



# FRIENDS of JOHN MUIR'S BIRTHPLACE

Newsletter No. 19, January 2012

Dear Friends,

When I wrote the convener's letter for the previous newsletter, I said that was my last one. I obviously spoke (or wrote) too soon. The new Friends Council have decided for the time being not to elect a convener and the duties will be shared as necessary. So here I am again and possibly from time to time in the future.

First of all may I thank Friends for presenting me with an honorary life membership. This is much appreciated. I was somewhat surprised too to be asked to follow Dan Cairney as President. Dan will be a hard act to follow. He has been involved with Friends and DJMA since inception in many capacities and, of course, it was Dan's foresight and inspiration that led to the formation of the John Muir Birthplace Trust and the subsequent purchase of the property.

Dunbar Primary School is now the biggest primary in terms of number of pupils and is split into two campuses. The 'old' primary school has been named John Muir Campus for the nursery and P1 to P3 children and the new Lochend Campus for older pupils. To acknowledge this development Friends are donating a series of Muir themed books to both libraries and early in 2012 Dan and I will be reprising our act as Muir and Roosevelt to present the books. I'm looking forward to explaining how the President of the USA has a Scottish accent.

A peaceful and prosperous new year to you all.

*Jim Thompson*

## **Friends Social Event**

Wednesday 8th February, 7:15 for 7:30pm

Given the success of previous social events, we are repeating the format of that event where, in addition to the refreshments, we hope to have a selection of members' favourite photographs with a short story attached. For further details see inside this Newsletter.



**FRIENDS** of  
**JOHN MUIR'S**  
**BIRTHPLACE**

## **Annual General Meeting** **13 October 2011** **Convener's Report**

As I have done in previous years I begin my report by stating the aims of the Friends of John Muir Birthplace's as given in our constitution. This year is no different. Our aims are:

to advance the education of the public concerning John Muir, as the Dunbar-born pioneer of world nature conservation, and his belief in the unique and irreplaceable value of wild places and wild creatures;

to implement John Muir's philosophy practically by conserving, restoring and enhancing landscape and wildlife in East Lothian and Scotland and supporting the work of the staff of John Muir's Birthplace.

Over the past year we have continued to further these objectives by:

- Conducting pre-arranged guided walks for both adults and young people, including groups from abroad, around 'John Muir's Dunbar'.
- Delivering a programme of talks and other events on John Muir and environmental topics, both within and outwith John Muir's Birthplace (JMB). Examples include continuing our support for the Dunbar Community Woodland Group, celebrating and promoting the 30th anniversary of Dunbar's twinning with Martinez in April which involved local schools and organisations contacting their counterparts. In July we welcomed Frank and Carol Walsh, Goodwill Ambassadors from Martinez.
- Meeting with people of influence in Scotland in general and East Lothian in particular. Treasurer Will Collin is a member of East Lothian Council's John Muir Strategy Group (JMSG) as are Friends Liz McLean representing the Birthplace Trust, Jo Moulin as Birthplace Manager and Robert Russel representing the John Muir Trust. JMSG aims to raise awareness of John Muir, develop educational and other links with the US and promote Muir-linked tourism in East Lothian.
- Being involved in local environmental initiatives such as the already mentioned Dunbar Woodland Group, 'Transition Town – 'Sustaining Dunbar'', beach tidies and other environmental projects.

- Providing volunteers on a regular and ad hoc basis to support JMB staff and to promote JMB both locally and further afield.
- Issuing on a regular basis our newsletter containing items regarding John Muir, environmental issues and the work of JMB, circulated to members and available at the Birthplace;

I was delighted to learn that visitor numbers in August exceeded 2300, a 20% increase on the same month last year and greater than the best annual total for the museum previously housed in the top flat prior to the Birthplace Trust acquiring the property. Visitor numbers are increasing, each year being better than the previous one, the visitors coming from all corners of the world, particularly North America and England. Most of these visitors come to Dunbar to visit the Birthplace and no doubt by doing so help the economy of the town.

