

The Portobello REPORTER

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The independent voice of Portobello

Your Community Newspaper produced by local people.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS AT KING'S ROAD?

CITY of Edinburgh Council have received £10.5 million from the Scottish Executive's Public Transport Fund for the improvement of access to employment and growth areas around the city, particularly by use of orbital bus services.

Part of the Council's bid included bus lanes on Portobello Road and Portobello High Street on the approach to the King's Road roundabout, and traffic signals at the Wakefield Avenue/Portobello Road junction and the roundabout itself.

Portobello High Street /Brighton Place junction was also identified as a problem, and a combination of measures was proposed: traffic signals able to recognise buses, a new junction layout and bus lanes at its approach. New parking bays would also be needed.

Further afield, on Milton Road, it was proposed that the roundabout there be replaced by signals, with bus lanes on its approaches.

Not all the money requested has been granted, nor has the actual 'achievability' of all the proposals been thoroughly tested yet. Nevertheless, I am confident that at least some of these measures will be implemented, and the need for traffic lights at the King's Road roundabout in particular has become increasingly apparent.

Cllr Lawrence Marshall



Photo by Peter Ross

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

LOOKING BACK

THE bound collection at the Library of back issues of The Portobello Reporter is a record of what has been happening in the area since 1980. Here is just a sample of the subjects covered in past Winter issues.

1987: A new Task Force for Portobello was set up by the Environmental Health department to stem the tide of urban decay, pinpointing dog-fouling, vermin, common stair problems and litter. Is nothing new? - See page 2 of this issue.

1987: A piece on the group who ran The Refreshment Room at the Baths. They had just won 2nd Prize in the Small Co-operative of the Year competition in which the judges were looking for "a co-operative set to meet the challenges of the future"! Sadly, they were displaced when the refurbished Swim Centre opened in 1997 and are greatly missed.

1992: A photograph of Screaming Lord Such and Andy Stewart who were starring in the Christmas Pantomime 'Robinson Crusoe' at Portobello Town Hall. This is a great venue for shows. Why are Community Halls neglecting it now?

1997: A report on a baby seal seen on the beach, kept under surveillance by one of our local policemen and a band of primary school children. Happily, it was later seen swimming with its mother.

The Library also has cuttings about Portobello from other papers, which are well worth a browse.

YOUTH ISSUES IN AND AROUND PORTOBELLO HIGH STREET

THE END of the school summer holidays brought about a dramatic upsurge in youth disorder in the Portobello High Street and Promenade areas, where groups of youths, sometimes between 40 and 60, have been gathering. We had a similar problem last year, involving rowdy behaviour and vandalism, as young people got back together with their schoolmates after the summer break.

The situation this year is different. Many of the young people involved are travelling to Portobello from outwith the area, and it is evident that some

are gathering here to escape CCTV cameras in other areas. These groups are intimidating to local people and I have received reports of assaults on householders and local youngsters, vandalism and thefts.

To deal with the problem, I have deployed additional police officers, in plain clothes and in uniform, which has resulted in a significant number of young people being reported to the Reporter to the Children's Hearing for a variety of offences. A large number were warned regarding their conduct in the presence of their parents. Close

attention is also being given to off-sales.

I fully understand the frustration of local people regarding youth disorder, and clearly, with the numbers involved, there will be no quick fix, but I will continue to deploy additional officers and to take a firm stance with the young people detected. I would urge parents to be aware of the activities of their children and to take responsibility for them, as I am sure they would find this preferable to a call from the police station.

Bob Hope, Inspector.

OIL SPILL PROTECTION



Photo by Peter Ross

AN EXERCISE on how to deal with a major oil spill, by the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, took place off Portobello in September.

In the light of recent events off the coast of Spain, and the obvious lack of preparation by the Spanish authorities for the oil spill, we can rest a little easier in the knowledge that SEPA practices for exactly such an event.

AROUND 70 residents of Rosefield and nearby areas met at Portobello Library in October to discuss the problems experienced in and around Rosefield Park, where large groups of youths have been responsible for late night noise, graffiti, violence and vandalism.

The emphasis was on steps that could be taken to alleviate the problem. Underage drinking is of great concern and a total ban on the public consumption of alcohol in Portobello was suggested. A letter has been sent to all local off-licences, asking for their co-operation, and anyone who has evidence

of local shops selling alcohol to children should report this to the police. It was also felt that there were not enough officers on the beat and a small group have volunteered to liaise with community police.

Anyone experiencing similar problems should log all incidents, provide evidence if possible, and contact the police.

On a more encouraging note, two young people recently enabled police to arrest and charge two adults involved in a series of violent attacks in the Milton area by coming forward as witnesses.

FIREWORKS FUN OR NUISANCE?



Montage by Peter Ross

PORTOBELLO Beach is the perfect place for a bonfire, and on a fine Guy Fawkes night several were lit and lots of fireworks were set off all over the area. This is great fun for everyone if confined to November 5, but in recent years people have been setting off loud and intrusive fireworks for weeks beforehand, well into the early hours. There have been lots of complaints about the disturbances and dog owner Shirley Shepley told us: "During the firework season my dog is afraid to go outside later in the day, as fireworks are being set off from mid-afternoon until after midnight".

Six weeks before the event, the Community Police asked local traders to take fireworks off their shelves until nearer the time, but they were clearly available somewhere. Along with Trading Standards officers they also conducted test purchasing, with the help of the Junior Crime Prevention Panel, as a result of which two local businesses were cautioned about the sale of fireworks to under-18s.

