



Edinburgh Festival Voluntary Guides Association

Newsletter

Winter 2021

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Welcome to a fairly compact Christmas newsletter. What was **supposed** to happen is that this newsletter would arrive in time for the invitation to the 75th birthday walk down the Royal Mile early in the New Year to be publicised. However at the last minute we felt it had to be postponed, because of the COVID-19 developments, and have not yet decided on another date. So the proposed slogan 'Save the date' is hard to adhere to, but we would ask that when we do decide on a date and circulate it, you would all support it.

Other than that there is a quiz in the middle two pages to keep you amused over the festive period, with a prize available for the supplementary questions, which are quite hard. The answers for the others are on the back page.

The EFVGA Committee would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a Good New Year, with the sincere hope that the Greek alphabet will not be such a feature of 2022 as it has been in the latter stages of 2021.

Save the Date!! (Whenever it is)

Next year our Association celebrates its 75th Anniversary. To get us all in the mood and to publicise the anniversary we plan to slowly walk down the Royal Mile probably in the morning at around 11am carrying 75 year birthday balloons and wearing a smile, as well as our usual gear. Please come along and bring family and friends with you. The walk should last about an hour, so should not affect any lunch arrangements. So whenever a date is set, please save it!



UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
CONFERENCE
UK 2021

COP 26



Events in 2022

We are expecting the City of Edinburgh Council to provide us with a Civic Reception to mark the 75th Anniversary and have also asked the Edinburgh International Festival to give us a mention in their Programme .

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2021 Statistics p4

Despite the COP 26 Climate Change Conference being held in Glasgow, there was quite a lot of activity in Edinburgh as well. Eric Melvin was contacted by an organisation who were hosting an event in Dynamic Earth on 24th November for an afternoon tour, their arrangements were all a bit last-minute as far as we were concerned, but the upshot was that Eric and three other guides were able to give a fairly short tour of the Canongate in the gloaming that day to a very mixed group of about 20 COP delegates from the US, South America, Europe as well as other parts of the UK. Luckily the weather was glorious, showing the setting of the Dynamic Earth at its absolute best in the late afternoon sunshine.

Edinburgh Literary Quiz

This quiz celebrates Edinburgh's appearance in fiction. These numbered excerpts are all from works of fiction set, at least partly, in Edinburgh and written between 1818 and 2021. The name of the work, its date and author are also listed separately by letter. The task is to match up one with the other, but some are easier than others! You will note that there are 12 quotes but only 10 authors and works listed. Two are left untitled, so there is an optional extra competitive element to the quiz.

If anyone can identify the two unnamed excerpts - which are quite difficult - correctly - there will be a prize. The two authors concerned were both Scottish males and contemporaries. They probably knew each other. One is better-known as a playwright, the other was very popular in his heyday but is now regarded as a bit old-fashioned. They also share one other significant connection. The answers are upside down on the back page, and send any answers to the competitive element to me at

eunsonjim@gmail.com. I will give you until Burns Night.

Good luck! Jim Eunson

1. They approached the Old Town which none of the girls had properly seen before, because none of their parents was so historically minded as to be moved to conduct their young into the reeking network of slums which the Old Town constituted in those years.

2. The area of the Grassmarket resembled a huge dark lake or sea of human heads, in the centre of which arose the fatal tree, tall, black, and ominous, from which dangled the deadly halter.

3. We turned into the Parliament Close, and my companion, without a faltering step, marched up to and through the Great Door into the old Parliament building itself. I had been in and out of this place once or twice myself, but never lingered much, preferring the light of the street to the gloom within.

4. The rain had in no way deterred the crowds – it had never occurred to him that Edinburgh was in the middle of 'the Festival' and that there would be carnival hordes of people milling around as if the end of a war had just been declared. He ended up in the dirty heart of the city, in a street that somehow managed to be on a lower level than the rest of the town, a blackened urban ravine.

5. Edinburgh tenements could be murder. She wouldn't be sorry not to have to climb the two storeys again after today.

6. Lysistrata woke with a start. She had come home, tired out, and fallen asleep in a chair..... For the last month she had been living in Edinburgh. The Government had successfully transferred itself, with all its apparatus and appendages, to the Scottish capital, and none could deny that in appearance at least the city was more congenial than Blackpool, to imperial and warlike administration; though many found the climate uncomfortably severe.

