

The Portobello REPORTER

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The independent voice of Portobello

Your Community Newspaper produced by local people.

BIG THINGS ON THE BEACH

INSPIRED BY sculptures on beaches as far away as Sidney Australia, and as close to home as Skye, 'Big Things on the Beach' is a new public arts trust set up by local residents who want to develop the Portobello beachfront to promote the enjoyment of public art.

This year, Big Things has funding from the Scottish Arts Council and the City of Edinburgh Council, to employ an artist to work in Portobello, to produce a new work of art for exhibition during August.

In partnership with the Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop, Big Things have selected Renny Nisbet, who grew up in Portobello, as the Artist in Residence for 2004. Many of his recent sculptures focus on the tides, and he is interested in developing a similar idea for Portobello.

Renny will consult local people about their views throughout the project. There will also be a programme of workshops and opportunities to meet the artist.

Big Things hope that there will be enough interest to justify permanent as well as temporary sculptures in the future, which will contribute to the revitalisation of the area. Big Things will be out and about on the Prom in July and August, asking people for their views on ways to use this space in a creative and attractive way.

For further details of events organised by Big Things on the Beach, visit the website www.bigthingsonthebeach.org.uk. Please e-mail comments to bigthings@f2s.com

Bob Stead,
Big Things on the Beach

PRESTIGIOUS AWARD FOR LOCAL AUTHOR

LOCAL AUTHOR, Louisa Waugh, has won the Royal Society of Literature's inaugural Ondaatje Prize, founded by philanthropist and adventure Christopher Ondaatje. At the award dinner in London on 18th May, Louisa received the award of £10,000 for her first book *Hearing Birds Fly*, an account of a year living and teaching in a remote Mongolian village. Richard Holmes, the literary biographer, who chaired the panel of judges, that also included the novelist Beryl Bainbridge, praised the book's "glorious sequences of prose".

Louisa actually spent three years in Mongolia living as part of the community in order to create "an intimate portrait of a remote community". She wanted to tell of the "constant, unrelenting struggle" that life there really was, rather than to create a sentimental picture of a disappearing way of life.

She was one of six shortlisted for the award, for which authors had to take their readers on a journey and create a particular atmosphere that would remain long after they had finished the book. On winning the award, Louisa said: "I'm absolutely delighted. The others had all written books before and I didn't think I had a chance. The money will enable me to do what I want to do more than anything - write a book on human trafficking - and that will involve a lot more travelling".

The book has already proved to be popular reading at Portobello Library, where library officer Lindsay Souter, in an on-line review, wrote that it was a "book probably better experienced than explained."

Louisa, who was born in Berlin and grew up in Liverpool, moved to Portobello three years ago. She has also written travel articles for *The Independent* and *The Guardian*.

Margaret Munro



Photo by Peter Ross

DEVELOPERS APPEAL TO SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

IN A surprise move, developers Duddingston House Properties have appealed to the Scottish Executive over the Council's delay in determining their planning application for a superstore on the Scottish Power site. Although the Planning Committee are expected to consider a report on the application in mid-to late June, there is now likely to be a public inquiry in the early autumn. The views of objectors will be considered along with those of the Planning Committee and elected members, but Cllr Maureen Child, who sits on the committee, said: "I'm very disappointed that this decision will no longer be taken by locally elected members".

Meanwhile the Campaign Against The Superstore continues, and the group has produced evidence that the resulting increase in traffic would lead to gridlock in the area. Chairman of CATS, Dickie Alexander stated: "The traffic figures submitted by the developers looked surprisingly low. We commissioned our own study and the results were extremely disturbing, showing that junctions along Portobello High Street cannot cope with existing traffic at many times of the day. Extrapolating present figures to 2006 (when the superstore would open), coupled with the resulting extra traffic, indicates that there would be a very serious problem, bringing the neighbourhood to a grinding halt, and creating an environmental and social nightmare".

Many people are concerned that, while a developer can appeal to the Secretary of State if an planning application is refused, individuals or communities cannot appeal if an application is granted that is contrary to the local good. There is therefore a growing demand for a Third Party Right of Appeal and the good news is that, although it comes too late to help in this instance, the Minister for Communities, Margaret Curran MSP, recently announced the publication of two major consultation documents on the future of Scotland's Planning System: 'Rights of Appeal in the Planning System' and 'Making Planning Development Plans Deliver'. Both are available on www.scotland.gov.uk and the consultation period runs until 30th July. She has also published the first National Planning Framework for Scotland.

Susan Deacon MSP, who strongly supports the campaign, told us: "I have regularly raised concerns with Ministers about aspects of the current planning system in Scotland. I am pleased that the Minister has recently published two major consultations on this issue ... I hope all those with an interest in this issue will take this opportunity to make their views heard".

B.M.

B.M.

SUMMER FUN WITH POD

PORTOBELLO Open Door (POD) apologises to anyone who came along to the Town Hall for their Spring Ceilidh on 23 April; this was unfortunately cancelled due to shortage of time, and lack of volunteers. They're all on course for the following summer events, however, but volunteers and new POD members/helpers, are always needed:

POD SUMMER CABARET- Portobello Town Hall, Saturday 21st

August from 8pm-12pm (doors open 7.30). Tickets £7 /£4 concessions are available on the night or from Kitcheners Deli, Portobello High Street.

Come and Party in Porty! A diverse feast of music, song, comedy, and dance featuring artists from the world festival circuit as well as major local talent.

PORTOBELLO BEACH BASH - Sunday 22nd August from 2pm, at the 'Cake Stand' Site, Straiton

Place. Live music, dancing, buskers and street performers. Be there! Bring your own donkey! Portobello Open Door AGM will be held on Saturday 4th September from 4 - 6pm in Portobello Community Centre, Adelphi Grove. All Welcome.

See the POD website www.the-pod.org or contact info@the-pod.org

TOWERBANK NURSERY GETS GLOWING REPORT

Happy young gardeners at Towerbank Nursery School.

ALL ASPECTS of activity at Towerbank Nursery were assessed as 'very good' after a full day's joint visit in April by the Care Commission and HM Education Inspectors.

This is the highest praise possible and is a tribute to the school's management team and staff. The inspectors' report was one of the best the Council has every seen.

