

# The Portobello REPORTER

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**The independent voice of Portobello**

Your Community Newspaper produced by local people.

## SHOPPING LOCALLY

THE recent jostling for position by the major supermarkets calls into question once again the effect these huge businesses have had on local shopping areas. *Portobello Reporter* readers have seven such outlets to choose from, provided they have transport. Those without transport, the elderly, the disabled, and many mothers with small children rely on our local shops – at the moment; maybe ten years hence, if we don't support them, there will be very few left. Then we might have to drive to the nearest supermarket, instead of just 'popping along the road', for the one or two items we often need in the middle of cooking a meal or doing a job.

An article in the May/June 1982 issue of the *Reporter* urged readers to try to buy everything they needed locally for a short period (as the author had done, with great success), and listed many of the items available, including toys, wallpaper, shoes, records and tapes, furniture and car parts. It would be almost impossible to do this now, as the shops that specialised in those items and others have closed.

Nevertheless, there are many excellent shops in our area, some



Photo by Peter Ross

new and some long-established, and it should still be possible to buy a lot more than many of us do now at our local general grocers, greengrocers, butchers, fishmonger, bakers, delicatessen, wine merchants, chemists, stationers, florists, cobblers, watch repairer, jewellers, clothes shops, beauticians, hairdressers, optician, hardware stores, cycle shop, fishing shop and others.

If we shop locally, we meet friends and acquaintances and can

exchange news and gossip, perhaps in one of the inviting cafes. Admittedly, that can take time, but it's much more pleasant than standing in a long queue at a supermarket check-out and it reinforces a sense of community.

Finally, this newspaper, that so many readers look forward to every quarter, is, as we always state "funded solely by the business who advertise in it. Please support them [and others] whenever possible".

B.M.

## EXCITING OPPORTUNITY FOR LANDMARK SITE

AS MANY readers will know, Scottish Power are moving out of their site at Baileyfield into a new unit at Telferton. This seemed to offer a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to de-industrialise this important gateway site to Portobello and I therefore asked the Council's Planning Committee to prepare Urban Design Guidelines for any redevelopment. These were approved by the Committee in February and aim "to knit the area back into Portobello in a positive way" while also improving the "security and amenity" of existing housing in Baileyfield Road.

A landmark building signalling the west entrance to Portobello is proposed, of up to five storeys - perhaps incorporating the Edinburgh coat of arms saved from the former Power Station which stood on the opposite side of the High Street. Elsewhere, street frontage heights proposed are three and four storeys, stepping down "across the site to offer a transition from the High Street to the one/one-and-a-half storeys on Baileyfield Road".

Whilst zoned for industrial use at present, "consideration will be given to some alternative uses if a suitable justification is offered". Housing and perhaps some retail outlets are therefore all possible in a mixed-use development.

Of course, not all the Portobello High Street frontage between the King's Road roundabout and Fishwives Causeway is owned by Scottish Power. Nevertheless, the "Council's expectations are for a high quality and comprehensive redevelopment of the entire triangle" and "redevelopment or relocation" of the three other businesses in this triangle will be encouraged.

This will be one of the most important developments in Portobello for many years and I hope these guidelines will help us to achieve something to be proud of and to leave as a legacy for the Portobello citizens of the future.

Cllr Lawrence Marshall

## 'FASHIONABLE' – THE ULTIMATE ACCOLADE?

THE *Guardian's* 'Editor' column of 1st February summarised a *Financial Times* article thus:

Edinburgh Rocks: "If you're looking for insulation from the threat of falling property prices, move to Edinburgh" says the *Financial Times*. "No one in the Scottish capital is forecasting a fall in the city's property prices - which may be because virtually no one in the trade is old enough to remember the last time the city's house prices dipped." Last year, property inflation soared to a 31-year high of 21.3% but prices are still forecast to rise by 5% to 10% this year because of the lack of supply.

Even "once unfashionable areas are attracting attention. Many agents point to Portobello and Joppa in the east as areas where big family houses can be bought for two thirds the price of something in the [more fashionable] Grange."

(Fashion isn't everything – What about friendliness and a sense of community? Ed.)

B.M.



Photo by Peter Ross

SINCE the demolition of Grannies Attic we have been given a unique opportunity to see the beautiful Victorian building at the foot of Bath Street in all its glory. This view from the Promenade will soon to be obscured again by the modern building about to fill the site.

## NEW HORIZONS IN PORTOBELLO

ARE YOU interested in: A change of direction? Learning new skills? Brushing up old ones? Finding work? Getting more involved in your community? If so, help is at hand.

Joanne Holmes is the local adviser from Careers Scotland and can offer people of any age support in planning careers and learning. Local people have had support with changing jobs, finding out about courses, volunteering and getting back to work. She offers appointments in Portobello Library.

Gillian Lawrence can support adults to brush up on everyday writing, reading and numbers. You can work on your driving theory test, sorting out bills, helping your kids with homework, writing letters, using computers or other English and Maths - You choose. Childcare is often available.

Both services are free, confidential and impartial. We welcome people of any age and at any stage. For more information please call: Gillian Lawrence (661 7463) or Joanne Holmes (556 4110).

## COMMUNITY BEAT OFFICERS TO PATROL ON FOOT

UNDER new policing arrangements to be introduced on 1st April, Edinburgh City Centre will become a single Division, and the Portobello area (to be known as a 'Sector') will become part of East Local Policing Area (East LPA), also incorporating Craigmillar 'Sector'.

The command structure for East LPA is: Officer in Charge - Chief Inspector Paul Morisetti (based mainly at Portobello); Inspector Bob Wardrop, responsible for Portobello; Inspector David Grady, responsible for Craigmillar.

The broad concept is that Portobello Sector will be divided into six 'Beats', aligned to the Council Ward Areas. These 'Beats' will be patrolled by a number of 'Community Beat Officers' who will be mainly on foot, plus a number of 'Response' vehicles that will attend emergency or urgent calls.

Of particular importance to local residents, AFTER 1st April, is that the Magdalene area (currently in the Craigmillar policing area) will become part of the Portobello Sector. The Duddingston/Durham areas will become the responsibility of Craigmillar.

Further information will be forthcoming once confirmed. Insp. Bob Wardrop

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Copy deadline for the next issue is 2nd May 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

## COMMUNAL BINS ON THE WAY

THE week beginning 23rd March will see the start of the delivery of communal waste bins in the Portobello area, completing the programme of containerisation that began with individual wheelee bins. No longer will King's Road reveal the culinary (and other!) habits of its inhabitants, nor will folk have to store their rubbish in their homes until the twice-weekly collections.

Communal bins are to be found throughout the UK and Europe and, while I admit that they aren't the most beautiful sight in the world, our city is all the cleaner for them where they are already in place - And complaints about rubbish

everywhere have formed quite a large part of the ear-bashing I get as a local councillor!

