

The Portobello REPORTER

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The independent voice of Portobello

Your Community Newspaper produced by local people.

POLICING PORTOBELLO

OVER the past six months this has been both challenging and rewarding. Low staffing levels across the Force area linked with significant changes in our Community Team, and the security implications of the events of September 11 have made the need to prioritise our work essential. Taking all this into account, however, I feel we have had a good success rate in line with Force Goals.

While Portobello is not seen to have a significant drugs problem, we have detected 26 dealers. In one instance, a significant quantity of crack cocaine, ecstasy and cannabis was recovered by the Drug and Major Crime Unit and several persons arrested in local public houses. In another, our Crime Patrol stopped a car in the Meadowbank area and recovered drugs, cash and a firearm.

The culprits for 38 housebreakings in the area have been detected. A group of three local youths have been detected for over 100 housebreakings and autocrimes in Portobello and across the City. 170 arrest warrants for various crimes and offences were executed.

Road safety has been a priority: we have breath-tested over 400 drivers and reported 34 for drink driving, reported 34 persons for speeding and warned a further 37, and issued 41 Conditional Offers for seat belt offences and a further 150 for other offences.

We have reported youths for breaking bus windows in the Lochend area, following a plain clothes watch. A youth was reported for smashing £1000 worth of windows at Parsons Green, and persons responsible for recent acts of vandalism in the Lady Nairn area have been identified. Several young people have been taken home and warned regarding throwing fireworks, and a local shopkeeper reported for selling fireworks to minors.

The biggest problem is calls reporting unsocial youth behaviour, often in excess of 20 per night between 7-10pm. While accepting that this is a headache for the residents involved, it is often difficult to identify any crime or offence being committed by the young people, who are just hanging about with their mates. We do not have the resources to attend every call, but try to identify specific hotspots and target patrols to these. If a youth is identified, a letter is sent to their parents outlining the problem, and should they persist a report is submitted to the Reporter. We are currently reviewing this problem and hope to work with local councillors, community groups, Community Education and young people with a view to improving the situation by next spring.

Bob Hope, Station Inspector



Well kent face P.C. Graham Jeffery on the beat in Portobello.

Photo by Peter Ross

WASTE MANAGEMENT PLANT PROPOSED FOR FREIGHTLINER TERMINAL

AN environmental impact study has been prepared regarding proposals for a privately run waste management plant on the former British Rail Freightliner Terminal in Portobello; other possible sites are believed to be Millerhill and Powderhall. According to the consultants for the study, Babtie Group Ltd, the site would extend over 30,000 square metres and throughput could be up to 350,000 tonnes a year of household, commercial, organic and civic amenity waste and recyclable materials. There is likely to be a waste tipping and shredding area, bailing plant, recycling facility, and workshop in one large building.

According to European directives, Edinburgh must increase the amount of rubbish it recycles from about 6% to 60% over the next 20 years, but is this the best site for such a plant, surrounded as it is by housing? This is a very windy area, and a few years ago, when coal was handled on this site, window sills and washing lines were constantly covered in black dust. Waste particles could be blown in the same way, not to mention smells. In addition, Portobello is a conservation area, and a large building in this elevated situation, would be widely visible.

The plant would probably function 24 hours a day, with lorries carrying rubbish travelling continuously through Portobello. The increase in traffic would be enormous, adding to the existing problems at the roundabouts at either end of Sir Harry Lauder Road. We need a strategy to ease our traffic problems not an intensification of them.

Such a plant should be placed well away from housing, on the edge of the city, near the bypass, on a site not exposed to strong winds, and not near a conservation area. A far more suitable and larger site is available at Millerhill, which already has a freight rail depot and could cater for the needs of Edinburgh and all the Lothians.

No information from the Council has been available: when asked, the Planning Department replied: 'The enquirer has requested that discussions be treated as confidential, as provided for in the Development Control Charter'. It is believed, however, that proposals have now been formulated between the firm concerned and Council officials, but it seems that the general public, and local councillors, may be kept in the dark until a specific planning application is lodged.

Portobello Community Council has conveyed its objections to this proposal to Babtie, and Portobello Amenity Society has written to Gavin Strang MP, Susan Deacon MSP, Cllr Maureen Child and Cllr Lawrence Marshall. Anyone else who wishes to object should do likewise.

John Stewart, Chair, Portobello Amenity Society

NO TOLERANCE ZONE IN PORTOBELLO

REPORTS in other newspapers have suggested that the Baileyfield Estate or A1 Industrial Park on the Sir Harry Lauder Road were possible locations for a new prostitutes' tolerance zone once the arrangement in Leith came to an end on November 30, but that is not going to happen.

'Discussions are going on among a number of agencies, but none has the power to make a decision or impose a so-called tolerance zone on anyone or anywhere', says Cllr Maureen Child. 'The A1 Industrial Site, on my Milton Ward boundary, is privately owned and the owners have exercised a right of veto on its use. Baileyfield Industrial Estate was never considered as an option and it was wrong of the press to suggest that it was'.

'I do not believe we can plan for tolerance of street prostitution in the current legal and social climate', she added. 'Any future zone will emerge through custom and practice, trial and error, but the practicalities can only be arrived at out of the blaze of publicity stirred up by a press pack hungry for good copy, which sells newspapers'.



Photo by Peter Ross

BBC Scotland spent several days at the beginning of October filming at Telferton Allotments; they were especially interested in the involvement of the families, pensioners and others who work the plots. A programme about the allotments, which will be part of a series on communities, is expected to be shown on BBC 2 sometime in March 2002.

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

SEASHORE BOARD IN PLACE



Christopher Keppie and brother Steven, both from Towerbank admire the new board.

THE seventh and last of the information boards erected along the seafront by Portobello Community Council and Amenity Society was unveiled in October by Cllr Maureen Child, chair of the Edinburgh Environment Partnership which funded the project. The artwork for 'The Life of the Seashore', situated just east of Rockville Hotel, was done by pupils from St John's and Towerbank primary schools after they had explored the beach and rock pools with countryside ranger Carol Huston. Alison Robinson who received the award for the project, and supervised the young artists, said: 'I was delighted with the youngsters' enthusiasm and dedication, and that their work is on permanent display for the

benefit of local people and visitors'.