The situation should improve next year, however, as new government regulations to cut the number of firework injuries and the problems of noise and nuisance were announced in October. They include a ban on the loud and dangerous 'air bombs' and a drive to encourage local councils to use their powers to curb noise problems.

B.M.

PORTY PROFILE No. 12
LINDSAY SOUTER

LOCAL LIBRARY Officer Lindsay Souter has worked all over the city, but she says "I prefer Portobello because it's almost like a village library, and I get to know people and have a chat". She also lives locally with her husband and daughter, and their two cats that were famously saved from a fire at their home in 2000.



Photo by Peter Ross

Lindsay (nee Wardrope) was born in Woolwich, where her father was serving with the army, and the family moved back to Edinburgh early in 1970, first to Dalry, then to Portobello, where Lindsay started in P2 at Towerbank. She moved on to Portobello High School and started at the library as soon as she left school, training on day-release at Telford College.

The Local History section at Portobello Library and its website are Lindsay's special interest and she deals with enquiries from all over the world from people looking for relatives, who in turn often send her copies of documents. This involves a lot of interesting research and helps to build up the Local History collection. She also cuts out items on Portobello and famous people from the daily newspapers, which are bound into a volume for each year and are available on the shelves.

Another of Lindsay's specialities is talks on local history to Primary 3 and 4 pupils using pictures and artefacts from the collection.

"You learn so much working in the library", she says. "All the staff would be great on 'Millionaire' in phone a friend!"

Outside work, Lindsay likes to swim; she takes part as an extra in films produced, written and directed by her mother-in-law; and her favourite book is *The Good Soldier Svejk* by Jaroslav Hasek.

B.M.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PORTOBELLO'S DEMISE

DEAR Editor, As a resident of Portobello for over 40 years, I have watched with regret as Portobello has become a backwater. There are many reasons for this.

Firstly the construction of Harry Lauder Road, with planners opting for a roundabout at Kings Road instead of an underpass to Seafield Road, the narrowing of the High Street and the removal of the traffic filter at Brighton Place. These are planning errors, which have turned Portobello High Street into a 'rat run' between Leith and Musselburgh. Instead of road narrowing, would bus lanes or parking meters not have been a better option that may have encouraged some tourism?

Unquestionably, the main factor in Portobello's demise was the closure of our railway station. Although I'm delighted by the new halts at Newcraighall and Brunstane, it would appear that during the development of the Cross Rail project, by omitting a station at Portobello 'Freightliner Depot', the City Fathers have again failed to acknowledge our need for a station that would facilitate both drivers and pedestrians, and give vital support to our traders!

If and when the 'Suburban Line' re-opens and the much heralded re-opening of the Waverley Line comes to fruition, if existing routes to North Berwick and the East Coast mainline are included, the powers that be must see the commercial benefits of a station at Portobello, not only for our traders, but also the train operators.

Perhaps in one of these phases of rail development Portobello will get lucky? Sadly, I still believe in Santa Claus. David Robertson (by e-mail)

TV SURPRISE

THERE was a TV programme on Channel 4 in August about the late Pat Phoenix (Elsie Tanner in Coronation Street) including her association with actor Tony Booth, the father of Cherie Blair.

Part of the story went back to the late 1950s, when they met, and that was where we got our surprise. There was a bit of black and white film about rock and roll dancers that looked familiar, but it was not until our son came over with the programme on tape, and paused it at that part, that we realised - there we were, 44 years ago! The TV company had got hold of the film of the Final of the British Rock and Roll Championship in London in 1958, in which we were representing Scotland along with another couple, following the Scottish Final Heats at the Palais de Dance at Fountainbridge. How the years have Rock and Rolled on!



Pat and Arthur Jeffery, Portobello

ACCESS FUNDS WITH 'FUNDER FINDER'

INDIVIDUALS and Community Groups looking for sponsorship funding can now search with ease thanks to a grant by Portobello Community Council, Portobello Amenity Society, and Portobello Rotary Club. The three organisations clubbed together to fund the start-up cost to make 'Funder Finder' available in the Library, and annual upgrades will be financed by the library service, ensuring up to date information is always available.

'Funder Finder' is a CD ROM which will lead the applicant through filters to find potential funding sources. Try it out at Portobello Library any time during opening hours (10 am to 8 pm Monday to Thursday, 10 am to 5 pm Friday, and 9 am to 1 pm Saturday.)

NEWS IN BRIEF

CROSSRAIL WINTER timetables are available from Waverley and Haymarket stations and from Portobello library, and are also on the web at www.scotrail.co.uk

A concessionary fare of 50p applies for holders of Edinburgh bus passes, which can take you right through to Dalmeny, and holders of blind persons' passes travel free

TASK FORCE WORKING

THE benefits of having a Task Force Manager, Robert Davidson, for Portobello are beginning to show. Street cleaning teams are keeping the beach clean and traffic islands and parks have received more attention. Vandals are undoing some of the good work, particularly in Rosefield Park and Joppa Quarry. Graffiti and fly-posting are still a problem although means of combating them are being urgently considered. Mr Davidson welcomes reports of any problems relating to the cleanliness and maintenance of our area. Call him on 657 4815.

SATELLITE DISHES NEED PLANNING PERMISSION

within a conservation area, such as many parts of Portobello, when installing a satellite dish on any part of a house that faces the road and on other buildings, including flats. If you are not sure if you need permission, contact the planning department on 529 4403.

THE SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

offers shop owners and tenants on Portobello High Street a new or refurbished shop front at a reduced price. Restoration and replacement of traditional frontages are encouraged, and good modern designs using traditional materials will also be eligible for grants of up to 75 per cent. More information from the Council's Conservation and Design Department on 469 3770.