The Council held two sessions in the Town Hall to discuss siting, etc. with residents, following a letter sent to those affected, and I hope most of the issues will have now been resolved.

The slogan says "Edinburgh is a Beautiful City - Let's Keep it That Way". I think Portobello is one of the most beautiful parts of our beautiful city and I'm sure containerisation will help to ensure that rubbish is no longer the blemish that it has all too often been.

Cllr Lawrence Marshall



## PORTY PROFILE No. 13 SANDY SMITH

MAN of many parts, Sandy Smith of Joppa, is probably best known locally as Producer/Director of the Melville Music Hall Company, formerly a drama club, the Melville Players, set up by him in the 1960s at Portobello Old Parish Church. The Company have performed dozens of fund-raising concerts for groups in Portobello and Edinburgh and on stage at the Brunton Theatre.

Sandy was born in Aberdeen where he graduated MA from the university. There he also met his wife Rosemary, and in the early 1950s they moved to Joppa. After taking a teaching diploma at Moray House, Sandy's first post was at Crookston Primary School, between Wallyford and Whitecaig, and when that closed, he moved first to Wallyford Primary, then to the headship at Whitecaig.

In those early days he took extra jobs in the holidays to make ends meet: he taught evening classes in Civil Service English at the former Regent Road Institute, then dashed across to Craigmillar for night shifts at the Walls icecream factory, or to Holyrood Road to the S&N brewery. "It was really hard work", Sandy recalls, "but we had a son and two daughters and I had to eek out the pittance that teachers earned then". In 1972 he became Head Teacher at Mauricewood Primary in Penicuik but took early retirement in 1983 because, he says, "there was too much paperwork".

Sandy had enjoyed acting during his own school days and later as a member of the 'Pedagogues', the Moray House drama group; when he became Head at Mauricewood he gained his Associate of the Drama Board for Education, and put the knowledge acquired to good use with his pupils. He has also directed for St Phillips Church drama group and was a reporter to the Scottish Arts Council on productions receiving SAC grants.

For several years, Sandy and Rosemary have taken adult foreign students into their home in the summer to learn what Sandy calls "English with a Scottish accent". "We have met some very interesting people through this", he says.

He has also found time to be a member (and former Chairman) of Portobello Community Council, the local Crime Prevention Panel, Community Festival Association, and Friends of Brunton Theatre.

Sandy and Rosemary have just celebrated 50 years of marriage with a trip to South America, New Zealand and Australia, and finally the Far East, including Japan and Hong Kong.

B.M.



Photo by Peter Ross

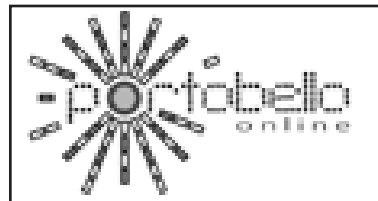
## PORTY CAR CLUB FLOURISHING

FOR some reason the *Evening News* likes being negative about it, but there is no doubt that the Edinburgh City Car Club is flourishing. Other car clubs round the world have 1000s of members in one city and so could Edinburgh! Planning is going through for two new sites in Portobello (at the Library and on the High Street) to replace the current unregulated space in Hope Lane.

If you want to find out more about the benefits of using a car - a choice of several cars actually - without all the hassle of owning one, contact Jill or Laetitia on 0845 458 1784 or 0131 466 8172, or visit [www.smartmoves.co.uk/carclubs/edinburgh.html](http://www.smartmoves.co.uk/carclubs/edinburgh.html)

Compared with £1000s a year to run your own car, the Car Club costs £100 per year membership, £2.20 per hour to use, and 15p per mile. That's all! So you can take it out all evening and it costs less than a one-way taxi ride into town. Contact [nick.child@virgin.net](mailto:nick.child@virgin.net) and join the local Porty email network.  
Nick Child

## LOCAL ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM



DO YOU think dogs should be allowed on the beach or that cycling should be allowed on the Promenade? Do you think Portobello needs CCTV? If you have an opinion worth sharing and access to the internet, we would like to invite you to join our new online forum to discuss and debate matters of local interest. The forum (or bulletin board) is easy and fun

to use and is available now.

A recent report claims that Edinburgh is the most 'switched on' city in the UK, with 69% of residents already hooked up to the net. That equates to over 8000 people in the Portobello area and we want to hear from all of you. Not content with that, we want to make the forum available in the Library and the Community Centre, so look out for the 'Portobello Online' desktop icon. Check out the forum, and enjoy a sneak preview of our 'under construction' community website, produced by local volunteers at [www.portobello-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.portobello-edinburgh.org.uk).

Let's talk! Bob Jefferson

## FOR PEAT'S SAKE ...!

THE NEW Local Biodiversity Action Partnership (LBAP) is a group of 30 organisations with an interest in the natural environment, working together to protect the wildlife and green spaces of Edinburgh. Once-common animals, plants, birds and trees are disappearing from our neighbourhoods and the LBAP would like all Edinburgh residents to help.

For example, Stuart Brook of the Scottish Wildlife Trust says "Remember - wildlife pays the real price every time you buy peat! By choosing peat-free compost, gardeners can make a real contribution to conservation in Scotland." In the last 200 years we have lost about 95% of UK peatlands and gardeners now account for about 70% of peat-use in the UK. Most of what remains is in Scotland, forming a unique habitat for a variety of wildlife.

A variety of alternatives are available at most garden centres, made from wood waste, coir and green compost. To win one of five 20 litre bags of non-peat compost on offer, send your answer to this question: "What percentage of UK peatlands have we lost in the last 200 years?" to the Biodiversity Officer, City of Edinburgh Council, 1 Cockburn Street, Edinburgh EH1 1ZJ, by March 31, with your name and address.

## CROSSRAIL UPDATE

CROSSRAIL user figures have shown quite an increase, and daily usage of the car park at Newcraighall Park+Ride has gone from an average of 60+ to 90+. This appears to be the result of enhanced road signs and additional advertising.

The embarrassment caused by customers complaining at not being able to pay has spurred ScotRail into action on that, and they also appear to be sorting out the malfunctioning of monitors.

## BEWARE BOGUS CALLERS

EDINBURGH EAST Crime Prevention Panel has issued the following advice: Check who a caller is, via a window or door viewer, before opening the door and don't open to strangers; connect the chain or safety catch before opening, then ask for proof of identity and check carefully. If they look suspicious, dial 999 or call a neighbour. If you do let a caller in, never leave them alone in a room. Advice leaflets with useful telephone numbers are available from Library, Community Centre and Police Station.

