

The Portobello REPORTER

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The independent voice of Portobello

Your Community Newspaper produced by local people.

THE HOME OF THE '99'

THE '99' icecream cone with a Cadbury's 'Flake' in the top, is popular the length and breadth of the UK, but it appears that not many people know how it got its name. There is even a page on the internet on the subject with some suggestions, but the real answer may lie right here in Portobello.

When Mr Stephen Arcari opened his icecream parlour in Portobello in 1922, he also sold sweets and chocolate. He soon came up with the novel idea of a cone with half a large 'Flake' in the top and, while searching for a suitable name he decided to call it a '99', because his shop was at 99 Portobello High Street. It's as simple as that!



Photo by Brenda Molony

Mr Rudi Arcari (pictured here beside an icecream van) told us "We have no proof of this because nobody bothered in those days. We just did what we did". Other local icecream makers soon followed suit and the practice spread further afield. Then, as Mr Arcari says, "the Cadbury's rep who called for our orders must have seen what was happening and told his employers", because in 1930 Cadbury's produced the smaller 'Flake 99', especially for sale in icecream cones. The origin of '99' must have been lost along the way as their website does not explain it. It does say, however, that over 100 million 'Flake 99s' are sold each year.

Sadly, the Arcari family closed the shop in 2004, although they are still making icecream in their factory at The Wisp. We have been unable to find a photograph of the shop, so if anyone has one that shows the slogan 'Home of the 99' with the icecream cone illustration, would they please contact The Portobello Reporter on 669 3466.

Perhaps a blue plaque should be put on the building, and the signs proclaiming: Portobello – Edinburgh's Seaside changed to: Portobello – Home of the '99'!

For the other suggestions of its origins see www.phrases.org.uk and insert The 99 Icecream in the search box. Our explanation will also be included. B.M.

A NEW PIER FOR PORTOBELLO?

AROUND 200 people attended 'Imagine Portobello' in late October, including local councillors Lawrence Marshall and Maureen Child, Gavin Strang MP and Susan Deacon MSP. The objective of the event, organised by the local arts trust Big Things on the Beach, was to involve the community in thinking creatively about how the land and seascape

of Portobello could be enhanced.

The main presentation, 'Re-aPier', explored the idea of building a new pier, with an exhibition area and gallery, a walk-through simulation of the Forth river bed with illustrations of its rich sea life, and a catering facility. This would create a fantastic tourist attraction for the whole of Scotland and our MSP and MP, local councillors and others

present expressed support for an application to the Big Lottery Living Landmarks programme, for sums of between £10-25M. Our councillors are helping to attract partners for the project before the submission date of 6th January, and Councillor Marshall will host a meeting for potential partners in the City Chambers on 15th December.

Other presentations included photographs of Portobello by local photographers Lee Kindness and Alex Morrice, and a series of large-scale seascapes by David Williams, Head of Photography at Edinburgh College of Art. Honor Thomson of Musselburgh architects Wiszniewski and Thomson presented 'Pyrotechnic Peonies', featuring creative ideas for Portobello's beach and prom, and first shown at the recent '6,000 Miles' exhibition at the Lighthouse in Glasgow; artists Euan Harvey and Malcolm Hosie explained the ideas behind the windsocks on the beach; and Justin Kenrick presented 'Eco-Town', the idea of an eco-village on the former Scottish Power site.

Diana Cairns

BOTTLE KILNS SUFFERING FROM NEGLECT

THE two bottle kilns at Bridge Street are suffering from years of neglect. Both are infested with weeds and, as this picture shows, a buddleia is growing from the 1909 kiln. One of the iron straps has fallen off and has been lying on the ground for some time; another appears to be missing.



Photo by Brenda Molony

The kilns belonged to the long demolished Thistle Pottery of A W Buchan Ltd and are all that remain of the pottery industry that existed in Portobello from the 18th to the late 20th century. They are called 'bottle kilns' because of their bottle shape. Very few are still in existence in Scotland, and Historic Scotland has therefore listed them at Category B, which denotes a structure of regional importance.

The kilns are in the care of the City of Edinburgh Council's Museums Collection Centre, and Portobello Amenity Society wrote over three years ago and again more recently, expressing concern at their deterioration. On both occasions the response was that the budget was severely stretched and repairs had to be prioritised. Letters on behalf of Portobello History Society have gone unanswered.

When asked by *The Portobello Reporter* for a statement, a council representative said: "The bottle kilns are scheduled ancient monuments and protected by law. The Council appreciates their local and national historical importance. Officers are sourcing detailed estimates for restoration work required to the brickwork of the kilns and hope to be able to begin work within the next financial year's budget." PAS and the History Society will monitor the situation closely. B.M.

Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year
to all our Readers and
Advertisers

PUBLIC MEETING: PORTOBELLO INTO THE FUTURE

OVER 200 people attended a meeting organised by Portobello Community Council at the Town Hall on 12th October to discuss possible developments in Portobello. Depending on a new site being found for Power League 5-a-side, City of Edinburgh Council will sell two-thirds of the present site for housing and, as Cllr Maureen Child said in a recent newsletter, "if and when the deal goes ahead, more than the Council's 50% share will be spent on public space and community facilities in Portobello".

Clear opposition was expressed at the meeting to rumours that the 5-a-side pitches, and a new Portobello High School, could be located on Portobello Park and Golf Course. More recreational space would then be lost, in particular the football pitches used by Portobello Thistle Football Club to train and coach generations of players. Surveyors have been seen taking measurements, but Cllr Child said it was not the only option and no decisions had been made.

Stephen Hawkins, Chair of PCATS, expressed concern that proposals for a new Library and Community Centre on the remaining land, next to the burn, could tip the scale in favour of any future planning application for a superstore on the Scottish Power site, by effectively moving the centre of Portobello westwards. (In refusing the recent planning appeal, the Scottish Executive reporter indicated that a superstore might be appropriate if it were in the 'town centre').

A recent interest in this land has come from 'Sub Zero', a privately-funded project developed with professional help by pupils at Drummond Community High School. Its aims, presented by 16-year-old Ross Whitton, of providing a well-regulated youth venue with activities and jobs for young people, were well received.

