

# The Portobello REPORTER

Quarterly: Autumn 2003  
Delivered in and around Portobello; circulation 12,500

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**The independent voice of Portobello**

Your Community Newspaper produced by local people.

## SUPERMARKET PLAN FOR SCOTTISH POWER SITE

**THE SCOTTISH POWER** site at Baileyfield has been sold to Duddingston House Properties, who have lodged an outline planning application with the Council to build a supermarket roughly the size of 'Safeway' at Piershill, with some 445 parking spaces accessed via Fishwives Causeway.



Photo by Peter Ross

Earlier this year, at Cllr Lawrence Marshall's request, the Council produced design guidelines for the site, which will be material in considering this application. These state that "comprehensive redevelopment of the site" should have three main objectives:

1. To mark a gateway into Portobello;
2. To ensure that comprehensive redevelopment knits the area back into Portobello in a positive way that respects and enhances its sense of place;
3. To integrate the existing housing into a sympathetic spatial structure which offers better security and improves amenity.

In a letter to Baileyfield Road residents in February, Cllr Marshall said: "I would hope that it might be possible to begin to see a more mixed use for this site ... I hope ... that any proposal ... will include a fairly substantial element of housing to go along with any proposals for offices and potentially some small retail developments".

He is, therefore very disappointed with the current proposal. "In my opinion, it will not help to knit this site back into the grain of Portobello, but rather create a discordant appendage at its very entrance", he said. "It is a single-use offer, the use of space probably uninspiring and car-dominated. Moreover, I believe it will compete with existing uses in the High Street rather than help to enhance them".

"By making these comments now", he continued, "I have forfeited my right to vote when this application is considered at committee. However, I am thereby freed to speak on behalf of Portobello on this very important matter - a much more important consideration for me."

"If people wish to receive a copy of the guidelines referred to, please e-mail me at [lawrence.marshall@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:lawrence.marshall@edinburgh.gov.uk) or call me at the City Chambers on 529 3282."

The residents of the cottages in Baileyfield Road have had a number of meetings to discuss the impact any development would have for them. Arthur Jeffery said, "We know that something has to be built there but don't think a superstore and car park is really what folk want. It's just a waste of space. Apart from general traffic problems there would be a huge number of car movements every day in the car park behind us and what about the effect on shops in Portobello?"

Local Deli owner Graham Kitchener is concerned at the impact such a development would have on the High Street: "When Asda opened in the 1980s, our High Street took a nose-dive", he recalls. "Before then we had record shops, book shops, shoe shops etc. Now diversity is low and we have a record number of fast food outlets. This is not just a local trader talking - I live here as well and am well aware that local businesses form the heart of our community. Some may think they would not be affected, but if diversity reduces even further, everyone's trade would suffer".

John Stewart of Portobello Amenity Society points out that this proposal contravenes Policy E26 of the N.E. Edinburgh Local Plan, i.e. that "particular attention will be paid to the need [for new development] to enhance main or important thoroughfares"; and Policy S1, i.e. that new shopping development should be "appropriate in scale and character and well integrated with the [existing shopping] centre in design terms... and not likely to affect adversely the vitality and viability [of that centre]". (Any objections should be sent to The Planning Department, 1 Cockburn St, EH1 1ZJ, by 17th September).

## LOCAL C.A.B. IN CRISIS

**THE** Portobello and District CAB is facing a crisis on two fronts. It has served the community well for nearly 25 years; more than 6000 people sought help last year and this May alone, the Bureau won more than £25,000 for clients through unpaid benefits, employment disputes and consumer problems. We also have a debt counselling and money advice service, which is in increasing demand. Our help is free, impartial and completely confidential.

The Bureau occupies premises rented cheaply by the Portobello Baptist Church, but in order to meet new laws on access for disabled people, the Church wishes to move into the street-

level rooms that we occupy. We are therefore looking for new premises in Portobello or the immediate vicinity, but have so far found nothing affordable.

The second crisis concerns money. Edinburgh City Council provides most, but not all, of the money needed to provide this service, and our deficit this year is just over £5000. If we cannot raise £5000, we face the real possibility of closure, depriving local people - including some of the most disadvantaged - of the help they need.

The Citizens Advice Bureau Management will be pleased to talk to anyone who might be able to help. We are open at 191 Portobello High

Street from 9.30-3.30 on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, and 9.30-12.00 and 6.30-7.45 on Wednesday, and our phone number is 669 7138.

Jim Barron, Chairman

**The Portobello Reporter is produced by a group of volunteers and with contributions in this issue from 35 members of the community. If you have a story to tell or an event to publicise contact the editor on 669 3466 or email us at [portobelloreporter@talk21.com](mailto:portobelloreporter@talk21.com)**

## PORTOBELLO CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY CHANGES

**THE** Portobello Conservation Area was originally designated in 1977 and amended in 1998. It includes Portobello High Street, the Promenade and the abundance of fine Georgian (and later) villas, Victorian tenements, public buildings and churches in the surrounding streets.

The recently produced Portobello Conservation Area Character Appraisal outlines the special qualities of the Conservation Area and the suggested changes to the boundary.

On 2 May 2003, the following properties were included because of their architectural and townscape qualities: 18 - 40 Morton Street, Joppa Gardens, Joppa Grove, 1-24 Joppa Terrace and 23-29 Portobello High Street.

Along with the benefits of conservation area status, there are some restrictions on what can be done to a property, particularly in relation to altering windows and doors, painting, fences and extensions. For further information on the implications of being in a conservation area or to obtain a copy of the Appraisal, please contact Anna Grant on 469 3659 or by e-mail: [anna.grant@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:anna.grant@edinburgh.gov.uk) The Appraisal can also be seen on the Council website [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/planning](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/planning)

If you are planning to carry out works to your property and would like advice on planning permission, please contact the Development Quality East team in Planning and Strategy on 529 3519.