The comments in the visitor's book make for wonderful reading. *'Inspiring'*, *'Awesome'*, *'A wonderful tribute to a great Man'* from American visitors. *'Best Little Museum I Have Ever Visited'* from an Australian and many, many more. And, of course, Royal patronage with visits from the Duke of Rothesay (Scottish title of Prince Charles) and earlier Prince Edward. This of course is no accident. It is all due to the hard work and dedication of Jo Moulin and her staff. It is their endeavours that have made the Birthplace the success that it has become, including maintaining their Gold 'Green Tourism' award and becoming a Scottish Tourist Board five star visitor attraction. School visits over the past eight years must now number in four figures, outreach, talks, lectures, the work shops for children, some as young as five. It's lovely to think of these young people learning to love nature and wild things and places just as the young John Muir did all those years ago here in Dunbar with his grandfather. Those who had doubts had what we were doing with the Birthplace must now realise how mistaken they were.

The position of convener of Friends is like that of the swan sailing serenely on the water. The convener is the head and body of the swan accepting the plaudits whilst underneath the feet are powering away like mad – the council who do all the work. Once again I thank the council for their tireless work in promoting Friends and the Birthplace. Susan, who works extremely hard as secretary, Will as treasurer, Birthplace Trustee and the newsletter, Duncan as membership secretary and the newsletter, Liz as Chair of the Birthplace Trustees, our new member Kevin giving invaluable input and Jo who represents the Birthplace and its staff on Friends' Council.

You will be aware that I am standing down from council and this therefore is my last report as convener. It is some 15 years since I answered Winifred's advert for a 'volunteer to train as a guide to John Muir's Dunbar'. I must admit that at that time my knowledge of John Muir was limited but I had been studying the history of the town and being not long retired thought 'it would be interesting'. I didn't know what I was letting myself in for. Before I knew it I was 'invited' on to council and the rest as they say is history. I have enjoyed my years on council having made good friends both here in Dunbar and in the USA and I wish Friends continued success in their endeavours. I am still continuing to volunteer at the Birthplace so will still be able to say hello to all Friends who visit on Thursdays.

Jim Thompson

## **Dan Cairney retires as President**

When our first President, Professor Fred Last, stepped down in September 1997 Dunbar's John Muir Association (DJMA) – now Friends of John Muir's Birthplace – was very fortunate, and pleased, to have Dan Cairney agree to become the second President of the Association. Dan is a founding member of DJMA and had served on its Council since its inception.

Just before Christmas '97 Dan was told that the Birthplace was about to be put up for sale on the open market he instigated a fund-raising campaign so that the building could be retained for the community rather than pass into private ownership. Dan was still at this time Chairman of Dunbar Community Council. In early January 1998, Dan convened a meeting with representatives from DJMA, Dunbar Community Council, East Lothian Council and the John Muir Trust in order to pursue the possibility of purchasing the Birthplace. As a result of this meeting the John Muir Birthplace Trust was established within a few months with local councillor Norman Hampshire as its first Chairman.

On the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Muir's birth – 21<sup>st</sup> April 1998 – the John Muir Birthplace Appeal<sup>1</sup> was formally launched and Dan was a prime motivator in that campaign. In particular he harnessed his contacts with the local traders and was highly successful in getting their backing for the fund-raising initiative<sup>2</sup>.

As a result of the campaigning and fund-raising by Dan and others the ownership of John Muir's birthplace was passed to the John Muir Birthplace

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<sup>1</sup> For details see <http://www.djma.org.uk/appeal/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> For details see <http://www.djma.org.uk/appeal/localtraders.html>

Trust on 29th January 1999<sup>3</sup> and at the DJMA AGM in September 1999<sup>4</sup> Dan announced the award of a £292,000 Heritage Lottery grant for the refurbishment of the Birthplace as a museum to honour Muir.

There is little doubt that the purchase of the Birthplace and the development of the Birthplace Museum are amongst the highlights of Dan's Presidency and during his 'term of office' DJMA/Friends have achieved a very great deal. Of course, anyone that knows Dan will recall their own favourite anecdotes of his time as President of Friends – and in his other roles in the community – and his friends and fellow Council members are extremely grateful for the time and effort Dan has committed to raising the profile of Muir in his birthplace of Dunbar and beyond. We all wish Dan the very best in his 'retirement'.