NEW SCHOOL BUILDING PLANS

A FURTHER eight new schools are to be built across Edinburgh through the Council's Smart Schools initiative, including Holy Rood High School on this side of the city, where the premises were considered to be insecure, not easy to manage and unfit for purpose. The school is also unable to meet its district catchment demand for places. Portobello High School, however, will not be included in this second phase of the public-private partnership method of funding new schools, scoring far fewer priority points, on the same objective criteria, than Holyrood despite major problems, particularly in the tower block. Dr Andrew Fraser, Chair of the School Board told us: "The High School Board is disappointed that the school was not selected for rebuilding under current plans. We

will continue to press the Council to show their commitment and invest for our children's education, both now and in the future."

At Towerbank Primary, the sale of the Annexe in Bath Street is expected to fund an extension of the main school building, as part of the Smart Schools programme, to enable all pupils and nursery children to be accommodated on one site. This has been a long-standing ambition of the school, which now tends to have three classes at every stage.

The Council is also consulting parents and the community on the possibility of amalgamating Brunstane and Lismore Primary Schools, both of which are less than half full, in a refurbished and extended school, which could be built on either site, as both are considered to be suitable.

Photo by Peter Ross

PORTY PROFILE No. 17 ERIC WISHART

ALTHOUGH a Porty Person for many years, Eric Wishart was born in Dumfries and brought up in Annandale, in sight of Birrenswark, the flat-topped Roman camp just to the south of Lockerbie and, he says, "in sight of key childhood landmarks of the woods of Rammerscales and Jo Graham's Monument. Take away these and I might forget who I am".

He attended Dumfries Academy, as did his wife Anne, then continued his education and passed his chartered accountancy exams in the practice of "a remarkable person, D M Vaughan" who looked after the affairs of writers, artists, academics and charitable organisations. Eric has continued in this vein ever since, in his "spare time", auditing the accounts of groups as diverse as Portobello Amenity Society and the Society of Scottish Artists, and acting as Company Secretary of the Portobello Reporter Group, where he gives sound advice and is a fount of useful information.

Eric's connections with *The Reporter* began in the 1980s when he met founder member Paddy Ross and accountant and treasurer John Danzig. That led to his employment with a bigger CA firm where he still works.

In the mid-80s "to keep in touch with the arts", Eric guided the embryonic Scottish Poetry Library through its application for Lottery funding for its fine new building in Crichton's Close, Canongate. "It says such a lot of a nation and the noble spirits of the time that such a place could be created", he says. "You are invited to go and see for yourselves".

Then, to get away from it all, in June and July it's "Mendelssohn on Mull at Tobermory, to support and enjoy young master string players, with a high spot at Iona".

Eric is a keen cyclist, often to be seen riding around Portobello. "Present pleasures", he says "are the 'passagiato' of the Promenade – and I hand it to our esteemed Californian professor of the antiquities, Gary Dickson, to have chosen the most apposite Italian word – whether on foot or by bike: here you slow down and converse with your neighbour".

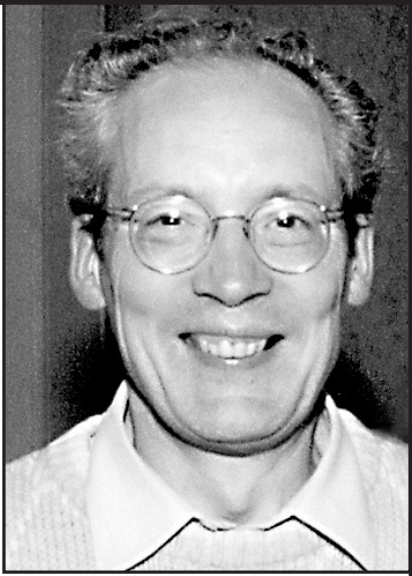
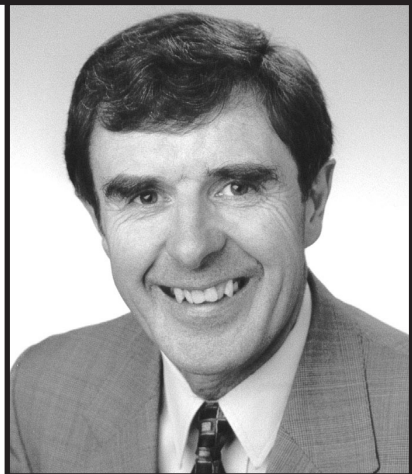


Photo by Peter Ross

GAVIN STRANG, MP is available to meet constituents on the second Friday of the month at

YWCA,
198 Restalrig Road South
between 11.00am and noon
and

PORTOBELLO TOWN HALL between 7.30pm and 8.30pm.



He is also available on the last Saturday of the month at
BRUNTON HALL between 9am and 10am and
COMMUNITY CENTRE, 63 Niddrie Mains Terrace
between 10.30am and 11.30am

You may also make an appointment to discuss a problem or raise an issue with Gavin Strang: Please phone **669 6002** or write to

Gavin Strang MP
Constituency Office
54 Portobello High Street,
Edinburgh EH15 1DA

or e-mail him at: gillana@parliament.uk
You can also visit his website: www.gavinstrangmp.co.uk

BUS PRIORITY SCHEMES PROPOSED

THE Council is planning more than £14 million worth of improvements to deal with traffic congestion over the next two years in three areas of increasing employment, shopping and leisure in the city.

In East Edinburgh that means Fort Kinnaird and the area around the New Royal Infirmary, and to tackle some of the problems of getting to and from these places by bus, bus priority measures are proposed. A number of buses serving these areas travel along the approaches to the Milton Link and Duddingston Park roundabouts and the stretch of Milton Road that separates them, including the 44/44A, 5, 12, 45, 32 and 49. Bus lanes are therefore proposed on Milton Road and the Duddingston Park approaches from north and south. The roundabouts on Milton Road, at Milton Link and Duddingston Park would be replaced by traffic signals and pedestrian crossings would be upgraded.

Plans are also under way to replace the roundabout at Kings Road with traffic lights and install bus priority measures.

EVER GREEN CLOSES

EVER GREEN, the community shop on Portobello High Street, closed at the end of May. For five years, in addition to charity trading, it has been a presence for arts, ecology and social justice and a contact point for people with similar interests.

Ever Green is managed by a board of trustees and has done all its work through volunteers. No-one has earned money from it. Trust Secretary Janet Fenton says: "We believe we have demonstrated that it meets needs in the community,

but it can no longer open five days a week on a completely volunteer basis. It has been operating very effectively, but we know we cannot maintain that".

The group has lots of ideas through which Ever Green can continue as a focus in the community – music, arts workshops, exhibitions, outside catering, but this will need the involvement of new people. Anyone interested should contact the convener, Alastair Cameron, on 669 5129.

