

W I N T E R 2 0 1 5

TALLISTON

T I M E S



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Experience the taste and simplicity of this warming winter meal



Welcome to the *winter edition* of our quarterly chronicle

It has been a few months now since we entered the final year of the Talliston house and gardens project and December marks the first milestone in our plan for completion. It's been an intensive few months of battling the elements of time and money, but now more than ever it's clear that Talliston is a dream that proves how anything is possible when you focus and walk every day towards your goal. And I hope you'll enjoy sharing these last miles with us.

Save the date

Volunteering

Any time

In our final year, we're adopting an open house policy to anyone who wishes to come along and help out.

Invitation to View

May-August 2015

We've signed up for this UK-wide initiative where the country's houses are opened for public viewings.

Team Talliston

October 2015

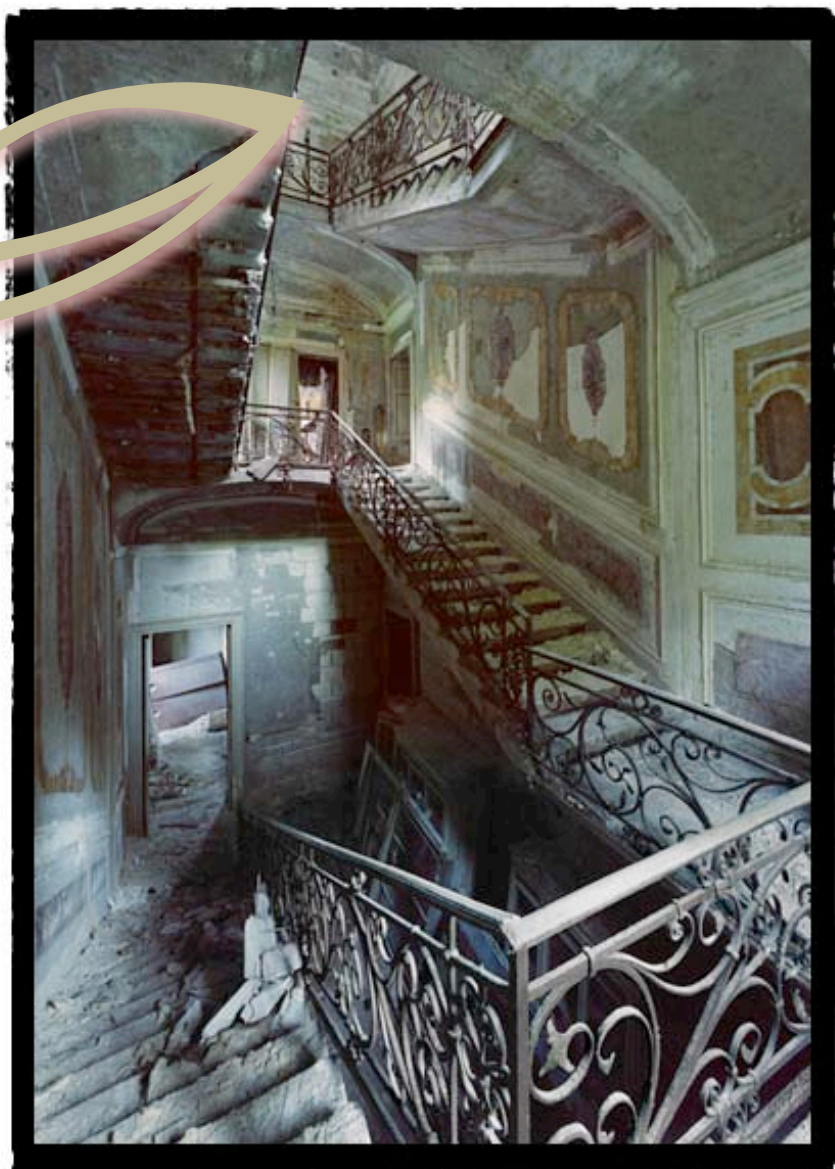
The countdown has begun for the project's end. So why not join the launch team for these one-off events?



