

THE Portobello REPORTER

Quarterly: Summer 2024
Delivered in and around Portobello; circulation 13,000
Also available online on www.porty.org.uk

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ISSUE

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The independent voice of Portobello

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CALMING THE COMING STORMS

THERE have always been storms, and sand has always shifted along our beaches, but we are navigating new times. Climate change isn't only about CO₂ in the atmosphere, but about accelerating sea level rises, increasing storm frequency, and the destruction of living landscapes. Some changes are gradual, some are sudden, and some are gradual until they are sudden. We are seeing bigger waves which can penetrate flood water further inland. Add in beach erosion and offshore beach deepening and our crucial 'soft sea defences' are increasingly under threat.

'Hard' defences alone (such as creating higher Prom walls) can increase beach erosion. Alternative solutions could involve supercharging the beach with much more sand (as Montrose is doing), adding more groynes, or creating an outer protective reef that helps calm storm surges.

Local authorities imposing even well-intentioned 'solutions' can alienate communities. After the damage caused by Storm Babette, and developments at Seafield being seriously delayed by predicted rising sea levels and storm surges, how do we as a community begin a calm but realistic conversation on how we respond?

Join Porty Community Energy's 22nd June Sea Rising Festival's 'Climate calming' conversation or the 23rd June event, 5pm at Bellfield asking: how do we make our coastal fringe more resilient, drop our emissions off a cliff edge in a socially just way and stop the paving-over of complex living landscapes that, left to themselves, can help regulate and restore the climate?

Justin Kenrick

PORTY PRIDE RETURNS

PORTY Pride returns on 28th-30th June. LGBTQ+ people enrich Portobello life, and we want to celebrate this. Our ethos is to provide a safe, celebratory, political and educational Pride weekend for the whole LGBTQ+ community and our allies. We aim to bring Portobello together to mark our third Pride and support everyone in our community to be themselves. www.portypride.com

Kate Gillwood



Filming on the Prom in April
for Netflix's forthcoming series,
Department Q

PHOTO: PATRICIA SCOTLAND

FINAL DECISION ON BRUNSTANE ROAD AND COILLESDENE AREA ETRO

THE City of Edinburgh Council has finally decided to make the Brunstane Road and Coillesdene Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) permanent. A report recommending this was approved by the Licensing Sub-Committee of the Regulatory Committee on 21st May. The report showed that 74 per cent of respondents to the final round of consultations were against the initiative but argued that while public views "are useful in gauging feedback", they are "not to be undertaken as a poll" on whether proposals should be taken forward. It said that concerns about displacing traffic problems would be partly mitigated by sinusoidal speed bumps in some of the streets in the

Coillesdene area, which will be installed this Autumn. The full report can be found at: https://bit.ly/CEC_Brunstaneroad

The ETRO has been contentious from the start and local views remain divided. Libby Dale, who lives in Brunstane Road, supports permanent closure as "it's now a far safer road" and has encouraged more bike use. Other residents, including the Joppa Residents Association, feel their concerns have been ignored and that traffic problems have just moved to other local streets. Russell Eadie, the Chair of the Association, told the Reporter: "It's a rubber stamping of a predetermined outcome by the Council."

Patricia Scotland

PORTY PROFILE No. 88

DAVID CALDER



PHOTO: DAVID CALDER

DAVID Calder was born in Edinburgh and, after graduating in Law and Economics from Aberdeen University in 1973, he moved to London where his first job included being speech writer to the Director General of the Confederation of British Industry.

Moving back to Scotland in 1979, he secured his first job with the BBC, as a reporter for the TV programme 'Current Account'. That started a 35 year career as a (mainly freelance) broadcast journalist which gave him the opportunity to report on many different subjects from science to the arts. For example, he reported on the Edinburgh Festival between the late 80s and early 90s for BBC Radio and Radio Canada.

He produced several documentaries for Radio 5, once travelling to record two in one week. One featured Devon and Cornwall Police and the other the Air Ambulance Service in Orkney. The first went well. But after travelling all the way up to Kirkwall, he learned that the ambulance service had pulled out of the deal. So the BBC said that, as they had already paid his expenses he may as well just make it a holiday, which he did.

From 2011-17, David was a director at BITweb.tv (now closed) making teaching and training videos; those made for the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce enabled them to win an award as Innovative Chamber of the Year.

