

# The Portobello REPORTER

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The independent voice of Portobello

Your Community Newspaper produced by local people.

## N W PORTOBELLO MASTERPLAN

### Objections aired at public meeting

OVER 250 people attended a public meeting, arranged by the Council in conjunction with PCATS and the Portobello Masterplan Action Group (PMAG) in the Town Hall on 14th November, to hear about the progress made in drawing up an urban design framework for this area of Portobello, which covers the Fun Park, Pitz and Baileyfield North sites (including the former Scottish Power site.)

The consultants, C2Wta, who are preparing the design framework for the Council, were present to answer questions arising from the public exhibition of their draft ideas in the library in June. These include the building of about 1,000 residential units in this area, in blocks of varying heights, including a row of five ten-storey flats alongside the Sir Harry Lauder Road and housing on the Bridge Street car park. They also want to move both the Library and the Community Centre onto

the Pitz site.

Ian Campbell, a member of PMAG, questioned whether the consultants really understood the existing character of the area, and where the pressure was coming from for such overdevelopment which would overshadow many existing houses and create huge traffic issues. Other people also raised the same questions.

Strong feelings were expressed that the Library and Community Centre should remain in the centre of Portobello and that, while there was a need for varied housing, particularly affordable housing, high blocks of flats did not suit the area's character. A need was also recognised for the proposed artists' workshops, but with a careful balance between residential and workshop units. Several Baileyfield Road residents made the point that their houses did not feature in the proposals, while others were concerned that the proposed housing in

Bridge Street would result in a serious loss of parking for residents, visitors and shoppers.

Alan Henderson, Head of Planning, stressed that the consultants wanted to listen to the views of the public, that community input was vital if the final design framework was to be acceptable, and that concerns which were important to residents should not be overlooked.

The revised design framework will be presented to the planning committee in December before going to public consultation in January and February. Our local councillors have asked for copies to be placed in the library, and it is vital that people look at the revised proposals and let the planning department know if they still have concerns. If they are not what local people want, then they have to use this opportunity to say so.

John Stewart

## COUNCIL "EXPLAINS" SNUB TO PORTOBELLO

IN our Autumn issue we reported that the Council had used a photo of North Berwick beach on the back of its *A-Z of Council Services*, to illustrate the "Stunning skylines and sandy beaches" of Scotland's capital. When asked why a photo of Portobello beach was not used, the following rather puzzling explanation was given:

"The A-Z subsidises its budget by attracting advertising income from relevant Council projects and external organisations. The advert on the back page of the publication is from the 'Edinburgh City Region Brand' project. As a vehicle to promote the whole city region, it is appropriate that at least one of the images in such a Brand advert is of a subject from outwith the city's boundaries.... in this case East Lothian ....[but] both the Brand Project and the Council's own Communications Team... are well aware of the assets of Portobello and take every opportunity to promote our city's own seaside resort whenever appropriate". This was one opportunity they missed.

The people of North Berwick may be surprised to hear about their apparent incorporation into the 'Edinburgh City Region'.

## KINGS ROAD ROUNDBOUT WORK DELAYED

AFTER the disruptions caused by the work at Milton Link and Duddingston Park junctions, road users will have some welcome respite before work begins on the Kings Road roundabout. This has now been put back to late February or early March. Alternative routes to Portobello High Street will be signposted and, where possible, traffic signals will be adjusted to ease the flow. The Council will distribute information leaflets around the area nearer the time. The work is expected to take 20 weeks.

## CYCLING ON PROM



Photo by Lou Hardless

THE Vox Pop on cycling on Portobello Prom in our last issue sparked a number of responses, none of them in favour. The following is a typical example:

"I use the Prom every weekday morning and evening and can assure you that the number of cyclists using it has grown to unacceptable levels. Given the number of 'No Cycling' signs, there can be no excuse for anyone mistaking the Prom for a cycle path. Too many cyclists brush past pedestrians with only inches to spare and most of them are travelling at a fair speed. Do we have to wait until someone gets hurt before the 'No Cycling' signs are enforced?"

According to the Council's City Development Department, under the Roads (Scotland) Act, 1984, Portobello

Promenade from Westbank Street to the Joppa end, is designated as a 'road' restricted to foot passage only and cycling is prohibited, as indicated by the signs. A police spokesman, however, said that before enforcement action could be taken, the Council may be required to have enacted a local banning order and this is still unclear.