MIDNIGHT LEAGUE SCORES A SUCCESS

WITH Scotland's national game in disarray, and the problems associated with youths hanging around on the streets, a recent football programme attempted to address both problems. For nine weeks this spring, children aged between 12 and 16 competed at the Portobello Pitz 5-a-side football pitches in the Midnight League, a national scheme sponsored by the Bank of Scotland and run by staff from the Scottish Football Association and Lothian and Borders Police, to offer free football to this age-group.

Up to 90 children attended each week, all looking forward to showing off their 'silky skills'. The benefits were clear – giving youths something else to do on a Friday evening, and promoting fitness and team building.

The Bank of Scotland provided the pitches, footballs, bibs and trophies. Alan White and Stuart Grieves from the SFA and an officer from Portobello Police Station kept a watchful eye on the games, looking for the next Kenny Dalglish, and ensuring fair play.

The enthusiasm of the players was first rate and positive feedback was received from parents. Given the success of the scheme, we hope a similar one can be put in place in the school holidays.

Two teams from the Portobello League, Pirello United and Porto Rovers play in the national finals at Dunfermline's East End Park in June, when teams from other Midnight Leagues throughout the country compete for the title of National Champion in front of some of Scotland's footballing VIPs.

P.C. Barry Mercer, Portobello Police



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NEWS IN BRIEF

THE 'SEAFIELD STENCH': The Parliament's Environment and Rural Affairs Committee, in response to representations from Susan Deacon and two other MSPs with similar local problems, has backed a call for a change in the legislation on odour emissions and is now pursuing the matter with the Minister. The Sheriff Court recently ruled against an appeal from Scottish Water, and sewage plant operators Stirling Water, challenging Edinburgh Council's Statutory Abatement Notice served on the Seafield Plant last year and the results are awaited of independent research into the causes – and solutions – of the odours.

PLANNING AN ACTIVE RETIREMENT? U3A Edinburgh is an organisation for retired people which offers opportunities to enjoy a variety of learning and leisure activities covering a wide range of interests. There are also monthly meetings with visiting speakers, reasonably priced monthly lunches and a selection of interest outings every month from May to September. For more information, contact Teresa Clark on 337 2922 or see www.myedinburgh.org/u3a

BLOOD DONOR SESSIONS, Town Hall, Monday 19th July, 2.30-4.30 and 5.30-7.30pm. New donors urgently needed.

WICKED WORLD TOUR: The WWT travellers are on the final leg of this year's world tour. Having visited the Americas, Asia, Australasia and the Pacific already this year Patrick, Ali and their fellow adventurers are continuing their exploration in South Africa. Further details of their experiences in the next issue of *The Reporter*.

On Friday 11th June at 7.30pm **MUSIC ON A SUMMER EVENING**, an informal evening with entertainment by Portobello High School Music Department, will take place in Portobello Old Parish Church Halls and Garden, Bellfield Street. Tickets: adults £5, U-16 £2.50, including refreshments. (For more information call 669 2425).



Portobello online, your local community website, has recently re-launched its own 'What's On' guide. If you are planning a local event, and want to tell the world about it, just e-mail the details to portyevents@blueyonder.co.uk and it will be included.

FAIR TRADE CITY

EDINBURGH achieved 'Fairtrade City' status in March in recognition of a commitment to Fairtrade and the number of outlets where these products are sold. Our own Just World Shop at 54 Portobello High Street, which sells a wide range of products, is listed in the accompanying brochure, and Portobello was well represented at the launch at the Film House, by Susan Deacon MSP, Gavin Strang MP and local people.

Portobello has been at the forefront of fair trade for some time and local councillor Maureen Child, who promoted the initiative to the Council, says: "It's great to see this becoming so successful, with a sales increase of 43% last year. We now have to develop further and build on this success in future years - and I'm sure we will".

The range of products, now also stocked by Scotmid in Bath Street, includes coffee, tea, chocolate, cocoa, sugar, fruit juices, bananas and more.

The Fairtrade system ensures that farmers and producers in developing countries are paid a guaranteed fair price for their produce, enabling them to invest for the future for their families and communities. For more information see www.fairtrade.org.uk and www.tradecraft.co.uk

TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES PROPOSED

THE COUNCIL has allocated some £2m in the financial year 2005/6 to begin to implement Labour's manifesto promise to introduce 20 mph zones in "appropriate" residential areas. As a recent Council report pointed out, such zones "are, in the right circumstances, a major opportunity for accident reduction", but they have to be enforced by speed ramps since advisory 20 mph speed limits (e.g. in Magdalene) have been largely ignored.

It is estimated that traffic calming will at least halve the current number of accident injuries. Records over the past five years were used to determine where these zones would be of most benefit, and Portobello, north of the High Street and east of the Figgate Burn, was ranked ninth on a list of 73 areas.

Cllr Lawrence Marshall has some concerns, however: "Courtyards such as Rathbone Place and cul-de-sacs such as Bath Place are probably not the most appropriate locations", he says. "And Mount Lodge Place and Windsor Place, for instance, are not on the list, yet are more subject to through traffic, posing a danger to young and old. Regent Street and Marlborough Street also seemed odd choices at first, but officials argue that high levels of parking, while reducing traffic speed, also increase the risk of injury to those crossing between vehicles".

As other councillors had similar concerns in their areas, Cllr Marshall has secured a consultation process with Local Development Committees and Community Councils, which will also address concerns over design in Conservation Areas. "Hopefully, as a result, we will end up with schemes positively supported by local people and which will also achieve the best results in terms of accident reductions for the money spent", he said.

PROMENADE IMPROVEMENTS

ANYONE walking along Portobello Promenade may have noticed that the installation of attractive new bollards and railings to replace the old rusty railings has now been completed all the way along. At the moment, they are set into black tarmac, but it is hoped that this will be given a special red coating during the summer. Lockable gates are to be placed at the Joppa and Kings Road ends of the Prom, as well as at John Street and Pittville Street, with access restricted to authorised vehicles. This should greatly reduce the number of vehicles using the Promenade.

Trees have been planted by the burn at Harbour Road in place of the ugly concrete plinth, and the area around the toilets at Pipe Street has been re-surfaced. Some provision for skate-boarding is planned for that area and picnic benches will be placed on the nearby grassy patch.