## LOCAL FRINGE EVENT A HUGE SUCCESS



Photo by Margaret Drysdale

**THE** first ever week-long Fringe event took place in Portobello from August 9th to 16th, with incredible success. It was organised by Portobello Open Door - otherwise known as POD - a community group of volunteers who came together to provide a platform for local talent and interests, and opportunities for creativity and performance in Portobello.

Sheila McWhirter of POD said: "We wanted to find a way to promote and enjoy art and performance in the local area. We feel there is a vibrant sense of community in Portobello and we wanted to express that culturally. We are overwhelmed by the positive response we have had."

Throughout the week there were workshops in craft, music, poetry and dance for children. There was theatre at lunchtimes and cabaret in the evenings - some of the best acts on the Fringe were attracted down to the stage at the The Old Pier pub, and, along with some of the best local talent, they played to packed audiences.

Tickets sold out for the World Music and Dance Night, which launched the week, and the Prom and bright sunshine provided the backdrop for a full day of free entertainment for the Big Beach Bash, the final fling of the week.

The success of the week's events has inspired others to join POD and prompted the group to start planning for the future.

Sheila added: "We couldn't have done this without the support of the local community, many of whom generously sponsored us, and we are very excited about the long term future of POD - though I think the group members will be having a serious rest in the immediate future!"

Eilidh Bateman

# PORTY PROFILE No. 15 SANDY CAMERON

**AUTHOR** and former history teacher, Sandy Cameron has lived longer in Joppa than anywhere else. "It's like a village in the city", he says. "There are open views over the sands and sea but it's convenient for Edinburgh's research facilities, especially the National Library."



Photo by Peter Ross

Sandy was born in Selkirk and educated at Selkirk High School and Edinburgh University but his studies were interrupted by war service with the Royal Artillery from Normandy to Germany. He returned in 1945 and took an Honours degree in History and also met his wife-to-be Elsbeth, a fellow student from Wales. While in Edinburgh, he played rugby for Edinburgh Borderers, which proved useful in his first teaching post, as he also coached rugby. This was Hawick High School, where he was from 1949 to 1962, becoming Principal Teacher of History. He moved to Inverness Royal Academy until retirement in 1973. Then, most well-illustrated school history books concentrated on English history so Sandy began to develop a course focussed on the history of the Scottish people and hunted down Scottish illustrations, in the belief that a good picture in the right place has more impact than a yard of text. Out of this grew *History for Young Scots*, a two-volume work that was adopted widely in Scottish schools. *Living in Scotland, 1760 - 1820* followed in 1969 to tie in with the new O-Grade topic. His first book for adults was *The Caledonian Canal* published 1972, also profusely illustrated.

The Camerons came to Joppa in 1973, Elsbeth to train as a Speech Therapist and Sandy to try writing full-time. He has since written eight history titles, two canal guides and a guide to the Highlands plus two books for adults, *The Man Who Loved to Draw Horses*, and *Go Listen to the Crofters*. Most recently he has completed two articles for the journal of the Hawick Archaeology Society and a fourth edition of *The Caledonian Canal* will be published later this year.

Sandy enjoys the theatre, although his chief recreation is hill walking, twice weekly if possible, but remarked, "The hills seem to be getting steeper now." He finds pleasure in exploring Scottish islands and other quiet places.

He has two sons and two grandsons, Peter and Michael who enjoy the sands for building castles and the Prom for football when they visit.

AF

## LOCAL CONCERNS OVER PHONE MASTS

A PROPOSAL in June by the mobile phone company Vodafone to site a mast in Bellfield Street Church, sparked a great deal of local concern, resulting in a meeting at the church at which it was decided that the mast would not be installed.

However, Portobello High School hosts mobile phone masts and the 'beam of maximum intensity' could well be falling on the surrounding area, including St John's Primary, Duddingston Primary and pre-school nurseries. In 1999, the then Health Minister commissioned an independent investigation into mobile phones and health, resulting in the 2000 'Stewart Report', which included the recommendation

that parents should be consulted on the hosting of masts in schools.

Although there is no scientific evidence of a direct health risk, some local people who have concerns about the possible long-term radiation effects in Portobello and the wider community have formed a group called 'Mast Awareness Portobello' (MAP). They have documented their concerns and requested a response from the City of Edinburgh Council. As the council no longer allows such masts to be hosted on council-owned property, MAP has asked what the policy is on the removal of existing masts, specifically from schools.

Paddy Ross (MAP)

## THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL - WHAT DOES IT DO?

THERE are 28 members of Portobello Community Council, some of whom are elected for three year terms, whilst others are nominated by local groups, such as the CAB, Portobello Amenity Society, History Society, the Rotary Club and Amnesty International. Meetings are held at the Baptist Church Hall at 7.30pm on the last Monday in the month, and often include a guest speaker on a local issue, such as the Portobello Triathlon, or a representative of the City Council giving information on a variety of social, planning and development issues.

Councillors Maureen Child and Lawrence Marshall usually attend, and Susan Deacon MSP and Gavin Strang MP have spoken at meetings during the last 12 months. The Police present regular reports, and one of the most discussed issues has been youth rowdiness and vandalism, and how we can help our youngsters to keep out of trouble and be seen as part of the community, rather than a threat. A local youth internet café is a new proposal.

The Community Council receives a grant each year, which is used to support local initiatives such as new signposts, plaques on buildings and display boards, Figgate Burn cleaning parties, or the increasing number of arts, sports and social events around Portobello, which demonstrate the enthusiasm and hard work of individuals and groups of residents who help to make Portobello what it is today.

Council meetings are open to all local residents, and anyone can raise issues that affect Portobello. Please contact the Secretary, on 669 5059 if you would like to raise an issue at a meeting.

Robert Gatliff

## CHILD SAFETY INITIATIVE

THIS project was carried out on and around Portobello Promenade during the traditionally busy Glasgow Trades Fortnight. It was designed to promote the safety of children, with free hospital-type wristbands available to adults with young children, plus information leaflets and a prominent display of posters.