Cyclists presumably use the Prom because they feel safer than on the roads, and the Spokes Cycle Map of Edinburgh does include it as a cycle path on which it may be necessary to dismount. For years people have turned a blind eye to careful cyclists, but it appears that an increasing number of inconsiderate ones, who pedestrians feel are a threat to their own safety, are causing real concern.

## HUNDREDS OBJECT TO WASTE TRANSFER PROPOSAL

WELL over 500 objections to the application by Viridor to build a waste transfer facility on the former freightliner terminal on Sir Harry Lauder Road were submitted to the Council's planning department by the deadline of November 5th. Local councillors also received hundreds of e-mailed objections.

Diana Cairns of the campaign group PONGS (Portobello Opposes New Garbage Site) and Cllr Maureen Child were interviewed on BBC Radio's 'Good Morning Scotland' and on ITV News on

November 2nd.

PONGS have asked for the application to be conducted as a Hearing, so that each side will have the chance to put their case and be questioned by members of the Planning Committee. This is not expected to take place until well into the New Year.

Meanwhile, Friends of the Earth, PONGS and other groups are calling for a long-term strategy for waste handling across the region before any individual applications are approved.



**PORTY PROFILE No. 29**  
**EDITH BUDGE**

Photo by Eilidh Bateman



Edith Innes is probably better known to many as jazz singer Edith Budge, but although she started singing in New Restalrig Church choir when she was 14, her career as a jazz singer did not really take off until she retired from nursing.

Edith achieved registration as a general nurse, midwife and health visitor and, when working in England, she established support groups for patients recovering from strokes and cardiac problems. She also trained junior doctors in rehabilitation skills.

On moving to the Scottish Borders, Edith worked as a Clinical Teacher and health visitor and continued her work with patient rehabilitation as a Senior Nurse Manager. She also trained as a nurse tutor and is qualified in Training Practice. Edith says: "I enjoy training very much, as it keeps you up to date with the caring environment and I believe it is very important to meet standards." She still cares for people in her work with Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland, as a counsellor and supervisor, specialising in working with bereaved children and young people.

Since retiring Edith has been able to focus on her singing and train with a voice coach. She has been resident singer in several venues in Edinburgh, including the Palm Court at the Balmoral Hotel, where she met Rod Stewart, who asked her to sing some of his favourite songs that later featured in his own recordings. Edith performs regularly in the Jazz Festival and says: "I perform the songs I know people like, so that they can enjoy themselves and have a relaxed time." She also enjoys the gospel nights in St. Philip's Church.

When Edith, her husband Duncan, and son Andrew decided to move to Portobello 20 years ago, they viewed what is now their home on a very cold, wild and wintry night. "Entering the house", Edith says, "we came into warmth, cosiness and light." She still enjoys living in Portobello.

Margaret Munro

**ON THE BEAT**

**'BE SURE AT YOUR DOOR'**

**THIS** is something we should all be. Portobello is a safe area, but if we all take extra precautions we can make it even safer.

Bogus callers are always inventing new ways of getting into people's homes to steal valuables or money. Always check who is at your door before you open it, and if you do not know or expect a caller, do not let them into your home, whatever they tell you. You should first check their identity, even if they say they are a police officer! Ask to see their identity card and if you are still not sure, look up the company in the phone book and call them.

Who is at risk and when? Many bogus callers call during the day, at times that you would expect workmen and service providers to call. Charity collectors call at more random times.

Don't let any casual doorstep workman do work on your property, for example roofing, tarmac for driveways or gardening.

Be aware. Be careful yourself and look out for neighbours. Ring them if possible to pass the word round, and if suspicious people are in the area, contact the police.

PC Kenny Owen  
Portobello Police Station

**BOOK REVIEW**

*A Cuckoo in the Land of Eagles* by Richard Fenton

Richard Fenton lives in Joppa when not working abroad, and spent time in Poland and Germany, before taking up a post teaching English for a year in Tirana.