## Body Beautiful

- Coming soon -
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# NEWS IN BRIEF

## A SAFER EDINBURGH:

According to National Statistics, 28% of people aged over 60 don't go out after dark and 44% of young people feel Edinburgh is not safe for them; so young and old share the same fears. There is now a resource pack, including a video of a discussion on fear of crime, to enable communities to talk across the generations. It will be available in libraries from March. Organisers of each local discussion are asked to complete a feedback form and the results will be published in the summer. For further information contact: A Safer Edinburgh for Us All, Room 5, New Parliament House, 5-7 Regent Road, Edinburgh EH7 5BL (550 6810) or e mail [asefua@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:asefua@edinburgh.gov.uk)

## LOCAL TOILETS

UPGRADE: All three public toilets in our area are to be redecorated - Bath Street, Joppa and Pipe Street, and Bath Street is one of three in the city that are to be refurbished, work to start by the end of March.

A young local man has a Millennium Award and funding from the Scottish Community Renewable Initiative to install a solar panel on the roof of Joppa toilets to provide warm water for the wash-basins. "I am assured the Council will give him all the support he needs to make it happen", says Cllr Child.

## STAY WARM - SAVE CASH:

The recently launched Warmburgh Advice Team offers free energy advice to all tenants and home owners in Edinburgh that will help to reduce fuel bills and maximise value for money, whilst staying warm (Freephone: - 0800 512 012). They can also advise anyone having problems paying their fuel bills, and suggest ways to combat condensation and dampness. Finally, they can assist in accessing a variety of insulation and energy efficiency grants; these are additional to the Central Heating Programme.

## TOWN HALL

Wed. Mar. 5:  
FLORAL ART CLUB. 7pm

Sat. Mar. 15:  
NEARLY NEW SALE of children's clothing and equipment for National Childbirth Trust. 11am-1pm To sell items, call 332 2191.

Mon. Mar. 17:  
BLOOD DONOR SESSIONS. 2-4 & 5.30-8pm.

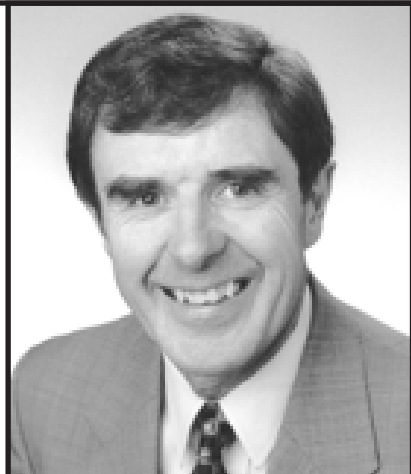
Fri. Mar. 28:  
LYNDOS SCHOOL OF DANCE SHOW. 7-10pm.

Wed. Apr. 2:  
FLORAL ART CLUB. 7pm.

Sat. Apr. 5:  
EASTER FAIR, EDINBURGH SOUTHERN HARRIERS. 10am

EVERY Tues. & Thurs:  
KICK BOXING - all ages from 6 upwards, male and female, beginners and advanced. 6.30-8.30pm

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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**LOOKING BACK - PAST ISSUES**

**MORE EXAMPLES** of articles from back issues of The Reporter, showing that some things never change. Two bound volumes are available at the Library.

**MAY/JUNE 1982: 'Bogus Workmen - Be Alert!'** : Details of action to take if worried about the identity of callers. (See this issue p.2).

**MAY/JUNE 1982: 'Green Menace Hits Portobello'**: Lambasts the former Edinburgh District Council's plans to collect rubbish just once a week and the "sudden deluge of hideous green bins" which, along with the free plastic liners given to all households, were meant to save money. (Sounds like a practice run for the introduction of the hideous, huge green wheelie bins in 1998).

**FEB/MARCH 1987: 'Freight Out, Passengers In?'**: With the closing of the Portobello Freightliner Terminal, Lothian Region Councillor David Begg said: "A passenger rail halt [on this site] would offer ample space ... for a park-and-ride facility to serve not only Edinburgh, but East Lothian as well". The possibilities are outlined.

**FEB/MARCH 1987: 'House Prices'**: Portobello House prices have remained relatively static since the recent upsurge, according to estate agents Slater, Hogg & Howieson. However, some of the traditional Georgian properties have been fetching substantial prices, around £60,000. (Now, that has changed!).

**SPRING 1993:** We were only able to produce a four-page issue due to the severe downturn in available advertising revenue, and included a report 'All quiet on the eastern front' on the number of well established businesses recently closed and boarded-up shop windows.

**FOCUS ON GROUPS**

**PORTOBELLO BOWLING CLUB**

**BOWLS** has been played at the Portobello Club in Lee Crescent since 1872 and a display covering its history to date can be seen in the Library, every Saturday from 10am to 12noon in the bowling season. In addition to its adult members, the club encourages and teaches boys and girls from 8 to 16 years of age, and are also keen to point out that no disability is a bar - anyone can enjoy the game of bowls. For further information call 468 6118.

**LETTERS**

**LET'S BRIGHTEN PORTOBELLO! -**

Wouldn't it make an eye-pleasing difference if window boxes containing colourful plants were firmly fixed on Portobello windowsills? After the initial outlay, the cost in time and money would not need to be a lot to keep the display going throughout the year and just think how cheerful our houses and tenements would look. The lightsome effect of flowers on viewers' spirits is immeasurable, as many people have experienced on visiting cities and villages in Continental Europe, for example, where window boxes containing bright flowers are commonplace. Think about it!  
Bill and Vivienne Nisbet

**BOOK REVIEW**

**THE KINGS** Manor Hotel and its predecessor, the Milton House Hotel, have been providing hospitality and welcoming travellers on Milton Road, for almost fifty years but the owners of the original building from which they emerged had been caring for the welfare of temporary residents for many years before this. It had been the St Andrew's Home and House of Mercy and here Anglican nuns looked after girls judged to be in need of care.

Local resident David Gavine tells the story of those years in a meticulously researched little book, *The Community of St Andrew of Scotland and its Rescue Home* in which he first of all sets the founding of the home in the context of the growth of the Oxford Movement and Anglo-Catholicism within the Anglican Church and its spread to Scotland in the second half of the 19th century. He then charts the progress of the home, including the work of its laundry, still remembered locally, till it closed in 1953 and in the process puts on record the devoted work of a small group of women dedicated to the welfare of less fortunate others of their sex. The second half of the book contains an extensive biographical record of clergy and nuns associated with the home and the breadth of Dr Gavine's researches is shown by the list of his numerous sources.

The illustrations showing the building before the series of alterations that has changed its appearance will be of interest to local people, especially the photograph of the interior of the chapel as it looked before it became the venue for many wedding receptions and other functions.

Copies of the book can be obtained from the Scottish Episcopal Church, General Synod Office, 21 Grosvenor Crescent, Edinburgh, EH12 5EE. It costs £4.50, including post and packing, and cheques should be made payable to The Scottish Episcopal Church.

**PIKE O' PLEA**

**THE LIBRARY** receives many e-mails from former Portobello residents and visitors, all expressing a warmth and fondness for the place, and recently Mr Bill Carruthers of Wester-Ross has been in touch.