Talliston's Gothic gate on a foggy night this autumn

Making an Entrance

*Fashioning a river of time
that runs through the
heart of the house*



W

hen researching a new room in the house, usually the spark that begins us down the path to finding the right time and place is discovered in a singular object, a photograph or even an emotion. For The Watchtower it was the Mask of Pan. For The Voodoo Kitchen it was 1950s gadgetry. And for the Hall of Mirrors it is this haunting image.

Photographer Thomas Jorion roamed Italy, from Piedmont and Lombardy to Tuscany and Emilia Romagna, compiling a gallery series entitled *Forgotten Palaces*. Here in a ghost village ('paesi fantasma') this once grand staircase lies in ruins, the steps have crumbled; its ornate railings covered in dust. On the decaying, bare walls, a splash of coloured panelling provides the last vestige of splendour. This once-great Italian villa would most likely have been home to nobility during the Renaissance – but now, it and many others have been abandoned. Yet seeing how the artist had captured the beauty of decay, we also saw answered

how we were going to tell the story of time; a tale that had been systematically removed from each of the other rooms. For the entrance to the house, we needed a way to create the throat of the labyrinth, effectively a visible river of time that connects many of Talliston's diverse and disparate locations.

The Lord of Time

There are believed to be more than 300 Italian ghost villages, many dating from medieval times, and this idea of a room that is now derelict was the key to showcasing the themes of time that were so important in the hall and stairs area. We had three representations of the passing of time to focus on: one clock from every room of the house (see the panel on *The Thirteen Clocks of Talliston*); mirrors lining the walls over the stairs; and, a representation of Saturn, the Roman's Lord of Time. Yet there is also a connection to time with the choice of the occupant. Taking the original inspiration this is to be Romano Drago, an Italian-born photographer and



author, best known for his atmospheric black-and-white photographs of abandoned and haunted locations throughout Europe. He is a frequent visitor to many of the forgotten towns and houses of his homeland, including this once-magnificence villa, on this hillside of its own ghost village.

Made in Greece by a specialist, family-owned company, the bronze mask of Saturn that acts as our oracle in the hall, is cast using the lost-wax technique; the method of oxidisation and patination results in a rich combination of texture and colour which is unique to each piece. Saturn is the Roman god of the Harvest or time of reaping, and named the sixth planet from the sun. He carried a sickle as his symbol and Saturday is named after him. He is inspired the modern derivative of Old Father Time. The offerings to this deity are air, water and death (being the three things that time cannot kill).

The Palace of Shadows

The naming of the hall and stairs was the next task and so was born the Palazzo di Ombre. Representing the throat of the labyrinth, and distinct from a maze, a hall of mirrors is a room that uses carefully arranged mirrors to confuse the perception of the audience. The most renowned of these is L'Galerie des Glaces, the central gallery of the Palace of Versailles. In this hall, as well as originally in the entire house, many mirrors were used to direct light and confuse passage. The overhead skylight brings both daylight and moonlight into this otherwise enclosed corridor, and also focuses on the passing of time, itself filled with clocks and a host of motifs all designed to bring the idea of mortality to the viewer – and in its near derelict state, this is made even more poignant.

The Thirteen Clocks of Talliston



• **ROOM #1.** The Labyrinth
Vintage brass astrolabe and hourglass.

• **ROOM #2.** The Hall of Mirrors
Brass lantern clock with 17th century design and finial dome.

• **ROOM #3.** The Watchtower
Victorian Vienna wall clock (circa 1900) made from walnut, with pendulum and winding key.

• **ROOM #4.** The Voodoo Kitchen
Bakelite kitchen wall clock.

• **ROOM #5.** The Boathouse
Neptune's tide indicator and clock.

• **ROOM #6.** The Fountain Courtyard
Brass bodied sundial decorated with mythological birds on each side of the gnomon, which is in the form of a winged lion. Dark green patina and Roman numerals on face.