*A Cuckoo in the Land of Eagles* is an account of his experiences at an Albanian language school in Tirana. Richard kept a diary, on which the book is based, recording the weather, the food, his first experience of an earthquake, and an encounter with a man with a goat, among other things. He describes the generosity of the Albanian people and the beauty of the landscape, and gives a lively insight into day-to-day life in an extraordinary place. For more information see [www.Lulu.com](http://www.Lulu.com)

**PILLARS MUCH ADMIRIED**

**THE** Community Garden on the Promenade is looking very good now and people are often seen admiring the decorative Coade stone pillars and reading the information board. A crown top for the large pillar is being made

by local potter, Alison Robinson, who made a top for one of the smaller pillars. The job is taking longer than expected because this top is much bigger and heavier, but it should be in place next spring.

**PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**THE** next meeting of the council will take place on Monday January 28th at 7.30 pm in the Baptist Church Hall, 193 Portobello High Street. Minutes of meetings can be seen in the library or online at [www.porty.org.uk](http://www.porty.org.uk)

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**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**TROTTERS BOWL OUT PHS:** Portobello History Society played its annual game of skittles against The Trotters in The Sheep Heid Inn on Saturday, 1st September. As is now becoming a tradition, The Trotters won 373 points to 193.

**HOVERCRAFT TO LAND IN LEITH:** Following the success of their hovercraft trial in July, Stagecoach propose running a full service between Kirkcaldy and the Ocean Terminal at Leith, from summer 2009, depending on funding. Until that starts, they propose a one-hovercraft operation from Kirkcaldy to Portobello from late 2008, operating every 45 minutes at peak times and hourly at other times.

Stagecoach have offered to make a presentation of the proposals to Portobello Community Council, but even a short-term service may be unacceptable to those who objected to the problems experienced during the trial. Other people and local businesses, however, may regret the loss of the potential benefits to the area of a regular service here.

**GET A FREE** Home Safety Check and a smoke alarm fitted by professional fire officers by contacting 0800 169 0320. So far, their work has reduced the number of fire incidents that end in death and injury by 30% and the number of fires by 25%.

**HOME GETTING COLDER?** If you need help and grants to install energy saving measures to keep you cosy, the Council funded Warmburgh Unit, 36 Newhaven Road can help in all sorts of ways. Call them on 538 7946 or e-mail [warmburgh@changeworks.org.uk](mailto:warmburgh@changeworks.org.uk)

**THE BEFRIENDING PROJECT** at Edinburgh Headway Group seeks volunteers to spend time with people with an acquired brain injury, encouraging them to be part of the community and involved in social activities, to help increase independence, confidence and self esteem. The project seeks a wide range of people over the age of 21 and offers training, support and expenses. For more information call phone 537 9557 or email [befriending@edinburghheadway.org.uk](mailto:befriending@edinburghheadway.org.uk)

**KEEP EDINBURGH GROWING, 2007:** Local winners of the Front Gardens, Edinburgh East, section were: 1st Maura Spencer, Durham Square, who also won the Best in Edinburgh section; 2nd Ralph Balfour, Duddingston Park. Jean Kerr, Mountcastle Dr. South, won the Tubs and Containers section.

**GENEALOGY** and Family History: Trace your roots on a 10-week course starting on January 16th in Portobello Library. Information leaflets available from the library.

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

to all our Readers, Contributors and Advertisers

To contact *The Portobello Reporter* you can telephone 669 3466 or email [portyreporter@btinternet.com](mailto:portyreporter@btinternet.com)  
Deadline for the next issue is 7th February

**GAVIN STRANG MP**  
wishes all his constituents  
A Merry Christmas  
& A Happy New Year.

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You may also make an appointment to discuss a problem or raise an issue with Gavin Strang.  
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Edinburgh, EH15 1DA  
email: [gillana@parliament.uk](mailto:gillana@parliament.uk)  
[www.gavinstrangmp.co.uk](http://www.gavinstrangmp.co.uk)



**NO FUNDS FOR A NEW SCHOOL ?**

**PARENTS** with children at Portobello High School and its feeder primaries were alarmed recently by reports that there is no identified funding for a new High School, as they had been led to believe. At a recent public meeting at the school, however, local councillors, MSPs and Gavin Strang MP, all re-affirmed their commitment to that made by the Council, for a new school.

At its meeting on 25 October, the Council agreed to produce a fully-costed report and feasibility studies, early in the New Year, on the redevelopment of the school on Portobello Park. The Parent Council says it will be keeping up the momentum on the campaign.