THE ISSUE OF CHRISTIAN PATH

and its upgrading has been around a long time! The path was owned by the railway and the Council were unwilling to purchase it unless the railway brought it up to an acceptable standard or provide a lump sum to help the work take place after purchase.

Despite a 'No Cycling' sign, Christian Path has become a useful addition to the city's cycling routes, linking the route south over the Hope Lane footbridge towards the Innocent Railway Path. It is also handy for pupils travelling to Portobello High School and St. John's Primary School.

The path has now been acquired by Sustrans, the UK-wide sustainable transport charity and I understand that volunteers might soon start upgrading it.

Cllr Lawrence Marshall

TOWN HALL

Fri. Dec. 6: CAROL SINGING on the steps by pupils from St John's at 9.30am; Duddingston at 10.45am; Towerbank, 11.30am.

Sat. Dec. 7: JUMBLE SALE for Inverleith Swimming Club, 2pm.

Wed. Dec. 11: Duddingston Area String Orchestra CHRISTMAS CONCERT OF CAROLS by local primary pupils, 7.30pm. Tickets at the door, £1.50/ concessions 50p.

Sat. Dec. 28: CEILIDH for Cancer Research UK, with Bella McNab band. Licensed bar. 8pm-midnight. Tickets £5 from Kitcheners Deli.



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

Susan Deacon holds a surgery on the last Monday of the month, except in December from 6-7pm at Portobello Town Hall, or Tel: 669 6446

Or write to The Labour Party, 54 Portobello High Street, Edinburgh EH15 1DA

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FREE I.T. ACCESS FOR COMMUNITY



Photo by Peter Ross

PORTOBELLO Community Centre is the first in Edinburgh to provide wireless ASDL Internet Connection, enabling users to access the Internet 10 times faster than a telephone connection. There are five computers for public use – four provided by the Scottish Executive, with printers, and a fifth from City Connect/City of Edinburgh Council Education Department. If this pilot project is successful, two other Centres will join the scheme.

Computer/Internet access is available free of charge after registration and introductory sessions are available. If you are interested, contact Maggie LeMay at Portobello Community Centre, 3 Adelphi Grove (669 8275), or e-mail her at PortobelloCC@btconnect.com giving your name and a day-time telephone number.

Portobello Library and all other City libraries now also provide fast, free Internet access (pictured) through CONNECT, the City of Edinburgh Council's Library Learning + Internet Service, part of the Government funded Peoples' Network.

Portobello library has six new computers for word processing and Internet use in the main library, with a further eight in the upstairs Learning Centre, which is suitable for classes. There is also access to on-line resources as well as the Council's own information service, Capinfo.

Every computer has dedicated software for disabled people and, in some libraries, in community languages; they are also equipped to synthesise text into speech or magnify text for people with sight difficulties.

Access to the Internet for under-16's will be filtered and parents who do not wish children to use the Internet can arrange this with library staff.

Sessions can be booked in advance at Portobello Library (tel 529 5558) or by turning up on the day.

PLASTIC BOTTLES MAKE GREAT CANOES!

NOT before time, Edinburgh is recycling plastic bottles in a scheme organised by Lothian and Edinburgh Environmental Partnership (LEEP), with recycling banks at 12 sites throughout the city. The nearest ones to Portobello are at ASDA and Safeway at Piersfield Terrace. All types of plastic bottle can be recycled, including milk containers, and bottles for soft drinks, household cleaners, shampoo etc, and we are asked to "wash and squash" them before depositing. If there is a high public response more banks may follow.

Recycling cuts down on landfill and saves energy, and recycled bottles can be made into a number of new products, including rubbish bags, fleece jackets, garden furniture, boat sails - and canoes.

For more information contact Karin Lundgren on 538 5381 or email klundgren@leep.org.uk

GET A HOME ENERGY HEALTH CHECK

'BE WARM, Save Money' energy efficiency leaflets are being delivered to 150,000 households in Edinburgh to encourage homeowners and tenants to complete a Home Energy Check Form and get independent energy saving advice. A free energy advice pack will be sent to everyone who completes and returns the form and they will be entered into a prize draw for £500 worth of energy efficient goods. The pack will identify what can be done to save energy, the cost

of each measure and how much it will reduce fuel bills, plus information on grants and special offers to help cover the cost of measures ranging from insulation to solar electricity equipment. Some households can even get a grant for central heating.

Whatever the budget, everyone can do their bit to reduce energy waste. To find out more, Freephone the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre on 0800 512 012 or visit www.saveenergy.co.uk

CARING SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

THE NORTH East Edinburgh Care Action Group enables older people and carers to exchange views about Community Care, learn about the services available from speakers on topics of interest, consult older people locally, and raise issues and concerns. It also gives advice on obtaining services, and help and encouragement to apply for them.

The group meets on the last Tuesday of the month (excepting August, December and January) from 3.15-4pm in Portobello Baptist Church Hall, 185 Portobello High Street. A New Year Party is planned for January 28. Would anyone who has not attended a meeting but would like to come to the party, or would like more information on NEECAG, please contact Caroline Hosking, Social Work, Shrubhill House, Shrub Place, Edinburgh EH7 4PD, tel. 553 8381, or e-mail caroline.hosking@edinburgh.gov.uk

FOCUS ON GROUPS

SCOTTISH WOMEN'S RURAL INSTITUTE

THE SWRI is part of a worldwide organisation started some 75 years ago in Canada by the wives of farmers, with the main aim of receiving instruction in various household crafts. The WRI in most countries, however, has now diversified from these early activities.

