

The Portobello REPORTER

Quarterly: Spring 2005
Delivered in and around Portobello; circulation 12,500

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	• Lindsay Leaves	P3
	• Pottery Finds	P4
	• A Diamond Couple	P6
	• Tsunami Appeals	P7
	• High Flyers	P8

The independent voice of Portobello

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IS IT FULL TIME FOR 5-A-SIDE?

THE proposed sale of the Power League 5-a-side site in Westbank Street has created another contentious issue for the local community. Negotiations between Power League and the Council have apparently been taking place for the past two years, while Power League were deciding whether to reinvest in the facility or relocate. With 84 years of the ground lease to run, an agreement has now been reached to jointly market part of the site, on which it is expected that high quality housing will be built, although it is unclear whether any social or housing for rent will be included. One third of the site, the area nearest Portobello Town Centre, is to be retained by the Council and the proceeds from the sale of the remaining land will be divided between the Council and Power League.

The justification for the sale, objected to by many local people, is that this is the only way to generate funds to provide new facilities in Portobello. Whether these would be a community centre, library or a combination of both is still undecided. It is proposed that some of the land retained would be used, along



Photo by Peter Ross

with Council owned land on the other side of the Figgate Burn, to create a linear park along the Burn from the High Street to the Promenade. Full community consultation has been promised, but those who have been involved in previous, similar consultations may view this promise with some scepticism.

Several development proposals are being considered and a report will be prepared for the Council Executive, which will include all the issues regarding the regeneration of Portobello. It is expected to be ready in mid-

March, after the superstore inquiry, so is not expected to influence or affect decisions taken as a result of the inquiry.

The proposed relocation of the Power League facilities raises further concerns, as they could be offered a new site on the southern edge of Portobello Golf Course. This would result in the loss of open green space, possibly including football pitches, so it appears that existing facilities could be sacrificed to create new ones beside the Figgate Burn.

Margaret Munro

INQUIRY BEGINS AT LAST

A VENUE has now been confirmed for the public inquiry into the planning appeals by Duddingston House Properties, concerning their proposals for a superstore and carpark on the former Scottish Power site at the Kings Road roundabout.

As the Town Hall is not available, the inquiry will be held at The British Legion Club, Clifton House, Baileyfield Road, Portobello, commencing on Tuesday 1st March. It is likely to last for up to nine weekdays, until all the evidence is concluded, and closing submissions will be heard during the week beginning 14th March.

Miss Janet McNair, the Scottish Executive reporter, will hear the inquiry; she will hear the developer's case first, followed by any supporters, then the case put by the Council, and finally others who oppose the proposed development.

The developer and the City of Edinburgh Council will have legal representation, and the Campaign Against the Superstore group, Portobello Traders Association, Portobello Community Council and Portobello Amenity Society will be represented by Siobhan Samson of Friends of the Earth, who has experience in representing groups at other similar hearings. Several local residents will also give evidence, speaking for themselves.

Proceedings on the first day will start at 10am, and at 9.30am on the following days, ending at around 4.30pm. Members of the public will be able to attend to observe the proceedings (the venue has disability access), and copies of the inquiry papers can be seen at Portobello Library. It is expected to take approximately eight weeks for the outcome of the inquiry to be made known. B.M.

CAMPAIGN FUNDRAISING GOING WELL

THE CITY of Edinburgh Council suddenly announced in October that it would not, as previously stated, be opposing the planning application for a superstore on the former Scottish Power site, at the public inquiry, on the grounds of retail impact on local shops, but only on traffic impact and urban design grounds. This came as a shock to the Portobello Campaign Against the Superstore (PCATS) group, who then decided to take on this aspect of the case themselves, as well as giving evidence on the likely impact of increased traffic. This meant they would have to raise even more money, to pay for a retail consultant as well as a traffic consultant.

They therefore produced the unique 'Stars of Portobello' calendar and organised several fundraising events, including bag-packing at Scotmid, a coffee morning and jumble sale, a ceilidh, a sell-out Burns Supper, and a pop quiz and disco. Still to come are another coffee morning and bric-a-brac sale on Saturday 26 February from 10am-1pm, in St James Church hall, Rosefield Place; and a Grand Raffle, with the draw taking place also on 26 February at 9pm, at the Dalriada (formerly the Bedford House Hotel) on the Promenade. Tickets are on sale in local shops.

Diana Cairns of PCATS says: "Fundraising is going well, thanks to the fantastic support of the Portobello community. There are still some calendars left in the shops, so if you haven't got yours yet, there is still time. Remember this is a piece of history". B.M.

PORTOBELLO – WHO'D LIVE ANYWHERE ELSE?

PORTOBELLO has a diverse and growing population and a lot to offer. The new flats at the foot of Bath Street and on the old Heather Valley site, and the recent conversions of the Portobello Gift Centre and Royal Hotel show a demand for housing within easy travelling distance of the city centre.

New businesses have been attracted here, including a variety of restaurants that have increased the choice of places to eat out, and at the many established shops in the High Street you can buy everything from fishing tackle to DIY. The warm welcome in these shops brings in not only local residents, but people from other parts of Edinburgh as well. The bargains to be found in local charity shops play their part in attracting shoppers too.

There is a range of leisure activities at the Community Centre, Swim Centre, and Indoor Bowls and Leisure Centre, and for those who want to learn new



Photo by Peter Ross

skills or improve on old ones, evening classes at Portobello High School are just the thing. The local library is more than a source of books and CDs; it is also a great place to check out local history or even surf the net.