**THE 'PORTY SHOPPER'**

**LOOK** out for these reusable shopping bags due to be launched in Portobello at the end of January. The local environmental group PEDAL got a Council grant to buy these strong jute bags. They are hoping that traders will sell them for £1, and that people will use them rather than plastic ones. They are also planning a talk on 'Waste in Portobello' and composting workshops, details to be supplied with the bags.

**VOICES FOR HOSPICES**

ON October 6th, 2007 at 7.30pm local time, Voices for Hospices concerts took place all over the world in a kind of Mexican wave of fundraising events under the umbrella of World Hospice and Palliative Care Day.



The concert in Portobello took place at St Philip's Church, where Andrew Booth and his sister, Sarah Wilkins (see photo) led an audience of nuns, nazis, and brown paper packages tied up with string through the songs of 'The Sound of Music'. All age-groups were there, singing with gusto to the strains of a live band. There were plenty of curtains in the costume parade, but more nuns - of every shape, size, age and gender. All gave generously of their time and money, and £700 was sent to St Columba's to indicate the high value our community puts on their great work.

Sandra Anderson

**IMAGINE PORTOBELLO 2**

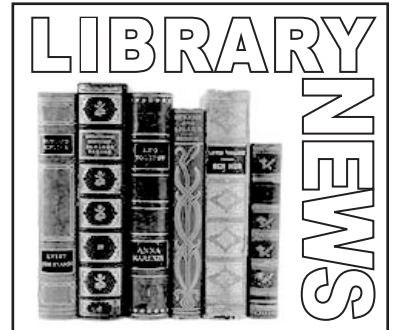
**SUPPORTERS** of Big Things on the Beach, Portobello's public arts trust, met recently to explore ideas for the future of public art in Portobello.

Local artist Paul Steer provided insights into the ways in which public art practice has developed over the last 40 years and described the main debates about what makes for 'good' or 'bad' public art. Riccardo Marrini, Edinburgh City Council's Design Leader, illustrated the ways in which public art has begun to play an important role in ensuring that places, such as Portobello, retain and develop their distinctive identities. Arts producer Jean Cameron and Amy Wilson from the Scottish Arts Council spoke warmly about what Big Things has achieved so far and encouraged the group to build on its successes with Blue Moon, Projections and, more recently, Wonder- the three pyramids on Portobello Beach.

Plans for 2008 include the second year of our Public Art Commissioning Course, another temporary art work to be launched around June or July, and a Garden Gallery presenting a wide range of contemporary art in local front gardens from June to September. For more information about the Trust see [www.bigthingsonthebeach.org.uk](http://www.bigthingsonthebeach.org.uk)

Damian Killeen

**DO** you love books but can't see to read? The library has a collection of recorded books, in both the Junior and Adult section, but sometimes our customers have simply "read them all!"



Carolyn has recently been on a course about Calibre audio library service, a registered charity, which is free to join, and welcomes children and adults. Applicants should either be unable to see well enough to read ordinary books, or have another disability that makes it difficult to use them.

The books are unabridged and recorded by professional actors and broadcasters, and cover all tastes: fiction, non-fiction and children's titles. Your application will contain your reader profile so that Calibre's staff know what type of books to send you, and there is an option to choose them online. Books are posted, free of charge, to your address. "No sooner do I post a book back than another arrives" says one listener; and "The readers really bring the books to life".

If you are interested, please ask at the library for the brochure (or the version on cassette) and application form, or contact Calibre on 01296 432 339 or by email on: [enquiries@calibre.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@calibre.org.uk). You can also join online at their website: [www.calibre.co.uk](http://www.calibre.co.uk)

'**CHATTERBOOKS**' club is starting a new session, on the last Saturday of each month, from 2-3 pm in the upstairs room. This is a branded organisation with the aim of helping young people to enjoy books and talk to others about them. If you are interested, please contact Tori or Elliot in the library (tel 529 5560) on Saturdays or Sundays about membership.

We've recently made a new '**LOCAL CAMPAIGNS AND PETITIONS**' area as you come into the library, where you can see at a glance what the current issues are, and it seems very popular. Just beside it, we've changed the notice board to a cork one, so that it can be freely used as the 'Community Notices' area. This is in response to a very helpful comment from one of our customers. Local groups can put up their own posters (drawing pin supplied!) and the position means they will be very visible. Posters should be time-dated, clear and relevant to the local area.