Duncan Smeed

## **Jim Thompson retires as Convener**

[The following article is the transcript of Susan Panton's citation prior to the award of Honorary Life Membership to Jim Thompson at the FoJMB AGM in October. Ed.]

We are not going to let Jim waltz off into the sunset without a proper thank you! Our convener, Jim Thompson, is a Glaswegian who moved to Edinburgh with his brand new wife in 1960, being transferred by his employers, a major general insurance firm. Jim eventually became regional manager for his company, but domestically was gradually moving eastwards. He came to Dunbar in 1989 when given the opportunity to take early retirement. At that time, like the majority of his fellow countrymen, he was completely unaware of John Muir.

A visit to the house corrected that, but an intense love of Scottish history and a notice in the local library seeking 'Volunteers to train as guides to John Muir's Dunbar' first involved him with DJMA. Jim was our first volunteer guide - training is still awaited! The first time I met Jim was on a rather dreich day at the launch of the first version of John Muir's Dunbar. I remember Jim as a rather dapper gentleman in a white Trilby, golf jacket and carrying a rolled up umbrella - once an insurance salesman always...!

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<sup>3</sup> For details see <http://www.djma.org.uk/appeal/news/elcnr02.html>

<sup>4</sup> For details see <http://www.djma.org.uk/djma/newsletters/newsletter16.html>

DJMA, now Friends know a good thing when they see one and Jim was grabbed with both hands and pulled into the body of the Council. He was initially co-opted, where he took on the responsibility of membership secretary and when the job of producing and editing the newsletter became vacant, he took that on as well. Jim is a prime example of the old adage... 'if you want something done, ask a busy person' and in 2000 Jim became convener when pressure of work forced Duncan Smeed to stand down.

Over the years Jim has forged important links with Muir scholars and enthusiasts in the States e.g. Harold Wood of the Sierra Club, Garret Burke, designer of the Californian Quarter and historians and authors John Simpson and Prof Donald Worcester, to mention but a few. Jim and Dan Cairney masterminded the donation of a mint quarter to every school child in the Dunbar cluster. He has also been involved in the visits of Catherine Soria, the head teacher of Yosemite Junior School to Dunbar and sightseeing tours of Scotland.

Jim and Will provide a very valuable double act on a Thursday when they work as Birthplace volunteers. Essentially they welcome and introduce visitors to John Muir. Their knowledge of Muir and Dunbar local history mean that visitors often leave with far more than they bargained for! We are delighted that Jim will continue to volunteer on a Thursday afternoon. Pop in and see him - no appointments required!

Finally - it has taken Jim over 70 years to learn the word 'no' and it has taken the Friends Council at least a couple of years to let him go! Friends of John Muir's Birthplace has benefited greatly from Jim's knowledge, friendliness and loyalty. Jim is our personal friend as well as a colleague and we wish him all the very best in the next phase of his retirement. His good wife, Margaret will be cheering!

Susan Panton



## Annual General Meeting 17 November 2011 Report from the Chair

I would like to start this year's AGM by noting the organisations which came together in 1998 to form the John Muir Birthplace Trust with the aim of securing the building where John Muir was born and creating a focus for presenting his life and work. Dunbar Community Council, Dunbar John Muir's Association (Friends of John Muir's Birthplace), East Lothian Council and the John Muir Trust represent a range of local and national interests whose aims as part of JMBT are to:

- promote knowledge of John Muir's life and legacy
- encourage participation in conservation and
- inspire people to follow in Muir's footsteps

I have been giving some thought to how these aims fit with the challenges which we face in today's world, the result of short term thinking and tied to an unsustainable economic model of growth. I believe that Muir would have been opposed to our current concepts of growth, development and globalisation. He railed against the belief in the Almighty Dollar, and was opposed to 'blind progress'. Increasingly his words appear prophetic when we consider how we need to become resilient enough to cope with the impacts from climate change, shrinking supplies of cheap energy and global economic instability –

*'Brought into right relationships with the wilderness, man would see that his appropriation of Earth's resources beyond his personal needs would only bring imbalance and begat ultimate loss and poverty by all'*

Perhaps we should review our aims to draw more directly on Muir's wisdom to address the need to build resilience within our communities, acknowledging Muir's own assertion – *"Not blind opposition to progress, but opposition to blind progress."*

Our new Primary School in Dunbar exhorts us to *'Let children walk with nature'* as we enter under the carved stone entrance lintel. The existing school campus has been renamed and at last we have a John Muir Primary School in Scotland! Thanks to all who contributed with the selection of the Muir quotations, now cast – literally – in stone.