Cllr Lawrence Marshall reported local feeling that the Library should stay in the centre of the community, and outlined his ideas for re-building on or near the same site. Referring to the proposed closure of Meadowbank Stadium, he said he had suggested to the Council that a new sports centre for east Edinburgh could be built on the carpark at the Indoor Bowls Centre. Maggie Le May, Community Centre manager, said her committee were not interested in moving and had plans to rebuild on-site.

Planner Rosie Leven spoke on aspects of a Scottish Executive White Paper 'Modernising the Planning System'. Instead of the third party right of appeal in planning decisions that many had hoped for, it proposes 'pre-application engagements' with the public. This could give developers further advantage, and Susan Deacon MSP said she had received many letters about this.

Winding up the discussions, Susan Deacon said that if the community decides what it wants and pursues it, she would support it all the way.

City Development is to produce a report on the way forward by the end of the year, and there will then be further opportunity for public consultation.

(A summary of responses to a questionnaire given out at the meeting can be seen at the Library).

Brenda Molony

NEW PLAY AREA



Photo by Archie Foley

A NEW play area with swings, roundabouts, a multi-activity unit and other facilities for children of varying ages and abilities was officially opened on 7th November by pupils from St John's Primary School aided by local councillor, Maureen Child. The area cost £70,000 and Councillor Child said, "We consulted local residents and it was important to talk directly to the children who would be using the park. Hopefully, we've provided a play area that will meet their requirements."

PORTY PROFILE No. 21
MAGGIE LE MAY

Maggie Le May is well known locally, especially for her work as Facilities Co-ordinator at Portobello Community Centre, a post she has held to great effect for 15 years, with her commitment resulting in a growing demand for space for a wide variety of activities.

Born in Wolverhampton, Maggie came to Edinburgh in 1979 and moved to Portobello 18 years ago.

Originally trained as a secretary, Maggie went to Maidstone Art College in Kent as a mature student, where she studied sculpture and gained a BA Hons degree in Fine Art. She has exhibited what she describes as "sculptural 3D pieces in boxes" and "lumpy drawings" at the RSA in Edinburgh, the Collective Gallery and Eastern General Hospital. Her degree course included photography, which she also enjoys and has exhibited.

Her first job in Edinburgh was for City Museums, cataloguing their collection of Buchan pottery, and she was later asked to carve a replacement lintel for the doorway to Tweedale Court in the Royal Mile. She believes her creativity is an important part of her current job.

Maggie has always been active in the community: due to the friendliness she found when taking her youngest child to St. James's Play Group, she soon got involved in the management of the group. This led on to work with the Scottish Pre-School Playgroup Association, where she trained play leaders in arts and crafts; for 10 years she helped with scenery, props and costumes for the Junior Choir productions at St. Philip's Church, starting when her daughter was a member; she was also a trustee for Evergreen and is currently a trustee of Big Things on the Beach.

This woman of many talents lives here with husband Mark and family, and says: "We love Portobello. It is such a friendly place and we felt comfortable as soon as we moved here. We have made lots of friends." In her spare time she enjoys foreign travel, camping, walking, helping Mark in the garden, crafts and entertaining.

B.M. & M.M.



Photo by Margaret Munro

KEEPING CRIME LEVELS DOWN

DURING the autumn months, criminal activity in general in the Portobello area has been low. We continue, however, to have sporadic problems with anti-social behaviour from youths congregating at various points, and to address these we have launched a Youth Action Team of six dedicated uniformed officers. They are not a task force to persecute groups of youths and hound them from one area to the next, but aim to get to know them and try to put over the concerns of the public, and persuade them to modify their behaviour and act responsibly. However, where necessary they will actively pursue and deal more strongly with those who clearly are not willing to play ball.

When the clocks go back and dark afternoons return, is historically a time when homes are most likely to be broken into. Can I ask all residents to ensure, if their home is vacant during the late afternoon or early evening, even for a short time, that it is secure, and if possible to take measures to have lights come on, to deter would-be housebreakers.

For those at home who have not closed their curtains for the night, if you see a stranger wandering in the street, paying more attention to houses than usual, give us a call on 669 0061 or, if they appear to be breaking into a house, dial 999. Hopefully these simple measures will be a deterrent and help prevent you from becoming a victim.

Insp. Norman Ward

PORTOBELLO SEASIDE CO-OPERATIVE

AUGUST 2006 will see the 20th anniversary of the formation of the company, which is still trading, although in a much smaller way. We thought this was something worth celebrating, and so are trying to contact all our 'old girls and boys' and anyone else who has worked with us over the years, particularly in the halcyon days at Portobello Swim Centre. Once we have an idea of numbers, we will get our party hats on, so please contact Stella on 669 0246 or email Muriel at m-mowat-54@hotmail.com. We look forward to seeing everyone again.

M.J-T

To contact *The Portobello Reporter* you can
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portyreporter@btinternet.com

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**NEWS
IN
BRIEF**

HOMECHECK: This brand-new free service, operated jointly by the Environmental Health Department and Care and Repair Handypersons Service, will help to prevent accidents in the home of people over 60 years of age. A Homecheck Inspector will check homes and advise on measures to reduce or eliminate hazards, such as: dangerous floor coverings, overloaded power points, faulty electric switches or sockets, poor ventilation, badly positioned furniture, safe storage of medicines and uneven steps or pathways. For a visit call 529 3030.