**THE** Book Group will discuss *The God Delusion* by Richard Dawkins on Tuesday 8th January at 6.30pm.

"Season's greetings" to everyone from all staff at Portobello Library.  
Joyce Campbell

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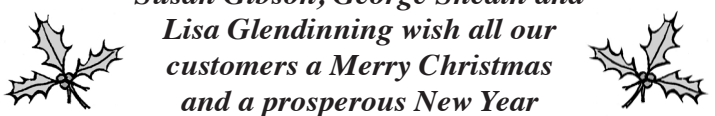
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# HOPEFUL PROGRESS ON KILNS

THE completion of make-safe and investigatory works allowed the architect and structural engineers to identify what further consolidation measures were required. These include: recording, numbering, dismantling and placing into safe storage the fireboxes in the 1909 kiln; removing vegetation growth on both kilns, carefully raking out and repointing with approved mortar where necessary; blocking off



Doorways will be secured

weather exposure and prevent water getting in.

Permission had to be obtained from Historic Scotland to carry out these works because the kilns are Scheduled Monuments. This was granted at the end of October and, weather permitting, everything should be completed by the end of January 2008, at which time the scaffolding will finally be removed. With the structures suitably protected, consultation will continue with local groups and other agencies to determine the best repair options for the kilns.

Simpson and Brown, Architects will consult with interested parties and Council Departments to ensure that adjoining developments and future proposals are taken into consideration as part of their options

appraisal. This is of particular import as far as this site is concerned. Once their report on repair options, programme and indicative costs is concluded it will be submitted to the Council's management for consideration and action.

A team including Council officers and representatives from the Architects and Consulting Engineers has spoken to two Assemblies at Towerbank School not only discussing the history, function and importance of the kilns but also highlighting the issue of public safety.

## REMEMBER NED BARNIE?

W.E. Barnie, usually known as Ned Barnie, was one of Portobello's finest sons. He was also the first Scot to swim the English Channel, once in 1950 and twice in 1951.

He was a 'well kent' face in Portobello, where he lived all his life, and could often be seen swimming in the Forth first thing in the morning, rain, hail or shine.

Writer Frank Chalmers is gathering facts about Ned Barnie's life, for a book on Scotland's Channel swimmers. He would love to hear from anyone who has any memories of Ned. Please call him on: 020 7485 1143, leaving your details, and he will get in touch.

## THE THOMSON TOWER – HOME OF CURLING

THE Thomson Tower is a unique octagonal building located on the shore of Duddingston Loch. It was designed by W H Playfair, the famous Edinburgh architect, and built in 1825 by Duddingston Curling Society, whose members wrote the rules of curling which are still used to regulate the game today.

The tower was a curling house for the Society where they could meet and store their curling stones. It was also used as a studio by the Rev. John Thomson, the renowned Scottish landscape painter who was minister of Duddingston Kirk in whose land the curling house is set.

It was refurbished in 1978 by the Rotary Club of Canada and Duddingston Village Conservation Society but has since fallen into disrepair. Dr Neil's Garden Trust, which has responsibility for the tower, wishes to bring it back to its former glory because of its significance in curling history. It therefore proposes to renovate the tower and re-create upper and lower chambers within the building: the upper chamber to be used as an interpretation centre to tell the stories of the history of curling, Dr Neil's garden and the Rev. John Thomson, and the lower chamber to form a museum of curling displaying many of the earliest stones and other artefacts.

The project will cost approximately £250,000 with funding being provided by The Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Scotland and The National Trust for Scotland and it is hoped work will be completed in 2008.

Jim Baird



Fireboxes will be removed for safe storage

wall-vent openings to stop pigeons roosting; repairing existing metal strappings where required on both kilns to provide structural support and replacing the missing topmost strap on the 1906 kiln. The partially collapsed 1909 kiln will also have to be provided with an approved wallhead cope to protect the wallhead from

## PORTOBELLO LAMPLIGHTER

WHEN we asked earlier this year for help to find the name of Portobello's last street lamplighter for an expatriate Portobello man in Canada some of our readers gave us not just one name but several. We are not sure that they date from the 1950s, which was the period our enquirer was asking about, but suggestions were John Cairns, Bobby Bell and Willie, whose

surname was not known but who only had one eye. One person from the 1930s is remembered in some detail, but only as Bob the lamplighter. He lived at number 18 Promenade and as well as being the lamplighter delivered rolls for the local baker and helped Tammy Lamb the rag and scrap merchant when he did his rounds in his horse and cart.