Meanwhile we have seen an increase in visitor numbers to the Birthplace in 2011 with a 17% increase between January and August on 2010. In July the

increase was 21% on the same month last year and in the past three years, August visitor numbers have increased to 144% of the baseline. Comments in the visitors' book are lively and positive.

The Birthplace and the Museums' Service have curated a number of exhibitions, among them, in January, *Wherever a Scotsman goes, Muir and Burns*, our spring exhibition celebrating the links between Dunbar and Martinez, home of Muir's Historic site, *John Muir, the writer* at the library and the summer exhibition about East Lothian's engineering genius, John Rennie. As a venue, the Birthplace hosted the Dunbar Arts Trust and Writers' group exhibition and talks, *One Touch of Nature: makes all kin*. Our Friday afternoon and summer holiday drop-in children's activities continue to be popular and ensure that for an increasing number of young local people the Birthplace is a welcoming and familiar place.

The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Muir's death will be marked in 2014 and presents a wider opportunity to celebrate his remarkable achievements and legacy. A John Muir Strategy group has been established in conjunction with East Lothian Council and others and is exploring how to gain greater recognition of Muir in a national context and to develop the potential of his name. The Birthplace is represented on this group and a number of exciting ideas are emerging which will have a lasting legacy. Among these are the inclusion of John Muir in the proposed Scottish Studies curriculum which aims *to create a distinct strand of learning focused on Scotland and incorporating Scottish History, Scottish Literature, the Scots and Gaelic Languages, wider Scottish culture and Scottish current affairs*. John Muir fits well with many of these themes. A tourism event charrette was held in June in collaboration with Queen Margaret University and a number of ideas offering potential to celebrate Muir and 2014 were explored for further development. The session explored taking the 2014 celebrations from an East Lothian agenda to a national agenda. Attending organisations included Visit Scotland, Event Scotland, Creative Scotland, National Trust, Historic Scotland, Royal Botanical Gardens Edinburgh. We are particularly pleased that the John Muir Trust plan to hold their annual members gathering in Dunbar in 2014.

We are delighted to have maintained our Gold Standard in the Green Tourism Business Scheme in Spring and our Visit Scotland 5 star status as a visitor attraction. Thanks to Jo and staff for the work and commitment needed to maintain these demanding standards.

Highlights this year include the completion, finally, of the new interactive games designed by Campbell and Co which have been well received: we are grateful to Viridor Credits and Scottish Communities Fund for their support. We have also installed on existing computers, *My Sust House* and *My Sust Environment*, games developed by the Sust programme at the Lighthouse in Glasgow.

Partnerships are essential to the Birthplace and apart from the Trust's constituent members, we have active links with among others, the East Lothian Tourism and Heritage Forums, the John Muir Award, the John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez and the US National Park Service, the Sierra Club, Yosemite Valley School, Sustaining Dunbar and Dunbar traders. We are pleased to confirm that we will be a John Muir Award provider for another three year period.

We are particularly grateful for the ongoing support of the Friends of the Birthplace who organise reading events, sand sculpture competitions, publish the series of wee books, welcome visitors from sister organisations in the US and maintain valuable links with Muir contacts, provide volunteers on a regular and ad hoc basis to support JMB staff and to promote JMB both locally and further afield; and generally punch above their collective weight! I would like to pay special tribute to Jim Thompson, recently retired Friend's Convenor, who has invested in developing these links over the years. Many thanks.

Museum staff have relocated from temporary offices to the refurbished Town House and this additional accommodation will provide much needed Education facilities and expand the Birthplace's range of activities.

We are very grateful to East Lothian Council for their continuing financial grant support which ensures that the core costs of running and maintaining the building are largely secured. Maintenance of the building and its exhibits remain a challenge and the recent flash rainstorms have highlighted vulnerable areas requiring attention.