Our beach is a place where children can play safely and families can enjoy the sunshine on good days. The Promenade is a great place to stretch the legs and enjoy the fresh air, there are places to eat or take a refreshment, and for a taste of the British seaside, try the fair

ground and amusements. For birdwatchers, there are many species to be seen along the shoreline - Take your binoculars and see how many you can spot.

Portobello, Edinburgh's Seaside, is very popular with tourists and always busy when the Festival is in full swing. Our local B&Bs and hotels offer a respite from the buzz of the city centre.

So, next time you are looking for a good day out, try what's on offer locally.

Linda Johnstone

A SUPERSTORE BURNS SUPPER

ON Saturday 29th January, Portobello's biggest ever Burns Supper took place in the Town Hall when over 160 people dined in support of the Campaign Against the Superstore. The meal was prepared on the premises and served by a team of smiling and efficient High School pupils. Several local musicians gave their services free, including Dick and Ann Lee, the Baguettes, Mae Shaw and Orna Gilchrist. The speeches were given by CATS supporters: Dickie Alexander (Immortal Memory), Alan Finlayson (Toast to the Lassies), Anne Ward (the Reply), and Karen McLean (Tam

O'Porty). The evening ran smoothly thanks to the excellent host, Sheila McWhirter. The event ended at midnight with Auld Lang Syne, although the dishwashing went on a bit longer by a small, stalwart band of unsung helpers.

The event raised over £2,000 due to the hard work of all who took part and our local traders who donated much of the food. Of special interest to note is that all the food and drink consumed came from shops within walking distance of the town hall - Who needs the superstore? D.A.

PORTY PROFILE No. 19
POLLY PHILLIPS

IT was a beautiful summer day in 1996 when Polly Phillips arrived in Portobello, with her young son Jed, and she's been here ever since.

Polly is well known locally as a musician and teacher.

She started out working for the *Aberdeen Journal* but she soon realised her true love was music. She moved to Edinburgh and into the Salisbury Centre where she helped run things, and had the opportunity to develop her interest in songwriting, voice-work and music.

During this time she was a backing singer for Planet Janet when she was spotted by Edinburgh's legendary Revillos, which led to recording and touring extensively with them. About this time she had started writing her own songs, fronting lots of bands and running the Song Writers' Showcase, which promoted new songwriters and gave them a platform to perform their work.

In 1996 Polly won the Edinburgh Fringe Singer-Songwriter Award which led to radio sessions and the release of her first solo album 'I Wish I Had Your Life', followed up by 'No Relation'.

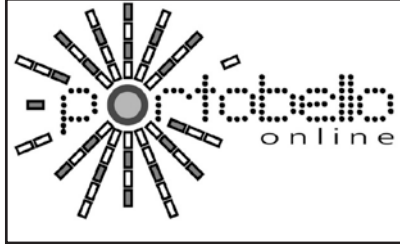
More recently Polly has been enthusiastically developing her career using voice and music in an abstract and therapeutic way. She has just completed a two year project with people with complex needs, encouraging and supporting them to create music for a short film, CD and booklet called 'Adventures In Sound'. Collaborating with another Porty musician Tam Treanor, Polly has been running community songwriting projects. "One of the songs we co-wrote with the Pilton Girls Consortium won the MTV Unsigned Talent Award. It was fantastic and the girls got to go to the awards in a limo to meet the stars", she told *The Reporter* as she beamed with pride.

Polly is currently working on 'Burnsong' a project to celebrate Robert Burns 250th anniversary in 2009. She is working with P6s and S1s to write new songs and "to encourage them to embrace songwriting as part of our cultural identity".

To find out more about her work go to www.allears.org PR



Photo by Peter Ross



THE Portobello Online community forum recently celebrated both its 300th registered member and 15,000 posts. It has now become so popular that a new forum, Portobello Matters, has been created to deal exclusively with the big issues affecting Portobello. So now you have a choice. If you want to discuss the superstore, the sale of

the Power League site or the closure of Phoenix House, for example, then you are welcome to join the ongoing debates on these subjects.

Meanwhile, our general discussion forum is as lively and entertaining as ever. Funny, informative, witty and above all friendly, it's a virtual street corner where Porty people come to exchange news, views and gossip. Join us at www.porty.org.uk but be warned, it's addictive!

Bob Jefferson

C.A.B. ON THE MOVE

AFTER nearly 25 years in Portobello High Street as tenants of the Baptist Church, Portobello Citizens Advice Bureau is on the move.

Our new premises at 8a and 8b Bath Street, like Phoenix rising from the ashes, are very nearly habitable. The outside has been painted the regulation CAB blue, and inside, the two former shops have been transformed into a bright modern office. The advantages over our current premises include a reception desk where we can welcome clients, plenty of space for computers to take account of the fact that our vast information system becomes fully computerised this spring, and four interview rooms instead of three. The new premises also have access for people with disability.

Our Bureau is staffed by highly trained and committed volunteers. We run two training courses a

year for advisers and are always looking for new volunteers.

We deal with a wide variety of issues including benefits, consumer, housing and employment, and can provide representation at Social Security and Employment appeal tribunals. Last year our appeals team gained over £190,000 for clients. Our Money Advice worker can advise on debt and money problems and we can refer clients with legal issues to our legal clinic.

The Bureau is open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 9.30am to 3.30pm, and Wednesday from 9.30 to 12 noon and 6.30 to 7.45pm. We have an appointment system (Tel 669 7138) but endeavour to see 'drop ins' wherever possible.

We are all very excited about the move and looking forward to the challenges ahead.

Joyce Boyd, Manager.