The project was supported by Portobello Community Council who contributed £150 for the purchase of the wristbands. Local shops and businesses contributed a further £500 for posters and leaflets for the business premises and parents/

guardians visiting the area.

During the campaign a Police Caravan was situated on the Prom, and additional Officers deployed in the area. Whilst the often inclement weather may have kept visitor numbers down, there were nonetheless no incidents of missing children, and the presence of additional Officers did much to promote Portobello as a safe and friendly place to spend a holiday.

Many thanks to all who supported, contributed to, organised and took part in this initiative.

Insp. Bob Wardrop & Sgt Richie Adams

## CROSS RAIL NOT UNDER-USED

COMMENTING on recent adverse publicity about the numbers travelling on Crossrail, Cllr Maureen Child says: "Both Gavin Strang MP and I have questioned the assessment that passenger numbers fall short of target; there are strong indications, from our own experience and that of others, that fare income does not accurately reflect the volume of passengers, since fares are not always collected on board, and we have made this point forcibly to Scotrail. Once the new Station opens at Edinburgh Park in October, passenger numbers should increase even further. When it works, this is a very useful service indeed and much better used than Scotrail think".

# NEWS IN BRIEF

**TRAVELINE CHANGES:** Traveline Edinburgh has closed and public transport information is now available from National Traveline on 0870 608 2608. Local information is available at the new Bus Station.

National Traveline provides journey planning information for all public transport services in Scotland, England and Wales, and is open from 8.00am-8.00pm daily (except 25/26 Dec/1 Jan). National call rates apply. See also the web site - [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)

Information on Concessionary Travel is still available on 0800 23 23 23 and Concessionary Bus permits can be obtained from any Public Library. Enquiries about Blue Badges/Taxicards and replacement travel permits should be made at 1 Cockburn Street.

**ADULT EDUCATION COURSES:** Local centres are offering a variety of day, evening and weekend courses for the autumn, most of which start in the week beginning 29th September.

Booklets are available now from local Libraries and Community Centres or a copy can be posted direct to you. Request a copy on the web at [www.ces.egfl.net](http://www.ces.egfl.net) or telephone 469 3250. (Mon.-Thurs., 8.30am to 5.00pm; Fri., 8.30am to 3.40pm).

**NEW HOUSING REGISTER:** From now on, people applying for a home in Edinburgh need to fill in only one application form to access most of the affordable rented housing in the city, instead of applying to each individual organisation. The City Council has now joined the 24 Housing Associations and Co-operatives in signing up to EdIndex, the biggest such register in the UK, and a form can be obtained from any Council housing office, housing association, or co-op.

**GRANNIE'S ATTIC SITE:** There has been some concern that the frontage of the new flats being built at the foot of Bath Street would encroach onto the Prom, but in reply to a query from Cllr Marshall, Stephen Dickson of the Council's planning section stated that "the building is in exactly the same position as the previous frontage, as the O.S. map also indicated."

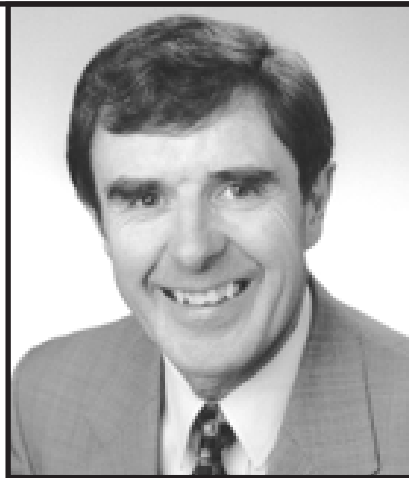
A computer-generated image of the new building, which is being sent out by the selling agents, is available on the Portobello Online discussion forum at [www.portobello-edinburgh.org.uk/forum](http://www.portobello-edinburgh.org.uk/forum)

**LOCAL BUS CHANGES:** The 32/32A circle bus has been replaced by the 32: Portobello - Niddrie - Peffermill - Cameron Toll - New RIE (but not Fort Kinnaird).

The no.12 will service Gyle-Portobello, then to ASDA at certain times (the 49 is unchanged).

Timetables are available from Lothian Buses, the St. Andrew Square bus station and Portobello library - see also [www.lothianbuses.co.uk](http://www.lothianbuses.co.uk)

**GAVIN STRANG, MP** for Edinburgh East and Musselburgh, is available to meet constituents at the following interview sessions:



On the 2nd Friday in the month; between 11.00am and 12noon in the YWCA, 198 Restalrig Road South, or between 7.30pm and 8.30 pm in the Portobello Town Hall.

On the last Saturday in the month between 9.00 am and 10.00 am in the Brunton Hall, Musselburgh, or between 10.30 am and 11.30 am in the Craigmillar Community Centre, 63 Niddrie Mains Terrace.

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

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

or e-mail him at: [gillana@parliament.uk](mailto:gillana@parliament.uk)  
You can also visit his website: [www.gavinstrangmp.co.uk](http://www.gavinstrangmp.co.uk)

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OUR online discussion forum on [www.portobello-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.portobello-edinburgh.org.uk) is going strong. At the time of writing we have 70 registered members, who between them have posted 444 messages covering a wide variety of topics such as cycling on the Promenade, the cleanliness of the beach and local planning issues. Over the next few weeks we will distribute 3000 business cards to help promote our community website 'Portobello Online' and we plan to launch officially later in the year. In the meantime there is still a lot of work to do and volunteers are always welcome. In particular, we urgently need someone with web design experience and time to spare. If you would like to get involved in this interesting and exciting project please contact us at [portyweb@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:portyweb@blueyonder.co.uk).

Bob Jefferson

## BE LOCAL, BE VOCAL

THE Council's East Edinburgh Local Development Committee (LDC) meetings are restarting after the elections and the summer break. They will move around the area and the dates and venues for the first two are:

Tuesday 9 September at Portobello High School, Duddingston Road, at 7pm.

