

THE JAMES GILLESPIE'S TRUST

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12 January 2023

To the alumni of James Gillespie's High School, wherever you are

Eric Melvin Talk – Friday 3 February 2023 at 2pm

I'm delighted that a number of you have let me know that you are planning to attend Eric's presentation on Edinburgh and the Golden Age. I have attended one of Eric's presentations in an overheated room on a Friday afternoon and have been rivetted by it so, trust me, if I can stay awake in these circumstances on a Friday afternoon, his presentation must really be worth listening to! We have space for quite a few more attendees so feel free to invite your friends, whether Gillespie alumni or not. Below is the information that Eric gave us:

James and John Gillespie lived through some of the most fascinating years of Edinburgh's rich history. Inspired by Lord Provost George Drummond, Edinburgh burst from the confines of the medieval Old Town and started to build what even then was described as the New Town. At the same time as Edinburgh was being transformed physically and socially, its intellectual reputation saw the city referred to as "The Athens of the North." This was due in no small part to the reputation of the University which attracted some of the finest academics of the day to live and to work in Edinburgh. With their shop in the High Street, the Gillespie brothers were witnesses to exciting times. Their successful tobacco and snuff business saw them amass a fortune which they left to the city to support charitable enterprises. Their generous legacy continues to this day. The talk will draw heavily from the work of their next-door neighbour, the artist John Kay who recorded many of the characters of the Golden Age - including portraits of the Gillespie brothers.

Box Hats & Blue Stockings

Norma Allan has asked me to let you know that she has a number of copies of the above book which she can't sell due to a printing error so, if anyone wants a free copy, please let me know and I will put you in touch with her.

We hope that you will continue to support us as generously as you have done in the past. If you would like to make a contribution to future projects, please either send your cheque, made payable to James Gillespie's Trust, together with your details (name and dates), to Treasurer, Mrs Jean Knox, at James Gillespie's High School, 120 Warrender Park Road, Edinburgh EH9 1DD or make electronic payment to James Gillespie's Trust, Bank of Scotland account number **17854260**, sort code **80-22-60**, using your name as reference and email her at alumni@jamesgillespiestrust.com.

Kind regards,

Jean

Jean Knox,
James Gillespie's Trust