LOCAL POLICE IN GOOD NICK

FOLLOWING a fabric survey, Lothian and Borders Police agreed on extensive stonework and roof repairs at Portobello Police Station, comprising the restoration and replacement of ornate and structural stonework and repairs to all the roof areas. The work will preserve what is considered to be a very important building, both historically and architecturally, and was formerly the old Town Hall.

At the same time, the Force is taking the opportunity, in conjunction with the Community Council, to have the 'Town Hall Clock' in the tower fully refurbished, including the restoration of the chimes.

The work will cause some minor disruption to the local community with the erection of scaffolding around the building, but this will be kept to a minimum and the co-operation of residents and passers-by is much appreciated by Lothian and Borders Police. The work is expected to be completed by September.

Many people will be relieved to hear that the Station has reverted to 24 hour cover, with increased numbers of officers and two response vehicles with two officers in the area most of the time, with the proviso that they are part of a city-wide response commitment.

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GAVIN STRANG, MP

is available to meet constituents on the second Friday of the month at

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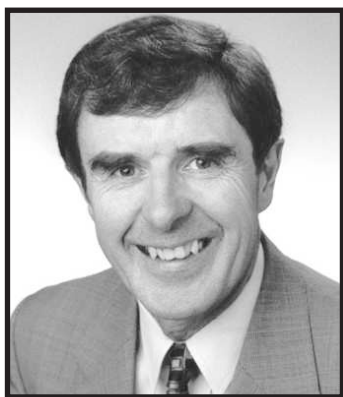
He is also available on the last Saturday of the month at **BRUNTON HALL** between 9am and 10am and **COMMUNITY CENTRE**, 63 Niddrie Mains Terrace between 10.30am and 11.30am.

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

You can also visit his website: www.gavinstrangmp.co.uk



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LETTER

Dear Editor,
 Hardly a week goes by without a horrendous gun crime in this country. Dreadful events like the double killing of Charlene Ellis and Latisha Shakespeare in Birmingham, and the shooting of Nottingham schoolgirl Danielle Beccan, have horrified many people.

But the problem goes far beyond this country. The world is awash with unregulated guns, and women in particular have become the 'collateral damage' in conflicts around the world. In Congo, Sudan, Chechnya and Nepal women and girls have suffered appalling human rights abuses. In some cases, women in war are being targeted by male combatants precisely to spread terror across entire communities.

To mark International Women's Day on March 8, Amnesty International will publish a new report on how the arms trade has blighted girls' and women's lives around the world. What can we do to stop it?

The clearest answer is to push for a tough international arms trade treaty that will prevent weapons ending up in the hands of human rights abusers. Please help with this great campaign for a safer country and world, for women and men alike, whenever an opportunity arises.

Mary Jane Elton /
 David Turner, Portobello.

The deadline for your contributions to the Summer Issue of *The Portobello Reporter* is **3rd May 2005**

REMEMBERING NED BARNIE

PORTOBELLO Amenity Society and Community Council intend to put up a plaque to commemorate Ned Barnie at his home in Straiton Place. Ned was a long distance swimmer of international renown who was mentioned in the Guinness Book of Records for swimming the English Channel both ways in 1951 when aged 55. He swam regularly in the sea by his home and was the first to swim across the Forth from Granton to Burntisland. As president of Portobello Swim Club, Ned encouraged the young, particularly the long distance, swimmers. The plaque will be bronze, of the same design as the one at the police station.

Donations may be sent to John Stewart, 4a Elcho Terrace, EH15 2EF; cheques made out to Portobello Amenity Society with Ned Barnie written on the back. All donations will be acknowledged. C.B.

MORE BIG THINGS ON THE BEACH

FOLLOWING last summer's 'Blue Moon' event at Joppa Rocks, the Big Things on the Beach local arts trust have applied for funding for a group of artists to present works for shorter periods in May/June this year, and for a proposal for reserved sculptures from the Scottish Collections to be displayed along the Promenade, on public or private land. This has the potential for a major exhibition, which would be a national and international attraction. Details and progress can be seen on www.bigthingsonthebeach.org.uk

The Trust was formed by a group of Portobello people in 2003/04, to demonstrate the potential of the beach as a site for the creation and display of public art works by established and emerging artists in Scotland. The trustees are looking for additional members who would like to support the plans: please contact enquiries@bigthingsonthebeach.org.uk

THE ANGEL PROJECT - CAN YOU HELP?

THE Angel Project in Tamil Nadu, India, provides free education, food and clothing for 30 semi-orphaned and destitute children in its Day Care Project, and there are plans to buy land and build an orphanage for children who also need somewhere to live.

Local woman, Amanda Hepburn, recently became the British Ambassador for the project and was able to donate schoolbags, clothing and funds. She plans to visit the Project later this year, once she has completed a Diploma in Counselling, to work with some of the children who have been traumatised by their experiences, and to give some basic training to project volunteers.

Amanda says: "More money, as always, and educational materials are desperately needed. If you are able to help, please contact me in the daytime on 667 7120, and I will happily supply further information".

LINDSAY SOUTER, Library Officer here for the last nine years, leaves for a new post in the Housing Department at the end of February. This is quite a turn up for the books (no pun intended) as Lindsay has been a mainstay in Portobello Library, and has loved her job here. However, an opportunity to start a new section for Housing ('Letwise'), which involves setting up an information bank, and advising landlords of both legal and council information, appealed to Lindsay as a career move with prospects, and she was quickly snapped up by the department. Their gain will be our loss.