David is well known, and not just locally, for the Porty Podcast, found online, featuring people and activities in and around our town. He made the first episode in November 2016 about the feasibility of an Urban Community Buy-out of the church in Bellfield Street. The latest – number 321 – was produced in February this year on the Winter Wanderland. They are all available on www.porty.org.uk. David has since been taking a break

WHERE AM I?



1



2



3



4

PHOTOS: ANDREW MYLNE

Where in the Portobello universe can these be found?
Answers on page eight.

but is considering starting with occasional episodes again, as there are other subjects that he would like to feature.

David met and married his wife Penny in 2003 and now lives with her in Joppa. "I genuinely wouldn't like to live anywhere else," he says. "I just love it here".

Brenda Molony

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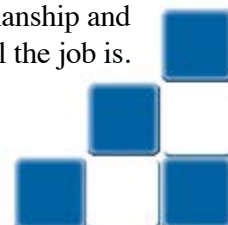
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What's On

BEACH BUSK: Saturday 31st August, noon till 6pm, Portobello Promenade. Just turn up and play.

CAR BOOT SALES (Rotary Club of Portobello): Last Sun. of each month until Oct, Newcraighall Station car park. Sellers arrive from 7.30am, buyers from 8.30am. Cars £12, large vans £18. Enquiries to **07708 796737/07523 689839**.

PORTOBELLO MARKET: 1st Sat. of month, Brighton Park. For details see portobello.market@live.co.uk

PAMOJA FASHION: Quality Clothes/Accessories: 1st Sat. of the month, 10am-1pm, St John's Church Hall, Brighton Place. Supporting school / community partnerships in Scotland and Tanzania.

COMMUNITY FRIDGE: Sats. 10.30-11.30am, Baptist Church Hall, Portobello High St. Surplus food from shops available free to all, to combat waste. Donations to food bank from 11.30am.

PARKRUN: Sats, 9.30am, Figgate Park. 5K. Free. Contact: www.parkrun.org.uk/portobello

PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY CHOIR: Wed. evenings, 7.30-9.15pm in the small hall at the Baptist Church, 189 Portobello High Street. See www.portobellocommunitychoir.org

PORTOBELLO CHAMBER MUSIC GROUP: Sundays, 2pm, Baptist Church Hall. See www.meetup.com/portobello-music-group

WALKING FOR HEALTH: A Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland project. One hour low-level walks – free, social and open to all. 1pm Mondays. Start and finish at CHSS shop, 113 Portobello High St. Before attending, call Jacq on **07388 378605** or email walking@chss.org.uk

SEA RISING FESTIVAL

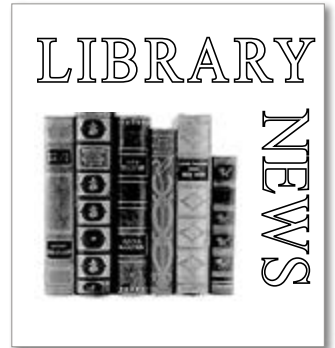
COME along on Saturday 22nd June from 1-6pm. We'll have a swell lineup of 10 bands over two stages, on the promenade and the beach near King's Road. There will also be a market with makers, climate organisations, workshops, demonstrations and bikes. But what is the Sea Rising Festival really all about?

Porty Community Energy is gathering local people who want to engage in community climate action and we're hoping a few more will wash in at high tide. As the sea levels rise, we need our community to respond rapidly and with creativity in order to build resilience. We encourage you all to join in, dance on the beach, sing along, be inspired by the passion of everyone around you, and be part of the change you want to see.

Porty Community Energy



WE ARE planning a full and fun programme of summer holiday activities for children. More information on this will be available in the library and on our social media throughout the holidays. We are also looking forward to this year's summer reading challenge for 8-11 year olds. The challenge provides a fun way to maintain children's reading habits by asking them to read six books over the holidays. All children who complete the challenge win a certificate, stickers and prizes. The theme this year is Marvellous Makers and celebrates children's creativity. Children can register at the library from the start of the summer holidays.