'The rock pools of the Firth of Forth are teeming with natural life, freshly recorded by these local youngsters for everyone to see and enjoy', said Cllr Child. 'The Edinburgh Environment Partnership Millennium Awards Scheme helped star people, like Alison Robinson, do star things in their local community. Alison's project linked kids with learning about their environment and with promoting Portobello as Edinburgh's Seaside. I was delighted to see it completed, one of several local projects by local people funded through this national initiative. Portobello still lives up to its reputation as Urban Community of the Year 1999.'

PORTY PROFILE No. 8
SANDY SUTHERLAND

SPORTS writer and broadcaster, Sandy Sutherland, has lived in Bellfield Street for 29 years. Born in Sutherland, he attended Golspie High School and was Scottish Schools shot putt and discus champion from 1958-61. After studying economics and psychology at Glasgow University, he joined the Universities Athletics Union in London as a sports administrator, but became bitten by the travel bug and spent some time in South Africa, as a sub-editor on the African daily tabloid *The World* in Johannesburg.



Photo by Ken Benjamin

Sandy returned to Scotland in 1968 to join *The Scotsman* sports desk as a sub-editor and later had a spell in news with *The Evening News* before becoming publicity liaison officer with the Church of Scotland in George Street. Leaving in 1973 to pursue his passion for sport, he set up a freelance agency, Edinburgh Sports Reporting Services, in 1978. He has covered every Commonwealth Games since 1970 - Manchester next year will hopefully be his ninth - and five Olympic Games, Montreal, Moscow, Los Angeles, Barcelona and Sydney, and has travelled widely to cover athletics, badminton and basketball. His company was bought out by a 'bigger fish' in 1999, and he decided to return to freelancing 'and to plague his wife at home'.

Sandy has played a large part in the growing interest in basketball in Edinburgh in recent years, becoming secretary of the Portobello Old Parish Youth Club, which became Portobello Basketball Club and in turn has developed into the City of Edinburgh Basketball Club, based at Portobello High School. Press officer for the Scottish Basketball Association (now Basketball Scotland) for some 30 years, he is currently the national president.

Sandy is married to Liz, who was Commonwealth 400 metre hurdles record-holder and Scotland's Sportswoman of the Year in 1977, and they have three grown-up children - Joanna, Catherine and Malcolm.

Sandy and Liz were instigators of the annual New Year Promethon which is in its 15th year and which Liz is threatening to run on Jan 1 to boost Malcolm's China Challenge - a sponsored walk of the Great Wall of China in aid of Maggie's Centre for cancer care. 'I confine my efforts to the Porty Swim Centre pool these days', says Sandy.

B.M

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Portobello Swim Centre

Over the past month or so the over-50s session in the small pool has been cancelled many times due, we are told, to staff shortages. As a regular customer I cannot understand why this is not being dealt with more efficiently. Perhaps the problem with the centre is not just staff shortages but poor use of existing resources. I don't understand why trained pool attendants have to man the reception when this could surely be done by anyone.

Last time I was there when the small pool was closed there were only 7 people in the main pool, 5 of whom were from our over 50 group. I asked if it wouldn't be possible to have everyone in the small pool but I was told this would not be considered. One lady beside us had even phoned before coming down, from Oxfangs, and was told that the small pool should be open. So she had a wasted journey. Five of us left without a swim and if this continues the centre will lose more and more customers.

It is important that the small pool is available for the over 50s as for many of us access to the main pool is difficult being by ladder rather than the steps and also the warmer water in the small pool is beneficial for many conditions.

Yours sincerely
Shirley A. Shepley
35 Marlborough Street.

We spoke to Liz Falconer at Edinburgh Leisure about this. She confirmed that they are committed to maintaining the sessions at the present level and that staff shortages and unexpected absences, had caused them to be cancelled. "Interviews are taking place and the swim centre should be up to strength shortly but it is not possible to close the big pool. This caters for the general public while the other is for dedicated sessions like tuition, small children and, of course, the over-50s", she said. (Ed)

**COMMUNITY
BASED ADULT
GUIDANCE SERVICE**

PEOPLE wanting to change direction, get help with finding work, education or training can now get free, impartial and confidential advice from a qualified adviser at:

Portobello Library - Appointments, Monday afternoons
Piershill Library - Drop-In, Monday mornings 10.00 - 12.30

Joanne Holmes, the community based adviser for the area says: 'Changing direction or developing your career can be difficult and the options are not always obvious. A careers guidance interview is an opportunity to discuss these options with someone who is familiar with the processes involved. We will not tell people what to do, but will offer impartial advice, information and guidance to enable people to make their own decisions'.

Paul Stephens, a lone parent from Portobello who worked part-time in a pub but wanted to work with young people, has already used the service. 'I had really wanted a change for a long time but didn't know where to start. Through talking over my ideas with Joanne I was able to come up with a realistic plan that suited my circumstances', he says.

This service is part of a new initiative providing community based adult guidance advisers to all areas in Edinburgh and Lothians. For more information and appointments, call 556 8770.

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**NEWS
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LOCAL BUTCHER IS HAGGIS CHAMP: Findlay's of Portobello, were awarded the regional first prize in the Scottish Haggis Master 2001 Championships at the Scottish Meat Trades Fair in Perth in September. Findlay's haggis, made to a top-secret recipe, is known across the country and receives regular orders from the Grosvenor House Hotel in London.

This is the second time they have won this award.

RECYCLING AFTER CHRISTMAS You can take your Christmas tree for recycling to the dump site at Fillyside Road, Seafield between December 27 and January 9. There will be collection points in Boots and main Post Offices for cards, or they can be put into paper banks, along with wrapping paper (but no sticky tape or foil, please). Trees up to 6ft can also be put out with your refuse sacks or bin - but that isn't very 'green'!

A new Yellow Pages is due, but don't just throw your old one away. You can put them into a special bank at the dump site from December 6 to January 31.