Lindsay has worked in several libraries, including Newington and Central, and was delighted when she was transferred to her home town of Portobello. My first memory of her when I came here five years ago, was her lively description of the deeds surrounding the Amalgamation over 100 years ago between Edinburgh and Portobello. She had the skill of telling it as though it had just happened! With this skill and interest at heart, and responding, as always, to local needs, she formed an unequalled local history section in consultation with Portobello History Society, the City Archivist, and the Edinburgh Room of Central Library. She then created a beautifully designed Indexing tool, using the Access database programme on the computer, and gradually indexed all the material she had collected. This multi-volume news index, with dated and indexed press cuttings, is a feature that no other local library in Edinburgh has.

Due to Lindsay's expertise in local history, she was invited to be a co-author of the History Society's recent booklet that accompanies the video 'It Always Seemed to be Sunny - Memories of Portobello', which were immediately added to our own and the Edinburgh Room's stock! We will do our best to maintain her standards.

Nowadays libraries have to cater for new services all the time, and Lindsay has been fantastic in implementing these. Over the last five years, these would include: Lifelong Learning partnerships; all staff through basic computer training; development of Connect public access computers (we now have 16); pioneering an ECDL course for staff; the annual Summer Reading Scheme; Concessionary Travel passes; Retail Techniques in libraries; and this year, Weekend Opening, and our Coffee vending service (a pilot - the only one in Edinburgh).

The book stock is a particular area where I will miss Lindsay, as she has a special awareness of what the next 'must-have' might be, and we have bought our book and audio stock as a partnership. Accepting that you can't replace someone like Lindsay, who will be missed for her energy and for all the above, as well as by all staff who have had her help and support over the years, we wish her well in her new job, which is the least she deserves.

Joyce Campbell

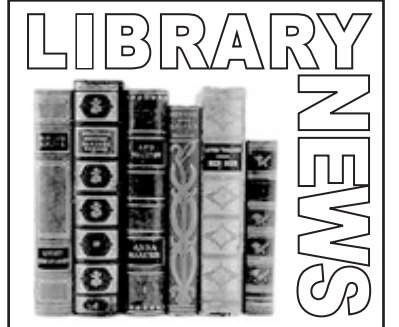


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ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT LOCAL SITE

THE vacant ground, which was once the site of Portobello's Figure of Eight Railway, has been the subject of an initial program of archaeological evaluation, carried out at the request of John Lawson, the City of Edinburgh Archaeologist. The work was carried out on behalf of the site owners by Graham Brown and the author, working for the Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust (SUAT Ltd). The on-site investigation consisted of excavating and recording four large well-spaced trenches, measuring four by two metres, down to the natural sand.

The site lies at the foot of Bridge Street, adjacent to the Figgate Burn and just to the rear of the two surviving pottery kilns that are the sole remnants of Buchan's large stoneware manufactory, which closed in 1972. It is also adjacent to the now enclosed amusement arcade and the built-over late 18th century harbour.

Although work has just begun on the processing and dating of the large amount of ceramic material recovered from the dig, the preliminary results suggest that the area was still a sandy beach until the sale by John Tough in 1867 of the small short-lived pottery of T. Tough and Co. The new pottery owners, Murray and Buchan, and



Recently identified from excavated shards is this superb Portobello blue and white transfer printed bowl, c.1820,

subsequently Buchan's, expanded enormously both their factory area and production of stoneware. Over the next 30 or so years the area of beach to the north of the enlarged pottery was covered over and built up by huge amounts of broken saggars, stoneware, sanitary ware and general kiln debris, which is now more than three metres deep in places. Certainly the area of the excavation had reached its present level by the beginning of the 19th century.

The preliminary evaluation of the pottery,

which has now been washed and marked, is interesting. It shows that in the third quarter of the 19th century Buchan's was also at the forefront of the developing market in sanitary wares, and were producing a fine range of transfer-printed cabinet sinks, etc. as an adjunct to their mainstay of brown stoneware flagons and bottles.

In tandem with the ongoing research on the newly recovered pottery, the author has also begun to catalogue all the Portobello ceramic material presently held both in the National Museums of Scotland and

Photo courtesy of Scottish private collector

Huntly House Museum. This work is being carried out with the object of making all the previously excavated and salvaged Portobello pottery, much of which dates from the Rathbone period (c1810-1880), available for studying in the form of an illustrated CD which will be distributed free, with the Journal of the Northern Ceramic Society, as the fourth in a series on the potteries along the shores of the Forth.

When carrying out the excavation, a local resident Mr Arthur Jeffery, a former thrower at Buchan's pottery and member of the Portobello History Society, asked if the museum would be interested in a box of pottery shards, which he had recovered from a trench dug by the Water Board at the foot of Pipe Street. The small collection, which dates to the 1820s, is extremely exciting, as it contains fragments of unrecorded transfer prints, and others with rouletted schemes and unusual combinations of variegated banding. Given the importance of this material, I would be extremely grateful to hear from anyone else with shard material or marked pieces from the pre-Buchan era, if only to have them photographed and recorded.

George Haggarty

VIDEO'S STUNNING SUCCESS

THE enthusiastic reception given to the History Society's video 'It Always Seemed to be Sunny - Memories of Portobello', when it was launched at the Town Hall on 19th November showed its makers that they could have a hit on their hands, but even so they were taken aback by the volume of demand when the video went on sale to the public. In a day or so more copies had to be ordered from the duplicating company in Newcastle to make sure there was always some on hand to keep the shops supplied. By the end of the year this second lot was almost sold out as well and the society is very grateful to the proprietors and staff of Portobello Stationers, Mulberries, Projections and Joppa Newsagents for their contribution to the success.