Mr Carruthers lived in the Mount Lodge area and worked in Henderson's garage in the 1950s and early 1960s. He would like to know the whereabouts of a 'red granite horse water trough' that was originally sited in the children's playground in Mount Lodge, then moved to the wall outside the garage in Portobello High Street, when the Corporation were building at Mount Lodge (Phoenix House and the Doctors' Surgery). He recalls that the playground was known as the Pike O' Peace and had been told that it was a duelling ground and that disputes were settled there.

According to Baird's Annals of Duddingston and Portobello there was a cottage nearby called 'Pike-a-Plea', which Baird presumed was due to some boundary dispute.

Mr Carruthers would like to see the trough and drinking fountain reinstated but, although its position can be seen on old Ordnance Survey maps, the Keeper of Monuments has no record of it. Does anyone else recall it, or have a photograph? If so, we would love to see it and perhaps give the Keeper something more to go on.

E-mail us at portobello.library@edinburgh.gov.uk or just pop in.

**Displays and Exhibitions:**

Portobello Library has a useful 'shop window' which is popular with local organisations. Portobello Bowling Club (1872 - 2002) is now showing photographs and ephemera and future displays will include Quakers in March, Amnesty International in April and 'Use your vote' in April/May, with elections coming up.

Following the very successful Art exhibitions by the St James Art Club, Musselburgh Art Club, and local artist Rose Nimmo, we would like to remind groups and individuals that we also have space available for exhibitors inside the Library.

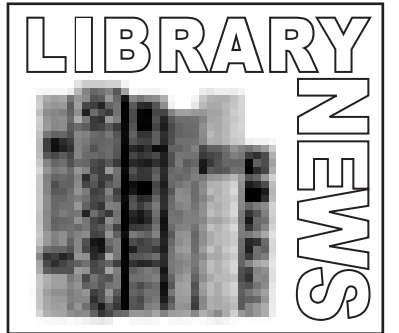
**Festival of Scottish writing**, 17th - 31st May, has the sea as its theme this year. Events will take place in libraries throughout the city - with a special weekend event in Edinburgh for Writers' Groups and Book Groups - featuring Portobello writer Audrey Jenkinson. Tom Aitchison will be in Portobello Library (date to be confirmed) to talk about his book *The Eyemouth Shipping Disaster*; there will also be a children's storytelling session.

**The Book Group** continues to meet in the upstairs room to read and discuss a wide variety of titles. On 4th March they will talk about David Guterson's *Snow falling on Cedars*, and Naguib Mahfouz's *Palace Walk* (the Cairo trilogy) will be the topic for April. Other books will include Jan Martel's Booker-Prize winning *Life of Pi* (May); Rohinton Mistry's *Family Matters* (June); Pamela Stephenson's *Billy* (July); and *Atonement* by Ian McEwan (Sept). Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month from 6.30 - 8.00pm. New readers are always welcome, so if you have read or plan to read any of these titles, do come along.

Book Groups are now advertised on Edinburgh Libraries' Web Pages - [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/libraries) (click on Reading Sphere).

Alanna Knight Crime fans will be interested to hear that she will read from her books and take questions at Wester Hailes Library on Thursday 20th March from 2 - 4 pm. Please ask at Portobello Library if you would like tickets put aside for you.

Joyce Campbell & Lindsay Souter



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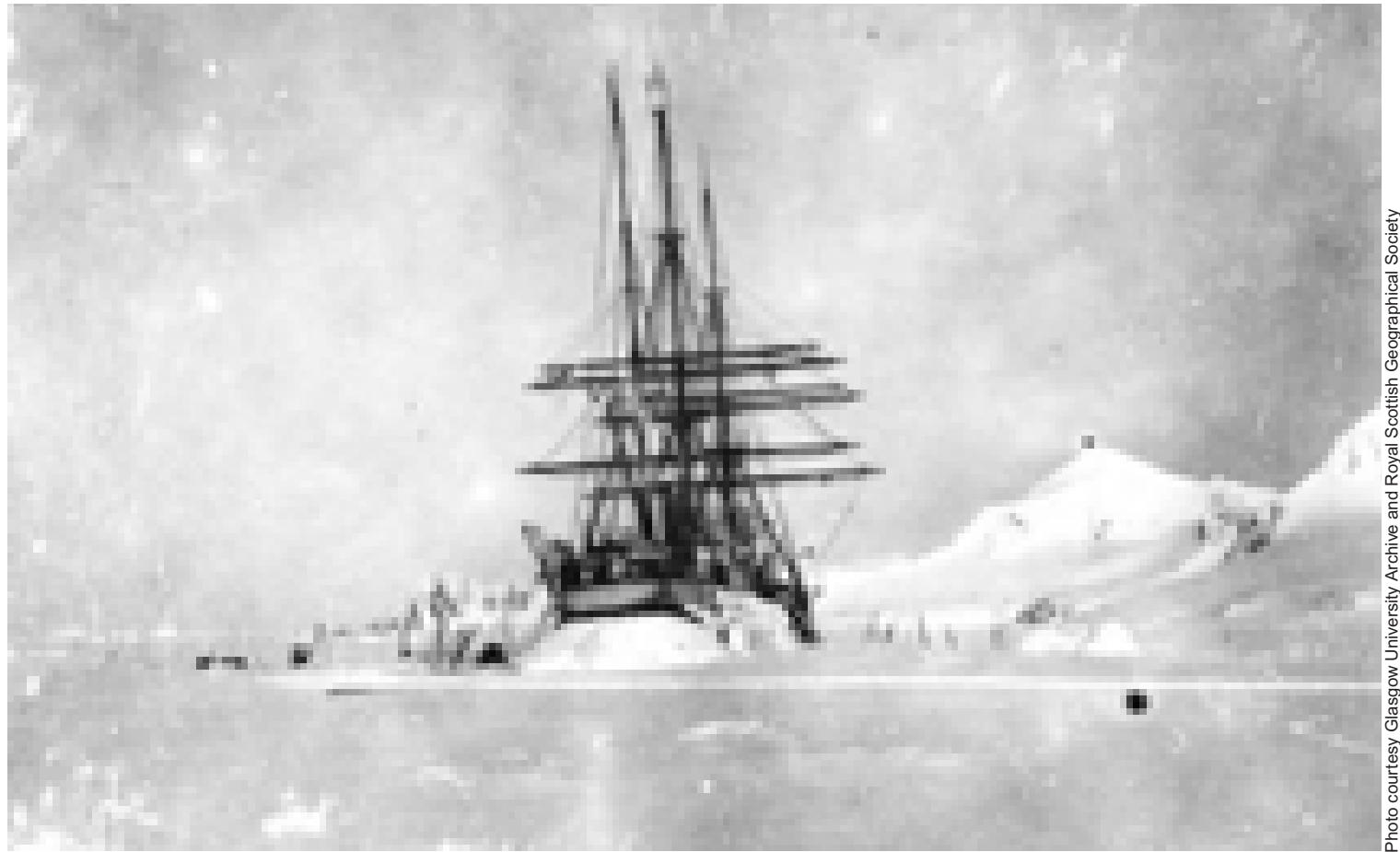
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# “ANTARCTICA” IN JOPPA - William Speirs Bruce

THERE HAVE been a number of enquiries in recent years about the whereabouts of a house in Joppa said to have been named “Antarctica” by its occupant. Why it should have been so named was the additional question. Research in the volumes of the Edinburgh and Leith Post Office Directory for the early years of the twentieth century revealed a house with this name in South Morton Street occupied by a W S Bruce. Prior to Bruce taking possession in 1906/07 this house was known as “Cairnbank” and it reverted to this name when Bruce and family moved in 1918/19. They also lived for brief spells at addresses in Milton Road and Joppa Road before and after staying in South Morton Street.

