**Guild of St George, Weekend for Companions following meeting of Board of Directors, 11-13 July 2025**

**Friday 11 July 2025 – Travel Day for Companions/Travel Morning for Directors**

The Board meeting will take place in Inverleith from 2:30 to 7 p.m. with a coffee break at the Royal Botanic Gardens nearby.

**19:00 for 19:30:** Evening meal for Board members and others at **The Herringbone**, 2 South Trinity Road, Edinburgh EH5 3NR, at the corner with Ferry Road, a major east-west route; the restaurant has a curved facade on the corner uniting the two streets. South Trinity Road is a quiet residential street which runs through a highly attractive suburb called Trinity.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Companions and guests are very welcome to join the Board for this meal, but please confirm by Wednesday 9 July with Martin Green so that we can all sit together at the same long table. Last-minute arrivals should contact The Herringbone direct on 0131 552 3292 to see if there are still places available. It is a friendly but busy place, especially at the weekends.

**Saturday 12 July 2025 – Companions Day**

**9.30 for 10.00:** Morning session at Riddle’s Court, 322 Lawnmarket, Edinburgh EH1 2PG. Lawnmarket is the upper section of the Royal Mile, stretching from the Palace of Holyrood House at the foot of the hill to Edinburgh Castle at the top, the heart of the Old Town; Riddle’s Court is about 5 minutes’ walk uphill from the High Kirk (Cathedral) of St Giles, on the same side of the road, and opposite the clearly marked National Trust for Scotland property called Gladstone’s Land. The roadway here is being re-setted, a triumph for good conservation. Enter through a stone doorway, with ‘Riddle’s Court’ incised into the stonework, which leads via a tunnel into a charming courtyard. Cross the courtyard veering somewhat to the right, walk through the next tunnel, and head for the double doors well ahead. We are meeting in the Library, at the same level as the courtyard, at the back of the site, so well away from the noise and confusion of the Lawnmarket.

Riddle’s Court is a16th-century merchant’s house which in the late 19th century became one of the triumphant successes of the ‘surgical’ conservation approach by Ruskin’s devoted Edinburgh disciple Patrick Geddes (1854–1932). It has recently had an ambitious makeover master-minded by the Scottish Historic Buildings Trust, which is one of the occupants of the house.

**10:00:** **Peter Burman**, architectural and garden historian and member of the Board, will give a talk entitled *Edinburgh – a Ruskinian Ramble, Part I*. This will highlight many of the special places we shall visit or glimpse during the weekend and touch on Ruskin’s relationship with Edinburgh and some of our major buildings, e.g. Edinburgh New Town, Edinburgh Old Town, including his influence on Patrick Geddes, and the Rosslyn Chapel.

**10:45: Nic Boyes,** Companion and Consultant Conservator, based in Edinburgh, will introduce the visits to *Rosslyn Chapel* (Saturday afternoon) and the *Temple of Hygeia* (Sunday morning) with remarks about Ruskin’s response to ancient buildings and his principles of ever-vigilant maintenance and of doing ‘As much as necessary, but as little as possible’.

**11:30: Coffee and tea** will be served.

**12:00: Alexander Hamilton**, Companion, based in Edinburgh, will give a talk entitled *My life as Artist and Publisher.*

**12:25: Peter Burman** will give a further talk entitled *Edinburgh – a Ruskinian Ramble, Part II* highlighting Ruskin’s family background and his relationship with other aspects of Scotland.

**12.45: a light lunch** will be served.

**13.15: Depart on foot**, walking downhill to the foot of the Canongate (the bottom of the Royal Mile) passing or glimpsing many of the famous sights of the Old Town.

**14:00: join the minibus at Holyrood (precise location to be notified during the morning) for the seven-mile trip to Rosslyn Chapel**

**14:45: Guided tour of the exterior** of Rosslyn Chapel, led by Companion Nic Boyes.

Rosslyn Chapel is one of Scotland’s most cherished places: it is also a church in active use by the local congregation of the Scottish Episcopal Church. The admirable new Visitor Centre was designed by Glasgow architects Page & Park. It is likely to be extremely busy on a Saturday afternoon in July.

Nic Boyes devised the strategy and directed the detailed conservation of the exterior of the Chapel, treating it as a precious jewel box: he and Lady Rosslyn made a BBC TV film about the significance of the Chapel and its proper treatment. Nic Boyes and Peter Burman both spent four years on the Project Team for what was at the time the most important conservation project in Scotland, and which received the largest ever Historic Scotland grant for a single building.