For more ideas on re-cycling call 538 5381 for a free guide, Too Good to Waste, due out in January.

PORTOBELLO ON-LINE:

The 'Portobello Online' project to set up a community website is making progress and it is hoped to have a site up and running by early next year. Budding young (and not so young) journalists, local people with experience in web construction/design and anyone with ideas and enthusiasm who would like to be involved are invited to be part of the team. Free web space is available to all local groups that run on a non profit-making basis, so stake your claim now! Email to portyweb@blueyonder.co.uk or write to us c/o 10 Rosefield Street, Portobello, EH15 1AY

Bob Jefferson

THE CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU at 191 Portobello High Street is open on: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 9.30 - 3.30; Wednesday, 9.30-12 & 6.30 - 7.45. (Closed on Friday). For an appointment phone 669 7138 / 669 9503 or call in to the Bureau.

READERS' HELP REQUESTED: Did you, or someone you know, work at the former Power Station, the Open Air Pool or the cinemas in Portobello? Local man Allan McNaughton is writing a report on Portobello from the 1950s to the present day, as part of his English course at college, and would like to speak to former employees about their experiences. If you can help, please contact Allan at 15/4 Northfield Farm Avenue, EH8 7QW or Tel. 468 4078.

TOWN HALL

Wed. Dec. 5, 7 for 7.30pm: Portobello **FLORAL ART** Club, demonstration by Catherine Gledhill 'Christmas 2001'. Tickets incl. refreshments £6. For info. call 01875 320 994.

Fri. Dec. 7, 7.30pm: Benefit **CEILIDH** for musician Tony Cuffe with Bella McNab ceilidh band. Licensed bar. Tickets £10. £5 concess. on 669 7508.

Sat. Dec. 29, 8-11.30pm: **CEILIDH** in aid of Maggie's Cancer Caring Centres, with Flaming Nora Ceilidh Band. Licensed bar. Tickets: £5 from Kidd's Chemists, Kitchener's Deli & Mulberries or call 669 5731.



**Gavin Strang MP
and Susan Deacon MSP
wish all their constituents a
Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year**

To contact Gavin Strang
Tel; 669 6002, e-mail
gillana@parliament.uk

To contact Susan Deacon
Tel; 669 6446, e-mail
Susan.Deacon.msp@
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CARE ACTION GROUP

THE North East Edinburgh Care Action Group, now in its 6th year, aims to help older people and carers to exchange points of view about Community Care by gaining information about services, discussions, consulting other older people locally, and raising issues and concerns. Among the issues covered in the last 12 months were fire safety, health care, healthy eating, hearing difficulties, lifelong learning and vandalism. It also helps people gain access to services by giving advice, help and encouragement to apply.

The group is organised by a small management committee, of mostly older people, and meets on the last Tuesday of each month (excepting December and January) at 3.15 - 4pm in Portobello Baptist Church Hall, 185 Portobello High Street, and new people are always welcome. For further information contact Caroline Hosking, Consumer Involvement Officer, Social Work, Shrubhill House, Shrub Place, EH7 4PD / Tel. 553 8381 / e-mail: usercarer.workers@edinburgh.gov.uk

RETIRED, BUT NOT RETIRING?

THE UNIVERSITY of the Third Age invites anyone who is looking for new interests in retirement to join its varied educational, creative, leisure and social activities.

Regular meetings take place at 2pm on the second Wednesday of each month from September to June, in Dalry House, 15 Orwell Terrace, near the Haymarket. In addition, monthly lunches are held at a reasonable cost; specific study groups meet weekly, fortnightly and monthly, and a variety of outings are organised. There are also opportunities to meet people from other countries and to travel.

The annual subscription is £10, or £15 for two people at the same address. For more information, contact membership secretary Teresa Clark on 337 2922, or go along to one of the monthly Wednesday meetings.

NOISE PROBLEMS?

DO YOU have a problem with noise from neighbours, nearby premises, vehicles or machinery? If an informal approach to the noise makers doesn't work, it may help to contact the Edinburgh Community Mediation Service on 557 2101.

If that fails, Edinburgh City Council's Noise Officers will give advice on noise related issues and investigate complaints; they also report on licensing and planning applications, and test new homes for adequate sound insulation; call them on 529 3030. Enforcement action is taken when and where necessary, and there is also an out of hours service which operates 365 days a year for urgent noise problems that need to be dealt with before the next working day, including burglar and car alarms and music from pubs and clubs - tel. 200 2000.

PUTTING AN END TO COLD HOMES

THE Affordable Warmth Strategy for Edinburgh, launched in September, will help to eliminate fuel poverty and the scandal of cold homes. 'Affordable warmth' is defined as a household's ability to heat their home to a reasonable standard for less than 10% of its disposable income, and by this definition 64,000 households in Edinburgh are said to be living in 'fuel poverty'. This is largely because nine in ten homes do not meet the current building standards for energy efficiency and vulnerable householders are often paying for their fuel by the most expensive methods.

Cold homes exacerbate illnesses such as asthma, bronchitis and heart disease and are responsible for around 400 excess winter deaths a year, particularly among the elderly and infirm, and the extra fuel required to heat them contributes to global climate change.

Householders can find out how to make their homes warmer and more comfortable by free-phoning the Warmburgh Unit on 0800 512 012 for advice, and for information on energy saving grants to help cover the cost of installing energy efficient measures.

FESTIVAL OF LEARNING

THIS was a joint venture put on at the Town Hall in September by local learning providers and organised by Portobello Lifelong Learning Forum. The Forum was set up a year ago, with representatives from local schools, colleges, churches, U3A, charities, adult education, careers guidance, Community Council and local Councillors, to promote Lifelong Learning and organise a Learning Database and Grid and the Festival.

There were 25 stalls, a café and displays of Dog Obedience, Taekwondo, Fiddle Music and dancing by Lothian Dance Academy. Cllr Marshall drew the prize draw, with prizes donated by The Link, UCI Cinemas, Megabowl, Kalpna Restaurant, the Library and Living Well. The day was well attended and the stall-holders felt it was most successful in attracting new learners to their courses, which means that there will be a 2002 Festival of Learning!