The Portobello Branch meetings, held from 2-4pm on the third Tuesday of each month at Portobello Community Centre in Adelphi Grove, include speakers on current and local affairs, demonstrations, musical afternoons and film classics.

There are just under 60 members and anyone wishing to join them will be made most welcome if they go along to a meeting.

GET UP AND GO

THE CITY'S first ever programme of activities and opportunities for the over 50s was launched by the City of Edinburgh Council in October. Based on the successful programme GO4IT for younger people, Get Up and Go aims to attract the older age group including those who have difficulty getting out. It provides social, educational, cultural, sports and leisure opportunities at venues throughout the city, including Portobello Swim Centre and Community Centre. A follow-up programme will start in April. Copies of the programme are available from Portobello Library and Community Centre or by calling 469 3504. For further information, contact Glenda Watt, Strategy Manager, 12 St Giles St, EH1 1PT, tel. 469 3806, or glenda.watt@edinburgh.gov.uk

Grants are available for citywide and local constituted groups to enable them to produce information about the programme and access transport and assistance to help people participate. For application forms, contact Maureen Thomson, Policy Assistant, address as above, tel. 469 3595, or e-mail maureen.thomson@edinburgh.gov.uk

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PETITIONING HOLYROOD

IF YOU have an issue about which you feel really strongly, you may want to consider submitting a petition to the Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee, which provides a means of access for public involvement in the parliamentary process, a procedure that does not exist at Westminster. There are no restrictions on who can submit a petition; an individual, group, organisation or institution can do so, but appropriate steps should first be taken to try to resolve issues of concern.

A petition can request the Parliament to take a view on a matter of public interest or concern, or to amend existing legislation or introduce new legislation.

The Parliament can only amend or introduce legislation in relation to 'devolved' matters, not matters that are reserved to the UK Parliament, and it has no remit to interfere with or overturn the executive decisions of other public bodies in Scotland, such as local councils or the NHS.

Full information and advice on submitting petitions can be obtained from:

Clerk to the Public Petitions Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh EH99 1SP. Tel. 0131 348 5186, Email: petitions@scottish.parliament.uk

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THOSE WERE THE DAYS!

MY BROTHER Bill and I are closing our shop, Thomson's Camping & Hardware at 266 Portobello High Street, in its 30th year. Our garden centre closed in November 2001. Although I am retiring, Bill is still selling and erecting greenhouses, from Bellfield Lane. The family business was started by our father, John Thomson, in 1945 as a slaters, cement workers and chimneysweeps in Adelphi place, next to the mission hall, where we both served our apprenticeship. Because of redevelopment, we moved to Beach Lane, later moving to 256 High St. for the same reason, and between times taking over the office of Hogg and Marshall at 209, High St.

We bought the shop at 266 from Jimmy Goldsburgh in 1973. It was purely an ironmonger's, with all that entailed: who remembers Sunlight and Lifebuoy soap, Reckitts Blue, Zebrite, cut nails, ozs. and lbs, threepenny pieces and paraffin at 2/6d a gallon? Happy days until the 'sheds' came along and made trading difficult for local shopkeepers. So we diversified into camping and outdoor goods (because of my scouting connections) and later to Die-Cast models/toys. Both successful moves.

Bill and I thank all the good people of Portobello for their loyal support over the years, some coming in first as kids and then as adults. See you around no doubt.

John Thomson

(John and Bill have been loyal supporters of this newspaper for many years, with advertising and contributions. We thank them both and wish them well for the future. Ed.)

CROSSRAIL

THE number of people using the service is building up with Brunstane Station exceeding all expectations and park-and-ride numbers at Newcraighall rising. The Council and ScotRail are putting together a marketing strategy and improving signposting to both stations.

The latest figures showing 87.4% of journeys on time or up to 5 minutes late are above average in this part of Scotland and improvement is now the main aim.

Thanks to all who have given detailed information on the service so far – particularly when attached to times and dates of trains. Keep it coming, preferably emailed to me at maureen.child@edinburgh.gov
Cllr Maureen Child

HELEN HOPEKIRK

Scottish-American Composer/ Pianist and Teacher

IN LATE SEPTEMBER Portobello Library and the History Society were contacted by American academic Gary Steigerwalt who with his wife Dana Muller is researching the life of Helen Hopekirk for a biography that they hope to publish in 2004. She was born in Portobello on 20 May 1856 and was the oldest child of Adam Hopekirk and his wife Helen. The family lived at 74 High Street where Adam carried on business as a stationer, book and music seller. In the 1860s he expanded to include number 76 and in 1868 moved to larger premises in the High Street, into the shop now occupied by Costcutters, where pianos were also advertised for sale or rent. Helen's early general education was probably at one of the local private girls' schools run by women teachers in their own homes but she also attended Windsor Lodge Academy for music lessons. By 1871 she may have been at boarding school in Edinburgh as at this stage she was undertaking serious piano study with Hungarian pianist/composer George Lichtenstein and was not with the family at the time of the 1871 Census.

Gary Steigerwalt and Dana came to Portobello on 11th October and as well as the library were able to visit some of the sites associated with the Hopekirks including the old Town Hall, now the Baptist Church. Evidence suggests that Helen Hopekirk's gave a public performance here at a People's Concert in 1866 or 1867.

The following notes on Helen Hopekirk's career are courtesy of Gary Steigerwalt.

"As a woman I prefer Scotland, as a musician Germany, but Vienna is the best place to live."