EDINBURGH STAIR PARTNERSHIP: Flat-owners and landlords can avoid the hassle of organising common repairs by joining the Edinburgh Stair Partnership (ESP). ESP will organise quotes and trades people, collect money and check repairs in progress, and arrange on-going maintenance of back greens and gutters, and stair cleaning. They will also give owners an annual written survey report on their tenement. All owners on a stair must join to receive a service, but only a majority vote is needed for a repair to be carried out. The cost: £58.75 p.a. per flat, plus an equal share of the cost of repairs and a 5% administration fee for work over the value of £4000. Go to www.edinburgh.gov.uk/esp or contact ESP, City of Edinburgh Council, 4 Queen Street, EH2 1JE, Tel. 529 7234, or Email to esp@edinburgh.gov.uk

DON'T BIN IT - DONATE IT! An Edinburgh Charity Map has just been launched, with details of charity shops in the city and information on the articles they can accept for re-sale. All the shops in Portobello accept textiles, shoes, books, music and bric a brac and, in addition, small items of furniture can be taken to Cancer Research and Hearing Dogs for the Deaf; Cancer Research also accept computers and printers. The map is available from Lothian and Edinburgh Enterprise Ltd on 538 7943/5381.

WANTED -VOLUNTEERS to help run Senior Social Club Coffee Mornings on Saturdays from 9.00 a.m. to noon. This valuable resource for older people in Portobello will close at Christmas without more volunteers to help run it.

To sign up - contact Maggie at Portobello Community Centre - 669 8275

FIRE STATION CLOSURES: LOTHIAN and Borders Fire Service are proposing a re-organisation to enable them to extend their fire-fighting capacity and increase community safety work. Despite concerns over proposals to close the fire stations at Marionville Road and MacDonald Road, and the formation of a campaign group, only 18 people attended the meeting arranged by Cllr Maureen Child at the Town Hall on 10th October. The Chief Fire Officer told the meeting that a new station would be opened in North Leith, to provide a more equal service across the city. He said that even if these proposals are implemented, £12.5 million more would have to be invested in the Fire and Rescue Service in Lothian and Borders.

Since then, however, the City of Edinburgh Council, which has the majority vote on Lothian and Borders Fire Board, has decided not to support the closures until a site in Leith and a timetable for the changes is confirmed.

The current plan is likely to be revised to take account of concerns raised during the recent consultation period and a final decision is expected in January.



**Gavin Strang MP
and Susan Deacon MSP
wish all their constituents a**

**Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year**

Gavin Strang MP and Susan Deacon MSP for Edinburgh East and Musselburgh hold regular interview sessions across the constituency.

For details write to

54/56 Portobello High Street, EH15 1DA

Or Telephone

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LETTERS

Hello
Re your pieces about the Police Station clean-up and the temporary relocation of the library. Did you know that the Police station was the library? I remember the library that I joined as a child and it was wonderful and atmospheric, a perfect building for that purpose

Wouldn't it be lovely to see more policemen on the street rather than just their cars on the High Street? My family is from Italy, although I was born in Portobello where we had several shops. One of them was Morga's fish and chip shop and café, which had a juke box in the 50s and 60s, and I'm sure a lot of older people will remember it. Anyhow, today in Italy police stations are always built on the edge of town while police officers are a highly visible, smiling, friendly and helpful presence on the streets.

Portobello should have had a weekly market years ago and it would bring in people from other places and help local shops. I was in Cassino in August at the weekly Saturday market and the town is always busy on that day.

Kind regards

Irene Haston (by email)

SCOUT POST

THERE is still time to hand in cards for Scout Post at the Café Lounge at Portobello Old Parish Church, Bellfield Street on December 5, 6 & 7, from 10am-2pm & 7-8.30pm. Price per card is 17p. Portobello Stationers is another drop-off point.



Radio Free Party

BORED with mainstream radio? Then tune in and turn on to Radio Free Party, Portobello's very own community internet radio station. Don't expect the Top 20, but enjoy instead a variety of musical offerings from local bands like Rosie Blue and Belle Stars, along with unlicensed music from around the world.

Recent highlights have included film soundtrack music from talented local musician Keith McDougall, and ex-Party resident David Irving reading extracts from his unpublished novel 'Kincaid', which explores the relationships between three boys growing up in Portobello and a re-opened murder case.

Broadcasting 24/7, RFP provides a free platform to anyone who wants airtime. Anything goes, whether it's music, poetry or storytelling. As station supreme Matthew Hunter explains, "if it's within the human audible range, we'll play it."

To listen, just log on to www.radiofreeparty.org where there is also further information for anyone wishing to contribute material or otherwise get involved in this exciting project.

Bob Jefferson

CAR CLUB REVS UP

CAR sharing is growing in popularity in Portobello, and another car has been placed at the Library, in addition to the one on the High Street. A third is planned for Brunstane Road, thanks to a planning condition Cllr Maureen Child persuaded the planning committee to put on the Joppa Station Place application. "This is the first such planning condition in Edinburgh, but not

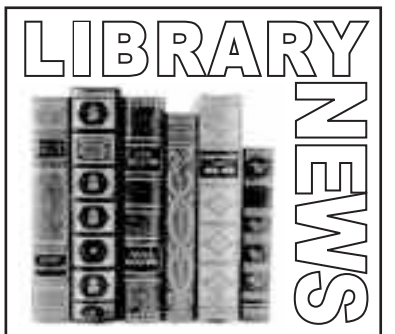
the last", she says. If you don't want the hassle of owning your own car, the city car club could be the answer. Members have access to a pool of cars and, with a membership fee of £15 per month plus reasonable hourly rates, this could be the lowest cost pay-as-you-go motoring anywhere in the UK. For more information, call 0845 330 1234 or visit www.citycarclub.co.uk

COMMUNITY GARDEN

WITH paving and planting complete, and the grass on the raised area germinating slowly, the old paddling pool site on the Prom is looking quite attractive. It is undoubtedly an improvement on what was there before, even if, due to a tight budget, it incorporates few of the ideas drawn up by a local focus group following lengthy public consultation.

It had been hoped to hold a formal opening this autumn but, as the work started later than expected, this has been postponed until next spring to give the grass more time to mature before being walked on.

By then, it is just possible that funding will have been secured from the Heritage Lottery so that three Coade Stone pillars that were formerly in the grounds of Argyle House and have lain in a council yard for many years, can be installed at the rear right-hand corner of the site; Portobello Amenity Society has made an application in collaboration with the Community Council.