7. Beautiful city of Edinburgh, most wonderful to be seen,
With your ancient palace of Holyrood and Queen's Park Green,
And your big, magnificent, elegant New College,
Where people from all nations can be taught knowledge.

8. She wonders when she will first glimpse the famous silhouette of Edinburgh Castle. At a terrace of recently-completed houses marked Picardy Place, the carriage halts and she peers outside as her driver disappears into a wide basement to deliver his message.

9. But the High Street of Edinburgh, which they soon reached, is a dangerous place in which to make an open attack upon a mob. And it appears that the entrances to the tavern had been somewhere near to the Cross, on the south side of the street.....

10. - I see from your application that you attended George Heriots. The old Heriots FPs seem to be rather thick on the ground this afternoon.

Yeah, fat-cat.

- Actually man, ah've goat tae come clean here. Ah went tae Augie's, St Augustine's likesay, then Craigy, eh Craigroyston, ken. Ah jist pit doon Heriots because ah thoat it wid likes, help us git the joab. Too much discrimination in this town, man, ken, like say?

11. Then she thought of Mansie, so called in loving diminutive of the good Shetland 'Magnus', how he had survived convulsions, how he had narrowly missed extinction when the horse in the Co-operative milk lorry bolted, how he might have been drowned when he fell into Inverleith Pond at the age of three, but was not, thanks to the gentleman who owned the model of the Titanic.

12. It was coming near noon when I passed in by the West Kirk and the Grassmarket into the streets of the capital. The huge height of the buildings, running up to ten and fifteen storeys, the narrow arched entries that continually vomited passengers, the wares of the merchants in their windows.....

Works quoted from are the following

- a. Robert Louis Stevenson 'Kidnapped' 1886
- b. Muriel Spark 'The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie' 1961
- c. Sir Walter Scott 'Heart of Midlothian' 1818
- d. Irvine Welsh 'Trainspotting' 1993
- e. James Hogg 'The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner' 1824
- f. William McGonagall 'Beautiful Edinburgh' 1881
- g. Sara Sheridan 'The Fair Botanists' 2021
- h. Ian Rankin 'A Song for the Dark Times' 2020
- i. Kate Atkinson 'One Good Turn' 2006
- j. James Robertson 'Joseph Knight' 2003



EFVGA 2021 Season Summary of Statistics

Key Figures -

The 2020 season was so different from normal that a comparison of statistics with previous years would have served little useful purpose, but the 2021 season was, if not a normal season, extensive enough to justify some comparison.

In 2021 what was provided for clients was a programme of two tours daily, at 10.00 and 14.00 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for three weeks. The SPICE tour, which normally is included with the normal tours, this season took place as a one-off the day after the last regular tour took place, but the numbers are included below.

	2021	2020	2019	2018
Total Number of clients	232	n/a	453	559
Number of tours	48	n/a	82	98
Average clients per tour	4.8	n/a	5.5	5.7
Average Number per slot	12.2	n/a	9	11.2

Two innovations this year were pre-booking via the Fringe website, and the availability of an online version of a tour via the Fringe Player. There were 148 bookings for physical tours made via the Fringe website, and 39 viewings of the virtual tour.

It is not possible to say what proportion of the 148 bookings resulted in an actual attendance as we did not consistently collect that information, but from personal experience and that of others, most did. There is no further information available to us as to the source of the online viewings of the tour. Many thanks are due to all those who helped with the new, sometimes daunting technical issues around Fringe registration and the online tour, but in particular to Frances McDevitt, Elspeth McLean and Eric Melvin.

It remains to be seen as to what issues 2022, our 75th Anniversary Year, will bring, but it seems safe to assume we will provide at least the same level of tours as in 2021, and hopefully a full programme again.



Quiz Answers

a	12
Anon2	11
d	10
e	9
g	8
f	7
Anon1	6
h	5
i	4
j	3
c	2
b	1