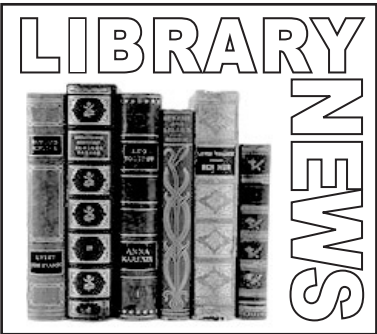
With the new seats and litter bins already in place, the appearance of the area is greatly improved, although the big job still to be done is the repair and resurfacing of the Promenade itself.

The project was implemented by the Portobello Working Group, comprised of members of Council departments, Portobello Amenity Society and Community Council, and local councillors.

The deadline for your contributions to the Autumn Issue of The Portobello Reporter is 10th Aug 2004

WEEKENDS IN THE LIBRARY -

Not just a lovely dream; extended opening hours are coming to Portobello this summer and several new library assistants are training now to help. The library will be open all day, until 5pm, on Saturdays, and from 1 till 5 on Sundays. Lots of new books (fiction) have been bought to boost the service, and the computers and internet, weekend newspapers, and Community Room bookings, will also be available. As soon as the launch date is known, it will be displayed in the library and on community notice boards.



READING ROLLERCOASTER -

Every summer holidays the Library runs a reading scheme for children, and this year the theme is "Reading Rollercoaster". This is a great one for Portobello - we can do rollercoaster murals, ghost train spooky stories, and a special "End of the Pier" street and carnival games party. Children can collect a card from the library at the beginning of the holidays, read their way through lots of lovely new books to enter the prize draw, and get free tickets for four special events. Library staff will be visiting local schools just before the summer term ends, to tell the children all about it.

EXTRA SERVICES -

Do you know of anyone stuck at home, who misses their reading? Our free home delivery service for housebound readers has a few spaces available. The library prepares a basket of books (to the customer's preferences) once a fortnight, which is delivered by a driver and assistant in partnership with the WRVS. Please telephone the Library Officer on 529 5558, or visit Portobello Library, for more details.

COMMUNITY POSTERS -

We now have a special new area for posters beside the counter and we hope local groups will make use of this free 'do it yourself' display area. The entrance hall is to be cleaned and tidied, including the glass areas, and a pinboard installed, as part of the refurbishment.

DISABLED ACCESS -

We are looking forward to getting our automatic entrance doors, new public toilets, and lift to the first floor, by the autumn.

PORTOBELLO AMENITY SOCIETY Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 23rd June at 7.30pm at St Mark's Church, Portobello High Street. All welcome.

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A PORTOBELLO WALK WITH A PURPOSE

THERE are now seven buildings in Portobello and Joppa bearing blue commemorative plaques erected by the Community Council and Portobello Amenity Society. Now that summer is with us why not make the time to go out and look at them as part of a pleasant and informative walk that would also take in the rich variety of architecture presented by the houses in our locality?

Start among the middle class villas and cottages of Rosefield.

1. The first plaque is on the wall of number 9 Rosefield Place. This was the house in which Sir William Russell Flint, the famed watercolour artist spent his youth. Before the Vetriciano phenomenon prints of Flint's paintings were consistently in the best-sellers list.

Leave Rosefield Place by crossing the bridge over the Figgate Burn and walk via Adelphi Place, where the houses are terraced brick cottages built for the workers in the industries sited west of the burn, to the High Street.

2. There is a plaque over the doorway at number 80 Portobello High Street, between the café and the bookmaker's shop, to the celebrated geologist and writer, Hugh Miller.

Stay on the north side of the High Street and walk eastwards to the splendid Scotch baronial Police Station building.

3. The building was commissioned by Portobello



Rock Cottage, the oldest occupied dwelling in the area.

Burgh Council and the plaque commemorates its use as the town hall and burgh offices from 1878 to 1896 when the amalgamation with Edinburgh took place.

Cross to the south side of the street and go east to Portobello Baptist Church, which is now shorn of its distinctive clock.

4. This building was purpose built in 1868 to be Portobello's first town hall and municipal chambers. The plaque records its use up to 1878 but this period was beset with quarrels and litigation between the council and its landlords.

Now, if you make your way to the promenade by way of

Regent Street or Marlborough Street you will pass a range of house building types from Georgian cottages to late-Victorian tenements. Continue east to the red sandstone tenement block that begins on the corner of Laing Terrace.

5. The plaque above the ground floor corner window marks that this was the site of the villa home of the antiquarian and historian, David Laing.

Walk towards Joppa and leave the promenade at Morton Street. Cross Joppa Road and walk up the street, over the railway bridge to the house named Cairnbank in South

Morton Street.

6. This was the house lived in during the first decades of the last century by arguably Britain's most successful Antarctic explorer/scientist, William Speirs Bruce. During his time there he named the house Antarctica.

From here walk through the typical 1930s suburban bungalow development of the Coillesdenes with its many well-kept attractive gardens back down to the main road at Seaview Terrace. Go to Rock Cottage next door to the Rockville Hotel and bar.

7. The plaque on the cottage does not record the residence of any individual. This is the oldest occupied dwelling in our locality and was one of the buildings on the site of the former Joppa Saltpans.

The money for the erection of the plaques came from a number of sources. The City of Edinburgh Council Community Grants funded those on the Police Station, Baptist Church, Rock Cottage and the one to William Russell Flint; the cost of the David Laing plaque was jointly borne by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the University of Edinburgh and the Society of Writers to the Signet; the British Geological survey and Edinburgh Geological Society paid for the Hugh Miller plaque and the one for Speirs Bruce was funded by the Royal Scottish Geographical Society and the United Kingdom Antarctic Heritage Trust.

Archie Foley

LOOKING BACK-

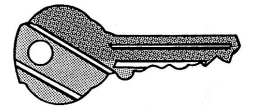
A **DIP** into a few 1980s issues of The Reporter to see how some things have changed.

KINGS ROAD ROUNDABOUT: In Oct/Nov 1984, Gavin Strang MP described as "a huge disaster for Portobello" the plan by the Regional Council to build a roundabout at Kings Road, instead of an underpass to take traffic from the new Portobello bypass to Leith. Now, with even more traffic using the roundabout, there are plans to replace it with traffic lights.

HOUSE PRICES - In the Aug/Sept. 1985 issue, the housing market in Portobello is reported to be "flourishing" with a two appt. flat costing £18,000, a three bedroom semi £36,000, and a villa £65,000. How did anyone ever afford them?