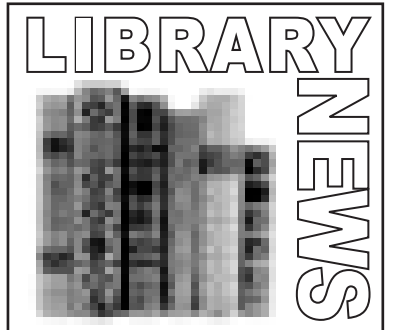
Tuesday 28 October at Meadowbank, London Road, at 7pm.

The meetings offer the opportunity to influence how certain Council services are delivered in your area and allow councillors to consider the views of local people when they make decisions. All venues are accessible for disabled people and hearing loops are available.

The LDC also awards small grants to local projects to benefit the wider community, and decisions about applications from groups and organisations are made at the meetings.

To help the East LDC become more relevant to local people and communities, Cllr Shami Khan, the new convenor, has written to Community Councils and other groups and organisations to ask which local priorities they would like to be discussed. "I hope to target future presentations and discussions at the meetings towards these priorities", he said. "I hope to consider the suggestions I receive at October's meeting to allow me to set a series of agreed 'themes' for next year".

To make it easier to contact the LDC an e-mail address has been set-up - [east.ldc@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:east.ldc@edinburgh.gov.uk)



PORTOBELLO's children have once again had a bumper summer - of reading! -with 139 children signing up for the 'Reading Maze' to get a certificate and medal for reading six books over the summer. The new Harry Potter book was busy, along with Darren Shan's *Cirque du Freak* and Susan Gates' *Invasion of the Vampire Spiders*, and with Jacqueline Wilson and Anthony Horowitz as popular as ever. Children also came to hear stories from the Greek Myths read by Carolyn and Lisa, to colour and paint pictures, to decorate Greek pots with Annie and Lindsay, and to learn to dance 'Zorba the Greek' and eat Greek foods with dance teacher Agnes Ness and library staff. Well done to all those who collected their medals and certificates, and we hope to have 'something completely different' for you next summer!

BY THE end of September we shall sadly have said farewell to our three lovely holiday relief staff, Lynne and Ross who were new to us, but soon got to know our ways, and Everisto, who also helped out last year. "I enjoyed the hospitality of the people of Portobello, hence I decided to come back for the second summer", he explained. Everisto hopes to get his Doctorate in Forestry very soon, and to use it in his home country of Zimbabwe, when the situation permits.

NEW services are constantly being added to the library, with Job Centre Plus now available on Wednesday afternoons for advice and assistance on returning to work. This will be on an appointment basis, as is the case with the Careers Scotland adviser, who already gives advice here on Mondays.

A NEW Small Ads service has been started (in the entrance window) for the use of local residents. Ads will be kept on show for three weeks. The library can take no responsibility for their accuracy - as is usual in these situations - but we hope people will find this a useful service.

Joyce Campbell

## 'WHEN YOUR NUMBER'S UP'



Photo by Alicia Conde

Directing a scene shot on location in Bath Street.

TINSEL Town came to Portobello in July when a new short film was made here, with a mainly local cast that included as many as 50 extras in one of the scenes shot at the Jewel Miners Social Club. The film, entitled 'Bingo', was written, produced and directed by local businessman Graham Kitchener and is his first short film. It is a social drama about a woman called Anne Shining (played by local actor Kirsten McIver) who is the victim of psychological abuse by her controlling husband, Jack (John Ramage). Her one escape is a night out with friends at the local bingo club, but one night a bizarre and black comic twist of fate changes for ever the lives of everyone connected with her.

"The film took two years to get into production", Graham said. "The whole process held my attention throughout, and I was amazed at how the cast and crew turned my script into reality. It was also a wonderful opportunity to showcase my local area, Portobello." The film was made thanks to the support and generosity of many businesses and the City of Edinburgh Council, and Graham hopes to have it ready for distribution to film festivals world-wide in January next year. He can be contacted at [info@highpointfilms.com](mailto:info@highpointfilms.com)

## BRUNSTANE ROAD TRAFFIC CONTROL

AS a consequence of the new development, now called Joppa Station Place, in Brunstane Road, Cllr Child has been consulting residents on proposals for traffic calming. "The developer's contribution to this is £25,000 - the cost of traffic lights contained in the planning condition, which are not technically feasible and opposed by residents in any case", she says. "The scheme was drawn up to give some comfort to the residents - particularly south of the railway bridge - that their concerns about traffic speeds are being addressed. Following a questionnaire sent to all residents worst affected, I have now consulted them on the scheme and most people would welcome it provided that on-street parking is not reduced and driveways are not blocked off, although many still feel the best solution for them is road closure".

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# SWEET SUCCESS

THE imposing red brick building standing on the corner of Portobello Road and Portobello High Street is now a fine block of flats but was long familiar to local people as The Ramsay Tech. It was built as a chocolate factory in 1906, and was the brainchild of a Border businessman of German extraction called Schultze, who brought over a manager, Herr Thiele, from Dresden. Unfortunately, Herr Thiele was caught up in the events of 1914 and, with his two eldest sons, was interned for the duration. In the early years of the First World War many improbable tales circulated about the building. One of these was that extra-heavy foundations had been put in to bear the weight of gun emplacements. These were completely untrue but the Army did requisition the building and used it for billeting troops.

After WW1, the Ministry of Labour turned it into a Government Industrial Factory, where disabled ex-Servicemen were trained as craftsmen. The building could handle 402 trainees in building, engineering, motor engineering, vehicle bodywork, rural handicrafts and tailoring.