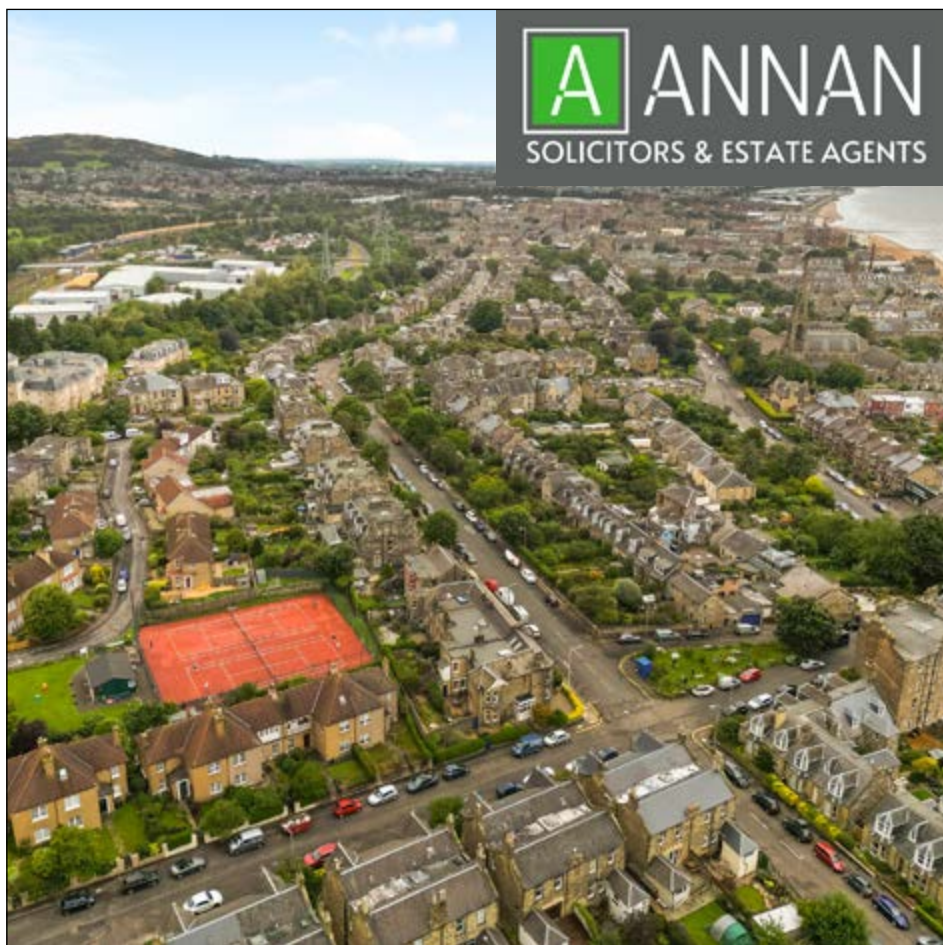


If you enjoy crafting and knitting and good company in a relaxing atmosphere, join our Bring Make and Do crafting sessions. We'll even provide free teas and coffees. These sessions run every Friday from 10.30am.

With the support of Police Scotland we have relaunched Coffee with a Cop police surgeries. These give everyone a chance to have a one-to-one chat with local community police officers. These run on the last Friday of the month from 1pm to 2pm.

We still have spaces on our Housebound and Library Link services for elderly or disabled readers. The Housebound service delivers books to your door every two weeks. The fortnightly Library Link service will bus you into the library for books, a cup of tea, and a chat on Monday afternoons. If you are interested in either of these services, call the library on **529 5558**.

Paul Hudson



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	- Conquer Gravity	(Baptist Church Hall-Live)	- 19:45 - 20:35hrs
Wednesdays	- Mat Class	(The Original - Live)	- 18:15 - 19:25hrs
	- Mat Pilates	(The Original - Virtual)	- 20:00 - 21:00hrs
Thursdays	- Mat Pilates	(The Original - Virtual)	- 09:30 - 10:15hrs

Magic Circle Pilates (Virtual) 2024:

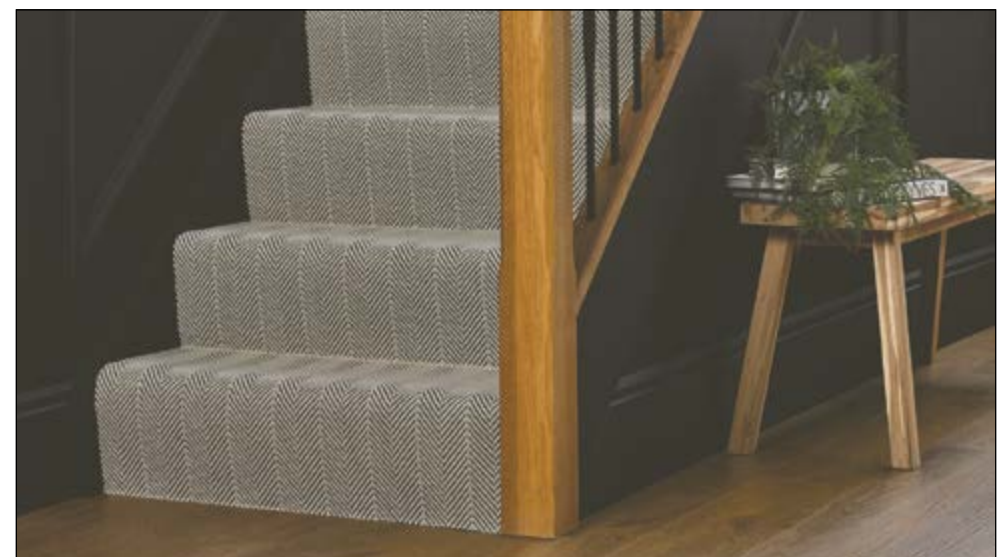
Fridays	- 9:30-10:15am	- 7 th June'24	2 nd Aug'24	6 th Sept'24
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Trigger Point Pilates (Virtual/Live) 2024:

Saturday	- 9:30-10:30am	- 22 nd June'24	24 th Aug'24	28 th Sept'24
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THE PILATES STUDIO Address: Tribe Porty, 19, Windsor Place, Portobello
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AFTER the wettest of winters, some plants will be doing well and others will have suffered. To check if a shrub or tree is still alive, scrape your nail near the bottom, close to the soil, and if it's any shade of brown, it's dead, which is an opportunity to grow something new.

Even on a windowsill you can grow a supply of fresh greens to garnish a meal. Peas, cress, mung beans and radish can all be grown on damp tissue. Spring onions and celery from the supermarket can be regrown from the root in a jar of water; cut off at about 5cm above the root and place in about 2cm of water.

It's not too late to sow seeds outside, especially tender vegetables like squash and pumpkin. Sow something unusual. I'm trying a winter squash.

Leave a few sections of grass edges to grow long before cutting to see if anything unusual comes up – I got orchids a few years ago and now have a good clump.

Our garden at 39 Nantwich Drive will be open under Scotland's Garden Scheme on Sat. 3rd and Sun. 4th August, 2 to 5 pm. Entry on Sat. £6 for SGS/Garden Organic; on Sun. £5, all for Garden Organic.

THE monthly market in Brighton Park is facing increased running costs which will have to be passed on to traders if it is to survive. There is also the threat of parking charges should controlled parking be introduced. We have always tried to keep costs low, helping local businesses like the rape oil business from Dalkeith, and Pochle, which produces a calvados type spirit locally. Increased expenses will make selling at the market unviable for some.

The aim is to complement the shops on the high street by retaining shoppers in Portobello. These shops serve us well and, along with services – a bank, doctors, dentists and yes, hairdressers – form the hub of a 20-minute neighbourhood where most people walk or cycle to a town centre.

What could make our town centre more attractive, besides opening two or three long-term unused and boarded up premises, is the cessation of through traffic, 35 per cent of which originates outside Edinburgh. One City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) solution is a bus gate, as mentioned at the recent Licensing sub-committee when considering the Brunstane Road closure. Other routes would allow access for deliveries and those who need cars to get their shopping. Look out for the CEC's consultation, possibly later this year.

Stephen Hawkins (PEDAL)



BEACH REPAIRS

THE Portobello beach area took a battering over the winter months, due to the high winds and storms. Parts of the promenade wall are crumbling, some of the groyne are in a sorry state and there has been a significant depletion of sand.

The City of Edinburgh Council has passed a motion proposed by local Councillor Jane Meagher to include repair work to the Portobello beach area in the funding allocation for Flooding in the 2024/25 budget. As part of the work, the groyne will be repaired and, where necessary, replaced. This will take place over the summer, which is not great timing for beach users, but is necessary to reduce the impact of further storms.