**15:30 Official tour of the interior** of Rosslyn Chapel, led by one of the official guides.

**17:00: Rejoin the minibus** to return to Edinburgh for a period of rest and refreshment.

**18:30: Set off by tram etc.** to Newhaven.Trams from Princes Street leave every 7 or 8 minutes and take about 35 minutes, passing through Leith, the historic port of Edinburgh. Take the tram to the end of the line at Newhaven, and continue walking for about 5 minutes in the same direction until you see the little harbour. Allow 45-60 minutes for the whole journey, depending on where you are staying.

**19:30: Companions’ Dinner** at Pier House, 24–25 Pier Place, Edinburgh EH6 4LP.

Pier House is one of three restaurants housed in the skilfully re-purposed 19th-century Fish Market at Newhaven Harbour, an historic fishing port, now linked to the vast harbour area which stretches as far as Leith, encompassing the Ocean Terminal and the Royal Yacht Britannia. Participants with sharp eyesight will be able to see all three generations of the Forth Bridge/Queensferry Crossing away to the west.

**21:30/22:00: Return from Newhaven.** You can return by tram; alternatively, if it is a sublime summer evening, Peter Burman and Ross Burgess will lead a walk back through the suburb of Trinity with its beautiful villas and gardens, arriving after about 45 minutes at Inverleith Row, a handsome street of tenements and then Greek Revival villas leading southwards. The top end of the Row is called ‘Goldenacre’: on the west side is the church of St James’s Goldenacre, designed by Sir Robert Rowand Anderson (1834–1931, ‘Scotland’s premier architect’) and on the east side is the ‘golden acre’ of the 5th Duke of Buccleuch (d.1884) who was a shrewd businessman as well as a notable philanthropist and courtier. From here you can return by bus (routes 8, 9, 23, 27) to the city centre.

**Sunday 13 July 2025**

**9:45: Visit to the Temple of Hygeia and the Arcadian Landscapes of the New Town**. Meet outside the Franco Manca pizza restaurant, 1 Deanhaugh St, Edinburgh EH4 1LU, , adjoining the elegant Stock Bridge overlooking Edinburgh’s river, the Water of Leith.[[2]](#footnote-2) The street opposite is called Dean Terrace: walk along it beside the river (you may see an Antony Gormley male sculpture standing in the water). Cross and descend from the next bridge and continue walking to the Temple of Hygeia (St Bernard’s Well).

**10:00: Guided tour by Nic Boyes** of the Pump Room within the Temple of Hygeia. Nic led the conservation/repair/revival of the Temple, a project of the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust. ‘A Roman temple among the trees, commissioned from Alexander Nasmyth in 1788 by Lord Gardenstone (a wealthy Law Lord who thought he had benefited from the mineral spring here). The builder John Wilson began work in 1789. The Pump Room is in a base of boldly cleft rustication below the level of the path. Above it ten tall Doric columns, unfluted, support a meticulously detailed entablature with paterae between triglyphs. Under the lead dome a statue of Hygeia, the original figure of Coade stone, 1791, replaced by another carved by D. W. Stevenson in 1888, when the building was restored and the pump room refitted by Thomas Bonnar’.

**10:30: Walk to Dean village.** In former times this stretch of the Water of Leith and the mills of Dean Village formed a major industrial quarter of the city. Housing the poor was a passionate leading concern of both John Ruskin and Patrick Geddes and we shall visit an outstanding example of a housing settlement created in their spirit (Well Court, 1883–6, paid for by the founder of *The Scotsman*, John Ritchie Findlay, likely to have felt himself to be a disciple of Ruskin).

**11:00 Return to Stockbridge.** At Well Court we will be welcomed by two distinguished citizens, Anne Simpson (Curator) and James Simpson (Architect/Architectural Historian). They will lead us back to Stockbridge passing through the Belgrave Crescent Gardens and the Dean Gardens, two of the sublime privately owned gardens in the Dean Valley, not normally opened to the public, with thanks to James and Anne Simpson and to Maureen Auld, representative of the Dean Gardens trustees.

**12:30: Lunch at Stockbridge**: We will be eating together at the ‘Franco Manca’ restaurant near where we started our walk.

**14:00: Walk/bus to the Mansfield Traquair Centre.** Continue along the Water of Leith Walk, then along Glenogle Street, passing the Colonies, a development for working-class families built from 1861 onwards by the Edinburgh Co-operative Building Association. Glenogle Baths is a towering castellated palazzo of 1897-1900 designed by the then city architect, Robert Morham. Then on foot (uphill) or by a short bus ride, via the Canonmills area, to the Mansfield Traquair Centre.