• **ROOM #7.** The Cabin
Antique hand carved Black Forest cuckoo clock.



• **ROOM #8.** The Starhouse
Sumerian star chart tablet.

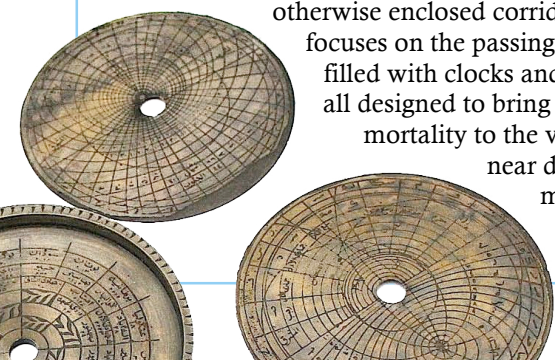
• **ROOM #9.** The Haunted Bedroom
Antique Waterbury brass Art Nouveau clock with beautiful maiden or woman with flowing organic scrolls.

• **ROOM #10.** The Room of Dreams
Vintage Elgin travel alarm clock manufactured by The London Clock Company.

• **ROOM #11.** The Office
Art Deco walnut mantle clock with squared case.

• **ROOM #12.** The Treehouse Sanctuary
Metamec Dereham mantle clock, the first type of synchronous movement with artificial tick option.

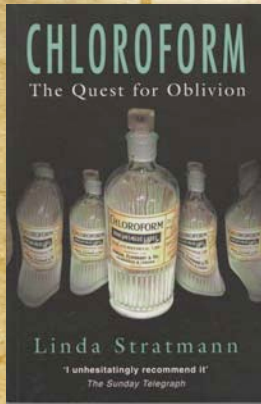
• **ROOM #13.** The Tipi
19th century silver and gold pocket watch with Roman numerals and glass case front.





OUR ARTISTIC PATRON

LINDA STRATMANN



I remember the day I first entered the house that was to become Talliston. John had purchased an ordinary home, but brought to it a dream of what it could be. I had a dream, too; I wanted to be a writer. I had explored many forms of writing; articles, plays, stories and novels, but although the writing process was an irresistible urge, I never quite found my individual voice. At the same time I was satisfying my fascination with historical crime, by collecting and

reading books; but while I read about crime, I thought I didn't have the skills to write about it. Of course when John started work on Talliston he didn't have some of the numerous skills he needed, but over the years he has acquired them, and collected the knowledge and inspiration that he has poured into the project.

My first adventure in crime writing came about when a friend asked for articles for an amateur magazine and I decided to write about true crimes. I was contemplating an article about murder by chloroform, based on the 1886 Adelaide Bartlett case when the realisation hit me that the project was too complex for an article – it had to be a book. That book took me three years to write. It was the 1990s and there were no online research facilities. Old newspapers had to be examined at archives as originals or on murky microfilm. All my notes were handwritten. One piece of good fortune was the opening of the British Library across the road from where I worked and where I was to be found most lunchtimes and many evenings.

With my book complete and after failing to interest an agent I decided to approach publishers directly. I sent an extract to Sutton Publishing (since incorporated into the History Press), expecting to hear nothing for a very long time. Two weeks later they replied asking if I would be willing to write a book on the history of chloroform. The first person to whom I showed their letter, after my husband, was John. He was working on his dream and I had taken the first step towards mine. *Chloroform, the Quest for Oblivion* was published in 2003.

We all have dreams and they can be hard to achieve, but with patience and hard work, we can get there.