The man whose name still adorns the building, William McCulloch Ramsay, was born in Fife in 1854 but came to live with an aunt in Portobello when still a boy. Later, without much schooling, he tried various jobs and opened a fruit and vegetable shop in Portobello. He eventually found his career with the 'Hope Trust,' a temperance association responsible for the 'Bands of Hope' and devoted his abilities towards the education and well being of young people. He organised a lads' guild at Portobello Parish Church. From 1909, he served on the Edinburgh School Board, and became a widely respected Convener of the Continuation Classes Committee in the Education Authority. He was awarded the OBE in 1926.

The Edinburgh Education Authority bought the former chocolate factory in 1923 and in September of that year they launched an ambitious scheme of evening class apprentice training. In recognition of his 16 years of dedicated service to education, they decided to name the school The W. M. Ramsay Technical School.

In its first session, the school provided evening classes for apprentices in woodworking, vehicle building, tailor work and pattern making. During the next few years the authority made strenuous attempts to introduce day classes for apprentices in building and in engineering, and in 1925 the authority agreed to accept the transfer of 127 trainees, disabled ex-Servicemen, from a factory in Glasgow. In 1927 the school was renamed The W M Ramsay Technical Institute. One year later W. M. Ramsay died but his memory lives on; the masonry students devised a memorial stone to him, which can still be seen on the staircase wall. During the decade before the Second World War, the building continued to be used mainly for apprentice training.

In the early Thirties the apprentices, using floodlights to work at night, built a janitor's house. The house included a boardroom for the Institute, and today stands as a credit to the apprentices' work.

With war looming, 350 unemployed 'juveniles' were enrolled in session 1938-39 in day classes for work in the aircraft industry, and the total enrolment was just over 800. Throughout the war the building housed an anti-aircraft unit and in December 1940 it became an emergency training establishment for women in munitions work. The courses ended in December 1944.

The first pre-apprenticeship courses for boys of 15 intending to enter the engineering industry started in autumn 1945. These courses, which must have been among the first in Britain, ran for many years with outstanding success and there are many people prominent at all levels in engineering today who can testify to the worth of the training they received at the Ramsay Tech. In 1947 day-release classes for motor engineering apprentices leading to City and Guilds qualification were offered for the first time. Day classes for trainee miners and other engineering apprentices followed, with student numbers steadily increasing until it became necessary to build and equip huts around the main building for day and evening enrolment.

In 1967 the Institute became part of the Telford College set-up, and in August 1968, the students moved to the purpose-built workshops and classrooms of the engineering department of the new college building. The Youth Hostel Association used the facilities of the building briefly until it became a busy annex to the new Stevenson College at Sighthill when it opened in 1970. It continued to offer a wide variety of further education courses both by day and by evening until it became surplus to requirements and closed its doors to students. Fortunately, it did not suffer the fate of other fine local buildings and instead of being demolished was converted into an apartment block. The breadth and depth of the service that the building bearing his name has provided for the community in peace and in war over the years would indeed have delighted W. M. Ramsay himself.

Archie Foley

(with grateful acknowledgement of the research of the late Andrew Archibald who was a member of staff at Ramsay Tech.)

**ROYAL SCOTS GENEALOGIST** and military historian, Ian McCallum is producing a book on the Royal Scots Battalions in Gallipoli and is seeking information and photographs relating to the battalions that were stationed in and around Portobello in 1914 and 1915. In particular he is looking for personal diaries, photographs of individual soldiers of the Royal Scots and period views of the soldiers and their billets at the Marine Gardens and the Chocolate Factory [Ramsay Tech.] on Portobello Road.

Additionally, anything covering the soldiers and the battalions over the same period in Musselburgh or Leith would be of great interest.

(Contact Ian McCallum at Trelawney Cottage, The Square, Gargunnoch, FK8 3BH or 01786 860488)

## LOCAL HOME FOR HISTORIC PORTRAIT

A PORTRAIT of Alexander Brand, the last Provost of Portobello before integration with Edinburgh in 1896, has come up for sale in London. The Community Council is keen for it to be brought to Portobello and funds have been made available from the City Council-administered Jean Watson Bequest Fund, which was set up to buy works of art of historical significance and artistic merit. Portobello History Society, Amenity Society and Community Council have also agreed to make a contribution. The portrait will hang in Portobello Library.

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# BRUNSTANE RUGBY CLUB



**THERE** are no names with this very old picture but we are told on the back that it is of Brunstane Rugby Club who played on land at Brunstane Farm. The only clue as to the date is the additional information that the club did not survive after WW1.

## BRIGHTONS RESIDENTS PLAN EXHIBITION

**BRIGHTONS** Residents Association was formed in 1978 in response to the plans to build Sir Harry Lauder Road and, although it was unable to stop the road being built, it was able to negotiate significant concessions on behalf of local residents. Since then, BRA has successfully lobbied for local traffic calming measures and a range of improvements to both Brighton and Rosefield parks. To mark its 25th anniversary, the association hopes to stage a local history exhibition in the library. We are particularly keen to speak to older residents about their recollections of living in the Rosefield/Brightons area. If you would like to help please email us at e-bra@blueyonder.co.uk or call 669 1918 (evening).  
Bob Jefferson

## PORTOBELLO HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

**AT** the time of writing members are looking forward to our first meeting on Wednesday, 3rd September when the programme of monthly guest speakers got underway. Dates and details of all meetings are already posted in Portobello Library and elsewhere around the area and individual meetings will be advertised from month to month.

The society is not just all about a group of people coming along to a church hall once a month from September to June to listen to a speaker and watch slides, interesting and enjoyable although that can be. In the coming session groups of members will be engaged in projects to record oral history, make photographic records as Portobello continues to change and develop, and to gather and preserve materials relating to local organisations that have gone out of existence. We have had a number of donations recently; copies of programmes of some of the shows, displays and sales put on by local Boy Scout troops from 1911 to 1954; booklets on the histories of St Mark's Episcopal Church, Duddingston Church and village and New Restalrig Church and old photographs, two of which are reproduced here. Saving material such as this is a race against time before it is destroyed or thrown out because people don't know what to do with it. The Portobello History Society will always give it a welcome and make sure it is not lost for future generations to look back on. Contact us through the Portobello Reporter, Portobello Library or by e-mail at Alfoley21@aol.com.