Finally, I would like to thank Jo and staff for their commitment to developing the work of the Birthplace to ensure that it continues to change and grow in pursuit of promoting John Muir and his legacy.

Liz McLean

## John Muir's Birthplace Museum – News

JMB was re-assessed by a mystery visitor from Visit Scotland at the end of November. Every year our re-assessment date always seems to spring up at the most inconvenient moment. On a previous occasion we had no running water due to urgent maintenance work. This year we were in the middle of preparations at Dunbar Town House for the preview event that took place that weekend and were in full flight with children arriving for the Friday afternoon workshop! I am pleased to confirm that we will be maintaining our five star visitor attraction rating for the next year.

John Muir's Birthplace is currently displaying a selection of children's work from our workshops and visiting groups. We held a preview event on the 16th December so that the children could pass on invitations to view their exhibition. The Christmas treasure hunt around the building was a big hit and the colourful waterfall banner and hedgehog hands a favourite. The exhibition will be on display for the rest of January.



*A Gude Fechter – John Muir the Campaigner* will be our main temporary exhibition opening in April and running throughout the summer. The exhibition will explore the campaigns of Muir's boyhood in Dunbar, as an adult and in Dunbar today and will link into a campaigning theme for Festival of Museums events in East Lothian over the weekend of 18-20 May.

Thank you to all the Friends who have shopped locally this Christmas. Sales have gone well again this year, with the latest batch of wine glasses and tumblers made out of glass bottles, John Muir Trust merchandise and books selling very well. We would welcome your suggestions for new shop stock items to add in the coming months. Look out for John Muir's Birthplace Fair-trade tea towels that we hope to have produced for the summer.

Jo Moulin

## Friends of John Muir Country Park

The newly formed Friends of John Muir Country Park recently spent a morning stomping out the hoof prints left by horses on the salt marsh near the Linkfield car park. [The area had been considerably damaged by riders galloping their horses along the marsh even though the area is a 'no go' one for horses!] There were 7 volunteers in total, and 2 dogs also joined in to help re-level the salt marsh!

Salt marshes are complicated habitats that occur in the zone between the shore and land. They spend some time submerged by water but are terrestrial enough to be colonised by plants. Hoof prints on this area are problematic as they can cause erosion to this delicate habitat. Damage to salt marshes can take several years to recover and some of the marks left by hoof prints at John Muir Country Park are still visible after 15 years.

The Friends of John Muir Country Park is a local group that was formed in early October 2011. It gives an opportunity for local people and users of the Park to become involved with the practical management and ecological recording on the park. It is also a chance for members of the public to work closely with East Lothian Council in considering ideas for the future management of the site.

The group is always looking for new members, so if you'd like to join please contact Katy Green at [Kgreen2@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Kgreen2@eastlothian.gov.uk).



**Will Collin stomping out hoof prints!**

Katy Green

## Including John Muir in Scottish Studies

The SNP 2010 manifesto made the commitment: *“We will develop the concept of ‘Scottish Studies’ in our schools, creating a distinct strand of learning focused on Scotland and incorporating Scottish History, Scottish Literature, the Scots and Gaelic Languages, wider Scottish culture and Scottish current affairs. All pupils will have access to this strand at Primary and Secondary levels.”* It seemed that there was a place in such a course for the life and legacy of John Muir.

A Scottish Studies Working Group was set up in August to provide strategic advice and direction to support the implementation of Scottish Studies. The 15-person Group, chaired by Dr Alasdair Allan MSP, the Scottish Minister for Learning and Skills, consists of a mix of folk from education at all levels and includes Iain Walford of Historic Scotland, musician Phil Cunningham and Scots Makar and writer Liz Lochhead. The group met first in September 2011.

It was discovered that only three meetings were scheduled and the group was expected to report to the Scottish Parliament in January 2012. The next meeting was to be at the end of October 2011 just after the SNP annual conference in Perth. East Lothian Council leader and John Muir Birthplace Trustee Paul McLennan volunteered to lobby Dr Allan for Muir’s inclusion in Scottish Studies. A briefing paper was prepared by Birthplace manager Jo Moulin and Friends council member Will Collin.