W. S. Bruce was in fact William Speirs Bruce, now being celebrated as Scotland’s greatest Polar hero. Dr William Speirs Bruce led one of the most successful expeditions to the Antarctic of the early 20th century, but he has been largely forgotten – because he was more interested in scientific gain than in playing the part of a daring adventurer. His achievements are now to be celebrated in an exhibition at the Royal Museum, Chambers Street, Edinburgh from 8 March – 1 June 2003. As the exhibition’s curator Geoff Swinney explains: ‘William Speirs Bruce didn’t take unnecessary risks on his expeditions – he wasn’t interested in a dramatic dash to the pole, but in methodical scientific research. Everyone remembers the drama of the later voyages by Amundsen, Scott and Shackleton, but on Bruce’s 13 expeditions only one man died - of chronic heart disease. He gave up fame, fortune and his marriage in pursuit of science. He deserves to be better known’



The expedition’s ship Scotia on the Antarctic ice.

The exhibition will look at Bruce’s life and his career as a polar scientist, focusing on his expeditions, his passion for Scotland, and links with royalty. The exhibition features a wide variety of material from Bruce’s life including notebooks, maps, sketches, and scientific specimens and equipment from his 13 expeditions, as well as many contemporary photographs, some of which formed the first postcards ever posted from Antarctica.

His most famous expedition was the 1902-04 Scottish National Antarctic Expedition on board the ship Scotia. The trip, sponsored by the Coats family of Paisley, covered 33,000 miles, and cost the modern equivalent of £2 million – a staggering £12 million less than Scott’s British Antarctic Discovery expedition. During the trip the crew catalogued hundreds of species of animal, many of them previously unknown, and discovered 1,000,000 square miles of the Antarctic continent.

The expedition made the first sound-recordings in Antarctica, took some of the earliest cine film and established a shore-based meteorological observatory, on a site that is now the longest continually inhabited site in Antarctica.

The exhibition is held in association with The Royal Scottish Geographical Society, and is part of an events programme organised by the Society to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Scotia expedition. Further information can be found at [www.rsgs.org](http://www.rsgs.org).

Archie Foley (additional material from Geoff Swinney and Hannah Dolby of the Royal Museum)

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**LOCAL EXHIBITIONS AT OCEAN TERMINAL**

LEITH is now a centre of activity with the Ocean Terminal having over a 100,000 visitors a week. Very few visit the rest of the area, however, but more may be encouraged to do so by exhibitions at the Terminal on ‘The History of Leith’ organised by local historian, John Arthur.

The exhibits come from the collections of the Edinburgh Museums and Trinity House and have been viewed by several thousand visitors since December. A special exhibition and events are planned during the Festival of the Sea in May, including Battle enactments by the Clan Ranald.

There will also be events and exhibitions in the Forum on the first floor of the Terminal, featuring the local Police, Community Councils, The Leith Council of Churches and an Art Exhibition, to promote the coastal towns of South Queensferry, Leith and Portobello as places that visitors from overseas can visit and enjoy.

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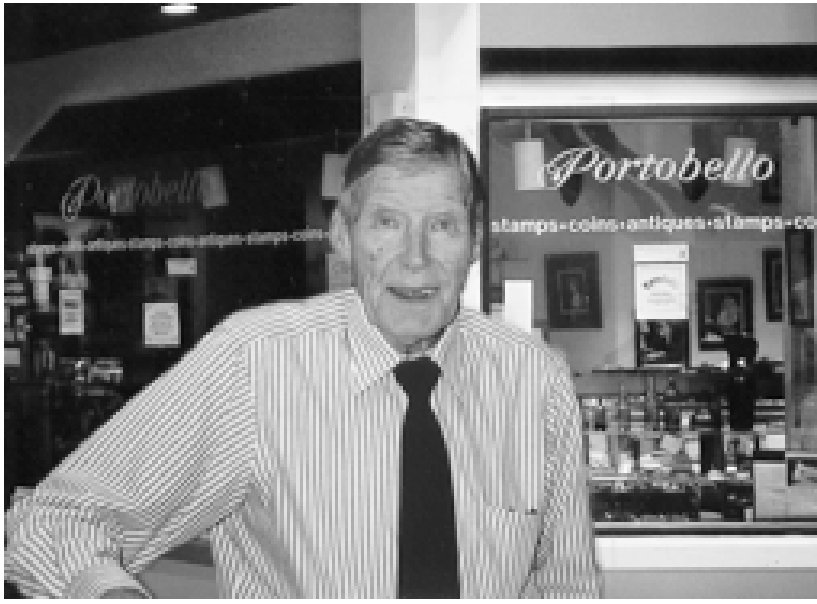
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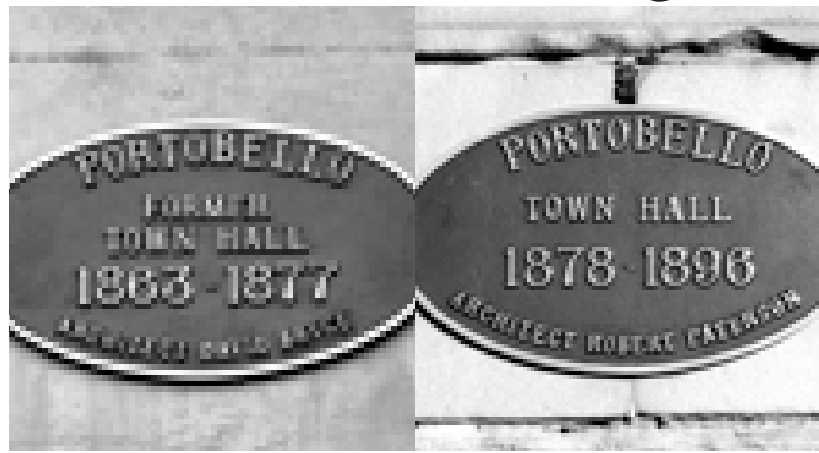
**RICHARD MUTZKE** was born in Portobello in 1913 and we featured his family of itinerant glass workers in our December 2001 issue. A descendant, Robert Fenley, who provided the family story has supplied this photograph taken on a recent visit to Hamilton, Bermuda where Richard has lived for many years. It's good to see that he did not forget his birthplace when naming his shop.