THE new Entitlement Card, also called 'Edinburgh One Card' (which will give free bus travel all over Scotland from May 2006) is now being rolled out to all users of Concessionary Travel Permits in Edinburgh. If you do not have a permit, and would like to know about the scheme,

please ask at the library. Concessionary Travel is for the over-60s, blind persons of any age, and those with a disability. The use of the Entitlement Card will gradually be increased to provide library membership and many other council services, on production of just one card. Information is available at the Library and other Council venues.

There are two new reasons to come to the library for books, and very good ones. The first is a new book by Margaret Munro and Archie Foley: *Images of Scotland: Portobello and Duddingston*, published in November at £12.99, and bound to be a best-seller for Christmas. Copies are available to browse in the library.

The One City Trust is publishing *One City* - a book of stories by three Edinburgh authors (Ian Rankin, Alexander McCall Smith and Irvine Welsh). This will be sold in aid of the Trust, which aims to help combat social exclusion among Edinburgh's poorest inhabitants and will make a great Christmas present. It will be available at £5.99 in bookshops from December 10th, and copies (to borrow and to win) will be in libraries citywide. Look out for our window display.

Now that we have our upstairs rooms back, there are lots of new meetings and classes starting: Care for Carers, a local group, will meet up there from January. For young children there is a new Crafts course, and a new French course for 4-6 year olds. Baby Rhymetimes for parent and baby will be starting very soon - see our information board for dates. The book groups for adults, teenagers and children, and the Toy Library are still on their usual dates upstairs - please enquire if you would like to join. Finally, there are now three regular computer classes for beginners, and we hope to add one-off classes on specifics such as Digital Photos and E.mail in 2006. We all appreciate our automatic doors, as there is a lot more traffic in the library nowadays. We would like to finish 2005 by wishing everyone 'A Very Happy Christmas and New Year from all the Portobello Library Staff'.

Joyce Campbell

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BOOK REVIEW

IMAGES OF SCOTLAND: PORTOBELLO & DUDDINGSTON

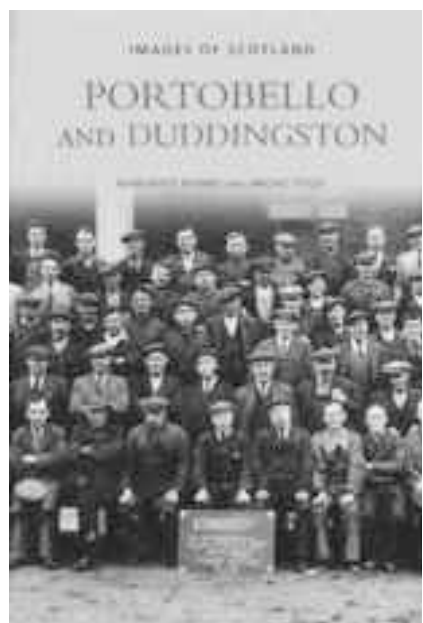
BY MARGARET MUNRO & ARCHIE FOLEY

JUST in time for Christmas, these two local historians have produced a wonderfully informative and entertaining, highly illustrated book about our community. With over 200 photographs and 20 other illustrations made over the last 150 years, it tells the history of Portobello, Duddingston and Joppa and, of course, the 'amalgamation' with Edinburgh in 1896.

The book starts in the mid-18th century when George Hamilton built Portobello House on land known as Figgate Whins (on the site of what is now 189 Portobello High Street). He offered refreshments, entertainments and refuge to travellers in an area then known for the dangers of highwaymen.

Central to the history of Portobello of course is the development of the seafront throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. All told in pictures, we see the Pier built in 1871, a massive 1250 feet long and 22 feet wide, incorporating a bar, restaurant, concert hall and camera obscura. We see the stunning Marlborough Mansions on the Promenade with tea-rooms, beach bazaar, pub and billiards (for men only) and the original Coillesdene House owned by a suffragette. We see the massive Marine Gardens site (now occupied by the bus garage and motor showrooms) with an enormous array of buildings that included a concert hall, ballroom, and motor cycle stadium, although occupied by the military in both world wars.

The two swimming pools are strongly featured. The still popular indoor pool was built as part of the deal with Edinburgh at the time of the amalgamation, and there is a recent picture of the prize-winning Portobello Water Polo team. The outdoor pool was, of course, heated by the Power Station and there are pictures and recollections of the construction, use and destruction of both these buildings.



There is speculation too about the future. Will the new building at the bottom of Bath Street be a landmark in the same way as Marlborough Mansions was? There is an illustration of ambitious plans for a new Pier drawn up in the 1930s – Will there ever be another one?

The High Street section features the Municipal Buildings, now the Police Station, Portobello Co-op and Sadie's dress shop in Joppa. There are group photos from the various schools, Portobello Burns Club, Gala Queens, Boys' Brigade and Home Guard.

Then there is an unusual collection of photos of Duddingston Village and Scotland's oldest pub, The Sheep Heid Inn, which took its name from the local delicacy that was served boiled or baked.

The authors, Margaret Munro and Archie Foley, have done a wonderful job here in putting all these images together and providing a most interesting text. The book is a perfect Christmas present at only £12.99.

Kingsley Dawson

(The book is available at Portobello Stationers, 110 Portobello High Street, Joppa News, Scotmid in Bath Street and Edinburgh bookshops.)



Archie Foley and Margaret Munro sign copies of their book *Portobello & Duddingston* at its launch in the Dalriada in November.

Photograph Peter Ross

A GRAVE ENQUIRY

PORTOBELLO History Society recently received an enquiry from Stornoway Historical Society regarding John Norrie Anderson, a former Provost of Stornoway, who died at 29 Park Avenue, Portobello in September 1925. He had retired to Portobello in 1923 with his wife Mary, but it was unclear where exactly he was buried. Portobello Cemetery on Milton Road seemed the likeliest place and, rather fortuitously, one of the society's committee members, Graham Arkless, works there. He located the grave and found the gravestone to be in good condition with a legible inscription, which he copied. It is inscribed to the memory of John Norrie Anderson, ex-Provost of Stornoway who was born on 10th October 1844 and died on 16th September 1925, his eldest son, Charles, another son John Norrie jnr and his wife, Mary (maiden surname Peake), who died on 18th March 1953.