BIBLIOGRAPHY NON-FICTION

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Gloucestershire Murders
The Crooks Who Conned Millions (Re-issued as Fraudsters and Charlatans)
Notorious Blasted Rascal
Kent Murders
Greater London Murders
Middlesex Murders
Cruel Deeds and Dreadful Calamities: The Illustrated Police News 1864-1938
More Essex Murders
The Marquess of Queensberry: Wilde's Nemesis

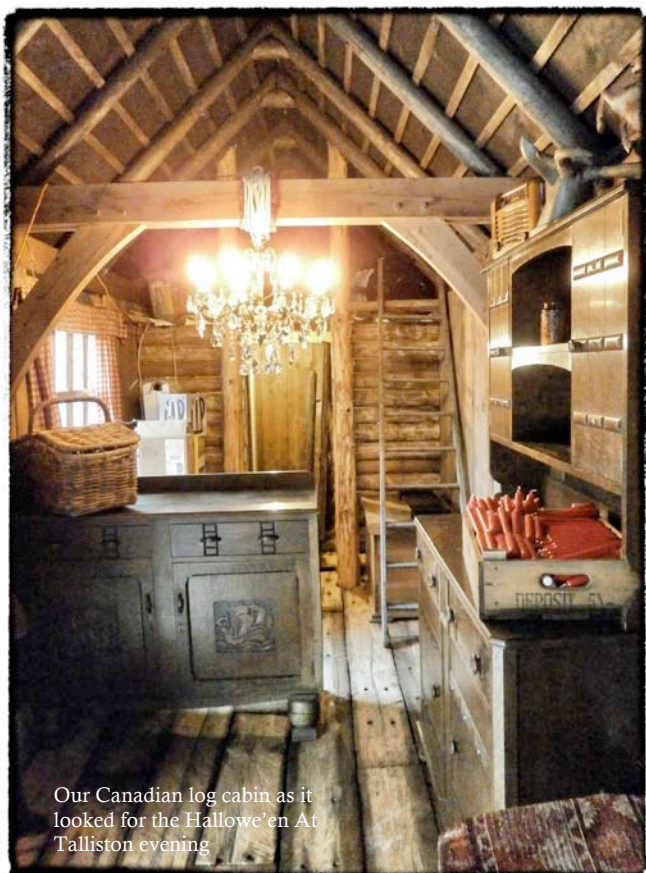
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The Poisonous Seed: Frances Doughty 1
The Daughters of Gentlemen: Frances Doughty 2
A Case of Doubtful Death: Frances Doughty 3
An Appetite for Murder: Frances Doughty 4

FORTHCOMING

The Children of Silence: Frances Doughty 5
The Case of the Greek Gigolo in Truly Criminal

DISCOVER MORE AT WWW.LINDASTRATMANN.COM



Our Canadian log cabin as it looked for the Hallowe'en At Talliston evening

Autumn project news



21ST SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER | NOVEMBER | 21ST DECEMBER

We look back over what's been happening at the house during the past three months.



The Cabin

SHED | EARTH

The essence of The Cabin is that, while you are only half a dozen steps from the main house, it should feel as if you are out in the Canadian wilderness. This has been the focus of efforts during the last three months; to create a palpable sense of seclusion. The installation of a raised floor made from 100-year-old railway sleepers contributed the look (and smell) of a real cabin. Each 2.6 metre length was cut using a chainsaw to expose the old wood at its heart. This was used as the facing side of the floorboards.

Next was the creation of the Snug. Accessed by a ladder running along the far wall, this will incorporate a raised sleeping area, complete with balustrade. We researched Native Canadian designs for the folk art painting that runs along each rafter and across the oak beam across the centre of the room.



The Hall of Mirrors

HALL & STAIRS | WATER

Always conscious of the limited amount of space available to us for the different locations inside the house, it took a lot of thought and searching to find the perfect stone entrance and stairway. Eventually we discovered similar servants' steps in Italian Renaissance villas. Such buildings would act as a second

home for members of Italian nobility, such as the Medici – a political dynasty and banking family which would later become a royal house. In the 15th century, Italians began uncovering ancient ruins and modelled their own buildings after Roman prototypes.