NEW SURF LIFESAVING CLUB FOR PORTOBELLO

A WAITING list for new members, aspirant coaches and lifeguards is now open for the new Porty SLSC (Surf Life Saving Club), a part of Portobello Sailing and Kayaking Club (PSKC) and supported by Dunbar SLSC.

Water safety training for young people will follow the SLS GB curriculum. Younger people aged 8 years plus will be able to join a structured pathway of fun water time and skills and safety awareness. Individuals aged 13 years plus will be able to join a graduate lifeguard programme enabling them to gain formal qualifications that may lead to employment. The course will cover marine science and, demand permitting, provide opportunities for young people and adults to compete in the sport.

We are actively seeking volunteers, aged over 16, to work with us over the next year to get qualified and to supervise club sessions. Introductory pilot sessions will run this summer. Contact PSKC direct or use insta [@portyslsc](#).

Alec Martin

EDINBURGH DOG AND CAT HOME

AS PET owners, we think we know what our dog is telling us better than anyone, but new studies have shown that a general misinterpretation of dog body language is linked to a rise in cases of dog aggression.

EDCH is helping pet owners better understand their dog's behavioural cues with a new Dog Body Language course.

The course addresses common misconceptions, such as the 'Alpha dog' myth and tail wagging and teaches owners how to recognise different emotions and behavioural indicators.

Find out more at www.edch.me/dog-body-language.

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PORTOBELLO HERITAGE TRUST BY MARGARET MUNRO

TOWERBANK PUTS ON A SHOW



PHOTOS: PORTOBELLO HERITAGE TRUST

EARLIER this year a teacher from Towerbank Primary School contacted Portobello Heritage Trust to ask if it could help with a project some pupils were undertaking to find out more about the kilns and Buchan pottery. This was part of an overall theme for pupils to discover more about their local community. I went along to the school to chat to the children and took pieces produced by the pottery, photographs and books to discuss with them. There were two groups composed

of P2, 3 and 4 classes. The children had undertaken a lot of research about their topic and asked very pertinent questions. It was a most enjoyable morning. Hopefully the Trust will be able to help in the future with any other local projects. In March, an exhibition of all the pupils' work was organised in Portobello Town Hall. There was a vast array of excellent models of local buildings and shops, along with route maps to school and written pieces about what pupils

liked about Portobello. The children interested in the kilns and pottery had produced wonderful models of the kilns and made and decorated pottery pieces. The photographs shown here illustrate some of the models and pottery along with photographs of my school visit. The town hall was very busy with people attending the exhibition and the work produced was highly praised by all. It was a very successful event and we can only hope it will be repeated in the future.

BEACH WHEELCHAIRS

WE ARE gearing up for another fantastic summer season in Portobello! Based outside Tumbles, we have various adapted beach wheelchairs to meet a range of needs and a hoist to aid with transfers if needed. We have four different manual wheelchairs for those fancying a wee paddle or to sunbathe and a powered all-terrain wheelchair, (pictured) for those wanting a longer beach walk. Whether you have a disability or reduced mobility we would love to help you get back on the beach to join in with family and friends. Hires are free. For more information, visit www.beachwheelchairs.org or call 0300 666 0990.



Alison Brown

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THE Wash House is now a registered Edinburgh Fringe venue and will appear in the programme in August.

We recently met with Portobello Town Hall and Bellfield with the aim of regularly linking up, sharing support networks, and future collaborations. Our three vibrant local venues are great and distinctive assets, locally and citywide.

We had a spring clean in preparation for a bulk order of comfy red chairs ready for Screen Party's upcoming showing of *Jaws* on 15th June. Our tree planters are now going in and the garden is blossoming.

Gica Loening

PORTOBELLO TOWN HALL

THE 1st June 2024 marked the first anniversary of the re-opening of Portobello Town Hall. In the last year we've welcomed almost 30,000 people to 186 individual events. Here's a flavour of what's been happening: theatre, ceilidhs, markets, fitness classes, exhibitions, weddings, parties, book launches, music events, dancing and sports. Hosting Towerbank School's local buildings models was a highlight.