### PROGRAMME

Society meetings from October to December:

Wed. 1st Oct.: Ian Campbell, *A Modern Survey of Hugh Miller's Shrub Mount*. [A report of the findings from a recent examination of the building]

Wed. 5th Nov.: Carmen Demarco, *An Immigrant's Story*. [How a family from Italy became established in Scotland]

Wed. 3rd Dec.: Geoff Swinney, *William Speirs Bruce - From Joppa to Antarctica*. [The remarkable achievements of Scotland's polar hero (illustrated)]

## THE WINDSOR PLAYERS



**CAN** anyone identify this cast of local thespians in a play titled Ballista? The history society would also like any other material and information about this amateur drama society that was not only locally popular but we believe also competed with some success in drama competitions.



Photo by Margaret Munro

**PORTOBELLO CO-OP** may have been absent from the High Street for some time but its name made a brief reappearance recently when CostCutters had the boarding that obscured its original frontage removed. This was done taking advantage of grants available under the Portobello Shopfront Improvement Scheme. Two other premises to have benefitted from the scheme to restore fronts to their original state are Deli 194 and d.b.studio, the photographers.

## KITCHENERS DELICATESSEN AUTUMN AT THE DELI

Enjoy the start of Autumn with a coffee outside, sitting at our tables under a canopy of trees, as their leaves begin their change in colour.

Graham Kitchener would like to thank all who helped and took part in the recent short film production, due for release in January.

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**LETTERS**

**POWER OF THE LOCAL PRESS**

IN the Summer issue we printed a request from Mr H E Anderson, who now lives in England, for information on two of his Portobello friends from 50 years ago, Rab Lane and Davy Wright, and soon received the following news:

"Dear Editor,  
The insert in your June edition was spotted and fed back to Rab Lane, who now resides in Corstorphine. He duly contacted me and we have spoken several times and eventually tracked down Davy Wright in Bristol, only to learn that he passed away last year. I have arranged a visit to Corstorphine next month [August], where we will have a bit of a reunion (albeit after 50 years) and I'm sure we will wander down memory lane around Portobello over our weekend.

The power of the national press is often quoted, but in this instance the local press has come up trumps. Many thanks for your efforts and long may you continue to fly the Portobello flag.

Yours sincerely,  
H E Anderson."

**FOCUS ON GROUPS THE TROTTERS CLUB**

THE Trotters Club was founded in 1882 as a Gentleman's Club, meeting in the Sheep Heid Inn, Duddingston, where they still meet today. An old advertisement for the club reveals that members played 'American Bowls' - skittles are now played at the monthly meetings. Membership has fluctuated over the past 120 years and lady members were admitted in 2000.

Each June, the top eight male scorers of the year play for the Colonel's Plate. The ladies have their own championship, but all members play for the Club Championship in September. A traditional supper of Scotch pie and beans is served at every meeting, although sandwiches are provided for vegetarians. Visiting teams are welcome.

Every meeting closes with The Harmony. The Sheep's Heid is first displayed and a gavel, dating from 1902, is used to call for order. The Snuff Box is then passed round as members offer a silent toast to the club's founding secretary John McArthur. Anyone coughing or sneezing is asked to contribute to the charity mug and, from this, £100 is donated annually to local charities. The Club Bard often recites his poetry.

The Trotters meet at 7.15pm on the first Saturday of the month between September and June, and new members are always welcome.

Margaret Munro

**CHRISTIAN AID WEEK**

The total collected in Portobello was a massive £9,366, including Gift Aid on many donations. (Gift Aid makes a simple and valuable addition to donations at no extra cost to the donor - the tax already paid on donations can be reclaimed by a charity - and it would make a big difference to all charities if more people signed up).

**GROWTH IN DEMAND FOR CHILDMINDERS**

THERE is a growing demand for childminders in Edinburgh and more are needed. This can be a satisfying career and often appeals to parents and grandparents, but interested people often don't know how to go about it, nor are they aware of the support available. Edinburgh Childcare Partnership, in conjunction with the Business Gateway, are organising short, free information sessions (with crèche) on what childminding involves and the free training, support and advice available. There are grants of up to £500 to get started.

The sessions will be held from 10am-12 noon on 27th September at Meadowbank Sports Centre, and on 4th October at Craiglockhart Tennis Centre. To book a place contact the Business Gateway on 477 8043 or email childminders @ecce.org

**WHAT'S ON**

**TOWN HALL -**

Sat. 20 Sept: 10am-4pm: STOP THE WAR COALITION PEACE FESTIVAL - Where do we go from here? Speakers, workshops and stalls.

Wed. 8 Oct: 7.00 for 7.30pm: PORTOBELLO FLORAL ART CLUB recommences. All welcome.

Sat. 29 Nov: 2-4pm: JUMBLE SALE for Inverleith Swimming Club.

**ELSEWHERE**

Sat. 11 Oct: 10-12: COFFEE MORNING for Guide Dogs for the Blind, at Restalrig Ave Sheltered Housing Hall. Various stalls incl. Guide Dogs goods and Christmas cards. (The Assoc. thanks all the shops in Portobello who contributed).

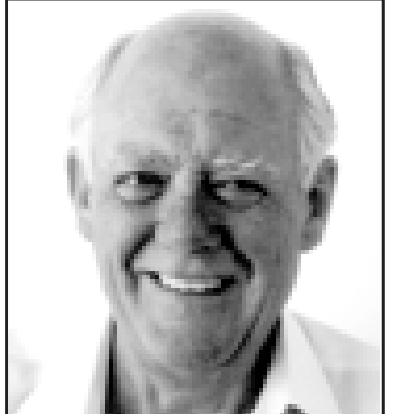
Sat 18th Oct: 10-12.30pm: TO mark the Banner Group's 10th Anniversary, an EXHIBITION OF CHURCH BANNERS and Coffee Morning will be held in Portobello Old Parish Church Hall. Come and join this social event and bring a friend too. £1 incl. refreshments.