It pointed out that *“Muir was a wonderful role model for young people in Scotland. That most of his life was spent elsewhere does not disqualify him from being part of Scottish Studies but rather widens the scope of the subject to encompass the many millions of emigrant Scots and their descendents, and the huge contributions they have made to modern civilization around the globe. Muir is arguably the most important, and probably globally the best known, member of the Scottish diaspora.”*

It emphasized Muir’s ‘Scottishness’ – his love of the Scots language, the influence that Burns’ poetry had on him, his collection of Scottish literature, his high regard for the success of fellow Scots, his Scottish values, etc.

It demonstrated that Muir could be linked to all main curricular areas and that his life and legacy could make major contributions to many subject areas that would be likely to be part of ‘Scottish Studies’.

It stressed that Muir was as relevant today as he had ever been amply shown by his image appearing on the California quarter; a quotation from his writings being used in the Scottish Parliament building; a Muir biography by Professor Donald Worster being chosen as the Scottish Arts Council's 2010 book of the year; by the existence of the John Muir Trust and the popularity of the John Muir Award

It concluded that *“Muir's life and legacy ... appears to be ideally suited to be one of the main strands running through and binding together Scottish Studies as a separate subject or as a theme which will carry Scottish Studies across the Curriculum for Excellence in primary and secondary schools (or both!)”*

Paul reported that the suggestion of including John Muir in Scottish Studies was well received by Dr Allan. Fingers are crossed!!

Will Collin

[See <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/curriculum/ACE/ScottishStudies> for more details of the Scottish Studies Working Group. Ed.]

## **How to celebrate your 60th birthday**

I had been thinking how to celebrate getting my bus pass and was inspired by my friend Sandy Wallace, a fellow member of Haddington and East Lothian Pacemakers running club or HELP as we are known. I was Sandy's backup last year when he ran the John Muir Way on his 60th birthday in a time of just over 7 hours. I am not as running fit as Sandy so there was no way I was going to run it so I said I would walk the route in one day thinking that would be easier (boy was I wrong). You can't just go out and walk 45 miles at pace without any preparation so I spent 10 days in Glen Shiel in June based in my touring caravan during which I had 7 days walking completing 15 Munros in the process.

On my birthday I was joined by another HELP member and best friend Paddy McDonald (a mere youngster at 59 but a very marathon fit distance runner). We set off from Fisherrow Harbour at 6.00 am and eventually got to Dunbar about 5.20 pm. At this stage however Paddy's feet were extremely blistered and he declared he could not continue. Sad to leave him after 35 miles I kept going while he phoned his wife and I eventually arrived at Dunglass layby at 8.10 pm to be met by Paddy, his wife Monica and my partner Shirley then straight home for a much needed bath. In case you think I didn't have time to

notice the scenery I have lived in East Lothian for 37 years and know the area fairly well but I thought the JMW route was excellent, very scenic and shows off beautiful East Lothian wonderfully well.

To conclude Paddy and I have entered the Venice Marathon in October to celebrate his 60th Birthday and believe me that will be a dawdle compared to walking the John Muir Way in one day.

Brian Carr, July 2011

## **Neighbours Together – Just doing it.**

The Neighbours Together project aims to get people to work together to reduce energy use, grow more food locally and improve local conditions in order to walk and cycle more. NT is part of Sustaining Dunbar's long-term goal of increasing resilience of our local community. Up to 140 households in the Oldhamstocks, Spott, East Linton, Stenton and Dunbar area can be involved taking the Household Canny Challenge, with the aim of reducing carbon footprints by 30%.