DO YOU REMEMBER the following advertisers from the 80s whose businesses have now closed? : Joppa Wools on Joppa Road; Hamilton Lodge Hotel; A T Nisbet, Upholsterers, in Southfield Place; Hearth & Home Textiles in Brighton Place; and on the High Street, Whirligig, gifts and crafts; Gemini Fashions; Alex Wood, Butcher and lots more.

STOP CHILDREN! - Not a road sign this time, but the message implied in an advert carried several times in the early 80s for vasectomy at the Marie Stopes Edinburgh Centre. What effect did it have on the local population size, one wonders!



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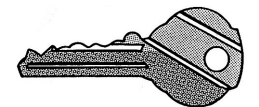
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PORTOBELLO HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

THE SOCIETY has had another successful year with a succession of excellent speakers at our monthly meetings and an increase in membership.

Millie Gray gave an entertaining account of growing up in Leith to an appreciative audience in March. Although her stories were personal they obviously struck a chord with her listeners and a lively discussion ensued for some time after Millie's talk as apparently forgotten experiences came to mind.

Arthur Jeffery took his large audience on an illustrated tour of Buchan's pottery at our April meeting. Arthur, who is a society member, was a skilled craftsman there from the 1950s to the 1970s and used his knowledge to describe the manufacturing process from a lump of clay to a finished pot. This, along with a well-chosen selection of slides made this a thoroughly enjoyable and informative evening.

The final speaker in this year's programme was Carmen Demarco, a tutor with the Workers Educational Association, whose reputation had obviously gone before her judging by the number of extra seats that had to be put out to accommodate non-members. Carmen's account of how her family settled and flourished in Scotland after coming here from Italy at the beginning of the last century was told in an engaging and humorous manner. There were some dark moments, however, such as the experiences of her own and other families who suffered abuse, attacks and internment during World War 2 despite having been in this country for generations.

The society took to the road on 8th May for a day trip to Callendar House and the Bo'ness and Kinneil Steam Railway. The outing, organised by our Treasurer, Vivienne Nisbet, was the first group day out for some years and was voted a great success.

We are now looking forward to the first meeting of next session on Wednesday 1st September at 7 pm in St John's Church Hall in Brighton Place. Then we hope to have a large audience to welcome Elizabeth Henderson to talk on Friendly Societies in Lothian. These societies have had a tremendously influential role in British life and Elizabeth is an acknowledged authority on their history. Another eagerly anticipated event in September is the return skittle match with the Trotters of Duddingston at the Sheep Heid Inn. Will the underdogs bite back?

PUTTING THE BELL BACK INTO PORTOBELLO

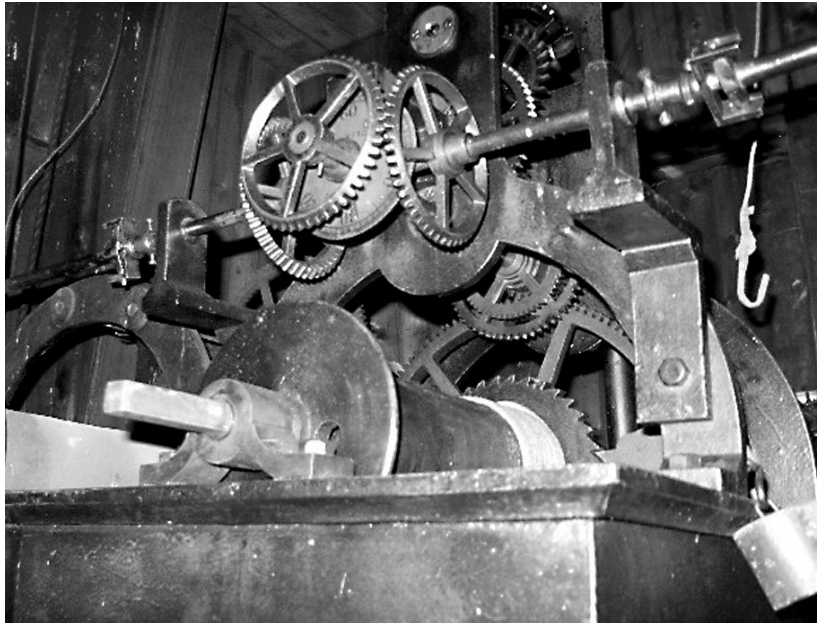


Photo courtesy of Portobello Online

FOR YEARS no-one knew it existed. It hasn't tolled in living memory, but Portobello Community Council now has plans to re-instate the bell in the clock-tower at Portobello Police Station. It was found again recently when John Stewart, chair of Portobello Amenity Society, was asked to write an architectural appreciation of the building, which once served as Portobello's Town Hall and housed the public library. A tour of the building ended with an inspection of the clock tower and the exciting discovery of the bell.

An inscription on the bell reads 'Patent cast steel 6249 Sheffield 1877' and has the maker's name Vickers Sons and Co Ltd, along with a crest depicting 2 lions and a crown. From Baird's *Annals of Duddingston and Portobello* we learn that the bell was gifted by Provost Wood. The clockworks have the maker's name H R Millar, Edinburgh. Hugh and his brother Robert Millar were clockmakers in Edinburgh from 1871 and also made the turret clocks in Selkirk Town Hall and the village clock at St Boswells.

The plan is to refurbish all the mechanical parts of the clock and to electrify the striking mechanism so that its operation can be programmed, thus enabling a silent period to be set. This period has yet to be decided but, for example, the bell may remain silent over night, from 10pm until 8am.

An online poll on the community website has shown strong support (83%) for the reinstatement the bell, many people feeling that it will add character to the High Street. People living in the immediate vicinity have also been canvassed.

If you would like to express a view, email portyweb@blueyonder.co.uk or speak to your local councillor.

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BOTTLE WORKS



Photo courtesy of Scotsman Publications

OUR request for photographs of industry in Portobello brought in this fine image of the late Davie Jones examining bottles for flaws. It was taken in December 1967 just three weeks before the United Glass Company closed down the works in Fishwives' Causeway thereby ending generations of glass manufacture in Portobello. Our thanks go to Mrs Jones for bringing it to us.

SCOTTISH ACTOR IN PORTOBELLO FILM

PAUL YOUNG, the well-known Scottish actor, has generously offered to introduce a video telling the story of Portobello's past both as a seaside resort and a place in which people lived and worked. Paul, who was brought up in Argyle Crescent, has many film, stage and broadcasting credits to his name but arguably is best known for the many TV angling programmes in which he has appeared over the years. Starting with 'Hooked on Scotland' these have taken him to numerous wild and exotic locations all over the world but his love affair with fishing started right here in Portobello when it was still possible to fish off the promenade at the old bandstand and Joppa had rocks worthy of the name.