Wed 8th Oct: 7.30pm EDINBURGH TELEPHONE CHOIR will give a concert at the Old Parish Church, Bellfield Street. Tickets £5 incl refreshments from the Café Lounge (Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm) or at the door.

Mon. 29th Sept - Sat 11th Oct: ART EXHIBITION by St James Art Group in Portobello Library. The group meets on the second Thursday morning of each month in the Church Hall in Rosefield Place and there are a few places available. Anyone interested should contact Evi Carmichael on 669 6731.

**OBITUARY**

**JIM MELVILLE**  
Died 20 May 2003, aged 77 years.



BY profession a senior Civil Servant, Jim (James Kelso) Melville will best be remembered as an energetic and enthusiastic servant of his Church and his fellows.

Coming originally from Saughtonhall, he lived in the Portobello area for 47 years and served the local Congregational (now United Reformed) Church as officer, lay preacher and inspiration.

In 1985, Jim became the first Secretary of the Portobello Council of Churches, was Publicity Officer for many years and Chairman in 1988/1990. He served on the Management Committee of the Portobello Older Peoples Project and was involved in the Portobello Benevolent Society. He was also Convenor of the Monday Centre, that remarkable project organised by the Portobello churches at the Baptist Hall; run by volunteers, it provides a social focus and lunch for those with mild or moderate dementia, and a period of vital relief for their carers.

During WW2 Jim served in Egypt and Palestine, seeing places whose names he knew from the Bible, and later in Italy and Germany.

He also held several Congregational posts at District and Scottish level, including that of President, and was an Accredited Lay Preacher for over 20 years, speaking in Churches all over Scotland. He hosted Social Evenings for his Church and, when inspired, would write a hymn for a special occasion.

So loved and honoured was he that mourners at Warriston Crematorium took 45 minutes to file past his wife Margaret, son James and daughter-in-law Norma. For his enthusiasm, organising impetus, joyfulness, and friendship Jim Melville will be greatly missed by many in Portobello and throughout Scotland.

R McK

**CHURCHES' CHALLENGE ON TRADE JUSTICE**

AS part of a UK-wide lobby of MPs in July, representatives of Portobello and District Council of Churches presented Gavin Strang MP with over 200 pledges signed by church members in the area, in support of the Trade Justice Movement's campaign to change the rules on international trade in favour of the poorest countries. Priority proposals are: that they be allowed to support their vulnerable producers until strong enough to compete in world markets; and that subsidies used by rich countries that harm developing states, e.g. in agriculture, should be removed.

Gavin Strang saw special value in another proposal: that a global authority be set up to control the activities of huge trans-national companies that seriously harm the poorer economies, violate human rights and degrade the environment; a Code of Conduct and an enforcement system would be established. He agreed to convey all the proposals to the Government and accepted a copy of the Trade Justice Resolution adopted, copies of which are displayed in each church in this area.

David Turner

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[www.disney.go/disneyvideos/miyazaki](http://www.disney.go/disneyvideos/miyazaki)

Dedicated to the wonderful Miyazaki feature animation 'Spirited Away' released by Disney, a must see movie, this website gives more background info on the film and its maker.  
Peter Ross

## ENTERPRISE TIME AT TOWERBANK

AT the beginning of June, eight Towerbank P7 pupils went to the City Chambers to take part in the finals of the Primary Schools Enterprise Competition. To reach the finals we had to design and make a kite for a toy company in the semi-finals. Our kite was a rocket design and we were joint winners with Lismore Primary. In the final we had to make a clock that could be used to teach P1s and P2s to tell the time. We decided on a monster design and made the numbers with different textures and colours for pupils who are blind or visually impaired. We also wrote a presentation.

The judges announced that three schools had the same number of points - South Morningside, Sighthill and Towerbank. So we had come third out of 80 schools.

Thomas Moens & Ross Coyle, P7B

## BBs PLAY HOSTS TO DANES



AFTER a highly successful visit to Denmark in 2001 it was the turn of the 25th Edinburgh Boys Brigade, based at St Phillips Church, to host the return visit of our twin Company the 1st Aalborg FDF. At the end of June, 29 boys and staff were joined by 13 Danes at the BB's Craggan Outdoor Centre on the shores of Loch Tay for a week of activities.

The theme of the camp was 'Creating a Legend' and through a series of activities and visits, participants explored how to create their own legend. The senior boys, seen here in action, took the legend theme one step further when they were crowned Kenmore Highland Games tug-of-war champions.

After camp we spent a week showing our guests around Edinburgh and the surrounding areas before they caught their flight home.

Once again our international camp was the highlight of the year and we are already planning for our next trip to Denmark in 2006. These exchanges have been running for 11 years and would not be possible without the continued support of the European Council's Social Fund.

Gordon Higgs

## EXCHANGING STORIES

IN a unique project, local professional story teller and musician Marion Kenny worked with primary school children at St.John's, Portobello, Scotland and Portobello School near Dunedin in New Zealand.

The children from the two schools worked with Marion to produce CD's from each school full of stories they had created and performed themselves and music they played between each of the stories. Here is an example of their work.

**A** long time ago there was a boy and he was walking home from school. He took a shortcut past the river and as he was going past the river he saw a huge firey bird that he had never seen before. He stared at the magnificent bird for a few seconds and then looked up only to see two blackbirds.

He went home and told his mum. His mum said that such a creature had been spotted before but no-one had proof. She said to him, "if you ever see this creature again you must kill it or it will give you bad luck for the rest of your life".

He packed some things in his bag and set off to find the creature. He went along the river where he first saw the beast. The river went on for miles and miles and went through a wood and at the end there was a huge waterfall.