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# TROTTERS' 125th ANNIVERSARY DINNER



Photo by Margaret Munro

THE Trotters' Club, the oldest active skittling society in the world, celebrated its 125th anniversary on 2nd November with a dinner at the pub where it was founded, The Sheep Heid Inn, Duddingston. As the club celebrates only once every 25 years, this was a rare event indeed. Guests of Honour were the Lord and Lady Provost of Edinburgh, who sat at the top table with Edith Kelly, first lady Captain, and Jim MacDonald, Bard.

The club recorded its first meeting 125 years ago, but had probably already been in existence for many years. Members met to play skittles, sing and enjoy each other's company in the hospitable surroundings of the pub, and the club still meets there monthly, recently opening membership to ladies. Guest teams are very welcome to visit for a match.

A delicious meal was served, replicating an original Trotters' menu, but starting with Scotch Broth, as members had declined sheep heid broth. It was a most convivial evening, with Bard, Jim MacDonald reading a poem written specially for the event and member David Hunter reading a poem by his father, a previous club Bard. Lord Provost George Grubb wished the club well and congratulated them on reaching this momentous anniversary.

The club regalia were displayed, including the sheep heid, whose eyes seemed to follow events with particular interest. Perhaps it was pleased to have been saved from the soup pot! The occasion was celebrated with great ceremony and members can be proud of their club's long history.

Margaret Munro

# WOMEN'S TIMBER CORPS REMEMBERED

MRS Rhoda Paton, 84, of Portobello was invited with other surviving members of the Women's Timber Corps (WTC), to attend the unveiling on 10th October of a memorial statue, in the Queen Elizabeth Forest Park near Aberfoyle, to the women recruited in the 1940s to cut and trim trees for the war effort. The statue by Fife-based artist Malcolm Robertson, is a female figure in WTC uniform with her right hand raised to her face in what appears to be a salute.



Photo by Noel Spencer

Rhoda thought it was a wonderful sculpture, but said she was disappointed that she didn't meet anybody she knew.

The WTC in Scotland was set up in May 1942, as part of the Women's Land Army and Rhoda Duff, as she then was, joined the girls and women from all walks of life, who were recruited from the age of 17 and posted throughout Scotland. They replaced the men who had gone to war and most of the timber they prepared was used down the mines. Rhoda says: "I thoroughly enjoyed every minute. It was a fantastic life."

The Corps was disbanded in August 1946 and has had no official recognition until now and no representative at Armistice Day Parades until recently. In fact, they had become the 'Forgotten Corps'.

# POND MEMORIES

CAROLE IRWIN from West Lothian spent many happy hours at Portobello Pool and hopes that *Reporter* readers can fill the blank space in her memory.

'What memories I have from the open air swimming pool! It's where I learned to swim. Long summers were spent swimming all day. You could even bring a favourite record to be played over the P.A. system. I remember a lovely chap called Ned who was a channel swimmer. I

also remember the famous announcement every hour:

'THE WAVES WILL BE ON IN FIVE MINUTES TIME'  
It was heaven!

Does anyone remember the Manager of Portobello Open Air Pool? His second name was Wilson and I remember he had a daughter who I chummed about with in summer. He went on to become the Manager of the Royal Commonwealth Pool in the 1970s. Can anyone help with their first names?'

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# PORTOBELLO HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

THE speakers featuring in the 2007/08 session of the society are proving popular with members, with full houses at our meetings.

In October, Christopher Fleet, Deputy Map Curator with the National Library of Scotland, illustrated the development of Portobello and changing perceptions of the geography of Scotland in his talk *Looking at Portobello and beyond through early maps and plans*. The details provided by various cartographers of Scotland and Portobello exemplified the knowledge that can be gained from the close study of maps. A marine chart of the coastal waters around Portobello also supplied a surprising amount of land details. Chris very kindly donated the maps he had printed for his talk to the society's archive.