The Director/Producer on the filming will be Mike Shepley, who co-directed and wrote the first 'Hooked on Scotland' series and who has been making films and videos with his company Forth International here and overseas for many years. Mike also spent his formative years in Joppa where he and Paul first came together via their common interest in fishing. The links formed in boyhood have endured and he and Paul have worked together on numerous projects.

Portobello History Society obtained a City of Edinburgh Council Community Grant to fund the making of the video, which will mix taped reminiscence, old photographs and film with new footage in a production designed to bring knowledge of Portobello's past to the younger generation and newcomers and to reinforce our sense of community. There will be a booklet to accompany the film and copies of both will be given to schools, libraries, community centres and retirement homes. There will be copies for sale but the date of issue and price have still to be decided. More details will appear in the September issue of this paper.

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* * * * *
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Friday 18th June - Jim McMail. Smooth and polished
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Saturday 3rd July - Jazz with the Sandra Stone Set
Friday 9th July - Martin Waugh, swing/Sinatra etc.
Friday 16th July - Linton Osbourne, young male vocalist
Friday 30th July - Jim McMail, an experience

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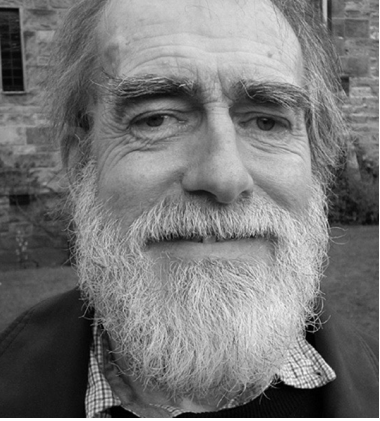


Photo by Bert McCall

A GREAT fund-raising idea was suggested by Graham Addis, who attends Portobello Old Parish Church. This brave man has volunteered to have his beard shaved off in return for as much sponsorship money as possible for Christian Aid. The deed will be done on Saturday 12th June at 12.30pm in the Church Hall in Bellfield Street, by Gerry Kerr, the High Street barber.

Graham was born in Zanzibar and moved to Portobello 10 years ago from West Sussex, so it's to be hoped that he won't feel the cold here in the north without his 'chin muff'.

The sponsorship drive is being spearheaded with great enthusiasm by Margaret Jack, who has already raised well over £500. Anyone wishing to add to this can contact her on 669 6130.

PORTOBELLO AMNESTY

THE GROUP was represented at Amnesty International UK Annual Conference in April by Cathy Crawford, who spoke to a motion of her choosing and strongly supported by the Group. It called for the Board of Amnesty UK to support the World Health Organisation's 3x5 initiative, to have 3 million victims receiving treatment by 2005. The motion was carried, but the degree of priority is still to be decided.

Amnesty's worldwide campaign on Violence Against Women is being pursued by the Group, with letters to our MP and MSP requesting comments and support. We have opted in to the Death Penalty Campaign, focusing on the execution of people in China who were legally children at the time of their alleged offending.

Work with schools continues, currently at St John's Primary. The Group will present Amnesty's role in furthering human rights worldwide and give the school colourful posters on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Group is stronger than for several year, with numbers continuing to increase. For information about meetings contact David Turner (669 1308) or Mary Jane Elton (669 5129).

BRUNSTANE BOWLING CLUB

TUCKED AWAY in a quiet cul-de-sac off Brunstane Road, Brunstane Bowling Club is a hidden delight, and the members would like to raise the profile of the club and encourage new members to join.

This is a progressive, open club with a mixed membership of around 140. No previous experience is needed and players of all ages are welcome. Bowls and shoes can be provided for those who just want to give it a go. The bowls season runs from April to September, but social events take place all year round. The club is also fully licensed and offers social membership for those who wish to use the facilities without playing bowls.

For more information or to arrange a visit, call the club on 657 4417.

FOCUS ON GROUPS

PORTOBELLO AMATEUR SWIMMING CLUB

PORTOBELLO ASC is a competitive swimming and water polo club with a strong community and family base. It has been in existence since 1912 and is registered with the Scottish Amateur Swimming Association (SASA).

The club enters all levels of competition, from local friendly galas to National events. All stages of swimmer can be taught, from beginners with Keith Anderson (see aqualearn@hotmail.com) with development right up to Scottish National level, and the club's Water Polo expertise is recognised throughout Scotland. It may also be possible to accommodate those swimmers who have Special Educational Needs.

Training takes place at Portobello High School Pool and in both pools at Portobello Swim Centre on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 7.00 and 9.00 p.m.

Water Polo is for both boys and girls and the main training night is Tuesday, again at Portobello Swim Centre.

All the coaches have experience in teaching/coaching and are all highly committed to improving youngsters swimming and water polo performances.

The cost of joining is also extremely competitive and new members are always welcome, from aspiring 7-year-old swimmers right up to those attempting to swim alongside Alison Shepherd.

For further information contact: Jack Snowdon, 669 3431 or cath.fleming5@btopenworld.com For Water Polo contact Neilson on 468 0086.

SPECIAL ROSE FOR QUEEN'S BAY

A SPECIALLY commissioned rose, named the Trust Rose, was planted on 7th April at the sheltered housing development at Queen's Bay Crescent, Joppa to mark the change of name from Kirk Care Housing Association Ltd to Trust Housing Association Ltd. Bill Renton, Convenor of the Housing Management Subcommittee, is seen here planting the rose prior to a celebration tea for the tenants.



QUAKERS IN PORTOBELLO

THE Portobello Quaker group meets on the first Sunday of every month in Portobello Old Parish Church Hall, Bellfield Street, from 7.30-8.30pm. Anyone who would like to join the group for worship will be most welcome. For further information, please contact David Turner on 669 1303 or Alastair Cameron on 669 5129.

A PARAMOUNT OFFER

WHEN HIS Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama comes to Edinburgh and Dunfermline at the beginning of June, local man Graham Kitchener will have the honour of being official film maker.

This follows a very successful trip to California in March to promote last year's short film and a new feature film currently in writing. The trip included an invite to the house of Jeff Bridges, who is pencilled in to take the lead in the new film, and a meeting with a producer for Paramount Pictures in L.A. Graham's next step is to get the script of what could be his first feature onto the desk of Paramount by August.