Joyce Campbell, Portobello Library

GARDEN CENTRE CLOSES

PORTOBELLO Garden Centre at 256 the High Street has, sadly, closed. After more than 20 years, proprietor Bill Thomson has decided to sell up and take it a bit easier, although he will continue to do garden maintenance and run the greenhouse agency.

Bill has been a firm supporter of this newspaper for many years, writing his garden advice column and adding to our advertising revenue, for which we are very grateful. Fortunately, he has agreed to continue with the column and with his involvement in the annual garden competitions which Portobello Amenity Society intend to keep running.

LETTERS

THANKS - I always intend (after every paper comes out) to say thanks for the work that is put into *The Reporter*. I've finally got round to doing it. Once again, well done. I always look forward to reading it when it pops through the door. Regards,

Joe Madden (by e-mail)

(Thanks for the vote of confidence, Joe - It's good to know people enjoy the paper, and we love getting letters! - Ed.)

BUS WARS - Dear Sirs, Although Cllr Lawrence Marshall's piece in the last issue of *The Reporter*, 'Bus Wars are Back', was written in a light-hearted way, he hit the nail on the head when he appealed for an organised transport system and some stability in the provision of bus services.

Even before the current 'war' between First Edinburgh and Lothian Buses, service changes followed quickly one upon the other, with the result that, no matter what the bus companies say, Edinburgh and the Lothians now have an unstable public transport system. This is a far cry from the 'best public transport system in Britain' promised by former Edinburgh councillor David Begg in the early 1990s, and by every chairman or executive member for transport on the city council since.

What do we have instead? Beautifully-painted streets known as Greenways and many more with Bus Lane painted on them. And that's it. In the meantime, there have been grand visions of guided busways and tram loops, each making way for yet another transport initiative, with the threat of road-pricing forever hanging over the heads of council tax payers.

Lothian Buses has made a great noise about its high-frequency service 26, and it is an excellent service. But that has been to the detriment of some others in Portobello and Craigtintny. Service 15 is now on a 30 minutes frequency, and services 42 and 46 have disappeared completely from Craigtintny, cutting the link from this area to George IV Bridge, the Royal Infirmary and Edinburgh University.

We really do deserve better than this.

(Mr) Alex Williamson, Craigtintny Crescent.

PORTOBELLO ROTARY

THIS last busy quarter has included a 'Silent Auction' £211 towards our International Night on October 31, when nine overseas students were treated to a meal and entertainment by 'The Tartan Lads'. On September 19 Miss Jackie Bright gave a 'Job Talk' on Accountancy, which was followed by The District Quiz in which Portobello beat Musselburgh 26-17.

At a Youth Evening in September, two Portobello girls each gave a short talk. Alex Nelson, captain of Scotland's Youth Basketball Team, spoke about her forthcoming visit as an exchange student to America. Natalie Todd, Deputy Head Girl at Portobello High, received her Rotary Youth Leadership Award and gave an illustrated talk on her week-long Leadership course sponsored by Portobello Rotary.

In October, slide-shows were given by Alistair Lawson of the Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society; Andrew Milburn on House Pests; and Peter Wilmshurst on The Royal Scottish Museum. A new member was inducted - Chris Marshall, Asst. Manager of PC World.

John Sowry

MALCOLM, MURIEL and STAFF wish all our customers a MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR

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ACCOMMODATION: Portobello Library gets many requests for accommodation information, ranging from a B&B for a night to a short let of two or three months. We would like to keep this information on file, so if anyone who runs a hotel, B&B or self-catering property would like their details to be available to our customers, please phone us on 529 5558 or pop in to fill out a form.

CHRISTMAS EVENTS: We are holding a Christmas Craft Party for 8-12 year olds on Monday December 17 from 3.30-4.45pm, a chance to make decorations, calendars and cards. Tickets now available.

Christmas Carols will be sung round our tree by Towbank pupils on Tuesday December 4 at 2.30pm, and by St John's pupils on Thursday 20th, 2-3pm. We would like to thank them for helping our customers to get into the true spirit of Christmas.

QUINTIN JARDINE, the well-known crime-writer of the 'Skinner' books, will speak on Wednesday December 5 at 7.30pm. Tickets from Library.

SLIDE-SHOW: There will be a free slide-show for adults and children 'Out in the Open' by the Country-side Ranger, on Monday January 15 from 7-8pm. Go on a tour of Edinburgh's green heritage and meet the folk of years gone by.

HUGH MILLER'S BI-CENTENARY falls next year, and we have been preparing for this in partnership with Portobello History Society, National Museum of Scotland and Cromarty Arts Trust. Hugh Miller, stonemason, geologist and writer, was born in Cromarty in 1902 and died at his house, Shrub Mount, in Portobello, aged 54. Details of an exhibition and talks planned for May 2002 will appear in the March issue of *The Reporter*. Meanwhile, if any businesses or individuals could loan a glass display case to the Library for use during May, please contact Joyce Campbell on 529 5558.

Lindsay Souter

EUROPEAN UNION

THE HISTORY society was very pleased to be able to provide Mr Robert Fenley of Sutton Coldfield with copies of old photographs of King's Road and Fishwives Causeway to illustrate his family history. His family was part of the large number of skilled continental, particularly German and Swedish, glassworkers who were recruited to modernize manufacture and improve the quality of the finished product. The following is a shortened version of his story.

Portobello figures very prominently in the lives of my maternal grandparents. They met and married there and their first 3 children were born there. But my grandfather's entire family had moved there sometime in 1900 and several other children were born there to his brothers and their wives, each of whom also married in Portobello. For a number of years they all lived in King's Road.