Between events we've refurbished the kitchen, refreshed the paintwork, brought the balcony back into use, upgraded our sound and lighting and enhanced the foyer and backstage areas. There's more upgrading work and a wider range of events booked for the upcoming year. Everyone involved in the Town Hall is bowled over by the success so far. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has been involved.

Wendy Davies

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AMNESTY – LOCAL NEWS

THE Portobello group of Amnesty International (AI) set a new record for themselves at their annual second-hand book sale and coffee morning at Bellfield on 13th April, raising the magnificent sum of over £1,250 to support AI's work internationally, protecting and campaigning for human rights.

Quite apart from being a highly successful fund-raising exercise, the event was a happy one, well attended and bolstered by generous donations of books and home baking, as well as live music.

One new and intriguing feature for the event was provided by Edinburgh Central AI group and borrowed for our May stall at the Portobello Market. This was a "human rights wheel of fortune", with visitors to the stall invited to give it a spin, the pointer settling on numbers tied to questions on human rights legislation in the UK. The questions and their answers were frequently surprising, not a little worrying, and timely, considering that the past few years have seen the UK Government pass laws clamping down on the fundamental right to protest peacefully, albeit in England and Wales.

The group meets at 7.30pm on the second Monday of the month in Portobello and Joppa Parish Church. All welcome. (Contact: theresa.mcmurtry@gmail.com)

Jim Gilchrist



JOIN us at our summer party on Sunday 23rd June, from 11 am to 4 pm at Tribe Party, Windsor Place. The event is free for all. Explore our makers' market featuring a variety of arts, homeware, and clothing. Indulge in delicious food from a food truck and enjoy allergy-free vegan treats by Nia, a talented baker. Groove to the beats of Oi Musica at 3 pm. Kids can sign up to a workshop hosted by the Edinburgh Tool Library. Stay updated on exciting announcements by following our social media, subscribing to our newsletter, or visiting www.tribeparty.org.

Alice Hudson



SCREEN PARTY

THE cinema club is becoming very popular, with several sold out screenings. On Saturday 15th June the classic *Jaws* will screen at The Wash House. This film is rated 12A and contains material that is not generally suitable for children under 12. Note a new start time with the bar open 6pm and film 7pm. See www.screenparty.org

Lindsay Perth

ACTION PARTY

BELLFIELD has had a very busy couple of months. In addition to our 36 weekly activities and classes, Bellfield played host to over 50 events in March and April – including a Brazilian Festival and another successful wedding. During the same period, Bellfield had to turn away more than 50 events which we couldn't accommodate due to lack of available space.

This is why Action Party is pursuing an exciting plan to re-develop Bellfield, which will create additional and more flexible spaces for community use. We have recently produced a new business plan to support this ambition and are actively pursuing grant funding opportunities. Action Party is also about to launch our community share issue, a unique way of raising money locally and enhancing the community ownership of Bellfield.

Ian Cooke

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NATURE NOTES

WHEN spring finally, belatedly, made itself known, the air started to fill with the familiar sounds of industrious nature. Perhaps most stereotypically associated with a dutiful work ethic is the humble bee. Workers are out foraging, collecting nectar for the next generation, but how they do so might surprise you, and there are two distinct methods.

The bumblebee, in its various species, is the archetypal bee. Its improbable ability to fly (through clever wing rotation, creating lift on backward and forward strokes) is made to look all the more burdensome when laden with yellow sacks. This is how the bumblebee operates, collecting nectar and pollen, and sealing it into saddlebags on its hind legs, to carry back to the hive.

The interesting thing about this process is that it sterilises the pollen, meaning it's of no use to flowers it visits later in its journey, only transferring a small amount on its fuzzy body.

For the true pollinator you need to find 'solitary' bees. Looking like a cross between bees and wasps, they are called 'solitary' because they each have their own nest. There can be hundreds, sometimes thousands, living together, but they don't create a hive.

These bees are excellent for your apple trees, as they carry pollen messily on hairs on their hind legs, meaning it is deposited liberally from flower to flower. These bees also need areas of earth to dig nests, or holes in walls: nature adoring an imperfection we should strive for.