This is far more than was expected and, following a meeting in February with Kenneth Branagh, it seems things are going in the right direction. 'Bingo' the short film made in Portobello last year, is to have some changes made as recommended by Paramount and Kenneth Branagh, so it will now be released later in the year.

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FOOTBALL TREAT FOR LOCAL BOY

LOCAL boy Ross Inglis was the Scotland Team mascot at the Scotland v Romania game on Wednesday 31st March at Hampden Park.

Friends of his father won this prize in a raffle, which also included four hospitality tickets to the game.

Ross led the team out from the tunnel and was given a Scotland strip to keep along with some other souvenirs from the SFA.



He said afterwards: "It was a brilliant experience, although also a bit daunting, and a great opportunity to meet the players". Ross, a 1st year pupil at Portobello High School and a keen Hibs supporter, is pictured here with Hibs defender Gary Caldwell.

WINNERS AND LOSERS

DUDDINGSTON Primary 7 football team narrowly missed winning the East of Scotland Cup in April when they were beaten by Gylemuir by 2 goals to 1, a fantastic achievement given that this was a national competition in which 630 schools were involved. The boys turned the tables on Gylemuir on 6th May, however, beating them in the Inspector's Cup final 1-0. Marc McNulty scored for Duddingston in both games

In April our Parents' Association held a super Spring Fair fundraiser which made a amazing total of over £1000. The school community will benefit in all sorts of ways, so a big "thank you" to Lindsay Bates and her ever enthusiastic team.

Also, our annual charity fundraiser, which supported the Barnardo's organisation, raised over £2000. Well done to all the pupils for making such a great effort.

David Wright



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www.miniclip.com

For any gaming fan, miniclip.com is an absolute must. From the multitude of games available, whether an adventure, puzzle or first person shoot 'em up, you are sure to find one that will amuse for hours. Easy to navigate and lots of fun! Recommended games include, 'Da Numba', 'Heli Attack 2' and 'Little Rocketman'.

www.popcap.com

Suitable for internet users of all ages, Popcap.com is a fun-filled gaming website. Currently featured games include 'Typer-shark', a fast and furious typing game, and the hilarious 'Insaniquarium'. All games are extremely well represented and explained, and the site is really easy to navigate.

Catriona Howson

SUCCESS OF THE LEMONADE KIDS

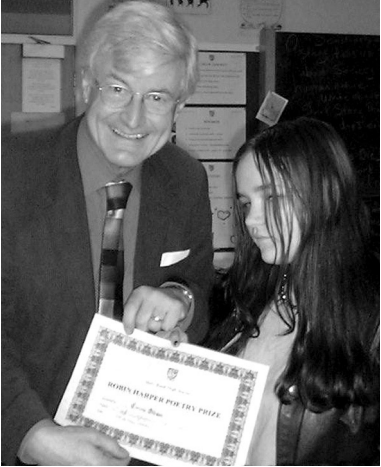
PRIMARY 7b at The Royal High School presented two performances of the musical 'The Lemonade Kid' to parents and friends in the school hall in March. The show was a class enterprise project that also involved producing a business plan, resulting in an Enterprise Grant from the Bank of Scotland. This enabled the class to apply for licences to perform the show and video a performance.

The moral of the show was that problems can be resolved without violence and, in particular, without using guns, and this is what pupil Louise Milne had to say about it: "Never mind Northfield, here they come Broadway! A sell-out success. The show will go down in history! Brilliant acting, props, songs, and costumes all produced by themselves. An amazing and entertaining performance. Star of the show was Shelley Duncan as 'The Lemonade Kid', but the rest of the cast were equally as good". Gemma Nolan was 'Louisiana May', Michelle Taylor - 'Daisy', Craig Smith - 'Hank', Christopher Catto - 'Wayne', Christopher Falconer - 'Shane', Owen Dodds - 'Dwane', Harry Simpson - 'Sheriff', Michael Sharp - 'One Eyed Jack', Alex Berwick - 'Shop Keeper' and Mhairi Wilson - the narrator 'Old Seth'.

Enough money was raised from ticket sales and donations to enable the class to donate £150 to Amnesty International and have some left over for a summer trip.

Eileen Forrest (class teacher)

ROBIN HARPER POETRY PRIZE



ROBIN HARPER MSP sponsors an annual prize for poetry at Holy Rood High School. He recently visited the school's poetry club, organised by Donna Jameson, teacher of English. After reading and commenting on the high standard and imagination of some of the poems, he presented this year's winner Emma Gibson, a third year pupil, with her certificate. Emma will choose her prize from the Scottish Poetry Library.

JOPPA TO MADAGASCAR

WHILE taking a gap year before university, Natasha Doff from Joppa is planning a 10 week charity expedition to the island of Madagascar, off the southeast coast of Africa. Natasha has secured a place on a 'Pioneer' scheme run by the charity Azafady, which runs projects in rural southeast Madagascar to support environmental, humanitarian and sustainable development projects. Natasha will be living and working alongside remote village communities, helping them to build wells to provide clean water and to establish community market gardens to provide food and an income.

Natasha needs to raise a minimum of £2,000, which will go directly to support Azafady's work, with only a tiny proportion covering her expenses. She has already done some fundraising, but if anyone would like to make a donation, please contact her on 657 1392. For more information see www.madagascar.co.uk

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TOWERBANK KIDS GET FIT

WORLD class gymnast Glen Smith visited Towerbank Primary School in April as part of a ‘Get Fit Kids’ programme during National Health Focus Week. His task was to to put pupils through their paces with aerobics and keep fit exercises. Glen, who was 10th in the 2003 World Championships, is seen here flying over the heads of some P5 pupils.

Photo by Peter Ross

OPEN WATER SPRINT TRIATHLON

THE second Portobello Open Water Triathlon will take place on Sunday 25th July, starting at 9am with a 750m swim from Portobello beach (at James Street), followed by a 20km cycle on roads round Portobello and a 5km run on the Promenade. Registration will take place in the Swim Centre from 7-8.30am. Further information and an entry form are available on www.edinburghracingcoop.co.uk or call 657 4716.

MARATHON 2004

THE 2004 Edinburgh Marathon takes place on Sunday 13th June, starting at 9am. The Promenade, Joppa Road, High Street and Brighton Place are on the last leg this year, and runners will need plenty of local encouragement. There was a disappointing number of spectators last year and very few in Portobello, but perhaps more people will turn out to cheer, especially as there are at least six entrants from Portobello Running Club – Paul Eunson, John Pringle, Karen Young, Janet Laing, Scott Jarvie and Ricky Fraser. There will also be parking restrictions and road closures. For more information see www.edinburgh-marathon.co.uk

WATER is a precious resource. I only use tapwater on seeds up to germination and for a week or two after. It is easy to fit a water butt (preferably of recycled plastic) to a downpipe on the garage or house, then the collected water can be used on all plants and you’ll be using it wisely.