At our November meeting Esther Sharpley, a member of the Costume Society of Scotland, presented a slide show of *Costumes through the ages*. Beginning with the Egyptians' love of decoration through to modern times, fabric, style and accessories were examined with an eye on fashion and colour. Esther also brought a collection of clothes and accessories for members to examine and marvel over.

On 5th December, Rev. Dr Jim Jack is to talk about the history of Duddingston.

As usual, there is no meeting in January. At our meeting on Wednesday, 6th February 2008, our speaker will be Dr. Stana Nenadic, a social historian from the University of Edinburgh. She has yet to confirm the title of her talk, but doubtless it will provide an insight into the social history of Scotland.

Meetings are held in St. John's Church Hall in Brighton Place and begin at 7pm. Non-members are most welcome.

Margaret Munro



## PORTOBELLO AMNESTY

**THE** Group supported the 'Protect the Human' Party in St Philip's Church Hall on 6th October. With a large attendance and entertainment of a very high standard, it was a great success both socially and financially, due in large part to the enthusiasm and good planning of Sandra McDonald. £1000 was raised for Amnesty's charitable wing, to which Gift Aid will be added.

The Group has gained two new members and a number of supporters who will help with projects. One such is the annual stall on Portobello High Street on Saturday 8th December, to highlight Human Rights Day, when members of the public will again be able to send cards of greetings and support to prisoners of conscience and their defenders worldwide. Over 60 were sent last year. This year local schools will participate in this compassionate and educative programme, with the Group's help, bringing comfort

and a sense of being not forgotten to victims of repression and abuse.

The Group meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7.30pm in the URC hall or vestry in Marlborough Street. Why not visit us and find out more?

David Turner

## WHAT'S ON

**CONCERT:** St Mark's Church: Sat. 29th Dec, 3pm. Popular classics and Scottish music with Lawrence Dunn, Wendy Weatherby & Philomusica of Edinburgh. Free entry.

### BURNS SUPPERS:-

**Portobello Burns Club:** Fri. 25th Jan. at the Woodside Hotel, Musselburgh. 'Immortal Memory' by Dickie Alexander. Details and tickets at £20 from 669 4664.

**Christian Aid:** Sat. 26th Jan, 7pm, Old Parish Church Hall, Bellfield St. 'Immortal Memory' by Cllr. Ewan Aitken. Tickets £12 from 669 5257.

## PLANS FOR COMMUNITY CAFÉ & ORCHARD

**PEDAL**, Portobello Energy Descent and Land Reform Group, who are committed to weaning Portobello off fossil fuels and promoting community growth, are applying for Lottery funds for feasibility studies for a community cafe and orchard.

The café will provide a space for community activities and serve hot food and drinks, and the community orchard project aims to use parks and other green spaces to grow fruit and vegetables, so promoting local food and cutting food miles.

**PEDAL** hope to hear if they have been successful in the New Year, when they will consult with local people about how to move forward with these and other ideas.

## CHRISTMAS AT ST MARK'S

**ST MARK'S** Episcopal Church, on Portobello High Street, is preparing for a busy Christmas with special services:

- Sunday 23rd December at 10.30am, a Nativity Play and Christingle, then a service of Nine Lessons and Carols at 6.30pm.
- Christmas Eve, the now-traditional Crib Service at 4pm, will give families of all ages the chance to escape from the bustle of the day and think about the real Christmas story. At 11pm, there will be Midnight Mass.
- Finally, on Christmas Day there will be a Christmas Eucharist at 8.30am.

The Revd Ruth Innes extends a warm welcome to all residents and visitors to join in these special services and celebrate Christmas at St Mark's. Further information from Ian Gardner, Vestry Secretary, on 669 9258.

## REVIEW - ST MARK'S CHURCH MUSIC FESTIVAL

**THERE** were lots of different kinds of music. The Leith Community Concert Band was nice, especially their theme from 'The Godfather'. Next was a fiddle and flute duo (Rebecca Mitchell and her dad) who sounded good together. The Auld Spice Ceilidh Band played a lot of different instruments and cheery tunes. Our band played tunes from different countries and I thought we were good.

Ronnie Carruthers played jazz piano and the audience sang along. The Wullie Broon Quartet were good on guitar, pipes and cello; then Sally Simpson played a set on the violin. The Capriccio String Quartet played classical music, and the last band

on was Spurtle, from Portobello High School, who played Scottish tunes and were very good.