**15:00: Visit to the Mansfield Traquair Centre**, 15 Mansfield Place, Edinburgh EH3 6BB, one of the four places in Edinburgh where it is possible to see outstanding work in art and craftsmanship by the multi-talented Phoebe Anna Traquair (1852–1936).[[3]](#footnote-3)

The Mansfield Traquair Centre is the former Catholic Apostolic Church, designed by the architect Sir Robert Rowand Anderson (1834–1921); it had been intended to have mural paintings from the outset. Anderson had worked as an assistant to Sir George Gilbert Scott for a couple of years and had ‘read his Ruskin’ and was also a follower of William Morris and a close contemporary of Philip Webb (1831–1915), both striving for a release from the Gothic Revival. Phoebe Anna Traquair had also read her Ruskin and had forged a cordial friendship with him, to the extent that Ruskin lent her priceless medieval manuscripts to study, sending them to her by post. The Centre is now a wedding and events venue, but is open on the afternoon of the second Sunday in the month.

We will be guided round the mural paintings by a leading trustee of the Friends of the Mansfield Traquair Centre, Rosemary Mann, who was closely involved with the rescue and restoration of the buildings and the conservation of the outstanding mural paintings.

**16:30: Session ends and group disperses.**

**18:00: Possible dinner** for those staying in Edinburgh on Sunday evening. A pleasant place to watch the world go by if the weather is fine is the Grassmarket. Several of the good hotels are there or nearby. We suggest an early supper, from around 6 p.m. onwards (we may all be tired!), and could reserve tables at a French restaurant, *Le Petit Paris*, which is in the Grassmarket (there is a basement room which is generally more peaceful than upstairs) or at an Italian restaurant, *Vittoria*, on George IV Bridge nearby, almost opposite the National Library of Scotland. Please let Martin know if you would be interested in either venue.

*Edinburgh is an eminently ‘walkable’ city but gradients can be steep and it may even be hot! So there is a lot to be said for using taxis which, for the relatively short distances, will not be expensive. A list of taxi phone numbers will be provided in the final version of this programme note.*

NIC BOYES, PETER BURMAN & ROSS BURGESS, the ‘Edinburgh Team’,
with valued input from Martin Green and Simon Seligman, revised 2 July 2025

**THE PROGRAMME ‘DISTILLED’**

**FRIDAY 11TH JULY**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **2.30** | **BOARD MEETING – 9 INVERLEITH PLACE** |
| **4.00** | **BREAK FOR TEA – ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN** |
| **5.15** | **BOARD MEETING RECOMMENCES** |
| **7.00** | **WALK TO ‘THE HERRINGBONE’** |
| **7.30** | **BOARD (& GUESTS) DINNER AT ‘THE HERRINGBONE’** |

**SATURDAY 12TH JULY**

|  |  |
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| **9.30** | **RIDDLES COURT – TALKS (TEA/COFFEE 11.30?)** |
| **12.30** | **LUNCH** |
| **1.30** | **CLOSE** |
| **2.00** | **MINIBUS FROM HOLYROOD** |
| **3.30** | **ROSSLYN CHAPEL – NIC BOYES GUIDED TOUR** |
| **5.00** | **MINIBUS RETURN TO CITY CENTRE** |
| **7.30** | **PIER HOUSE – COMPANIONS DINNER** |
| **9.30** | **WALK THROUGH TRINITY** |

**SUNDAY 13TH JULY**

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| **10.00** | **TEMPLE OF HYGEA & WALK ALONG WATERS OF LEITH** |
| **12.30** | **LUNCH – THE FRANCA MANCA** |
| **2.00** | **PHOEBE ANNA TRAQUAIR TRAIL – POTENTIAL VENUES*** **Mansfield Traquair Centre – the former Catholic Apostolic Church GUIDE CONFIRMED**
* **OPTIONAL National Gallery of Art, at the foot of The Mound, has a permanent display of paintings OPTIONAL**
* **OPTIONAL National Museum of Scotland which also has a permanent display of her work**
 |
| **6.00** | **POSSIBLE DINNER – LE PETIT PARIS OR DIVINA ENOTECA, GRASSMARKET** |

1. Beware! There is another Herringbone in a completely different part of Edinburgh. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. If you arrive early you may like to drop into the vibrant Stockbridge Market. Stockbridge is full of temptations on Sundays as well as weekdays including numerous cafes, charity shops galore, and I. J. Mellis’s famous cheese shop. The enterprising Oxfam Bookshop is an ever-present temptation. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. If you’re staying a little longer in Edinburgh, the Scottish National Gallery of Art, on Princes Street at the foot of The Mound, has a permanent display of paintings and four ravishing panels of embroidery by Phoebe Anna Traquair, in the new Scottish Galleries. The Scottish National Museum in Chambers Street has a permanent display of her work, with an emphasis on her craftsmanship, which includes a decorated piano, embroideries, metalwork, enamelling, book binding, and more. Highly recommended is *Phoebe Anna Traquair* by Elizabeth Cumming, published by the National Galleries of Scotland, 2022. A range of publications is on sale at the Mansfield Traquair Centre. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)