Graham tidied the area around the grave and took several photographs with the Society's digital camera, which were despatched along with the details on the gravestone to the Stornoway society who were very grateful for our help. It is worth noting that all communication between the societies was by e-mail and there is no doubt that the digital revolution has expanded the ability of societies to respond to enquiries from anywhere in Scotland or wider afield.

MM

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Over the festive season we will be closed on Monday 26 and Tuesday 27, plus Monday 2 through Wednesday 4 January. Open as usual inbetween and after. We will be open from 8am on Christmas eve 'til 4pm.

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The Portobello Reporter is produced by a group of volunteers, with contributions in this issue from 40 members of the community. If you have a story to tell or an event to publicise call 669 3466 or email us at portyreporter@btinternet.com

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COOPERATIVE WOMEN'S GUILD

WE were interested to read Archie Foley's article on the Scottish Cooperative Women's Guild in your last edition.

The branch that meets in the Labour Rooms, 54 Portobello High Street is, in fact, the Eastern Branch, which was founded in the Abbeyhill area in 1905 under the auspices of the St. Cuthbert's Cooperative Society, now Scotmid. Portobello branch folded some years ago. In October we held our 100th Anniversary dinner in a restaurant in Edinburgh, where current members and friends were joined by past members and senior members who are less able to attend our fortnightly meetings.

We assure your female readers of a warm welcome if they wish to come along on alternate Tuesday evenings. We have an interesting range of speakers, social evenings and fund raisers and the meetings are from 7.30 pm to 9 pm.

Contact our Hon. Secretary on 669 2710 for more information.

Betti Swift

"IT ALWAYS SEEMED TO BE SUNNY" MEMORIES OF PORTOBELLO

THE video produced by Portobello History Society continues to sell, with the quality of its information and production recognised outside Portobello. Dr. Alastair Durie, who teaches History of Tourism at Stirling University, has told the Society that he intends to use it for his students for whom the time span it represents "is the very distant past".

In its DVD version the video has gone to a number of places the length and breadth of North America:

from Ontario in Canada to Georgia in the south of the USA, taking in Pennsylvania and New York, State and City, on the way; Ohio in the Mid-West and California. Most have been bought by or for people with family connections to Portobello, but one was bought by an American collector keen to know more about the home of Buchan pottery.

(The video can still be bought at Portobello Stationers, 110 Portobello High Street, price £12.99.)

OLD POTTERY PATENT ACQUIRED

THE History Society has brought a document of significant local importance back to Portobello from the USA. It is a copy of an 1874 patent application by Mr Alexander Willison Buchan, the founder of Buchan's Pottery, that obviously has been extracted from a bound register of similar documents in which it was numbered 2180. It was bought on the online auction site, eBay.

The front has the stamp of the Franklin Institute Library, which was founded in Philadelphia in 1824 specifically to house books relating to science and the useful arts and became one of the foremost institutions of its kind in the world. Among its holdings were copies of the patent applications donated by several countries, which explains how Mr Buchan's one crossed the Atlantic.

In 1985 the Institute suddenly announced the sale of nearly all its library collection, and the manner and speed with which this was done ensured that it was fragmented and dispersed far and wide. It must have been then that the bound volumes were broken up and the contents sold in bits and pieces. How many hands has our document passed through before coming home?

Graeme Cruickshank, who is an acknowledged authority on Scottish Pottery, examined

the patent application for the Society. He said, "The patent is for the invention of improvements in apparatus for shaping clay, specifically for the formation of a screw thread. This was achieved by an addition to the potter's wheel that combined both longitudinal and rotational movement, controlled by levers and pulleys. The accompanying drawing shows a screw thread being formed on the outside of a bottle and the inside of a jar. This is odd, as of the thousands of Buchan's bottles I have seen over several decades, not one has had this feature on the outside, while the jars with screw threads, which are comparatively rare, have all had it on the outside - exactly the opposite of what the patent shows.

It should be appreciated that Buchan's Pottery was very inventive, creating a number of patents and registered designs over an extended period. However, in 1874 it was not yet Buchan's Pottery but Murray and Buchan's, and by coincidence in that same year Thomas Murray, A W Buchan's main partner, also lodged a patent for a similar invention. The curious feature of them both is that they mistermmed the medium, calling it earthenware - it is, of course, stoneware."

AF

PORTOBELLO HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

ATTENDANCES at this session's meetings have continued last year's pattern of almost full houses with the committee members scurrying about to put out more chairs so that everyone is seated before the speaker gets underway.

The October meeting was a presentation entitled *Images of Portobello and Duddingston* by Margaret Munro, the Society Secretary. She used photographs not only from the Society's collection, but also those loaned for inclusion in the book of the same title, which was not then published. This meant that many of the images had never been seen in public before and they aroused a great deal of interest. The audience had been asked for information and comment as the images were shown and certainly many of them took full advantage of the invitation.

The speaker for November was also a local figure who could not be said to be entirely home grown, as he was raised in the fertile soil of East Lothian before being transplanted some years ago to Joppa. George Anderson is President of the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society and he chose *My Life in Horticulture* as the title of his presentation. In this he led us through his career from market gardens to the Royal Botanical Gardens, taking in places as diverse as Carnwath and China. With well chosen slides and some interesting stories, humorous asides and a sprinkling of gardening tips, this was a most enjoyable evening.

There will be no meeting in January and the speaker on Wednesday 1st February will be Professor H T Dickinson of the History Department at the University of Edinburgh. The title of his talk is *The Porteous Riot, Edinburgh 1736 - 1737*.

All meetings are in St John's Church Hall, Brighton Place and are open to non-members. They begin at 7 pm, but remember to come early to make sure of a seat.

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QUILTS - GLORIOUS QUILTS

THE Milton Quilters are to be congratulated on a stunning exhibition of their craft at Portobello Old Parish Church Hall on 8th October. The 170 exhibits ranged from small bags to large king-size quilts, all in beautiful colours and designs, and a special large quilt made in memory of founder-member Helen McDaid who died last year. Almost all the members had a hand in making this and it was donated to Helen's favourite charity, the Dog and Cat Home, to be raffled at their Christmas Fair on 3rd December.