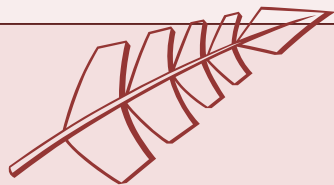
Our first task was building a herringbone patterned set of stair risers, faced with travertine and auburn brick slips to mirror cotto steps found all across Italy and the Mediterranean. Next we began tiling the walls, again in travertine, each piece hand cut to simulate the real layout of stone blocks. At the same time, work began to construct the stained glass skylight and lantern ceiling panels, ready for the hanging of the crystal chandelier sourced from a 1940s hotel in Turkey. And lastly we commissioned the creation of a matching glass panel for the front door oval.



Constructing the herringbone patterned staircase steps

ALL GOOD FRIENDS

Where we ask our Friends a little about themselves, their interests and why they visit the house...



SUSAN MAC NICOL

☞ *Tell us a bit about yourself.*

I'm married, have grown up kids, hold down a day job in the world of compliance and I'm a published writer of gay male romance.

☞ *Where did you first hear about us?*

I was looking to join a writing circle and saw the Talliston Writer's Circle being advertised on MeetUp. That was my first exposure to the world of Talliston, and I knew it wouldn't be the last.

☞ *Have you met anyone interesting?*

Interesting is an understatement. I mean, have you met John? He's so multi-faceted he could be a diamond. And yes, I've met a load of interesting people, all in different ways. Artists, photographers, crime writers, fellow authors, naked gardeners, historians and poetry lovers...

☞ *Do you have a favourite location?*

Definitely the Haunted Bedroom. I'm big on ghosts, the occult, the supernatural and for me, this room epitomizes the essence of the house.

☞ *What's the appeal?*

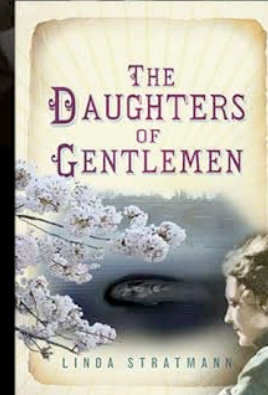
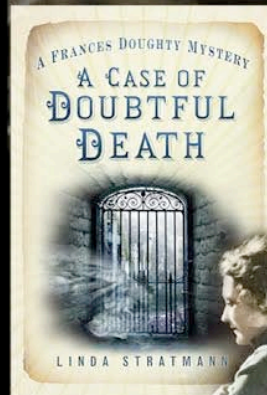
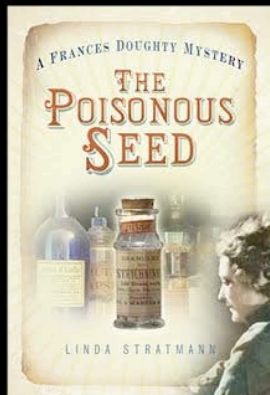
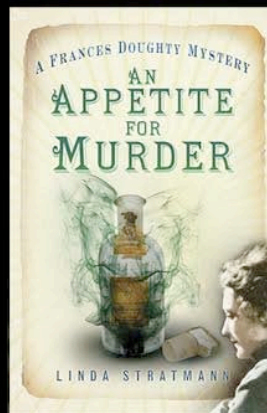
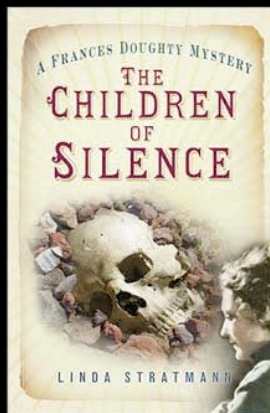
That's like asking a child what's the appeal of Willy Wonka's chocolate factory. Or Hansel and Gretel what they saw in the gingerbread house. The short answer is the absolute magic, mystery and uniqueness of the house.

☞ *What keeps you coming back?*

The house gets into the blood, into your psyche and it's almost addictive. Talliston has this effect on you, that you want to be part of it, breathe it and feel it. For me, it's a wonderful atmosphere in which to absorb some of its creative energy. And I need that to keep writing...