Karl Heinrich Mutzke was an itinerant glassblower and the family had lived in Dresden, Neusattl (Bohemia, now Czech Republic), Italy, St Petersburg and Lyons before coming to Portobello. All 3 of his sons, Oswald Franz (my grandfather), Paul Oskar and Karl Heinrich junior were interned on the Isle of Man in WWI, during which Karl Heinrich senior died in Glasgow. My grandfather and his family moved to London around 1920 and his brother Paul died there in 1934. His other brother Karl and family moved to Dresden towards the end of WWI and their fifth son was born there in 1919. That son was in the German Army during WWII while his Scottish-born brothers were in the British Army.

Agnes Martha (Nancy) Mutzke was the last direct connection with Portobello - she died there, at 8 King's Road in 1943. But Emma Elizabeth, who had married Bill Crawford in 1928, survived in Scotland until she died in Glasgow in 1975. My Aunt Winnie, born in Portobello in



Louisa with husband and sons after the family was repatriated to Germany. Sons l. to r. are Richard, Walter, Willi, Oswald and Carl. 1908, lives in Eastbourne. As children, we were told that our granddad had helped form the Portobello Labour Party.



Louisa, wife of Karl Heinrich jr. with her 4 Scottish born sons, l to r., Oswald, Richard, Carl & Willi. Taken in Portobello in 1916 when her husband was interned.

I'm in touch with Walter, the one born in Germany in 1919. His brother Richard who lived in Portobello until the family was "repatriated" to Germany visited him in September and they reminisced about those difficult times around WWI.

Richard in particular remembers his older brothers, Willi, Carl, and possibly Oswald, who went to school in Portobello, telling him later about being shouted at as "German pigs" after the start of WWI. The police had to be called out once to smooth things over. But, of course, when they went to Dresden towards the end of the war, they were shouted at as "British pigs"!

A final reflection: my granddad never regarded himself as German. His family clearly originated from German-speaking areas, like Saxony (Dresden), but he and his siblings were born all over Europe and I like to think of them, itinerant glassblowers, as "European".

Archie Foley

PORTOBELLO HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

THE SOCIETY has had three excellent meetings since our new session began in September with Jim Denholm's talk on the landscape and history of the island of Minorca, illustrated with his own excellent slides. In October we had the return of Tom Mabbott who displayed all his usual skills of explanation and presentation to make the story of the humble potato's place in history into a riveting evening. Peter Murray, an Edinburgh Castle guide, came in November to take us, by the use of slides, through the Scottish National War Memorial and displayed not only his knowledge but also his attachment to the building and all that it represents.

At the time of writing we are looking forward to local historian, David Gavine coming on 5th December to describe the varied history of the building that is now the Kings Manor Hotel. David has been researching this topic for some time and his work is due to be published next year.

There is no meeting in January and Gavin Booth will be the speaker on 6th February with a presentation titled A Transport of Delight. Details of meetings are posted in the library and in other public places.

Archie Foley

The Portobello Reporter is always looking forward to hearing from you. If you have something you would like to share with the community please write to;

The Editor
9 Bedford Terrace
Edinburgh EH15 2EJ

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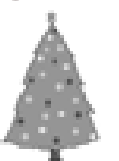
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SQUIDS IN!

Drew Strachan's piece in the last issue of the Reporter about lazy, hazy summer days in 1950s Portobello drew a response from Maggi Dignall, formerly Margaret Leatham.

I was interested to read Drew Strachan's article. I grew up in the same building and remember his grandparents and family well.

As happens when reading about the background to one's childhood, various memories came back and I decided to write to the Reporter with one or two of my own.

Who else remembers the shoals of small squid that were washed up on the Promenade in the early 1950's? There had been a high tide, combined with storm conditions, with waves crashing against and over the promenade. Hundreds of squid were thrown up on the Promenade along the route that I took to school at Towerbank from my home at West Promenade Terrace. It was extremely unpleasant picking my way through the bodies of these squid all the way along the Promenade past the Fun City and then the Amusement Arcade area.

With thoughts of Towerbank School in mind do any readers remember the wonderful mural of unicorns in an idyllic pastoral scene on the wall of the Assembly Hall, or the small models of animals such as lion, bear, tiger and elephant, all of which had cords under their chins, which when pulled produced the required vocal noises made by these animals? These models were kept in a large glass fronted cupboard in the middle of the Assembly Hall.

Finally every hour, on the hour at the Open Air Swimming Pool the inevitable gramophone records of Sousa's Military Music were interrupted for a voice to announce, "The waves will be on just in a minute's time. Will non-swimmers at the shallow end kindly keep to the side of the ropes while the waves are on."

A SAFE FIND!

A FEW weeks ago I discovered an old safe in the basement of Duddingston Manse. It was large and very difficult to move. It was also in the way! The problem was that it was locked and there was no key. I asked around but no one seemed to have a clue what might be inside. So, we employed a safe cracker to open the door. Inside was a treasure trove of old documents and church memorabilia. From the items that were dated we worked out that the safe had been locked since 1983.

All the documents have now been lodged with the archivist including a volume titled, "Account of assessments in the support of the poor of the parish of Duddingston beginning 1833". This lists by name those receiving monies from the parish in the days before pensions, unemployment benefit and social security. Also listed are the following legacies left to the poor of Portobello:

"Legacy left to the poor of Portobello by Mr Glen in 1845, late Minister of Portobello £102 8s 11d; Captain Barclay in 1847 of Portobello £50 0s 0d; Robert Scott of Mountlodge in 1850, Chairman of the Parochial Board of Duddingston £118 0s 3d."

A fascinating series of documents reveals that a stormy debate took place in the years immediately following the Great War concerning the proposed memorial to honour the 29 men from the parish of Duddingston and the landward areas who fell in that terrible conflict. Many thought a remodelling of the Kirk Door, of which the original drawings survive, was an unsuitable War Memorial. The opponents of this scheme wanted to see a cross as a memorial and more fitting symbol of sacrifice.

The safe also contained two curiously designed Alms Plates (seen above), probably made in Belgium in the early part of the 17th century. On one there is a representation of Adam and Eve, and on the other the return of the spies from Canaan, carrying a pole draped with enormous clusters of grapes. By whom these plates were gifted, or when they came into the country we can't say. For the past 18 years no one has seen them. If anyone has any information about them I would like to hear from you.