The Belhaven area held the first (NT) meeting on November 13th. Six households welcomed the offer of cheap worm bins provided by another Sustaining Dunbar project - Worm's Work<sup>5</sup> - was widely welcomed. We are investigating garden sharing for growing more fruit and vegetables locally. The provision of Twenty's Plenty Wheelie Bin stickers was especially poignant as one of the children at the meeting had recently been hit by a car. I am looking forward to developing our local area and welcome anyone else along to join us. For Belhaven NT contact Mark or Julia at [mrmajames@gmail.com](mailto:mrmajames@gmail.com)

Several other neighbourhood groups have started to initiate enterprising ideas, such as making their areas safer by displaying '20's Plenty' stickers on their wheelie bins, reducing fuel costs by buying curtain lining and insulation in bulk, holding swaps of jams and preserves, and many more great ideas. For more information about being Household Canny and to organise a gathering in your area contact [sue@sustainingdunbar.org](mailto:sue@sustainingdunbar.org) (tel: 866920) or the Neighbours Together Facebook page<sup>6</sup> or website<sup>7</sup>.

Mark James

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<sup>5</sup> <http://ourlocality.org/wormswork/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.facebook.com/neighbourstogether>

<sup>7</sup> <http://neighbourstogether.org.uk/>

## **Muir News From Around the World (Wide Web)**

Facebook has also become an important medium for community groups and charities like Friends to disseminate news and to organise and promote their events. A Friends Facebook page has been created to help raise the profile of Friends and to help promote Muir's life and work. This Facebook page will also be kept updated with news, events and links to other Muir-related web resources. Friends (of the Birthplace sort!) are encouraged to 'like' the page as a certain number of fans are required before a more memorable 'username' – e.g. <http://www.facebook.com/fojmb> - is enabled. Until then a (shortened) link to the Facebook page is <http://www.tinyurl.com/fbfojmb>

Past newsletters have included some details of the many other Facebook pages and groups dedicated to Muir that Friends can now link to and share news with. Here are some of the recent highlights from these resources.

### **John Muir Association**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/John-Muir-Association/124570547602721>

Join us this year for our John Muir birthday/earthday celebration. Bring the entire family - FREE of charge!!!

### **John Muir Fans**

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=6008104983>

Angus McCormack In my book, the Ghost Shirt, a remnant of John Muir's beard becomes one of the central characters in an Eco-adventure for young people. My hope is that through the book, the first in a planned series entitled Warriors of the Rainbow, John Muir's legacy can be brought to a new audience. A Scot from Edinburgh I knew Dunbar well when I lived in Scotland. Muir's birthplace and name hold a special place in my life. The Ghost Shirt is available at Amazon.com.

### **Restore Hetch Hetchy**

<http://www.facebook.com/RestoreHetchHetchy>

A great 90 sec promo about our campaign.

**Discover Hetch Hetchy with Harrison Ford preview**

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

## **Friends Social Event with Photo Sharing Wednesday 8th February, 7.30pm at John Muir's Birthplace**

Following on from similar very successful events in the past, we plan to do the same again! Members are encouraged to show and talk about three of their favourite images. 5 minutes per person! Refreshments will also be served! If you wish to be involved, please e-mail your images to [duncan.smeed@gmail.com](mailto:duncan.smeed@gmail.com) and these will put into a presentation for ease of showing. Meet at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start at JMB.

### **Membership Renewal Reminders**

Renewal forms were included in the last newsletter for Friends who had taken out their membership on an annual basis and whose renewals are not automatically paid by standing order. Friends' Council hopes that the initiatives, events and publications that are produced to help promote Muir's life and work and that support John Muir's Birthplace have been of interest to the membership. If our records show that your membership is still due for renewal then a subscription form will be included in this newsletter mailing.

### **FRIENDS CONTACTS**

**Official address:** Friends of John Muir's Birthplace, John Muir's Birthplace, 126 High Street, Dunbar EH42 1JJ: tel: 01368 865899

**Friends Email:** [info@muirbirthplacefriends.org.uk](mailto:info@muirbirthplacefriends.org.uk)

**Friends Website:** [www.muirbirthplacefriends.org.uk](http://www.muirbirthplacefriends.org.uk)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-John-Muir's-Birthplace/108490739233583](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-John-Muir's-Birthplace/108490739233583)

**Birthplace Email:** [info@jmbt.org.uk](mailto:info@jmbt.org.uk)

**Birthplace Website:** [www.jmbt.org.uk](http://www.jmbt.org.uk)

**Convener:** TBA, **Secretary:** Susan Panton, **Membership Sec:** Duncan Smeed, **Treasurer:** Will Collin. All can be contacted through the Birthplace.