The good news is that still more copies have come from Newcastle and the video will continue to be on sale for £12.99 at Portobello Stationers and Mulberries for the foreseeable future. For those that prefer it, a DVD version can be bought at Portobello Library in Rosefield Avenue for £15.99. A.F.

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maureen.child@edinburgh.gov.uk

SUSAN DEACON MSP
INTERVIEW SESSIONS

Susan Deacon will be available; on the **last Monday of each month 6pm - 7pm in PORTOBELLO TOWN HALL** and on the **first Thursday of the month 6.30pm - 7.30pm in PIERSHILL LIBRARY**
She also holds regular interview sessions at other locations in her constituency.
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JOPPA STEAM LAUNDRY

THERE was a letter in your December issue from Mr Robertson of North Berwick about the railway laundry in Brunstane Road. As a boy, I lived at 7 Argyle Crescent in Joppa and our long back garden gave onto a lane off Brunstane Road just north of the bridge over the main railway line to London. I used to play in the area between our back garden and that railway line... where there were garages and great places to play hide-and-seek, and also visit Joppa station with its drinking fountain and metal cup to train-spot the exquisite great steam-powered trains heading to London. They had exotic names... 'Union of South Africa', 'Spion Kop', 'Sir Nigel Gresley', who designed the locomotives, and of course 'Mallard' which at one time held the steam train speed record of 123 miles per hour.



Photo by George Neilson

My companion on many of these forays was Tommy McCallion who was the son of the lady who lived in the old railway laundry on the other side of the lane at the back of our house. We'd put pennies on the railway line to Newcraighall and Millerhill to be flattened by the coal trains on the bridge which crossed the London line, and try to drop apple cores down the chimneys of trains from the footbridge at Joppa Station. That line is now the road from the roundabout near the top of Brunstane Road to King's Road called Sir Harry Lauder Road, named after the comedian who was born in Portobello.

At that time, I reckon the old railway laundry was used for other purposes, as there was no smoke or steam coming from the chimney, though I can't quite remember what Tommy's mother did for a living. On a recent return to the area, however, I noticed that the garden of 7 Argyle Crescent had been divided and a bungalow built with the front leading onto that lane. The old laundry was gone and a development of flats was under construction. Like so many people returning to childhood areas, it seemed so much smaller than when Tommy and I, and other pals, played so many games in what was, to a young boy, a magical area. So many happy memories

Paul Young

HELP WANTED



THE history society was given this photograph some time ago along with others that were clearly identifiable as of Portobello people and occasions. This one came with no details and so far remains a mystery. Can Reporter readers solve it and say where and when it was taken and name the speaker and any of his listeners?

PHOTOGRAPHS NEEDED FOR NEW BOOK

TEMPUS Publishing is the largest local history publisher in Britain and has commissioned Archie Foley and Margaret Munro to produce a book on Portobello for its Images of Scotland series. The book, set to appear late this year, will have about 200 photographs and postcards plus a text of 10,000 words. Reporter readers are being urged to search out

photographs of individuals, places of work, events and outings that illustrate Portobello as a community as well as a resort for possible inclusion in the book. They don't have to be terribly old, 30 years is a long time ago for lots of people. Contact Archie at 669 0184 and Margaret at 657 2866; evenings preferred in both cases.

BELLBOTTOMS & BLOOMERS

THIS second book by Louisa M Jenkins features her Wren memoirs from World War II. She has made contact, after 50 years, with one ex-Wren friend who appears in the book, and hopes it will interest the local people she knows. For more info. visit www.diadembooks.com



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PORTOBELLO HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

THE SOCIETY finished 2004 with a bumper audience at its December meeting. Extra chairs had to be put out when Peter Stubbs gave his illustrated talk on the history of Edinburgh Photography and Photographers. He included many local examples in his presentation showing that for its size Portobello was home to a very large number of photographers. The year also ended with membership numbers at a record high. This is not only due to the efforts of the committee to make the society better known in the community but also to existing members spreading the word and persuading friends and neighbours to come along.

The second part of this session's programme began on Wednesday 2nd February when Allan MacKinnon of the Registers of Scotland gave a talk on Scotland's centuries-old and widely envied system of recording the transfer and ownership of property. Much fascinating detail was revealed and Mr MacKinnon also explained how they could be used by anyone to investigate family history.

Alistair Davidson of the Colinton Local History Society will be the speaker on 2nd March. Mr Davidson was the director of a major project carried out by society members that studied the life and times of Colinton parish in the mid 19th century. The eight year project based on Census records began in 1996 and culminated with the publication in 2003 of a comprehensive report that was hailed as a model for other local history societies. In his talk Mr Davidson will explain how the project was organised, how it expanded as it progressed and how the participation of so many society members was achieved.

On 6th April society member, Mike Brown will be giving an illustrated talk titled *Buchan's Decorative Pottery*. Everyone interested in Buchan's pottery and its stoneware products will be aware of the Thistle design, which was produced in large quantities particularly for the American market. Less well known is the enormous range of decorated output in Portobello during its golden period of the 50s and 60s. These designs are now much sought after by collectors. Mike Brown's talk will range over the coloured glazes and named designs e.g. Brittany, Edinburgh etc. plus floral and abstract designs developed in Portobello until the pottery moved to Crieff in 1972. Bring along your pieces from this period to be appraised.

The last of our talks, on 4th May, is a double-bill; John Stewart of the Portobello Amenity Society and Bob Jefferson of the Brightons Residents Association will take the stand to describe when and why their respective organisations were formed and the role each plays within Portobello.

All of these meetings will be held in St John's Church Hall, Brighton Place and start at 7 pm. They are open to non-members.