It pays to have an inquisitive mind! I am only pleased that we decided to open the safe before we disposed of it!

Rev'd Dr James A. P. Jack, Minister of Duddingston Kirk.



Photo by Peter Ross

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BOOKS

George Baird's 'Places Of Entertainment In Edinburgh - Part 4 - Portobello' is a real must for people interested in the history of the area. Packed within its 48 pages are gems of information such as 'As early as 1806-07 Portobello enjoyed the rather doubtful advantage of having a good many public houses or 'Inns', mostly in the High Street'. Oh how little has changed!

This booklet can be acquired by contacting George F. Baird on 661 1618.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Copy deadline for the next issue is 2nd February 2002.

Send your contributions c/o 9 Bedford Terr, EH15 2EJ, or put them in the box provided at Portobello Library, or call Brenda Molony on 669 3466 or e-mail: portobelloreporter@talk21.com

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MILTON QUILTERS WORK ON SHOW



Milton Quilter Helen McDaid (centre) shows one of the quilts to Jim and Margaret Melville of the Portobello Older Peoples Projects

A VERY successful exhibition of quilts made by the Milton Quilters for charity projects was held on October 13 in the Old Parish Church Hall. They included 15 quilts for the Portobello Older People's Projects and 25 for the national fund for mentally retarded and abused children - the Project 'Linus' UK Fund. The raffle of a quilt, plus the proceeds of the sale of teas, raised £800 for the Maggie Centre at the Western General Hospital.

Also on display were 15 cushions to be sold by the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, after a competition at the Craft Fair in the Brunton Hall, Musselburgh on October 19-21, in which the Milton Quilters won First and Third Prizes.

Helen McDaid

ST PHILIP'S CHURCH RESTORED

THE FOLK at St Philip's have been hoping that restoration would be complete in time for the special events planned for Christmas and for a week of worship and celebration starting on Sunday December 2. Parish residents, the local community and all who gave support over the last three years are invited to attend these events or to visit the church on Monday to Friday between 10am and 4pm and Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, 7-9pm:

Mon. Dec.3: 7-9pm: Community Evening - See the range of activities enjoyed by the groups who use the premises.

Tues.4: 6.30-8.30pm: Youth Evening - Activities for children, performance and fun. Youth Café.

Wed.5: 7-9pm: Music - Entertainment from local schools and choirs; hear the new church organ.

Fri.7: 7.30-9pm: Drama - Light entertainment by the Junior Choir and Drama Group. Phone 669 1720 for tickets.

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CHURCHES CAMPAIGN FOR SOCIAL EQUALITY

THE Portobello and District Council of Churches Peace and Justice Group arranged a public meeting on children's health issues at the Town Hall on October 26, when the Health Minister, Susan Deacon MSP outlined how the Scottish Executive is addressing the need to improve services for children and families. While progress has been made, she said, serious problems remain that can only be tackled in partnership with social, education and community workers.

A lively question and answer session followed on issues such as effective communication in primary care and hospital services, new hazards to children through changing lifestyles and environmental factors, and the need to step up Health Promotion programmes. The Minister listened attentively, giving positive responses to the suggestions put forward, but stressed the limitations of what can be done 'from the top' and the importance of each of us accepting responsibility for what we can do.

All agreed that it had been a very worthwhile meeting.

The Group continue to campaign for a change in world trade rules to give a fair deal to developing states, and to highlight Fair Trade promotion locally.

David Turner

PORTOBELLO AMNESTY

DURING the Week of Special Action on Torture in October, the Group obtained many signatures on the High Street to a Petition to the Prime Minister, to take a lead in persuading uncommitted states to ratify the UN Convention on Torture.

Following the events of September 11, the Group wrote to Gavin Strang MP stressing the need for the basic human rights of every person to be respected and safeguarded during any armed intervention.

As part of an event on December 8, outside the Town Hall, to celebrate Human Rights Day, a Tree of

Life will convey a message about Amnesty's work worldwide to bring hope to those whose rights are violated, and to their supporters everywhere.

The Amnesty International 40th Birthday Ceilidh on October 27 in the Community Centre was a great success, thanks to the support of the Musicians Union, including the excellent Castle Ceilidh Band, and all who helped promote it.

After many years as supporter and Treasurer of the Group, Gordon Morris retired in October. The Group are grateful to him for his many services.

David Turner

CHRISTIAN AID EVENTS

CAROL FESTIVAL: The popular annual Carol Festival will be held in Portobello Old Parish Church, Bellfield Street on Sunday 16th December at 7.30pm. This is a chance to sing along with your favourite Christmas melodies and then mingle and chat with refreshments and mince pies afterwards. The Crescent Singers will lead the singing and also make their own contributions to the programme. There will be a collection.

THE TABLE SALE on October 20 in the Old Parish Church hall raised a total of £400.

'**THE FEAST OF LIFE**' is a joyful musical about hope and a celebration of life. The music includes ballads, folk, gospel and rock, which will appeal to all age groups, and a rock band and singers from Portobello churches will be involved.

This show takes place at St Philip's Church Hall on Sunday December 9 at 7.30pm. Adult admission is by £4 donation to Christian Aid; school children free. Entry is by programme at the door or from Lilian Warwick on 669 4906.

BURNS SUPPER DATES

PORTOBELLO Burns Club Annual Supper and Dance will take place on Friday January 25 at 7.30pm at the Woodside Hotel, Musselburgh. The Immortal Memory will be given by Ronnie Crichton, and the Headboy and Headgirl of Portobello High School will give the Toast to the Lassies and the reply. Tickets from Irene Balfour on 669 4238.

PORTOBELLO Old Parish Church will hold their annual Burns Supper for Christian Aid on Saturday January 26 at 7pm in the church hall. The Immortal Memory will be given by the Rev. Calum Macdougall, formerly of St James Parish Church. For table placings at £10 per head, call Bert McCall on 669 8040.

A CHARITY WITH A DIFFERENCE

EVER GREEN, our local charity at 232 Portobello High Street, needs volunteers to help with the shop and with the conversion of accommodation behind the shop into a Green Arts Workshop; they will provide training, support and out-of-pocket expenses. Cash donations are also welcome.