Over 48 children's comfort quilts on display have been given to the charity 'Project Linus' for children who are sick or traumatised. Linus is the small boy in the 'Peanuts' comic strip who trails his comfort quilt along. The proceeds from a Raffle Quilt, Silent Auction, and entrance money to the show, a total of £1295, have been donated to Marie Curie Cancer Care.

The group meet fortnightly on Monday evenings in the Church Hall. It includes people new to quilting and some who are very accomplished. Their exhibition is held every two years. **B.M.**



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MUMS RAISE CASH FOR CHILDRENS CHARITY

AS part of national 'Yummy Mummy Week' sponsored by Honda UK, local mums and friends from Café Ba! sold raffle tickets and held a girls' night out at the Dalriada on 19th September. In the process they raised £720 for CLIC Sargent, one of the UK's leading children's charities.

Many thanks to the Dalriada for hosting the evening and providing a lovely buffet. Thanks also to the following local businesses who donated raffle prizes: Dalriada, Sizzlers, DB Studios, Body Beautiful, Flowers by Ray and Haddows, and to Inver House Distillers and Whyte and Mackay who generously donated a number of bottles of liqueur and whisky.

Café Ba! is run on a voluntary basis by Portobello Parenting Network. Based in St Philip's Church, Brunstane Road North on Mondays 1-3pm, it offers support with breastfeeding for new and expectant mums.

Alma Jones

CHRISTIAN AID CAROLS

THE annual Service of Carols and Readings, conducted by the Reverend Stewart Weaver, will be held at Portobello Old Parish Church on Sunday 11th December. The singing will be led by a choir from St John's Primary School and the service will begin at 7.30 pm.

Coffee, tea, mince pies and biscuits are on offer in the hall afterwards. Of course, this is an enjoyable evening with a purpose, as it gives us an opportunity to help suffering people elsewhere in the world. This year Christian Aid will be sending the proceeds of the collection to relieve hardship for those less fortunate than we are.

CASH FOR OLD MOBILES

HAVE you upgraded your mobile phone lately? Is your old one, or two, lying doing nothing in a drawer somewhere? Discarded mobile phones are worth £3.50 each to Christian Aid. Contact Bert McCall on 669 8040.

ACTION NEEDED POST-G8

THE Peace and Justice Committee of Portobello Council of Churches recently met local MP, Gavin Strang to raise and discuss matters of concern ahead of the World Trade Organisation meeting in China in December. There is a real need to bring pressure on G8 leaders as despite the recent mass demonstrations, they have failed to deliver on urgent action required to end extreme poverty in our generation.

Trade has the potential to lift millions out of poverty but rules governing international trade are rigged to ensure that rich countries and companies always come out on top. World trade rules rob poor countries of £1.3 billion a day, 14 times what they receive in aid!

The so-called level playing field is a myth. One side has huge advantages over the other.

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Bert McCall

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SHOP LOCALLY

HAVING succeeded in beating off a planning application for a superstore, at least for the moment, perhaps we could all follow that up by showing extra support for our local shops in the run-up to Christmas. Instead of trudging around the shops 'up-town', why not see what we can buy locally, and shop in short bursts with breaks for coffee in one of several cafes.

See what our advertisers are offering in this edition, from Kidd's Pharmacy at one end of Portobello High Street to the Fair Trade Shop at the other, as well as all the other shops along the way. As you take your leisurely stroll, you'll find shops offering toiletries and cosmetics and, a wide range of other gifts, cards and wrapping paper, ladies fashions and beauty treatments.

Buy your Christmas turkey and all the trimmings at one of our excellent butchers and greengrocers, and your favourite drinks from any number of shops, and if you feel like a break from slaving over a hot stove, local hotels and restaurants will be pleased to oblige. Get your cakes, mince pies and puddings, or the ingredients to make your own - there is still time! And to ward off starvation, stock up on some fancy cheeses and other delicacies.

Now sit back and relax - It's all taken care of! Happy Christmas from us all at *The Portobello Reporter*.

WHAT'S ON

DEC:
A FUN PANTO 'No Room at Baldy Towers' by Portobello Old Parish Church's young Performing Arts Group: Sat. 10th, 7pm, tickets £5/£2.50; Sun. 11th, 5pm & Sun. 18th, 12.30pm - donations only, for a children's charity.

JAN:
BURNS SUPPER for Christian Aid: Sat. 21st, 7pm, Old Parish Church Hall, Bellfield St. Tickets £12. Call 669 9363.

PORTOBELLO BURNS CLUB
Burns Supper: Fri, 27th, Woodside Hotel, Musselburgh. For tickets call 669 4238.

TOWN HALL - DEC:
CONCERT: Duddingston Area Schools String Orchestra, Mon. 5th, 7.30pm.

FLORAL ART Club Open Meeting with Christmas demonstrations, Wed. 7th, 7.30pm.

JUMBLE SALE for Inverleith Swimming Club, Sat. 10th, 2-4pm.
CHRISTMAS PARTY with 'Ignition' & 'The Monuments', Sat. 17th, 7pm. Bar & buffet. Tickets £10 from tel. 07899 880305.

PRIMARY PUPILS CAROLS:
Primary school pupils will sing carols on the steps of the Town Hall on Friday Dec. 16th: St. John's from 10-10.30am; Duddingston 10.45-11.15; Towerbank 11.30-12noon.

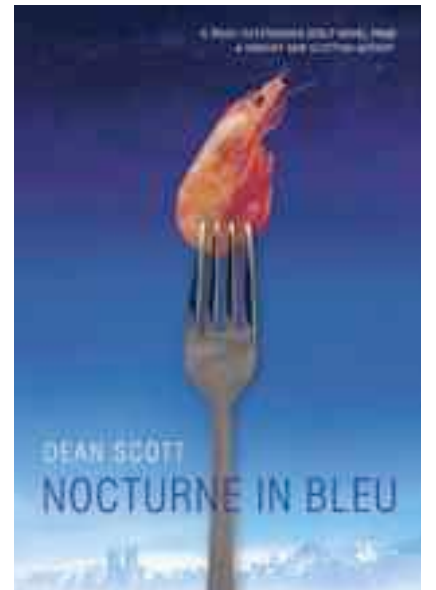
NOCTURNE IN BLEU. A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS?