(*A Scottish Lady Composer--A Chat with Madame Hopekirk,* *The Dundee Advertiser*, November 19, 1894)

On November 19, 1894 at the age of 38, the pianist/composer Helen Hopekirk (b. Portobello, Scotland, 1856; d. Boston, Massachusetts, 1945) premiered her *Conzertstück in D Minor* for piano and orchestra with the Scottish Orchestra in Edinburgh. The Dundee Advertiser article printed the day of the event portrayed a cosmopolitan person who had developed an active performing career in Europe and the United States. The reporter described a "pleasant, resolute-looking" woman with a "sympathetic voice" and a "warm handshake."

During the previous decade and a half Hopekirk had graduated from the Conservatory in Leipzig; made her debut in 1878 at the Gewandhaus and London's Crystal Palace; toured the United States twice (1883-1886; 1891-1892); and lived in Vienna for 18 months (1887-1888), where she studied piano with Theodor Leschetizky and composition with Carl Navrátil. She had acquired an extensive repertoire of standard works and presented new music written by her teachers and colleagues (Salomon Jadassohn, Louis Maas, Edvard Grieg, Xavier Scharwenka, Anton Rubinstein, among others).

Remembered as one of the great concert pianists of her generation, her acquaintances included, Clara Wieck Schumann and Franz Liszt, but also Pyotr Tchaikovsky, Edvard Grieg, Anton Rubinstein, and Arnold Dolmetsch, among others. She performed the music of Johannes Brahms, Edward MacDowell and Claude Debussy when it was new to concertgoers. Her biographical sketch appeared in more than twenty references, including the 1890 Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Riemann Musik Lexikon, and the Thomson International Cyclopaedia of Music and Musicians (Nicholas Slonimsky, ed). Her active performing career to age thirty-five was well documented and impressive. Among the artists who worked with Leschetizky, she was regarded as one of the most outstanding.

Like her mentor, it was as a teacher that Hopekirk made her most lasting contribution. An offer from George Chadwick to teach at the New England Conservatory brought Hopekirk and her husband to Boston in 1897, where she established herself as performer, composer and teacher of wide influence, maintaining a high profile and strong influence in the musical life of the city until her death.

Dana Muller and Gary Steigerwalt have drawn on a variety of articles, interviews, and reminiscences during their research of Helen Hopekirk and her music. Personal interviews, along with examination of the contents of the Helen Hopekirk Collection in the Music Division of the Library of Congress, are the basis for Dr. Muller's doctoral dissertation offering the first comprehensive presentation of Helen Hopekirk. The thesis is comprised of an overview of Hopekirk's life as a concert artist, teacher and composer; a thematic catalogue of her works for piano; and a critical edition of the *Conzertstück in D minor*, for piano and orchestra. Dr. Steigerwalt has carried out extended research in preparation for the publication of a book on Helen Hopekirk.

Muller and Steigerwalt perform as a four-hand and duo-piano team. The husband-wife duo lives in South Hadley, Massachusetts, where Dr. Steigerwalt is Professor of Music at Mount Holyoke College.

Contact information: P0 Box 308, South Hadley, MA, 01075, USA Phone/fax:413-532-7648 Website: www.muller-steigerwalt.com



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KITCHENERS DELICATESSEN

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HUGH MILLER - THE PLAY

THE TWEED THEATRE presentation in Portobello of Stewart Conn's play 'Hugh Miller (1802-1856)' was an unqualified success. Both performances, on October 11 and 12, were very well attended and the Baptist Church Hall was transformed by a simple set and professional lighting into a small, intimate theatre.

Scott Noble's performance as a deeply disturbed man looking back over his life on the night of his suicide was enthralling, leading the author, who was present on the second night, to say it was the best performance of his play that he had seen.

It was all the more poignant as Hugh Miller's birthday was on October 10, and his suicide took place a short distance from the hall at his house at Shrub Mount, which is marked by a plaque at 82 the High Street.

The play was brought to Portobello by Sandy Smith, on behalf of the Community Council; he and his small team are to be congratulated.

B.M.

ON 9TH OCTOBER a plaque, jointly funded by Cromarty Arts Trust and Portobello History Society, was unveiled by Magnus Linklater on the façade of the City Chambers to mark the location at 297 High Street, Edinburgh of the offices of "The Witness", which Hugh Miller edited from 15th January 1840 until his death in December 1856. The Society was represented by Treasurer Vivienne Nisbet and her husband Bill who is a member of the committee.



Kenneth Pratt of Northfield (1st left, bottom row) started at Portobello High School in 1959, in the old building. He would like to hear from anyone who knows when this photograph was taken (he thinks perhaps First Year), the names of any of the other pupils and anything else of interest. Please call him on 661 3002.

LOCAL GARDENERS' 16TH CENTURY HARVEST

WHEN digging in preparation for building his garden pond, local man Mike Burns harvested an amazing haul of clay pipes. At first Mike and his wife Susan thought the pipes were 19th century, though interesting they put them aside and thought no more of it.

Mike and Susan opened their garden to the public in July and put the clay pipes on display. To their astonishment one of the visitors was a local archeologist who told them that the clay pipes were in fact from the 16th century. From markings on the bowls of the pipes he established that they were made by James Banks, circa 1520, who was the first clay pipe maker in Edinburgh, his son William, 1540's, and his grandson Thomas, 1580's-1607. The Banks family lived in a house in Burgess Street, Leith and had workshops in Wireworks Close, Edinburgh. "We thought other people might find them interesting", Susan told the Reporter, "but we never thought they would be as old as that".