Ever Green believe that there is a relationship between poor environmental practice and social deprivation, and make all kinds of donated goods available to those who need them. So don't throw things out - take them along to the shop. They also believe that people can use their creativity to solve problems and take control of their lives, helped by the Workshop, where artworks will be created from discarded materials.

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HOLY ROOD'S TV STARS

IT WAS the day that young people across the land had worked and waited for – the day when they would have the exam results that would determine their careers.

Francesca Capaldi, who sat five Highers at Holy Rood, was apprehensive because Scottish Television had requested that she open her exam results on live television. The moment was beamed across the nation, as Francesca ripped open her envelope, leapt into the air, and ran around the school library in a dance of celebration. She had gained four A passes and a B. 'I just love the SQA', she declared.



Photo by Newsflash

Francesca was accompanied on STV by Graeme Hunter of Fourth Year, who gained nine Standard Grades at band 1 – the highest possible grade. In fact, Graeme's year group clocked up Holy Rood's best ever Standard Grade results.

STARS FOR A DAY

PUPILS at St John's Primary School had a taste of the big time on Friday October 26. This was designated 'National Tell a Story Day' and storytelling events took place in schools and other venues across Scotland.

Professional storyteller Marianne Kenny visited the school and, along with her son Jamie and Ele Erskine, both P7 pupils, told stories on the theme of magic and enchantment to all the children at morning assembly.

The children took great delight in the stories and the accompanying music, and took even more delight from being filmed by BBC Scotland. Pictures of Marianne telling her stories and the children enjoying listening to them went out on that evening's Reporting Scotland programme. No doubt the programme gained many new junior viewers that evening, who would take great delight from seeing themselves being stars for a day!

Ted Brack, Headteacher.

GREEN GARDNERS GROW ORGANIC

LAST YEAR, as part of Environmental Studies and supervised by Mr Mike Farrell, Head of Geography, pupils at Portobello High School took over a plot at Telferton Allotments. They cleared it, dug it over and grew late crops of potatoes and lettuces. This year they sowed a wider range of seeds in the school greenhouse, but when the door blew off in a gale they were unable, for safety reasons, to tend the seedlings, which all sadly died. Undeterred, however, they planted three varieties of potato and pumpkins, radishes, beetroot and lettuce.



Everything is grown organically with the help of the Henry Doubleday Research Association, the champion of organic gardening, who send leaflets and information on organic pest control. They also ask for information back, which gives the pupils something else to work on.

The school's Home Economics department give waste for the compost heap in return for vegetables for use in class. 'What I'm trying to do is to integrate the idea of sustainability into the whole life of the school', says Mike Farrell (seen here with some pupils). Among the regular gardeners are Mary Campbell, Beth Spence and Lorna McDonald, previously members of the discussion group, the Really Wild Club. 'Our interest is mainly environmental', says Mary. 'Organic and stuff'.

FILM REVIEW: GHOST WORLD (15) - Running Time 111mins 'Ghost World' is the coming of age story of friends Enid (Thora Birch) and Rebecca (Scarlett Johansson), teenagers just out of high school who must cope with all the new challenges life throws at them. As Enid tries to appease her friend and find a job so they can rent a flat together, she starts to realise herself. She makes friends with geeky record collector Seymore (Steve Buscemi) whose pathetic life strangely appeals to her. Enid feels a great guy like Seymore should not be single and sets out to find him love.

As Enid and Rebecca drift apart, Enid looks for answers to her confused dilemmas and Rebecca for the perfect Ikea furniture set, Enid must choose between her friends and her dreams. Director, Terry Zwigoff has moulded a story that offers both a realistic and comic glimpse into the brief crossover from childhood to adulthood as well as a peak into the extremities of American suburbia.

This film offers more to those who enjoyed 'Catcher In The Rye' than fans of recent teenage comedies like 'American Pie'.
Eddie Ross



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Peter Ross

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TOWERBANK ENTERTAINS

ON Wednesday 10th October, Towerbank Primary School held its annual Neighbours Near and Far Afternoon, when about 60 senior citizens from the Portobello area came to the school for a cup of tea and some home baking, and were entertained by the pupils. There was dancing, poetry, drama, baton twirling, violas, guitar, choir, and class songs. Our guests all seemed to enjoy the event and went home with even more home baking and a bunch of flowers. Flowers and home baking were also taken to a few elderly people in the community who could not manage to the school. Everyone had a great time!

Annette Morrison (Senior Teacher)

TOY LIBRARY SEEKS HELPERS

THE Toy Library run by the WRVS in Portobello Library is looking for volunteers to help with welcoming users, simple paperwork, setting up for the session and tidying away at the end. Training and support are provided. This would be a good chance for someone interested in working with children to gain some practical experience, and prospective employers are keen to see job applicants who have done some voluntary work.

If you have 2-3 hours a week to spare, on Wednesdays during term-time, they would be delighted to hear from you. For further information, visit the Toy Library between 10-11am any Wednesday or contact Elaine Appleby, WRVS Toy Libraries, Lower Ground Floor, 44 Albany Street, EH1 3QR: tel. 556 4284.



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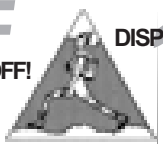
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JOPPA TENNIS

THE 2001 season has proved yet again how popular a sporting amenity the courts have become, with over 50 family memberships and the courts busy most of the time.

There have been several Open Days, including a Coaching Day which was so popular the coaches were overwhelmed by the number of children. The unofficial 'Championships' were held in September and Dave Bonar and Louise Learmonth were crowned champions.

The future of the courts is still in doubt, however, as the surface deteriorates further each year. A feasibility study has been completed by architects Somner and Macdonald, and drawings and proposals for upgrading will soon be available for consultation. Funding is still the big issue of course, so everyone concerned for the future of the courts should keep up the pressure.

Like most small organisations, the success of the courts is down to a few willing volunteers. So if you are interested in keeping the courts alive and giving the youth of Joppa and Portobello a chance to play a great sport, come along to the AGM next year and help out.