LOCAL playwright Dean Scott will see his first novel *Nocturne In Bleu*, published by Lipstick Publishing, on the shelves in time for Christmas.

27-year-old Dean from Northfield got his inspiration for the novel from personal experience: "I have been inside a lot of kitchens!" he explained.

The story follows top chef Charlotte Brown as she copes with the pressures of life at the top and her battle with her addictions and obsessions. It deals with many of the modern themes and challenges faced by us all, but more acutely by the ambitious, and whilst dealing with drugs, sex and violence Dean insists "the book neither condones nor condemns them. They are simply part of life. The only opinion fixed in this book is about great restaurant cooking!" Restaurateur Jean-Michel Gauffre says of *Nocturne In Bleu*: "A whirlwind novel which kept me interested all the way through".

Dean is working on his next novel which, by contrast, is about vampires and is set around Scotland's "botched" attempt to colonise Darien, Central America, now called Panama.



Peter Ross

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41st BBs CELEBRATIONS

THE 41st Edinburgh Boys' Brigade Company was re-formed at Duddingston Kirk on 8th October 1964, having previously disbanded in the Pleasance. On 8th October 2005 the Company celebrated 41 years at Duddingston with a trip to Alton Towers Theme Park in Staffordshire. A bus full of Boys and staff had an enjoyable day despite the rain.

The Company meets at Duddingston Kirk Church Hall, with Anchors on Thursday nights and Juniors and Company Section on Fridays. It is one of the largest and most dynamic Companies in Edinburgh and continues to provide Boys with opportunities to learn, develop and challenge themselves.

To celebrate our 41 years a number of events are also planned throughout this session, including a commemorative church service, an all-sections display, a family barbeque and lots of fundraising activities. The year ends on a high for the Company Section with an adventure holiday in the south of France next August.

We are organising a reunion dinner for former Boys and Officers at The Quayside in Musselburgh on Saturday 6th May 2006 and we would be delighted to hear from anyone who served in the Company over the last 41 years. For further details call 0131 620 1242.

Alan Meikle, Capt.

PRIMARY PUPILS PETITION PARLIAMENT



Photo by Peter Ross

SUSAN Deacon MSP and her colleague Cara Duncan came to the Royal High Primary School in August for presentations by our Nutrition Action Group and Sports Action Group. P7a and P7b split into two groups to complain about the lack of sports equipment and tasty, filling school dinners. The presentations took about a month to make and about an hour to show. We were given great praise for them and we hope we've made a difference.

Our efforts paid off, and our presentations were also given to the Scottish Parliament on November 9th. They may even be thinking of re-opening the kitchen in the dining hall.

Andrew & Martin.(P7)

KIDS GET THEIR GOATS

INSPIRED by Christian Aid's 'Goat for It' project, the children of St Mark's Episcopal Church Sunday School decided to raise money to buy the gift of a goat for a family in Bolivia. They decorated and sold cakes at the after-service tea and coffee over the weeks, and this proved so successful that it was clear that there would be money for more than one goat. The congregation was so impressed by the efforts of the little band of young children that they decided to join in and dedicated the proceeds of the Harvest Lunch to the cause. Soon one goat became a herd. They will be given to a family who will benefit from milk they can drink and sell and from manure for their fields. When the goats have kids they are given back so another family can benefit.

Details of this and other similar gifts that last are in Christian Aid's Present Aid Catalogue. Call 0845 3300 500 or visit www.presentaid.org.uk.

LM

GREEN ECO FLAG FOR ROYAL HIGH PRIMARY

IN September we had two special guests at our Eco Assembly. They were Mr Roy Jobson, Director of Children and Families and Mr Jamie Pearson, an Environmental Education Officer. Mr Jobson talked to us about how our Eco journey had such an impact on the whole world. After that we sang 'The Together Song' and then the oldest pupil, Sana and the youngest pupil, Seamus accepted the Green Eco Flag from Mr Pearson.

Next, Jamie Delaney, a member of our Eco Board recited our Eco Code: "We at the Royal High Primary promise to Reduce - Reuse - Recycle - Switch Off - Bin It! And are dedicated to a clean, healthy, attractive and caring environment for our whole community."

We sang our school song 'Vivat Schola Regia' in Latin and then a piper led us all to the front of the school where the Green Flag was hoisted up the flag pole. It was a wonderful moment! Do you care about your local environment?

Alexander Cuthbert, P6b

PUPIL LIBRARY BACK IN BUSINESS

ON Friday 30th September the Towerbank School library was re-opened, looking better than ever! The opening day included story telling, singing and lots of fun.

The many guests included Peter Lloyd and Mel Wilson from Portobello Library. Peter Lloyd said he wished he had a library when he was at school and Mel Wilson told us that she thinks our library is great and has a fabulous selection of books.

The day was a great experience for all the pupils, who would like to say a huge 'thank you' to all who made it possible. The library will be enjoyed for many years to come.

Lewis Jepson & Mark Wilson P7c

BUSY TIME FOR 'PORTY PLANETEERS'

THE Environment Group at Portobello High School have been very busy this year: we resurrected the school allotment with the help of some enthusiastic pupils and are preparing for a second sale of plants grown from seed or plugs and cuttings, by the 'Porty Planeteers' in the 8th floor greenhouse. The last sale raised over £150 which was spent on materials for raised beds at the allotment, the produce of which we gave to the Home Economics Department.

We received £750 in generous donations from the Community Council, local businesses The Mortgage People and Woodwares, plus £100 from an Artwork sale in the Alternative Education Base and over £4000 from the Lottery 'Awards for All'. This enabled us to buy eight benches for the covered part of the playground, a bench to accommodate a wheelchair and planters for the playground and school entrance; soon we will improve and plant the small garden area. The Royal Botanic Gardens generously donated compost for the planters and the allotment.