Archie Foley

WHAT'S ON

COFFEE MORNING & Bric a Brac Sale: Saturday 26 February from 10am to 1pm in St James Church hall, Rosefield Place. (In aid of the Campaign Against the Superstore).

JUMBLE SALE in aid of the Tsunami Appeal: Saturday 9 April from 10am to 12noon in St Philip's Church hall, Brunstane Rd North. Light refreshments will be available.

GUIDE JUMBLE SALE, Sat. 12 March from 1-3pm, in the Church Hall, Bellfield St. A fundraiser for the Guide Summer Camp in France.

PLANT & BOOK FAIR: On Saturday 30 April from 1pm at St Christopher's Church, Craigentiny Road. There will also be a home-baking stall, and teas and coffees. This is a golden opportunity to renew plants in your garden, donations of plants appreciated, and should be handed in at the hall on the Friday between 7-9pm. For further information call 669 2129.

RECTOR RETIRES



ON the 6th March St Mark's Episcopal Church will say goodbye to the Rev. Eleanor Morson. Eleanor came to the church in 2000, but unfortunately ill health has prevented her from realising her full potential at St Mark's. She has had to take early retirement, and is returning with her husband to the Orkney Islands, where they were both previously active in the church's ministry, and which they feel to be their home. Her sincerity has been the hallmark of her ministry here. We wish Eleanor and John a happy retirement. J.L.

PORTOBELLO AMNESTY GROUP

THE Group held it Human Rights Day, with a Tree of Hope, in early December to publicise the Greetings Card Campaign for prisoners of conscience, their families and supporters worldwide. Passers-by signed 38 cards to bring greetings and hope to such people in six countries, and 25 more were sent by young people in Holy Rood High School and other local people. MP Gavin Strang spent some time at the stall; he chose a card and expressed his appreciation of the group's initiative on this and of its display in the Library concerning the Stop Violence Against Women campaign, which he also visited.

The Library display was the group's contribution to an annual campaign by the World Council of Churches, as part of the UN Decade to Overcome Violence. People were asked to 'imagine a world in which violence against women and girls has ended' and think of the liberating effects on women and men alike. Eighteen people responded, and their thoughts were written on cards and pinned to the display.

A fundraising Coffee Morning and sale will be held on Saturday 19 March in the United Reform Church Hall in Marlborough Street, from 11am to 1pm, to which everyone is warmly welcome.

The group meets on the third Monday of each month in the vestry of this church at 7.30pm. For further information, call 669 1308.

David Turner

CHRISTIAN AID

THE annual Carol Festival on Sunday 12th December raised £344, which was donated to the Palestine and Bethlehem Appeal.

The 2005 Forth Road Bridge Cross will be on Saturday 30th April, the day on which Christian Aid celebrates its 60th birthday. Last year the 600 sponsored walkers raised over £50,000 for good causes world wide and organisers are going all out to beat that sum on this special day. If you think you can help to reach the big 60k and want more information telephone the Area Coordinator at 220 1254 or you can e-mail shbrown@christianaid.org.uk.

Christian Aid Week, which includes the door to door collection, will run from 15th - 21st May. Portobello householders of all faiths are very generous with their donations but those who are UK taxpayers could make their contributions worth more by following the Gift Aid information on the collection envelopes. Last year about £800 was gained from reclaimed tax.

www.pressureworks.org is a site run by Christian Aid. All of us have felt that as individuals we can't make a difference in the world. Pressureworks.org gives information on ways we can help to end world poverty and tackle problems in this country. It's practical as well as informative and demonstrates how even one person can be effective.

On 22 January, over 140 people gathered for the 20th Annual Burns Supper for Christian Aid held in the Portobello Old Parish Church hall. Another resounding success for the organisers, and greatly appreciated by everyone, the event raised £1169.

THE REV. BUCHANAN LEAVES OLD PARISH

THE Reverend Neil Buchanan, minister of Portobello Old Parish Church in Bellfield Street for 13 years, is soon to move on (and back) to the West. He will continue his ministry at Steps on the outskirts of Glasgow.

During his stay, the Church has seen some changes, with a new chapel area and coffee lounge; and the halls are increasingly used, not least by a youth club and a young performing arts group. Externally, the Old Parish, St James' and St Philip's have covenanted to work closely together.

Neil will be missed as a preacher who presents the Gospel simply, with some humour and in down to earth language. Unstinting of his time in visiting the housebound, the sick and the bereaved, his pastoral care and friendly disposition have won him many friends. He has also found time to act as chairman of the Portobello and District Council of Churches for two years, to serve as school chaplain, and as a prison chaplain at Saughton.

Neil's hosting of the church's annual Burns Supper for Christian Aid has prompted the question for any would-be successor: "Would you be willing and able to cook a Burns Supper for 160 people?"

In recent years, Neil's wife Marion has had her own successful ministry as a deacon at St Margaret's, Restalrig, and we have had the pleasure of seeing their children Kirsteen, Stewart and Rebekah growing up beside us. We wish the family well in the future. T.B.



Photo by Brenda Molony

A VERY SPECIAL CELEBRATION

CONGRATULATIONS to Mr and Mrs George Ewing of Wilsons Park, Portobello, who celebrated 60 years of marriage on 10th January. The celebration was held at the Malmaison Hotel. They were delighted to receive good wishes from The Queen.

George and Aileen Ewing have lived in Portobello since childhood. George was born in Leith and moved here with his family in 1929, eventually staying in Bellfield Lane. Aileen was born in Tower Street, now Figgate Street. They both went to Towerbank School and George later worked on the building of Portobello Power Station and on the Forth Road Bridge.