He sat down to have something to eat and wasn't sure if he would find the creature. He chucked a stone into the waterfall but instead of hearing a plop he just heard it hit something hard, so he decided there must be a cave at the other end of the waterfall. He went through and at the other end he was drenched. There were three tunnels and he took the middle one. It went on for quite a time but then he heard snoring. At the end he saw the beast sleeping. The big firey bird. He got out his knife from his bag then he dropped it and the bird awoke. The bird threw fire at him but he missed. The boy managed to kill the bird but when he went home no-one believed his tale.

Amy McDonald,  
St. Johns,  
Portobello, Edinburgh

## CHRISTIAN PATH TO BE RE-SURFACED

THE cycling organisation 'Spokes' hope to have the help of Portobello High School pupils this autumn to re-surface Christian Path with whin dust and have received just over £3000 from the Local Development Committee for the project. Lots of cyclists and High School pupils regularly use this path, which skirts the railway embankment between Windsor Place and Brighton Place. The path has been neglected for many years because of disputes over ownership and, therefore, responsibility for it, so this is good news. Would anyone else willing to help please call Ian Maxwell of Spokes on 669 6542.



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## OPEN WATER SPRINT TRIATHLON



The 90 competitors who took part in this event in Portobello on 20 July are seen here entering the water at the start of the race. The winner was Phil Sykes; 2nd Michael Cunningham; 3rd Stuart Reid.

Photo by Peter Ross

**I START** to collect paper bags and those envelopes you get with junk mail about now, and use them to collect my own seeds. Pick a good dry day and ensure the seeds will come out of the pods easily. If there are bits of husk or debris, put them in an ordinary sieve and blow it off gently, but don't do this outside on a windy day or you'll lose them all. I write the date and name on the bag immediately; in my past ignorance I thought I'd remember or identify which seeds were which, and of course I couldn't, so had no idea when, where or how to sow my harvest the following year.

If you have an apple tree and don't eat or cook the fruit, it can be used for juicing. We hire a fruit press (£5 per day from the local beer/wine kit shop) and make our own organic apple juice - You could even get together with a few friends and have a mini-community fruit pressing. We spend a day collecting, cutting off any bad marks, rinsing, crushing (cores and all) and pressing the fruit. It is poured into plastic bottles and frozen immediately and thawed throughout the winter when needed. Much better than supermarket stuff. I collect woody trimmings for my barbecue, and put the wood ash round the fruit trees to provide potash, which helps keep them healthy.

Let all the leaves fall off your trees before starting to remove from lawns etc, and only remove from around those plants that don't like the winter wet, otherwise they act as a free mulch. By March they'll have disappeared, but if you've left some on the lawn and see a scroll of leaf pointing upward, that is a worm taking it down under the lawn. Nature, the great recycler.

Buy some bulbs and let children plant them into grass in the shape of their initials. Snowdrops, crocuses, or any of the miniature daffodils or tulips look good, but ensure they are from a reliable source and not dug from the wild, either in the UK or abroad.



with Susan Burns

## 'CITY' COURT SUCCESS

**CITY** of Edinburgh are looking to build on the outstanding successes of last season and consolidate their position as the number one basketball club in Scotland.

The league season begins on Saturday 21 September, with the juniors and cadets both at home to Dundee Sharks. The senior men and senior and junior/cadette women have a warm-up tournament at Meadowbank on 13/14 September, and the men play the Scottish Rocks in a challenge game at Meadowbank on Saturday 27 September, tip-off 6.30pm.

The first full card is on Saturday 4 October, with all cadet and junior teams away to Highland, senior women away to Dunfermline, and senior men away to Glasgow Storm.

S.S.

## OOP! CHILLI 'SIN CARNE'

- |                                       |                            |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2 tbsp vegetable oil                  | 2 medium onions, chopped   |
| 2 tsp hot chilli powder (or to taste) | 250g red lentils           |
| 2 x 400g tins chopped tomatoes        | half litre vegetable stock |
| 1 dessertspoon Marmite                | 2 bell peppers, chopped    |
| 2 x 400g tins red kidney beans        | 1 tsp cocoa powder         |
| 1 tbsp sugar                          |                            |

- Heat the oil in a large pan and cook the onions until just going soft.
- Add the chilli powder and stir for a minute, then add the lentils and stir well.
- Mix the Marmite with the stock and add to the pan, then add the tomatoes.
- Bring to the boil and simmer until the lentils start to go soft.
- Add the peppers and beans (drained and rinsed), return to a simmer and cook for a further 15 mins.
- Finally, add the cocoa and sugar, stirring well.

This will make quite a lot of chilli, enough for 6-8 people. It freezes well, but be sure to defrost it before trying to re-heat!

## TENNIS COURTS OPENED

**SATURDAY** 21st June saw the official opening of the newly refurbished Joppa Tennis Courts, when members and friends were joined by Susan Deacon MSP and Cllr Maureen Child. The ribbon was cut by Mrs Flo Brown, who can remember playing tennis at Joppa before the Second World War.

Membership is well up on last year and the courts have continued to be busy throughout the summer during the 'Pay and Play' sessions. Thanks to Richard Mowat and team for looking after the courts so well.

M.T.

## AUTUMN AQUATHON

IN the wake of the successful Portobello Spring Aquathon, an Autumn Aquathon will take place on Sunday 28 September from 9.00 to approx. 11.00am at Portobello Swim Centre and on the Promenade. The event consists of a swim followed by a run and will be split into five age-groups for 8-16 year-olds, plus an adult category. For further information, call 657 4716 or email [bruce.kidd@baesystems.com](mailto:bruce.kidd@baesystems.com); for applications see [www.edinburghracingcoop.co.uk](http://www.edinburghracingcoop.co.uk)

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The deadline for your contributions to the Winter Issue of *The Portobello Reporter* is **2nd Nov. 2003**

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