On an optimistic note, two new nets have been donated by Mr Harvey of Coillesdene Grove. We look forward to them being in place next season.

M.T.

GREAT TIME FOR ALL AT COMMUNITY CEILIDH

THE THIRD annual ceilidh organised by Portobello High School's environmental group, Party 4 The Planet, at the Town Hall on November 9 was a community event for all ages. Dave Francis of the ceilidh band 'Bella McNab' spent his evening on the dance floor instead of on stage. 'It was really nice to spend a Friday evening like that, to bring along the kids for a change', he said. A Rosefield resident remarked, 'It's good to see teenagers here enjoying themselves, getting into the dancing. I think they've all been up for every single dance'. The Portobello Ceilidh Band provided us with a well balanced sound and driving rhythm, and in Wilma Henderson we enjoyed a caller of humour, charm and unshakable patience.

Whilst fewer ceilidhs are being held in the usual 'high profile' venue of the Assembly Rooms in George Street, Portobello seems to be organising a growing number. The Town Hall hosts a ceilidh on December 7 with 'Bella McNab' on stage, with another on December 29 featuring 'Flaming Nora'. We hope our annual event will continue to attract the wide spectrum of participants that gives it its warm open atmosphere. Watching S6 pupils form sets with parents and children, a new Portobello resident observed: 'You have something very special here. You should treasure this'.
Lewis Waugh

REAL CHRISTMAS TREES will soon be a feature in many homes, so how can one avoid needle-drop all over the carpet? A fresh tree, grown locally, should retain its needles better than cheaper imports; give it a helping hand by standing it in a pebble-filled bucket or a special tree holder and give it lots to drink - about a pint of water a day should do it. Cyclamen are popular at Christmas and, if watered with tepid water from the base, should flower until at least February.

Out in the garden, there are still jobs to be done, such as gathering up fallen leaves, which may be diseased or harbouring pests, and attending to roses: established roses can be pruned by shortening long stems by half, and ramblers and climbers should be tied in well to prevent wind damage. Protect young conifers and susceptible shrubs by winding string round branches to prevent break-ages.

Dahlias can be lifted after the first frosts have blackened the leaves; dry them, dust with sulphur and store upside down on newspapers. Primulas and alpine can be sown in pots now; leave in the open, exposed to frost but protected from damp.

The splitting of clay and ceramic pots during frosts is mainly due to blocked drainage holes, resulting in an excess of water which freezes, then expands in the pot; reduce the risk by raising the pots off the ground.

Have a merry festive season, and Happy Gardening!



with Bill Thomson

CITY HOOPS CLUB HONoured

THE Portobello-based City of Edinburgh Kings men's basketball team, coached by Danny Costello, have been honoured by Edinburgh City Council with a civic reception to mark their achievement in winning the Scottish Cup for the first time last season after six unsuccessful appearances in the final. Kings beat Troon Tornados in a desperately exciting final 64-63 at Glasgow's Kelvin Hall last April. The reception was held at the City Chambers on November 21.

The City of Edinburgh club, which is based at Portobello High School and grew out of the former Portobello Parish Youth Club, are one of only two in Scotland to run teams in all six national leagues, the other being the Linwood-based St Mirren, and can boast a record number of players this season, with over 100 registered with Basketball Scotland. 'We have been having so many turning up for senior men's training that we can't cope with them and have had to divide up the sessions. It's a nice problem to have but it does make team selection a problem', says head coach Danny Costello. 'Fortunately we have a men's team in the Lothian League and those not making the national league team can play in that. They are undefeated so far', he added.

Sandy Sutherland

PORTY CLUB SCOOP £5000

CITY of Edinburgh Basketball Club received a grant of almost £5000 from the National Lottery Awards For All for their proposal to introduce a new Under-14 League and coaching programme for girls and boys at Portobello High School on Sunday mornings during the coming winter.

The programme, aimed primarily at beginners, is open to all children in the Edinburgh area. It will be supervised by the club's head coach Danny Costello and staffed by its own qualified coaches. Children will be assessed on their ability before being placed in appropriate teams and further assessed as the season progresses. Sessions have already started and further information can be had from club secretary Sandy Sutherland, tel. 669 5731, or by e-mail: Sandy@hoopscotch.co.uk

COMMUNITY CENTRE DEVELOPMENTS

THE Feasibility Study for the reprovisioning of the Centre is now available for consultation; the options include rebuilding on the present site or moving to the Town Hall. The Report can be seen at the Centre and the Library and comments would be appreciated. A public meeting will be held in the New Year.

We are still seeking volunteers for the Management Committee - come and join us at this exciting time.

Meanwhile:

THE STEAMIE CLUB has restarted on Weds, 2.15-4pm. A group for older people - everyone welcome - slides, music, discussion, crafts.

NEW Classes: French and Art Workshops for Children, Sat. mornings.

Art and Design for all ages, Weds. 6-8pm.

SPACES for: Yoga for Women (free crèche), Fri; Belly Danc-ing, Tues; Children's drama workshops, 5-8 years and 9+, Mon.

For more information on any of the above, call Maggie on 669 8275.

KITCHENERS DELI FESTIVE OPENING HOURS

CHRISTMAS SATURDAY 22 DECEMBER 8.00am to 5pm	NEW YEAR SATURDAY 29 DECEMBER 8.00am to 5pm
SUNDAY 23 DECEMBER OPEN 10am to 4pm	SUNDAY 30 DECEMBER CLOSED
MONDAY 24 DECEMBER 8.30am to 5pm	MONDAY 31 DECEMBER 8.30am to 5pm
TUESDAY 25th & WEDNESDAY 26th CLOSED	TUESDAY 1st & WEDNESDAY 2nd CLOSED

RE-OPEN AS USUAL THURSDAY 27th

RE-OPEN AS USUAL THURSDAY 3rd

JOIN OUR TEAM
At the end of January we will require a self-motivated and cheerful member of staff to join our team, average 20 hours per week, must be flexible for more hours. Application forms from the deli.

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