Anthony Robson



Bulging pollen sacks on a bumblebee

PHOTO: ANTHONY ROBSON

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ROW PARTY

THE season is now in full swing for Portobello Sailing & Kayaking Club. Kayakers have regular weeknight sessions for adults and juniors and have recently had great fun trying out 'Canoe Polo' on the Forth and Clyde Canal. Sailors are out every Sunday afternoon, zipping up and down while a safety boat keeps watch. As in winter, occasional 'cruises' are being made to beaches and harbours in Fife and East Lothian but now we're going for ice-cream stops!

are covering the greatest distance though, both at Portobello and elsewhere. Crews are out seven days a week with various sessions from dawn to dusk. They've recently rowed down the Tay, paraded at Burntisland and competed in regattas at Port Seton and Musselburgh. July will see a crew travel to the Isle of Lewis for their (nearly) annual expedition of rowing and wild camping, after a RowPorty team competes in the Ullapool regatta.

The club's coastal rowers

Ali Jeffrey



KARATE KID

IN LATE April, Drew Riddell was a member of the winning team (other teammates included Brodie Cross, Harris Robertson and Ben Walker) in the Boys 10-11 category at the British Karate Federation (BKF) Four Nations tournament in Durham, winning four matches in a row. Drew is a pupil at the Royal High Primary School and a member of the prestigious Chris Ewing Karate group. He achieved champion position in the 2023 BKF International Open, the Scotland Grand Prix and National Kumite Championships.

Drew trains for 8-10 hours every single week and, according to his mum Amanda, he "lives and breathes karate". He has ambition to represent his sport at the highest level, hoping that karate will be included in the Olympics in Brisbane 2032.

IN THE SADDLE

IN APRIL, seven Portovelo riders travelled to Mallorca to sample the island's great cycling roads. Based at Puerto Pollensa, they did many of the classic rides - including Cap Formentor, Puig Major, and the famous Sa Callobra climb with its 26 hairpin bends. While they were enjoying Mediterranean sunshine, the rest of us were gathering at the Musselburgh Yacht Club for a meeting to review various aspects of how the club operates. A key theme was that we can't just run the club to suit those of us who have been members for years; we also need to make it work for the person who's trying it for the first time and who isn't yet ready for a 4-hour ride of around 50 miles. To address this, we are now offering 'taster' rides of around 25-30 miles on the first Sunday of each month. We've also created a 'buddy' system to support every new rider the first time they come out. If you want to know more about this, or any other aspect of what the club does, see our website, www.porto-velo.com.

Andrew Mylne



PHOTO: ANDREW MYLNE

SWIM CLUB

PORTOBELLO Men's Water Polo team celebrated victory in the Scottish League 2023-24 by beating Stirling to retain the title for another year. The U19, U17 and U15 boys' and girls' leagues are under way, with teams hoping to reach the Scottish Championship Finals in June. Many players are now training regularly with national development squads at all levels, with two players securing selection with GB.

In swimming, various swim meets have seen swimmers smashing 'Personal Bests' (PBs) and gaining valuable race experience. We had qualifications for East Districts and Scottish National Age Groups, with PBs shaved and finals reached. Senior swimmers are looking ahead to the Scottish Nationals in June.

The social committee organised a successful wine tasting evening in April and the club is looking forward to the Annual Summer BBQ on 23rd June. For enquiries contact portyascmembership@gmail.com or visit our website, Facebook and Instagram pages.

Lucy Scott-Watson

JOPPA TENNIS

THE 2024/25 season began at the start of April. Membership is an impressive 197. As most members take out family membership, this equates to around 490 individuals signed up to play at Joppa. The match season is underway with all three teams facing challenging opponents in the higher leagues. One of our junior members, Iona Senew, has an exciting summer ahead. She is going to Rwanda in July with Comfort International, a charity dedicated to help rebuild lives devastated by poverty, genocide and conflict throughout the world. Iona, who is working towards a coaching qualification, plans to take and donate tennis equipment to teach children the basic skills. She is looking for donations of children's racquets and balls that are no longer in use. She also accepts cash donations which will be used to buy equipment. For more information please email portyiona@gmail.com. Any donations will be greatly appreciated.

Marjorie Shepherd

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ANSWERS TO WHERE AM I?

- 1: Book box in the garden of St Marks.
- 2: Memorial in Abercorn Park (Dr Dewar).
- 3: Police box on Dalkeith Street/Morton Street.
- 4: Tardis on groyne