In the excitement of the day they forgot to ask the archeologist his name, so if you are that man please get in touch through the Reporter. Peter Ross



Photo by Peter Ross

MEMBERS have enjoyed two contrasting but equally entertaining talks at our October and November meetings. First, Dorothy "Dot" Baxter gave a lively account of her wartime experiences instructing signallers, predominantly women and girls of the ATS, to intercept and transcribe German transmissions in Morse code as part of the Enigma operation. As she said, without their expertise and dedication the work of the decoders at Bletchley, recently glamorised on film, would not have been possible. Dot's talk, which was sprinkled throughout with interesting and humorous anecdotes put the record straight. Thousands of girls passed through the training camp on the Isle of Man to be sent to the many intercept stations scattered across Britain where they spent long hours wearing headphones sat at wireless sets.

Then Joyce Miller, writer and acknowledged authority on myth and magic in Scotland, came in November, appropriately shortly after Hallowe'en, to talk on Magical healing practices in early-modern Scotland. Examples were brought in from all over Scotland with more than a fair scattering from Edinburgh and round about. This really was "alternative medicine", as we learned about healing customs, beliefs and places associated with particular ailments.

At the time of writing we are looking forward to a presentation on 4th December by two of our members, Margaret Munro and Caroline Lancaster, along with David Anderson from East Lothian Museums Service. The trio will be describing and showing examples of material they have collected that show self-help at work in communities in Edinburgh and Lothian from the 19th into the 20th century.

There will be no meeting in January as per usual and the first session of 2003 will be on Wednesday 5th February. Because the society has no premises of its own and no storage facilities all the photographs, papers and bits and pieces accumulated over the years are kept in boxes, cupboards and under beds in peoples' houses. This means that very few members as well as the good folk of Portobello have seen a great deal of what we have. So, the meeting on 5th February is going to be an exhibition of ephemera and artefacts relating to the history of our burgh called *Portobello on Display*. It will be in St John's church hall and will be open to all from 6.00pm.

We revert to our normal format for the meeting on Wednesday 5th March when the speaker will be Andrew Broom on the subject of the Appin Murder of 1752. The controversy over the shooting of Colin Campbell, the Red Fox, is one of the most enduring and

contentious in Scottish history. Was James Stewart framed and unjustly hanged? You may find out if you come to this talk illustrated by slides that contain location shots and contemporary documents.

All are welcome at our meetings, which are advertised in the library and elsewhere around Portobello. There is a Donation Box for non-members.

Archie Foley

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CHRISTIAN AID

THE TABLE SALE and Café on 26th October raised a very creditable £458. The Committee would like to thank all the helpers from the different churches and also the local shopkeepers for their generous contributions to the Tombola stall.

THE POPULAR annual Carol Festival is on Sunday 15th December at 7.45pm in St. Philip's Church. The Reverend Eleanor Morson of St. Mark's will be the main speaker and the Crescent Singers will present a selection of seasonal airs as well as leading the community singing of favourite carols. There will be a retiring collection for Christian Aid and the evening will end with coffee, tea and hot mince pies.

SALVATION ARMY – PORTOBELLO CORPS

THE Portobello Corps is based at 40a Bath Street and is led by Major Christine Allen.

Its programme of activities, which are open to all, is as follows:

- Sunday – Praise and Worship, 4pm.
- Monday – Lunches (for OAPs), 12noon. Keep Fit, 1.30pm. Ladies Fellowship, 2pm.
- Tuesday – Parent and Toddler Group, 1.45-3.45pm.
- Wednesday – Lunches, 12noon. Over 60s Fellowship, 1.30pm. Thursday – Parent and Toddler Group, 10am-12noon.
- 1st Saturday in each month – Afternoon Tea and Sale, 2-4pm.

ROTARY NEWS

PORTOBELLO Rotary are delighted that Duncan Anderson, a Past President who organises the annual Art Exhibition and has contributed greatly to the club over the years, has been made a Paul Harris Fellow – the highest honour for service that can be bestowed.

The club again had a stall on Fringe Sunday, in The Meadows, run by Bill Thomson and helpers. £600 was raised for charities, less than usual due to very heavy rain.



THIS SPARROW-HAWK with its prey was captured on film in Joppa recently by local photographer Murdo McLeod.

21st CENTURY COMMUNITY CENTRE

AN OPEN meeting to discuss the outcome of the consultation on the future of the Centre was held on 29th September. Almost a 1000 questionnaires were returned with the following outcomes: 20% - Rebuild on existing site; 22% - Create link with Library; Sensitive refurbishment of Town Hall – 58%.

Gillian Dunn (Chairperson of the Management Committee), outlined the background to the meeting and Iain Abbot and Richard Atkins, the architects working with the Centre, gave a background to the Study. Following a question and answer session, Gillian asked that the meeting consider the proposal to move the initial Study forward and seek funding to carry out a Feasibility Study focussing on two options – the link with the Library and a refurbished Town Hall. Out of the 56 people present, 44 voted in favour of this and there were 12 abstentions.

Maggie LeMay

WHAT'S ON

JAZZ and Folk Night for Christian Aid, St John's Church Hall, Brighton Place, Friday December 13 at 8pm. Tickets £3 from 653 6603 or at the door. (B.Y.O.B.)

BURNS SUPPER DATES

PORTOBELLO Burns Club Annual Supper and Dance, at the Woodside Hotel, Musselburgh on Friday January 24 at 7.00 for 7.15pm. Immortal Memory by Rev. Calum Macdougall, formerly of St James Church. Tickets £15. Contact 669 4238 or 5367.

PORTOBELLO Old Parish Church Burns Supper for Christian Aid, Saturday January 18 at 7pm. Immortal Memory by Rev. Donald Currie, of Portobello Baptist Church. Musical entertainment. For table placings at £12 each call 669 8040.