Another water topic is a comfrey bin - a bucket or dustbin. You can buy comfrey through the Organic Gardening Catalogue (0845 130 1304) or get a bit from a friend. I put the leaves in old tights and cover with water; at the end of the season the tights are almost empty and can be reused for years, but this does smell and some people don’t like it, so site away from the house if you can. I think it helps make my tomatoes taste great because it keeps them so healthy, used once a week diluted to the colour of weak tea; it saves buying liquid fertiliser and can be used on any plants. Another great use for comfrey is as an activator for compost. It also makes a good tea and, rubbed onto cuts, bruises, etc helps the healing process, hence its old name ‘knitbone’.

Before going on holiday dead-head everything, especially sweet peas, annuals and so on, also crops such as beans and peas, and when you return the difference will be amazing.

In doubt about pruning? - Immediately after flowering, cut back right to the ground one in every three stems - the oldest and weakest first; if this is done every year it helps to maintain the vigour, health and longevity of the plants.

Keep weeding – it’s not a pain – it’s fodder for the compost heap. Put the personal hifi/radio on, have a cuppa by your side, and a cushion or old jumper inside a plastic bag for a kneeler - and chill. You can think of everything or nothing - as refreshing as a massage. I like to be close up to my weeds so I never pull anything out by mistake; this year I’ve discovered self-sown seedlings of hellebore that I wouldn’t have if I’d hoed.

ANY organic questions? Mike and Susan will do their best to answer them on their Open Days, Saturday 10 and Sunday 11 July, at 39 Nantwich Drive. Theirs is a large, wildlife-friendly, urban garden, including ponds, mixed herbaceous and annual borders, mini orchard, greenhouse and conservatory, secret and kitchen gardens, and is well worth a visit. Entry £1 (no toilet facilities). All proceeds go to the HDRA- the Organic Organisation. Information leaflets also available



GOING ORGANIC



with Susan Burns

WATER POLO – SCOTLAND’S FINEST

PORTOBELLO Water Polo team continue their great performance at UK level this season. They qualified for the 2004 British Championships in February by winning the Scottish National League for the 10th successive year, and their domination of senior men’s water polo in Scotland was capped when they also won the Scottish Cup in March, beating Dunfermline 6-5.

In the British Championships semi-finals, Portobello met favourites Lancaster in what proved to be the game of the tournament. Two stunning goals from Fraser Rutherford helped Portobello take an early 3-1 lead, but Lancaster drew level 4-4 by half time. Strong defence in the second half and goals from Giles Gilhooly and Barry Davidson kept Portobello in contention, but Lancaster took a one-goal lead going into the final period and won the match 8-7. Portobello went on to claim third place with a comfortable 7-5 win over Bristol.

The team then turned their attentions to the British Cup, winning their quarter final match against England’s second best team Bristol 17-6. Bristol proved no match for Scotland’s finest, who simply blew them out of the water. The semi finals and final take place on 5th & 6th June in Manchester when Portobello will aim to repeat their 1997 success. In current form they will be difficult to stop.

Neilson Rutherford

TENNIS - SET FOR SUMMER

JOPPA TENNIS is offering **COACHING** this summer, from beginners aged 8, upwards. There will be Mini Tennis - Just Starting, Just Improving and Just Playing. Coaching will take place on Friday afternoons, for six weeks, starting 11th June and the cost is £15 for the course. The club has obtained the services of a fully qualified LTA coach with lots of experience coaching in Edinburgh schools. This is a great opportunity to learn a great game, and have fun at the same time. For further details and application forms contact Marjorie Thomas on 669 6394.

The courts will also be open during the school holidays for **PAY AND PLAY** - Monday to Saturday from 1 to 8pm.

MEMBERSHIPS are still available – Family £45 a year, Individual £35, Concessions £20. Plus £5 key deposit. Application forms from Elsie Thom, 01875 811183.

PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY CENTRE NEWS

PENSIONS ADVICE : For help and information on all Pension matters – fortnightly on Monday between 10am and 12 noon - from 31st May

COMPUTERS : Free drop-in sessions with Stewart – Thursday afternoon 1.30-4pm.

Starting soon: Silver Surfers Club- contact Centre for day and time – come along with a friend and try out the internet and e-mail.

EMOTIONAL FREEDOM Techniques and Aspects of NLP Workshops start on Tuesday 1st June for 6 weeks – 2-4pm Cost by donation, to cover room hire – for more information contact 467 0739

MEDITATION: Friday nights – 7.45-9pm. Contact Group for Self-Realization Meditation Healing Centre. Open Meditation Evenings – help yourself to unwind and relax. This is a stepping stone to pure meditation course. No charge. Contact Satay on 07708796737

ENJOY-A-BALL Summer Camp, Tuesday to Friday, starting 19th and 26th July.

It is with regret that we have to report that, after many years, the Friday night Chess Club has closed.

PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY CENTRE, 3 Adelphi Grove. – Tel: 669 8275 e-mail enquiries@portobello.cc website: www.portobello.cc

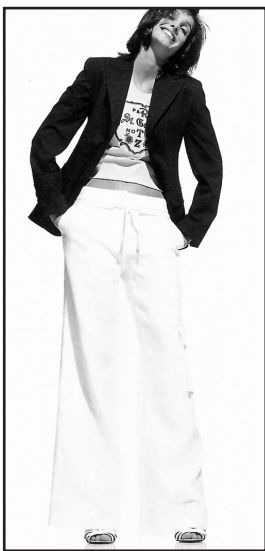
BASKETBALL- Scottish Cup Treble

CITY OF Edinburgh Basketball Club, based at Portobello High School, was the most successful in Scotland again this season, winning three of the four cup finals at Meadowbank on 3rd April to equal last year’s record of three wins out of five.

City of Edinburgh Kings achieved the Scottish Cup and League double by defeating Falkirk Clark Eriksson Fury 82-73

before a noisy crowd of well over a thousand, and the junior men did it as well, beating Troon 86-66 in their final. Kool Kats retained their junior women’s trophy, the RAF Cup, by defeating league champions St Mirren 77-70, and the cadettes were runners-up to St Mirren. For more information see the club’s website www.hoopscotch.com

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