

# The Valley Voice

## Newsletter of The Friends of Braidburn Valley Park

[www.braidburnvalleypark.org.uk](http://www.braidburnvalleypark.org.uk)



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### *Tea in the Park 2011*



Despite the threat of Hurricane Irene, we think our ninth annual Tea in the Park was the busiest yet with over 500 people coming along during the afternoon. The highlight of the event was stunt unicycling from the Voodoo Unicycle Stunt Display Team. Magic Ian entertained the children with magic and balloon modelling, and the Auld Spice Ceilidh band put a spring in our steps. There was a very busy bouncy castle for the wee ones, along with craft activities, raft building and games. The plant and home baking stalls did a roaring trade, as did the refreshments and the bar. Support from the police and fire service was much appreciated.

Our world famous duck race was a great crowd pleaser – we once again sold out of 600 ducks and the excitement at the finish line was palpable! Congratulations to our lucky winners, thank you to everyone who donated a prize, and to the generous sponsors of our Fun Day. All funds raised will be used to help subsidise future events and make them even better for your enjoyment. Finally our fifth Green Flag is now flying.



So called Portaloo

2012 Tea in the Park will be on Sat 1st September. Book the sun now!

### **Friends of Braidburn Valley Park Annual General Meeting Sunday 11th March 2012**

Enjoy a guided walk in Braidburn Valley Park and see all our up dates.

Meet at the Main Park Gates on Greenbank Crescent at 2pm.

Followed by refreshments in Greenbank Church      **All welcome**

### **Minibeasts and Updates on our Website**

Teachers—why don't you check and use the detailed Minibeast Education Pack at the Wild Flower Meadow section?

With the Flood Defenses completed you may see troutlets in the shadow of what is now the second bridge from the Greenbank gates. But these are midgets compared with the edible fish described by young anglers of the 1950s. Can you top such fishy tales?

The *Sunday Post* ran two lovely features about the park for Love Parks Week (July 23-31). We want to add more of such happy memories to our Website. Can you help us out with your favourites?

For further information about the Friends and Park see

[www.braidburnvalleypark.org.uk](http://www.braidburnvalleypark.org.uk)

or email [info@braidburnvalleypark.org.uk](mailto:info@braidburnvalleypark.org.uk)

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## Dear Friends,

It's time for me to retire. As many of you know, I have not only served on the Friends Committee since 2004 but was involved with Braidburn Valley Park as the South Morningside Councillor for twenty years before that. I have seen the park develop from a rather municipal facility to the community paradise we have today.

Changes began in the 1990s, when paths were covered in whinstone dust – not a success. These were eventually metalled. When the middle bridge was washed away it was replaced further south, the path from the Fly Walk made more user friendly (remember that precipice!) and new lighting installed.

The donation of the rowans was the catalyst for the formation of the Friends. Because some residents adjacent to the park resisted the tree planting, a working group was formed. Input from the members ensured that planting was done sympathetically; moreover, there was a genuine feeling that greater things could be achieved if the park had some 'local ownership'. The Parks Manager said to me, "Councillor, if we can set up a Friends Group, we can get access to all sorts of funding and a real co-operation between Council and residents".

A meeting was held in Hermitage House with Council Representatives, the MSP and local residents. To my immense satisfaction Jim Lavin volunteered to set up a Friends Group. His bright idea was to advertise in the Evening News, asking if any of the former Girl Guides and Brownies who had planted the 1935 Cherry Trees would come back to the park and help current Guide Movement members to plant daffodils. Others rallied round with membership forms and the Friends Group was born. The rest, as they say, is history.

I am grateful for the help and support that I and the Committee have had from our membership. Without your subscriptions, we would not have the sound financial base which makes the group viable – or the help from the many of you who volunteer at our Clean up Days, the Fun Day and the Work Parties.

*Lindsay Walls, Membership Secretary*

### Friends of Braidburn Valley Executive

Chair: Andrew Swann, Tel: 0131 447 5473  
Secretary: Peter Weeks, Tel: 0131 447 1874  
Treasurer: Christine Johnston, Tel: 0131 447 2138  
Membership Sec: Lindsay Walls, Tel: 0131 445 5415  
Honorary Tree Wardens:  
Keith Knight, Tel: 0131 447 2138  
& Louise Maguire, Tel: 0131 445 3126



**The Woodland Trust** kindly gave us over 400 small trees and shrubs as part of a community planting pack. The species include Blackthorn (Sloe), Dog Rose, Elder, Hazel and Crab Apple. These will all bear autumn fruits or nuts which will provide good food for the local wildlife especially the birds, but could also be a source of ingredients for local residents— jams, jellies, wines.

On a grey but mild mid-November Sunday around 15 of the Friends Group planted the bulk of these in an area near the south end of the park on the western boundary, not far from the main path. The remaining trees will be planted by pupils from South Morningside Primary. Good fun was had by all especially the younger ones who admired the many worms that were found in the holes. The area has been marked off with small stakes to prevent the grass cutting machines encroaching on the new planting

Let's hope that the trees thrive and in a few years' time we can all dig out our recipes books to make some preserves or wine. Just be sure you get there before the birds do.

**Friends and volunteers** have been busy in the park over the summer. We hope we have made a real difference to the clump of invasive Japanese Butterbur below the electricity substation. No doubt we'll have to revisit the area in the coming seasons but we have been able to move further south to the next patch. The real challenge yet to be addressed is the large growth on the very steep bank close to the southernmost bridge.

We are very pleased to have restored the lit path that crosses the middle of the park to its original width. Grass had grown over the tarmac reducing the width of the path by over a metre in places. The Council have also sprayed the newly exposed tarmac in an attempt to slow re-growth. We recognise that the paths have narrowed significantly in a number of other places.

**Left.** South Morningside Primary children recently raking the wild flower meadow.