LOCAL WOMANS MARATHON ACHIEVEMENT

MAGGIE CRAMOND (a classroom assistant at Towerbank Primary) and Anne Morrison (a practice nurse at Craigmillar), both from Portobello, took part in the New York Marathon on 3rd November. They had a great time and found the cheering crowds very encouraging and friendly. 32,000 people ran the race from all over the world.

It was a great challenge and both were delighted to cross the finishing line, Anne in under five hours and Maggie in under 4 hours. They raised nearly £1,000 for Breast Cancer Research in memory of Anne's sister, Rosemary, who died of the disease a few years ago. They are both now searching for a new challenge!

Annette Morrison

PACKED MEETING ON WAR ON IRAQ

OVER 120 people attended a meeting in Portobello Old Parish Church Hall on 10th October to hear the arguments against America and Britain bombing Iraq. The meeting was organised by the non-party Portobello/East Edinburgh Stop the War Group (P/EESWG) and the speakers were Gavin Strang MP; Aamer Anwar, civil rights lawyer; and a representative of the Kurdish Iraqi community in Scotland.

The meeting was strongly against an attack for many reasons, including the inevitable killing of thousands of innocent people, and concerns that it would really be about control of Iraq's oil resources. The meeting voted to support a Day of Action against the war on October 31, including a vigil by the Town Hall.

For more information on local peace activities, contact Portobello Stop the War Group, c/o Ever Green, 230 Portobello High Street, tel. 657 2257, or come to a meeting on the first Thursday of each month from 6.30-7.30pm at the Community Centre, Adelphi Grove, or contact Stop the War Coalition on tel. 020 7053 2155/6 or email www.stopwar.org.uk

P/EESWG

PORTOBELLO AMNESTY GROUP

ASYLUM AND Immigration Bill: Group members visited the surgery of Gavin Strang MP in October to urge modifications to the Bill on its return to the House of Commons after perusal by the House of Lords. The main issues are: right of appeal safeguarded; right to ask for bail; independent assessment of the human rights records of countries of origin. He was broadly supportive of these points and agreed to raise them with the Home Secretary.

Human Rights Day 2002 will be marked in Portobello on Saturday December 14, from 11am to 1pm, by a stall and our Tree of Hope near the Town Hall. Greetings cards for prisoners in many countries will be available and other Amnesty campaigns featured. Please come and take a look.

The group has been strengthened by several new members and offers of help. Meetings, which are open to all, are held on the second Monday of the month at 7.30pm in the Vestry of the United Reformed Church, Marlborough Street.

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NEW STRIPS FOR CAVALRY PARK FC

AFTER a year of trying to get sponsorship for new team strips, the local Cavalry Park Football Club have teamed up with Brian Hunter of Lothian Access Scaffolding Company. The boys, seen here wearing the new strips, have played in the Edinburgh League for the past year and all have shown real commitment in turning up for training sessions and matches, whatever the weather.

FAREWELL TO BEAVERS

JANIS AND GEORGE Hobb would like to say a huge "thank you" to all the 3rd Portobello Beavers, their families and the Cub Leaders for the gifts of flowers, wine, and vouchers. It was lovely of you all to show your appreciation of the time we gave to the community.

George and I have been involved with the Beavers since 1993 and felt it was time to move on before we became a little 'long in the tooth'. I am sure that for many years to come, we will come across some of our old boys, the oldest of whom are now in fourth year of secondary school. I hope you will always say "Hi" guys - you know who you are.

We wish everyone the best of luck and hope you all have as many good memories of your time at Beavers as we have of ours. We would also like to say a huge "thank you" to the Scouts who helped us over the years; again, you know who you are. Lots of luck.

Janis S. Hobb



www.rspb.org.uk

Would you like to encourage more birds to your garden or windowsill and help them survive through the winter and the breeding season? If you don't already feed the birds, now is the time to start, and this RSPB site gives information on the best kinds of food and containers, and how to make a simple birdbath, because birds need water too. (Log on, then go to Resources - FAQs - Feeding).

www.barbie.com

If your favourite colour is pink, and your favourite pastime is dressing up then you have to log onto this 'absolutely fabulous' site. Great graphics and lots of activities for girls.

www.yahooligans.com

Jokes, games and film reviews where you can watch preview trailers of upcoming films. Ask Earl general knowledge questions and find out fascinating facts. This is a good fun site where you can stretch the grey cells and have a laugh.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Copy deadline for the next issue is 2nd February 2003.

Contributions c/o 9 Bedford Terr, EH15 2EJ, put them in the box at Portobello Library, call 669 3466 e-mail: portobelloreporter@talk21.com

ECO-SCHOOL

PORTOBELLO High is now officially an Eco-School. The award was made in June and the Eco-Schools flag is flying proudly outside the school. It is the first school in Edinburgh and the second High School in Scotland to receive the award in recognition of the great work done on improving the environment, using alternative energy and safer routes to school. A video of this work has been made by the Scottish Executive and is being used to encourage more schools to apply for the award. The main driving force behind the project is assistant Head, Mr Mike Farrell and the School environment group 'Porty4thePlanet'.

PE IMPROVES LEARNING

FOR some time, St John's Primary School has offered pupils the opportunity to participate in a developmental movement programme, led by the school's PE teacher Jan McIntyre. Participants improve their ability to learn by following an exercise programme both at home and at school, which research shows has a beneficial effect on pupils who take part.

Mrs McIntyre's work was recognised when she was invited to make a presentation to the Improving Physical Education in Primary Schools Conference, organised by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI).