## BEFORE MEADOWS YARD ...?

**MEADOWS YARD** is an open green space on Fillyside Road opposite the civic amenity dump, which was designated a Local Nature Reserve in May 2002. The Friends of Meadows Yard want to make an information panel for the site and would like to hear from anyone in the Portobello/Craigentiny area who has memories or photographs of this area when

it was an allotment site, or earlier. Please send any information, before the end of March, to: Karen Hay, Urban Forest Officer, Planning and Strategy, City of Edinburgh Council, City Development, 1 Cockburn Street, EH1 1ZJ, tel. 469 3677 / fax 469 3594, e-mail karen.hay@edinburgh.gov.uk or contact her for more information.

## TOWN HALL PLAQUES



**THE TWO** latest additions to the number of commemorative plaques in Portobello are on the Baptist Church and Police Station and mark the buildings used by Portobello Burgh Council as Municipal Chambers, or Town Halls, during much of its existence.

When the council moved in to purpose built premises in the High Street in spring 1863 it should have been the beginning of a period of stability after years of making do with a series of temporary homes; instead it ushered in five years of acrimony and legal suits with its landlords. The council, which had a fifteen-year lease accused the Portobello Town Hall Company, a group of local businessmen, of failing to provide the stipulated accommodation, refused to pay the rent and moved out.

Attempts to find a settlement failed and the courts were asked to decide. The case dragged on until the council was forced to back down and move back in May 1867 to see out the remainder of the lease.

It was obvious that the council needed a building of its own and ground was bought next to Ramsay Lane. Work was begun in December 1877 and the striking Scotch baronial style building was ready for occupation the following autumn. There were police offices, cells and a Court Room in addition to municipal offices, and a garage for a fire appliance was at the rear of the building. From here the business of running the burgh was conducted until the amalgamation with Edinburgh in 1896.

AF

## PORTOBELLO HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

**THE SECOND** half of our programme began on 5th February with an exhibition of photographs, documents, pottery and varied material relating to bygone days in Portobello. All the items on display had been collected by the society since its inception but rarely seen, even by members, and it was pleasing that the exhibition was so well attended. The "Then & Now" display of photographs drew most attention but all the exhibits attracted a lot of interest. At the time of writing we are looking forward to our meeting on 5th March and a talk on the Appin Murder of 1752, an event in Scottish history of perennial fascination to scholars and public alike.

Last year's tribute in music and words to Irving Berlin was so successful and enjoyable that we had to put on a similar show this year. Because his centenary has just passed, the subject is Richard Rodgers and his collaborations with Lorenz Hart and Oscar Hammerstein. Annabelle Meredith will be the narrator, Robert Syman will dazzle us once more on the piano and Annabelle's husband Harry will help out with the vocals. Audience participation is required and song sheets will be provided for those who can't remember the words of the hit songs from musicals like Oklahoma, Sound of Music or Carousel. The show is on Wednesday 2nd April at 7pm in St. Mark's Episcopal Church and tickets cost £4, which includes supper, and are on sale at Portobello Library.

In May we are visiting the Bank of Scotland Museum on The Mound and in June we have our Annual General Meeting and Quiz Night. Would members please note that the date of this meeting will be Wednesday, 11th June and not as originally scheduled.

Unless otherwise stated, meetings are held in St John's RC Church Hall, Brighton Place, at 7pm. Everybody welcome.

Archie Foley

## WHAT'S ON

**A CAR BOOT SALE** organised by the 41st Edinburgh Boys' Brigade - Company Section will be held on Saturday April 26 at Royal High Primary School, Northfield Broadway, from 10:00am-12noon (cars £8, entry from 9:15am). Tea/Coffee, home baking, BBQ. Why not have a spring clean or just pop down for a cuppa?

**A GOLDEN AGE OF TOYS** Toys from the late 19th to early 20th centuries at the Museum of Childhood, Royal Mile, includes teddy bears, Meccano and Hornby train sets. Mon-Sat 10-5pm until June 7.

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**OBITUARY**

**TIMM ENGH**

**THE** death has occurred on 14th February of the Reverend Timm Engh former Rector of St Mark's Episcopal Church. Advised by his doctors to take early retirement at the end of 1999 he had fought a courageous battle against increasing ill health over the past year.

Timm came to St. Mark's in November 1991 from Holy Trinity Church, Melrose. He was born in North Dakota, USA and during his service in the United States Air Force spent some time at Kirknewton, outside Edinburgh, where he met his future wife, Ann. After ordination he spent some years in America before eventually crossing 'the pond' at the invitation of Bishop Richard Holloway and the Vestry of Holy Trinity Church, Melrose to begin a new life in Scotland.

During his time at St. Mark's Timm introduced new ideas in worship and fellowship and was instrumental in re-establishing a ministry in Craigmillar. This unfortunately did not last. He was very active within the Portobello Council of Churches and was its chairperson in the last few years of his ministry. Timm also worked tirelessly within the Edinburgh Diocese of the Scottish Episcopal Church, serving on various committees and much of his time after retirement was spent raising funds for the Cathedral of the Isles in Oban.

Former colleagues and friends gathered to celebrate Timm's life and ministry in a Eucharistic Service at St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Edinburgh on 21st February. He is survived by his wife Ann, for whom the term helpmate must have been coined, and daughters Sandiann and Tracy Lynn.

**ST MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

**ST MARK'S** started life as a small chapel on the site in Brighton Place where St John's R.C. Church now stands. It soon became inadequate for the number of retired Army officers and others settling in Portobello and so a new building was erected at number 287 in the High Street. This church was consecrated in 1828, so 2003 is the 175th anniversary of its foundation.

The Congregation are marking this occasion by holding a Festival of Music and Flowers during the week of 12th - 18th May. The music will include both choral and instrumental concerts and the flower displays, arranged by the Portobello Floral Art Club, will follow the theme of Music. All events will be open to the public and profits will go towards the Organ Restoration Fund.

Full details of the Festival programme will be advertised shortly, both locally and elsewhere.

**PORTY STORY**

**PORTOBELLO** author Kath Murphy's short story 'Help' is published in *Shorts 5*, a collection of the best of the 2002 Macallan and *Scotland on Sunday* short story competition. The 25 stories were chosen from over 2000 entries.

Although Kath also writes novels and scripts, she believes the short story is a unique and threatened form. 'Short stories are ideal reading for the busy lives we live now - a whole story can be enjoyed on the journey to work, or before falling asleep at night,' said Kath. 'However, UK publishers are reluctant to publish collections, believing that there is no market for them. That's why competitions such as this one provide vital opportunities for short story writers.'

Kath is supporting the 'Save our Short Story' campaign, initiated by authors Jackie Kay and Margaret Wilkinson, which aims to increase readership and publication of short stories.