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ECO AWARD FOR ROYAL HIGH PRIMARY

THE Royal High Primary School received a Silver Eco Award last session and are now working hard for the ultimate Green Flag Award. One of the key areas of the Eco Award is litter and recycling, and pupils and staff are all involved on a daily basis. Infants recycle their fruit cores and skins in our garden compost bins, and our recycling officers collect the class waste paper. We have bought lovely new waste bins for our playground to encourage everyone to keep our playground litter-free. We also organise community clean-ups throughout the year when we try to improve our local area. Some of the pupils from P7 have also made up an Eco Rap.

Each week at assembly our School Councillors act out a social skill to remind the school of that skill, which we all demonstrate from then on. So far we have looked at Please and Thank You, Be Punctual, Speak in a Quiet Voice, Be Polite and Don't Interrupt. Eileen Forrest

BUDDING BARDS OF HOLY ROOD

THE Poetry Club at Holy Rood High School has been up and running in the English department for two and a half years. The budding poets come from every year group and there is a terrific creative spirit in the group. The older pupils help and encourage the younger ones, offering them ideas and giving them feedback. It's a great team spirit.

Ms Jameson, the club organiser told us: "The purpose of setting up the group was to encourage creative writing outside of the classroom. The pupils find poetry an excellent way to express themselves".

The club has been a great success: it is fun and the pupils have won lots of national competitions. Last year, Ronan McLaughlin, a third year pupil, and Katherine Steward, fourth year, both won the Ottaker's Book Prize. Emma Gibson, also in fourth year, won the Robin Harper Poetry Award.

This year, Christopher Ford, third year, was awarded a winner's certificate for his poem 'Nothing' in the 'Great Minds' Poetry Competition. The poem has been selected for publication in the 'Great Minds' anthology later this year. Perhaps a future Poet Laureate is already making his mark in Holy Rood.

Lesley A Carroll, Head Teacher

PUPILS RECORD CD FOR AFRICA

CLASSES P5A and B at St John's Primary School created a Christmas CD called 'Come and Celebrate'. Last year we were watching the News and it said it is 20 years since the old Band Aid single that raised money for Africa. We thought we could help raise money for Band Aid too. Our teacher asked the class to write down what Christmas meant to them. Then we used our ideas to write a song called 'A Perfect Christmas'. We asked Mr Patterson, a pupil's dad, to compose a tune. We held a competition to design the front cover and Kay was the winner.

We practised the song along with three other carols and then we performed for our mums and dads at the school Christmas Fair. Our teachers organised a trip to St Thomas of Aquins (which has a recording studio) to record our CD. We made 150 copies and raised about £750.

To find out more about our CD please visit www.st-johns.edin.sch.uk

Matthew, Feargus, Charlotte and Andrew (P5A/B)

TSUNAMI APPEAL CONCERT

ON Saturday 5th February over 200 children and parents filled St.Philip's Church Hall for a charity Mr. Boom Concert: fun and songs with a serious message - the children of Portobello wanted to show solidarity with the children who lost everything in the tsunami. The initiative came from Katriona Tweedie, aged 5. "She wanted to bake some cakes", says mother Allison Holligan, "but I thought we could do a bit more, so we contacted children's entertainer Mr Boom, who was delighted to contribute to the cause". The children had a stall with home baking and goodie bags donated by ASDA and Borders Fresh Farm Produce, and there was a raffle with prizes donated by Scotmid, Portobello and Early Learning Centre, Fort Kinaird. £1400 was raised for the Disasters Emergency Committee.



Photo by David McDermott

PAINT A PENGUIN!

LOTS of children at Towerbank Primary School entered Edinburgh Zoo's recent exciting 'Paint a Penguin' competition. They painted some fabulous penguins and we are delighted to say that Chloe Miller from p5/6 was the overall winner. As her prize she is allowed to adopt a penguin for a whole year! Andrew Stephen P5/6 and Abbie Watson P3A were runners up. Congratulations to them all. Patricia Morrison

ECO RAP

by pupils at the Royal High Primary School

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Reduce, re-use, recycle

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Reduce, re-use, recycle ..

We recycle paper
Then we use it later

Reduce, re-use, recycle ..
Reduce, re-use, recycle ..

Please reduce your waste
So we can have a better place

Reduce, re-use, recycle ..
Reduce, re-use, recycle ..

WEAR YOUR PYJAMAS TO SCHOOL DAY!

ON January 28th Towerbank pupils (and teachers!) came to school in their pyjamas! Teddies were brought to school and face masks applied. The staff and pupils congregated in the hall for a special assembly to raise money for the Tsunami Appeal. Pupils and teachers wearing pyjamas were asked to bring a donation to school 'Wear Your Pyjamas To School Day' raised approx £1000, with money still coming in! We hope our contribution will help in some small way. Thanks to all who took part.

Daniel Jefferson & Innes Taylor P7

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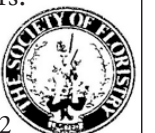
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KITCHENERS DELICATESSEN MONDAY 1 MARCH

A Big thanks from the staff at the deli for all our customers support during the supermarket campaign.

Monday 1 March is the start of the Public Inquiry to be held up at the British Legion club. On behalf of all the traders we ask for your support again by attending as often as you can at the Inquiry.

In the meantime myself, Fiona and her team look forward to welcoming you at the deli & coffee shop.



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HIGH FLYERS NET A BIG CATCH



PORTOBELLO - based City of Edinburgh Basketball Club have been High Flyers for quite a while but they really look like jetting off to new heights now, thanks to a generous grant from RAF Careers.