At the end of the Summer Term, staff and pupils made a pebble mosaic to replace endless concrete slabs, painted fantastic murals, and put together four frames of clay masks made in the Art Department.

The school recently achieved a second Eco-flag, the only secondary school to have done so, and is working towards a third.

PHS Environment Group



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www.buynothingchristmas.org
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Eilidh Bateman

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COMMUNITY CENTRE NEWS

THE Management Committee of Portobello Community Centre are moving forward with plans for the building. Initially we will look at the redesign of the entrance and some refurbishment, but also intend to start fundraising to rebuild on site and hope the community in Portobello will support this endeavour. Anyone who is interested in helping us with fundraising will be very welcome.

Having been keen to make the Community Centre accessible to all ages, we believe that the work done by Brian Greatorex, Youth Worker, in helping support the youth in the community, who in turn support the Community Centre, exemplifies what can be done. There are now four youth groups using the Centre throughout the week, the constraints being lack of spaces larger than the Youth Lounge for the number of young people coming along.

The Centre users range from babies to people in their late 90's, who can now use the premises in comfort since a new heating boiler has been installed by City of Edinburgh Property Services.

To find out more about what goes on at the Centre contact Maggie on 669 8275, e-mail maggie@portobello.cc or look on our website www.portobello.cc (if you can't use a computer, come to our drop-in sessions on a Thursday afternoon, 1-4.00 pm, and learn how) or call in any morning except Wednesday when Maggie is usually in the office.

PS: We are looking for people to help run the Senior Social Club on a Saturday - this group for elderly people will fold if we cannot find some new helpers!

POD PLANS FOR 2006

SINCE the success of the third annual 'Porty Party' held this summer on the promenade, Portobello Open Door have been meeting to plan future artistic events in the area.

They will host the beach party again next year, bringing together local and international talent at Edinburgh Festival time. In the past, acts have come from all over the world as well as on the doorstep, performing to crowds, both young and old.

They are also considering a film night with hotdogs and popcorn, a pantomime, a bonfire event with floating lanterns and a Chinese dragon, and a recreation of Victorian Portobello, when local shopkeepers could dress in period costume and decorate their windows; there would be a Punch and Judy show, a sandcastle competition, donkey rides and deck chairs on the beach.

Joe Madden, POD convener, outlines his vision for POD in the coming year: "I want to see Portobello recognised as a place where all ages and cultures feel comfortable." He believes that, through hosting different entertainments, a feeling of respect can be generated between them. "When people have the opportunity to meet at venues which are open and welcoming, any barriers often evaporate." E.B.

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MARCONA

AS readers may be aware, Mike and I open our garden each year on behalf of HDRA, the organic association. I know from experience that the name takes some explaining and this article is too short to explain where the name Henry Doubleday came from and its relation to Lawrence Hills and comfrey! If interested you could go to the website www.hdra.org which has lots of helpful advice. The charity has decided to rename itself Garden Organic which I think helps clarify what it does, which includes organic horticultural expertise, research pedigree, education, demonstration gardens, membership and a practical focus.



with Susan Burns

Every year members of Garden Organic are invited to do experiments and report back their findings, so I tried a trial of GM-free soya beans. It was quite successful, not enough to use, but I felt it was more important to see how hardy they'd be this far north.

It seems an odd time to discuss weed control, but if you can get them out over the winter there will be less in spring; choose a nice day and it's a pleasure. I use a number of different tools: an old kitchen knife to cut off underground as far as possible the likes of dandelion or docks, a long-handled tool with a claw at the end for loosening tamped down soil, a hot-air gun for very small weeds on paths or gravel. The last two are helpful for people who can't bend too much. I use my hands as much as possible and, having watched a cow eating grass, try to emulate its tongue when pulling annual weeds like chickweed. It's helpful too to recognise the tugability of different weeds so that you can save your effort for the tougher ones.

Order seeds now and get ready for the activity of spring. Every year I fully intend to wash all pots and containers for spring sowing before Christmas, but find I'm having to wash them immediately before sowing, I'm determined to do it this year, using an environmentally sound washing-up liquid. One job I do concentrate on is thoroughly cleaning the greenhouse, as I value the crops so much and do not want a build-up of pests or diseases. If you've cleared tomatoes away and still have growbags/containers with soil in, try sowing winter lettuce or annuals like marigolds for early flowers.

Consider a vegetable box, even if you grow your own vegetables and/or fruit, as you sometimes need extra, particularly in the winter when there is not so much going on. You can find local suppliers under Organic Foods in Yellow Pages.

STAR PUPIL TO VISIT SPACE CAMP

HANNAH McDiarmid, a fifth year pupil at Portobello High School, has won a place at Scotland's Space School.

In January she will travel to Houston, Texas to visit the NASA space camp as part of a Careers Scotland initiative backed by the Scottish Executive.

Each year 25 students from schools across Scotland are selected because of their achievements in scientific subjects such as physics. The students have to submit a number of essays and assignments to be in with a chance of making the trip.

Hannah will be one of those talented pupils setting off for NASA in early 2006. "I'm really excited about going and seeing around the place", she said. "I'd quite like to study science at university and I think this is a once in a lifetime opportunity." E.B.



Photo by Eilidh Bateman

JOPPA TENNIS

THIS has been another successful season for the Tennis Club. Family Memberships have risen to over 70 and many others 'Played and Paid' during the summer holidays.

A 'Play Tennis' day was held in June, and junior tournaments took place in the summer, thanks to David Schofield, Benny Dawson and David Grieg, who managed the courts during the holidays. Along with Kyle Bryceland, they also won the Edinburgh Schools Tennis Championships at the Meadows; all are senior pupils at Portobello High.

Our next big problem is the perilous state of the clubhouse. Chris Cowie has costed some ideas for improvements, and the whole funding issue is under discussion by the committee.

The club depends on the volunteers on the committee and we desperately need new blood, so come and join us and help Portobello find the next Andrew Murray.

M.T.

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