Is the short story worth saving? For more information, or to express your view, email Kath on ka.murphy@easy.com (Shorts 5 edited by Suhayl Saadi is published by Polygon, price £6.99).

**GREAT RESPONSE TO SHOEBOX APPEAL**

A **VERY** special "thank you" to everyone who donated gift-filled shoeboxes to our special project 'Operation Christmas Child'. We collected from nurseries, primary and high schools, offices, churches, youth groups and many other community groups, as well as individuals. I would especially like to thank local residents who handed in over 100 boxes to our collection point at Woodwares on the High Street, and members of Duddingston Kirk and St. John's Church, Portobello for their fantastic efforts.

We sent just under 9,000 boxes to Bosnia, and many others were sent to street children in Moscow, who often live in the sewers, and other desperately poor children in the surrounding area.

We should never underestimate the impact a single shoebox can make on children who sometimes have nothing and have never received presents before. It tells them the people of Scotland remember and care about them.

For more information on the work of 'Operation Christmas Child' and Samaritan's Purse International Relief (SPIR), please go to [www.samaritanpurse.org](http://www.samaritanpurse.org). If you or your group wish to take part in this appeal later in the year, please contact me for more information, on 0131 620 2097. Craig Paul (Rep. SPIR)

**COMMUNITY CENTRE NEWS**

**FUNDING** applications have been made for the costs of the Feasibility Study to forward the plans for a 21st Century Community Centre for Portobello. At this exciting time we require enthusiastic members for the Management Committee, particularly a Treasurer - contact Maggie for further information.

We are also looking for 'computer buddies' to help some of our older members to use the Internet. If you are able to spare some time during the day, please let us know. And is there a webmaster/mistress out there who would be interested in volunteering to set up/manage a website for us?

The Youth Club and Chess Club are looking for new members. Youth Club is on a Thursday evening from 7-9pm for P7's upwards. The Chess Club meets on Fridays from 7-10pm (contact Lawrence on 468 1812).

Portobello Thistle Football Club are running a ball skills/sports group (not just footie) for 9+ on a Thursday evening, 5.45-6.45pm - Come along and try it and, if you are old enough, stay on for the Youth Club afterwards!

For a full programme of activities or any information contact Maggie on 669 8275 or portobelloc@btconnect.com or call into the office in Adelphi Place any weekday morning except Wednesday to speak to her.

**CHRISTIAN AID**

**THE 18TH** annual Burns Supper held in Portobello Old Parish Church Hall on January 18 raised £1076. Over 100 people sat down to an excellent meal, rib-tickling performances from the top table and fine musical entertainment.

The collection at the Carol Festival in St. Philip's Church raised £526.

The sponsored walk across the Forth Road Bridge will take place on Saturday, 27th April. Last year's walkers raised £60,000 and any group or individual who wants to help to better this sum by taking part in what is an exhilarating experience should contact Christian Aid at 229 1254 for information and the appropriate forms.

Donation envelopes will be delivered and collected during the annual Christian Aid household Collection Week of 11th to 18th May.

Over the past year, the combined fund-raising efforts of the Portobello churches (collections, events, and donations) raised a total of £18,437.

**PORTOBELLO AMNESTY**

**CONTINUING** its work in schools, the Group organised a scenario at an assembly about young victims of torture, with Drama Group enthusiasts playing the parts and illustrating the realities of torture in an effective and moving way. Later, a session on human rights of adults and children was held at a primary school when P7 pupils were asked to imagine the plight of people fleeing persecution, with only 10 minutes to decide on essential items for the journey.

Our Human Rights Day stall in the High Street in December, featuring our Tree of Hope, attracted a lot of interest in writing cards to prisoners of conscience worldwide, and messages to Russian government figures about Amnesty's campaign on human rights abuses there. Amnesty's work will be displayed in the window of Portobello Library during March.

David Turner

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**ONE HUNDRED YEARS CELEBRATED**



**MR THOMAS GIFFORD** of Craigentiny is pictured here celebrating his 100th birthday with a party on December 8 2002 at Jamiesons Victorian Tea Room at 79 Portobello High Street. Mr Gifford was joined by 22 members of his family at a special buffet lunch served by the new owners of Jamiesons, Julie Phisatory (left) and Frances Whitton.

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**THE** Murrayfield Wanderers/Portobello High School girls rugby team, pictured here, are trained by Beth MacLeod and Angela Huit who play for The Wanderers and Scotland. There is an under 14s and an under 18s team, consisting mainly of PHS pupils, with some from other schools. In recent games the U14 s beat Galasheils away, and the 18s had a home win against Livingston.

The teams are looking for new players from a wider range of schools and anyone interested should contact Beth Macleod, the girls/womens development officer, email [beth.macleod@sru.org.uk](mailto:beth.macleod@sru.org.uk) Heather Green

### NEW YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE FOR PORTOBELLO

**EDINBURGH** City Council's Community Education Service is hoping to develop provision for young people (12-18 years old) in Portobello over the coming months.

Please encourage any young folk you know to read the supplement that you should find with this edition of *The Portobello Reporter*, and become involved in these exciting developments by returning the Questionnaire.

If you are an adult and would like to become involved in the development of local youth services, please call Brian Greatorex on 661 7463. All volunteers will receive appropriate training and screening in line with Child Protection guidelines.



[www.bbc.co.uk/totp](http://www.bbc.co.uk/totp)

Pop fans can get lots of info, gossip, video clips and much, much more from the Top Of The Pops site. You can check out the latest Top 40 chart, look at photos of your favourite stars or find out their biographies from the microsites dedicated to the them. There are competitions with lots of prizes and links to official sites. As always from the world leaders in web sites the BBC have produced a high quality and easy to navigate web site.

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PR

### PHS TO BE MUSIC 'FOCUS SCHOOL'

**PORTOBELLO** High School will be the 'focus school' for the Composer Laureate Project in Edinburgh. Louise Martin, Education Projects Manager for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, wrote to congratulate the school on being selected. She also conveyed a message from Rory Boyle, the Composer Laureate for Schools, that he is very much looking forward to working with the staff and pupils over the next three years.

Head Teacher, David Wright and Principal Teacher of Music, Mrs Alice Clegg are delighted with this achievement, which will provide pupils with a unique opportunity to develop their musical talents. Mrs Clegg will meet Rory Boyle shortly to discuss the initial stages of the project.

### EQUALITY BRINGS SUCCESS

**PORTOBELLO** High School head girl, Stephanie Crolla has been picked to train with the Scottish Ladies Golfing Association in Spain. Stephanie is the only female junior member of Duddingston Golf Club and has been playing for four years. Duddingston was one of the first all-male clubs in Edinburgh to put in place an equal opportunities policy, which the Council made a condition for sports clubs who wanted to continue to benefit from discretionary rating relief. The Club can be very proud of Stephanie's success. Their decision to let women join and play their course on equal terms with the boys is paying dividends for their golfing record and reputation.