Kings' junior men, who are unbeaten for 18 months, donned their brand new RAF strips to receive a cheque for £900 from RAF Recruiter Sergeant Alison Smith (centre). Also pictured in the Portobello High School gym are several top players from sister team Kool Kats, the Scottish Cup-holders, who will also benefit from the grant.

S.S.

EVER GREEN - THE FUTURE

OVER 30 people gave up a Saturday recently to explore Ever Green's arts, ecology and social justice future. Led by trustee Diana Cairns, supporters looked at ways ahead. Ever Green's High Street shop closed last May, after five years involvement with the community as a place for organic foods and recycled goods, as well as an occasional gallery and music venue.

"A voluntary group can't keep it going," said organiser Janet Fenton. "Lots of people could be using the place - and it would remain a friendly, welcoming vibrant part of Portobello."

Trust convener Alastair Cameron set out the potential for the space: exhibitions, meetings, classes, therapy sessions. Commercial activity is welcome if it is in line with the Ever Green ethos. Renovation work is under way, so that catering can be carried out, and the new small group room downstairs had its first use for the meeting.

Lots of support was shown for Ever Green, with offers of help and plenty of good ideas. Any other individuals or groups interested in using or developing the space should contact Janet Fenton on 657 2257, or janetfenton@blueyonder.co.uk.

SPRING is a great but busy time for gardeners, when you sow seeds and have the thrill of seeing them develop. The only time I buy compost is in spring for sowing seeds, as they need the best start; I buy multi-purpose compost certified by the Soil Association. I also buy a bag of horticultural grit for extra drainage if the compost looks 'claggy'.

Re-use and recycle - If you run out of plant containers, anything will do as long as you water carefully if holes can't be made in them: I've used supermarket bags to hold tomato plants and toilet rolls for peas. I've also sterilised home-made compost in an old microwave, which works well. You need to experiment, but I fill a 2 litre glass container and cook on high for five minutes until steaming, then let it cool before using.

Hygiene with seedlings and plantlets is important to reduce the risk of fusty moulds and diseases. I give all my containers a wash in warm water with a skoosh of environmentally safe washing-up liquid, then let them dry in the sun.

I use a hand spray-gun filled with tap water to start seedlings off, rather than a watering can - it wouldn't be the first time I've washed seeds out and lost the lot - then when seedlings graduate to small plantlets, I use water-butt water. I wash the water butt out when it goes dry in the summer to keep it fresh.

For feeding all plants throughout the year I use combinations of worm-bin juice and comfrey juice, and only buy liquid seaweed manure as a back-up for the summer, in case I run out.

There are lots of varieties of organic seed now available and I try something different every year. I am a member of the Heritage Seed Library (through HDRA), which preserves old varieties of vegetables that may otherwise disappear forever. These have qualities that the big seed companies aren't interested in, such as great flavour, but are oddly shaped so supermarkets wouldn't want them.

And finally - If you have an outside tap, take the leg of a pair of tights, put soap in the toe, tie the other end to a nailbrush and hang it over the tap. It lathers up great for washing hands, which keeps door handles clean!



with Susan Burns

PORTY'S WATER'S VERY SPORTY

THE Portobello Spring Aquathon will start at 9am on Sunday 3rd April, with registration at 8am in Portobello Swim Centre. It will consist of swim section in the pool, followed by a run in the vicinity of the Prom. Roads will be closed to traffic during the events, making them suitable for juniors and children. Enter online at www.EntryCentral.net or for more information e-mail brucekidd@baesystems.com or call 657 4716.

The big news is that Portobello has been awarded the 2005 Scottish Triathlon Championships, which should have a high profile throughout the UK. The race will take place on 14th August and could attract over 300 athletes from all over Britain.

In an effort to promote Portobello, a small team attended this year's London Triathlon exhibition in mid-February. 8000 triathletes taking part in last year's London event and it is hoped that some of them will be attracted to Portobello this Summer.

Bruce Kidd

PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY CENTRE NEWS

OPEN DAY: A very successful open day was held on 6th November when about 300 people turned up. There were displays from most groups, culminating with a stunning display of Indian Dancing by Ganga Waite

THE KURDISH FAMILIES CLUB had a splendid New Year Party with members of their community from Edinburgh and Glasgow.

A 21st CENTURY CENTRE: No update yet, but we're hoping to receive the feasibility study by the end of February. It will be available in the Centre, and possibly on-line.

NEW GROUPS:

GENTLE EXERCISE: Thursday morning, 10.20. Arrive from 10a.m. Free until the beginning of April with a charge for tea/coffee.

DIGITAL CAMERA GROUP - This group is full for this session and we are running a waiting list.

SOCATOTS for pre-school kids on Wednesday mornings - for more information contact the Centre.

All groups are running well and can be seen on the website, with pictures of the day.

For information contact the Centre, look on our website or come and see Maggie in the Office - mornings, except Wednesday. And don't forget, you can have free access to our computers then, too.

3 Adelphi Grove, EH15 2AY. Tel: 669 8275. e-mail: enquiries@portobello.cc website - www.portobello.cc

GOLF FOR A GOOD CAUSE

ON 13th April, local man John Barclay will play in the 5th Annual Tournament for Parkinson's Disease Research, to raise funds for the Dr Grant Clinical Neurosciences unit at the Western General Hospital. John, himself a sufferer, says: "Over the past four years we have raised over £3142 and we hope to break last year's total of £890".

The tournament takes place at Musselburgh Golf Club, starting at 11am, and there will also be a raffle. Would anyone who would like to sponsor the event or support the raffle, please call 669 1105.

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