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THE GARDENER'S ALMANACK

OUR SEASONAL GUIDE TO WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN THE LABYRINTH & THE FOUNTAIN COURTYARD GARDENS



While our spring edition of *Talliston Times* will cover a larger article on planning the final gardens at Talliston for May 2015, there's space here to mention the source book used for researching the Labyrinth flowers, plants and herbs. *The Medieval Flower Book* by Celia Fisher explores flower illustration as far back as the 14th century. Each page provides intriguing explanations of history, symbolism and uses – and offers a wonderful palette to create our Gothic Revival entrance.



*The Labyrinth
Cottage Garden*



Sowings due/Planting out

Sweet peas are the principal crop. They should be sown in the final positions to avoid root disturbance at lifting time. At beginning of the month the herbaceous border plants, such as lupins, and biennials, such as sweet Williams, may be sown. Hardy annuals, too.

Prepare for/Other work due

Planting bulbs in semi-wild settings, by cutting down grass, once sites have been selected. Order bulbs. Prepare also for planting bulbs and other bedding subjects such as myosotis (forget-me-nots).

Remarks

Hardy annuals when sown in the open in autumn should not be planted out until the spring.

*The Labyrinth
The Vegetable Patch*



Sowings due/Planting out

At the beginning of month are winter spinach, onions for early crops next year and radishes and lettuce of winter varieties. Spring cabbage, in soil well manured from a previous crop, such as potatoes and on soil which drains well, for these plants must not have water around their roots.

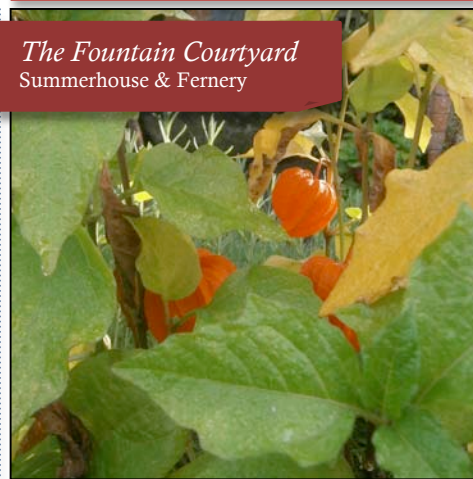
Prepare for/Other work due

Potato lifting towards end of month – decide method of storage (in clamp, sack or loose on the floor of a shed). If it is intended to store maincrop carrots, parsnips, beetroots, a start should be made towards the end of the month.

Remarks

It is essential to store root crops – they keep well in the ground but are liable to be destroyed by pests.

*The Fountain Courtyard
Summerhouse & Fernery*



Sowings due/Planting out

Seedlings of hardy herbaceous plants and biennials should be lifted from the bed and set out before the bad weather starts. Cuttings from marguerites, roses and antirrhinums may be taken.

Prepare for/Other work due

Choice flowers such as dahlias may have to be protected from frost towards the end of the month, covering them with hessian, tiffany or papers when frost threatens. Cut out flowered growths from rambler roses and tie in new growths for next year's flower display.

Remarks

Preparing the ground for January crops means digging and manuring it at this stage.

AUTUMN MOONS 21ST SEPTEMBER – to – 21ST DECEMBER

First Moon | Of Man | Earth | Dark Half of the Year

Hunter's Moon

Thursday 23rd October (Night: 21:56 UTC)
Friday 21st November (Morning: 05:23 UTC)

Thursday 23 October: NEW MOON (First Moon – Of Men). 1 The Labyrinth | Front garden | The Old Rectory | 1852 | Essex, United Kingdom. • GOD'S DAY: Feast of Jesus. Offering of white cloth and flowers.

Wednesday 6 November: FULL MOON (Tenth Moon – Of Men). The Moon will be directly opposite the Earth from the Sun and will be fully illuminated as seen from Earth. This phase occurs at 05:23 UTC.