### SHOOTING STARS!

**TOWERBANK** Primary School are delighted with the news that Annie Rowan, (S1 Portobello High School) who was one of our many basketball stars last year, made her debut recently playing for Scotland's under 16 team. Well done Annie!

Congratulations also to Jenny Simpson and Kate Cooke from Primary 6 who have been chosen for the under 11 Edinburgh team. What stars!

Tricia Morrison

### HASSAN'S HALLOWEEN HAPPINESS

**HASSAN MIR**, a P6 pupil in St John's Primary School, was recently awarded first prize in a poetry competition organised by the Edinburgh Dungeon. The competition attracted over 200 entries from all over Scotland, so Hassan did really well to win. Hassan was delighted when he received the news and his classmates were pleased too, because the prize is a free trip to the Dungeon for the whole class. Mr Burgess, the class teacher and his pupils are looking forward to a visit to this popular tourist attraction in the near future.

Hassan's poem is printed below:

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### 'Halloween Magic'

A bald headed ghost  
drank some witches' brew  
and on top of his head  
a strange thing grew

As black as a bat  
it was pointed and tall  
with stringy long hair  
where his head was flat

The sad little ghost  
didn't want any hair  
or a black pointed hat  
so he said 'witch beware!'  
then he chanted some  
words  
with a spell casting switch  
and gave Halloween night  
a bald headed witch

Hassan Mir

### The Rocking Horse Nursery

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# WALK THROUGH THE SEASONS

A NEW series of 18 guided walks in the Lothians started on Sunday 23 February with a Winter Tree ID at Newhailes, Musselburgh, led by the National Trust for Scotland's Area Ranger. Other walks will take place at Newhailes, the House of the Binns near Linlithgow and Inveresk Lodge Garden on the edge of Musselburgh. Further information from Jane Greig, Marketing Manager, The National Trust for Scotland, 32 Northgate, Peebles. Tel. 07713 786289 / 01721 726003.

Newhailes is a gem of a late 17th house with impressive 18th century additions and interiors set in a unique 18th century landscaped garden. The recently conserved house opened to the public in June 2002 and due to its fragile nature and size visits must be booked in advance on 0131 653 5599. Bookings can now be made for the new season, which starts on April 1. The landscape is open to the public all year, from 10am-6pm daily.

# PROM RACE RESULTS

THE 17th Annual Portobello Promethon took place on a cold New Year's morning in moderately heavy rain and only a handful of hardy supporters turned out to cheer, but despite the conditions there were 173 entries in the main 4 mile race and the winning time was only 4 sec. slower than last year. The proceeds from the event were

donated to the Maggie's Centre.

The first man home was Steve Cairns, Hunters Bog Trot. in 19min .29sec; 2nd, Colin Meek (Vet.), Lothian RC, 20.07; 3rd, David Rodgers, Lochaber AC, 20.12. The first woman was Trudi Thomson (Vet.), Pitreavie in 23.04. (For full results and information visit [www.runningresults.freeserve.co.uk](http://www.runningresults.freeserve.co.uk))

I HAVE gardened organically for nearly 15 years. What does this mean in practice? Changing to organic principles can actually save on time, money and effort and so I would suggest a few basic rules - keep the soil healthy and use no artificial chemicals as fertilisers, pesticides or herbicides. I would also suggest making a compost heap. If you wish to go organic these points would be a great start and you'll feel good about benefiting your local environment too - think of all those lovely summer butterflies.



with Susan Burns

Jobs to get on with now include planting seeds inside, where there is some warmth, using organic grow bags to fill containers and old margarine pots with holes punched in them, but wait until mid-May if planting hardy annuals outside.

Cut back and tidy borders to ensure that bulbs coming up can be seen clearly. I like to weed thoroughly in early spring, taking out even the tiniest weeds, as not only does this make the garden look good, it saves a lot of time later on.

Prune roses and cut back buddleia, dogwoods and leycystria formosa to between six inches and three feet above ground. If the trimmings are not diseased, shred them (hire a shredder if need be) and use as a mulch after weeding; again this saves effort and time later. If you need to plant something, just move the mulch aside, remembering not to leave any against the stems of shrubs; covering perennials is fine, unless susceptible to wet. Finally, if you have space, an area of two square metres sown in mid-May with cornflowers, marigolds and love in a mist, and perhaps mignonette for scent, will look great from mid-July. Place a small cushion in the middle on a nice day, and sit there with a glass of wine and admire your mini meadow!

# KINGS ARE CHAMPS!

PORTOBELLO based City of Edinburgh Kings won the Scottish Senior Men's Basketball League Championship for the first time in their 15-year history, when they beat St Mirren 79-69 at Meadowbank on Sunday 9th February in front of a 300-strong crowd, after being 34-38 down at half-time. Top scorers: Dan Wardrope 24, Laurie Costello 20, Derek Frame 16.

The Cadets had the honour of first blood, however, taking the under-16 title by beating St Mirren convincingly 94-65 at Portobello the day before, after being only 34-31 up at half-time - a great achievement by the boys, who are still unbeaten, and their new coach Dougie Reilly who explained: "We upped the pace in the second half." Top scorers: Euan McInnes 24, Colin Slow 24, Garreth Lodge 21, Tony Hogg 14.

S.S.

# SPRING INTO ACTION IN LOCAL AQUATHON

TO PROMOTE and encourage wider participation in multi-sport events, the Scottish Triathlon Association (STA) and members of the Edinburgh Road Club will be holding two small Aquathon events for children and adults, based at Portobello Swim Centre, as part of the 2003 Scottish Aquathon series. An aquathon is a continuous race consisting of a swim followed by a run, and the run sections will take place on the Promenade.

The Portobello Spring Aquathon takes place on Sunday April 6, starting at 9am and is expected to take two hours to complete. The Autumn event is on September 28. The proceeds will be donated to Muscular Dystrophy research.

There are age-graded swim/run events for children from 8 to 16 years and a fun event for adults. Prizes will be presented at about 11am. For full information call 657 4716/ 346 7266; for application forms visit [www.edinburghracingcoop.co.uk](http://www.edinburghracingcoop.co.uk)

# HEALTHY EATING

## OOP! HONEY ROAST PARSNIP SOUP

- 1 kg parsnips, peeled & chopped
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 75 g 'runny' honey
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 1 3/4 litres vegetable stock
- Salt & pepper

Coat the parsnips in the oil then in the honey. Sprinkle with salt.

Roast in the oven @ 200°C for 45 minutes.

In a pan, saute the onions then add the roasted parsnips. Cook gently for 10 minutes.

Add the hot stock, bring to the boil and simmer for about 15 minutes.

In a food processor or with a blender, puree the soup, season and serve.

Serves 6.

The deadline for your contributions to the Summer Issue of *The Portobello Reporter* is 2nd May 2003

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