Mike Jess, a lecturer in Physical Education at Edinburgh

AWARD FOR PORTOBELLO HIGH

PORTOBELLO High School received the Standard Life 'Raising Achievement' Award from Education Minister Cathy Jamieson at a ceremony in the Royal Scottish Museum on 6th November.

To help develop an Ethos of Achievement, the school introduced a study support resource centre to give pupils a quiet place to study, workshops for parents to involve them in their child's learning, strengthened partnerships with external providers, and revision and team building weekends for staff and pupils.

Headteacher, David Wright, describes the programme as enormously successful: "More pupils than ever before have participated in exam revision programmes and the team building weekends have contributed greatly to a positive school ethos. We want our pupils to succeed and we are delighted to receive this prestigious award". The school received a trophy and a cheque for £500.

University, is researching the benefits of movement to children's education. He is working with Mrs McIntyre and early years pupils in St John's who will follow some of his exercises in PE classes.

Ted Brack, Headteacher

CHANGES IN SCOUTING

SCOUTING in Portobello District is implementing a major change in the age ranges and Sections it provides to encourage greater participation of the members; this follows a review by National Headquarters.

Beaver Scouts (ages 6-8) is introducing new tests and badges, Cub Scouts (ages 8-11) will have a revised training programme, and a revised Scouts will now cater for ages 10-14. Explorer Scouts is a new Section for the 14-18 age group, and a further Section, Network Scouting, will provide for 18s to 25s, but on an Edinburgh-wide basis; these two will replace Venture Scouts.

More adult leaders will be needed to staff the Sections and to make up for the loss of several long serving leaders. Training is provided and anyone who would like to offer their services should contact Ernie Moran, District Commissioner, on 657 1300.

TOWERBANK FETES NEIGHBOURS NEAR AND FAR

ON WEDNESDAY 16th October, Towerbank Primary held its annual 'Neighbours Near and Far' event in the school. Over 80 senior citizens enjoyed the afternoon, with a wide variety of entertainment by a large number of pupils. They also had a cup of tea or coffee and some home baking and went home with more baking and a bunch of flowers. Home baking and flowers were also delivered by some pupils to people who could not manage to the event. It was a great afternoon and everyone enjoyed the experience.

We had some cakes and biscuits left over and decided to sell them at the tuck shop and to the teachers, and raised £80 to send to our neighbours in Malawi.

Annette Morrison (Senior Teacher - Learning Support)

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JOPPA TENNIS COURTS IN ACTION



From top Maureen Child, Amy Mancini, Sophie Mancini, Ellen Bonar, Lisa Russell, Danika Downy, Heather Colvin and Jess Bonar.

COUNCILLOR Maureen Child had a knock-up with local youngsters at the end of September on the newly refurbished tennis courts. "I am delighted that Portobello Community Council made sure the courts were resurfaced and well used by a wide range of people in the community", she said. "All credit to those with the energy - not just to play tennis - but to take time voluntarily to develop and manage this much-loved facility. All strength to their serving arms!"

Photo by Big Scotland

IT IS usually possible to plant bare rooted roses at this time of year, during mild spells and when the soil is not water logged! However, as I write, the ground is sodden, with flooding all around us. If you do have newly planted specimens, firm any soil around them that has been loosened by frost. Otherwise heel them in and spray with a winter tar wash to kill pests that over-winter on the stems.



with Bill Thomson

Do not be afraid to lightly mow the lawn in mild spells - if the ground is not too wet, to prevent it from becoming overgrown. Plant out bulbs such as hyacinths and narcissi that have finished flowering indoors, and move containers to sheltered sites, making sure the drainage holes are clear. On allotments or the kitchen garden, finish the digging, leaving the ground rough. Remember to inspect stored apples and pears, discarding any that show signs of decay. There are many tasks to get on with over the winter - repairing and painting fences and sheds, preparing the ground for spring planting, looking at seed catalogues and planning for spring. And remember to buy locally whenever possible - it makes sense. The Season's Greetings to you all.

HEALTHY EATING

OOP! CULLEN SKINK

THIS RECIPE was given to us by a fishmonger in Anstruther, who got it from his mother, who got it from her mother... (We use haddock from Williamsons in Portobello High Street who smoke their own fish)

- 1lb undyed smoked haddock
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 2 1/2 pints water 8oz potato, diced
- 2oz butter 2tbsp flour
- 6oz carrot, grated 1/4 pint single cream
- salt & pepper parsley, chopped

Simmer the fish in water until just breaking up. Drain, reserving the liquor.

Flake the fish

Cook the onion in butter until soft.

Add flour and cook for 2-3 mins

Add the reserved stock (liquor) plus a further 1 1/2 pints of water.

Add the vegetables and bring to the boil. Cook until the vegetables are softening.

Add the fish and return to a simmer.

Finish with the cream and seasoning.

Garnish with chopped parsley to serve.

LIFE SAVERS GO UK CHAMPIONSHIPS



Photo by Peter Ross

Left to right; Sophie Wakeford with Katie and Amy Sinclair.

FOUR local members of Edinburgh Life Saving Club will take part in the UK National Championships at the Manchester Aqua Centre next March. Amy Sinclair, who attends Portobello High School, and Jade Gilhooley (Holy Rood High) won the Senior section of the Scottish Regional Heats in October, while Amy's sister, Katie (Portobello High) and Sophie Wakeford (Castlebrae Community High) won the Junior section. The girls had to carry out a simulated water rescue and first aid rescue, a rope throw, and a swim and tow. The club meets at Portobello Swim Centre on Thursday evenings.

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Karen, Teresa and Michelle would like to thank all our customers for a great first year and to wish you all a very Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year

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Happy Holidays

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