BLOOD MOON

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
21						22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20

HUNTER'S MOON

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	

Second Moon | Of Man | Fire | Light Half of the Year

Blood Moon

Saturday 22nd November (Morning: 05:23 UTC)
Sunday 21st December (Afternoon: 12:27 UTC)

Saturday 22 November: NEW MOON (Second Moon – Of Men). 2 The Hall Of Mirrors | Hall & stairs | Palazzo di Ombre (The Palace of Shadows) | 1992 | Lombardy, Italy. • GOD'S DAY: Feast of Saturn (Saturnalia, Lord of Time, Old Father Time). Offering of air, water and death (the three things that time cannot kill). • GOD'S DAY: Feast of Thor (God of Thunder). Offering of runic stones. Saturday 10 December: • FULL MOON (Second Moon – Of Men). The Moon will be directly opposite the Earth from the Sun and will be fully illuminated as seen from Earth. This phase occurs at 12:27 UTC.

END OF THE  TALLISTON ALMANACK  2013-2014



Creamy fish pie

A warming winter meal for 6



Ingredients

Use haddock or any white fish

- 🍷 5 large potatoes, peeled and diced into 2.5cm squares
- 🍷 Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 🍷 2 free range eggs
- 🍷 2 large handfuls of fresh spinach
- 🍷 1 onion finely chopped
- 🍷 1 carrot, finely chopped
- 🍷 Extra virgin olive oil
- 🍷 285ml double cream
- 🍷 2 good handfuls of grated mature cheddar or Parmesan cheese
- 🍷 Juice of 1 lemon
- 🍷 1 heaped teaspoon of English mustard
- 🍷 1 large handful of flat leaf parsley, finely chopped
- 🍷 455g haddock or cod fillet, skin removed, pin-boned and sliced into strips
- 🍷 Nutmeg



- ① Preheat the oven to 230oC/ 450oF/ Gas Mark 8. Put the potatoes into salted boiling water and bring back to the boil for 2 minutes. Carefully add the eggs to the pan and cook for a further 8 minutes, by which time the potatoes should be cooked.
- ② At the same time, steam the spinach in a colander above the pan. This will only take a minute. When the spinach is done, remove from the colander and gently squeeze any excess moisture away. Then drain the potatoes in the colander. Remove the eggs, cool under cold water, then peel and quarter them. Place to one side.
- ③ In a separate pan slowly fry the onion and carrot in a little olive oil for about 5 minutes, then add the double cream and bring just to the boil. Remove from the heat and add the cheese, lemon juice, mustard and parsley. Put the spinach, fish and eggs into an appropriately sized earthenware dish and mix together, pouring over the creamy vegetable sauce. The cooked potatoes should be drained and mashed – add a bit of olive oil, salt and pepper and a touch of nutmeg if you like. Spread on the top of the fish. Place in the oven for about 25-30 minutes until the potato is golden.





That's #sotalliston!

Launch of new Spirit of Talliston hashtags

In November we crowned our first Talliston Hero. Through her hard work, both volunteering and as assistant organiser for our creative groups, Sarah Wragg has made a big difference to the project – but more importantly, to us and the people she has met and friended.

To this end, we are launching a new Twitter account to celebrate just what Talliston means in the wider sense, not just as a magical place but about the spirit and passion that drives us to be our best selves (and also, the reverse!) Follow us at: #sotalliston & #sonottalliston.

Follow our countdown to completing the project on Facebook at Talliston House & Gardens or the Friends of Talliston pages.

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NEXT ISSUE ♡ SPRING 2015 ♡ 21ST MARCH 2015

TALLISTON

Friends of Talliston Rewards: For each paid-for event, guests receive one loyalty star – as do volunteers. Talliston Writers' Circle receive one star to a maximum of five. At one, five, ten, fifteen, twenty and twenty-five stars, guests receive these rewards.