The Festival was organized by Bridget Blackmore, Lawrence Dunn, Wendy Weatherby and Revd Ruth Innes. People I asked all said they enjoyed themselves and would like it to happen every year.

David Martin, P7A, Towerbank Primary

(Another free musical event will take place on Sat. 29th Dec. at 3pm, with Lawrence Dunn, Wendy Weatherby and Philomusica of Edinburgh, with popular classics and Scottish music).

## CHRISTIAN AID

**THE** Coffee Morning held in the Old Parish Church hall in October raised £460. Thanks to all who attended and all those who helped.

**Carol Festival:** This popular event will be held on Sunday 9th December at 7.30 pm in St John's RC Church, Brighton Place. The speaker will be the Rev. Ian Wilson. The programme will include contributions from St John's Primary School Choir and the church music group. There will be a collection for Christian Aid and as usual hot drinks and good company will be provided at the end.

## NEW MINISTER AT ST CHRISTOPHER'S

**ON** 12th September Rev. Dr Caroline Ruth Lockerbie was inducted as the sixth permanent Minister at St Christopher's Church of Scotland, Craigen-tinny.

Rev Lockerbie was born into a traditional Church of Scotland family which emigrated to Canada in the early 20th century. After a first degree in biology and chemistry, she studied theology at Knox College, University of Toronto, followed by a Doctor of Ministry from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. Two children and three charges later, in 2004 she was appointed to the Presbytery of Caithness for four months of locum work, where she studied the processes of congregational amalgamation. Of her latest charge, Rev. Lockerbie says: "I was thrilled to be called to Craigen-tinny, St. Christopher's. Each day I am more thankful for and excited about that call."



## PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY CENTRE NEWS

### GOOD NEWS

Portobello Community Centre has received a grant of over £3,500 for new computers, furniture, and table tennis table from the Portobello/Craigmillar Neighbourhood Partnership Community Grants Fund, for which we thank them.

The not so good news is that we are still waiting to hear about our plans for a rebuild on the present site.

### WANTED

1. Ladies to help run the Senior Social Club on Saturday mornings, to replace Kay who is leaving the country and Janet who has just had her first baby. The more the merrier for these older people, who love to get together and have cake and coffee. Contact Maggie if you can spare a few hours regularly, but not necessarily every week.

2. New members of the Management Committee: a Treasurer (training will be given, and you can shadow our present one for a few months) and a Secretary (training also given).

### NEW ACTIVITY

Funky Fitness on Mondays from 7-8pm - a new aerobic exercise class with the emphasis on Fun - £3 p.w. Come and work off the mince pies!

**WE** still have spaces in the paper craft, pottery and mosaic classes. See our new website for information: [www.portobellocc.btik.com](http://www.portobellocc.btik.com)

The Centre will be closed from Sunday 23rd December, re-opening on Monday 7th January 2008. All enquiries to Maggie on 669 8275 or [maggielmay@portobello.cc](mailto:maggielmay@portobello.cc)

## COUNCILLORS' SURGERIES

Portobello & Craigmillar Ward

**Cllr MICHAEL BRIDGMAN, SNP:**

Portobello Library, 2nd Monday of the month, 6.30pm.  
Bingham Community Centre, 1st Monday, 6.30pm.

St Francis Primary School, 3rd Monday (term-time) 6.30pm.  
OR call 529 4233 or email [michael.bridgman@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:michael.bridgman@edinburgh.gov.uk)

**Cllr MAUREEN CHILD, Labour:**

Portobello Library, most Mondays, at 7pm.

To check availability or make a different appointment, call 529 3268 or email [maureen.child@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:maureen.child@edinburgh.gov.uk)

**Cllr STEPHEN HAWKINS, Liberal Democrat:**

Portobello Library, each Wednesday, from 6pm.

OR Tel. 529 3262 or email [stephen.hawkins@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.hawkins@edinburgh.gov.uk)

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

*la vie en rose*  
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## DUDDINGSTON PRIMARY CHARITY FUN-RUN

**PUPILS** at Duddingston Primary School held a sponsored fancy hat fun run on Friday 16th November. Everyone in school took part. The P1-3s jogged around the field for 10 minutes and the P4-7s jogged for 20 minutes. However, the catch was that you had to wear a fun hat, like a cowboy or witch's hat. Some of us are also wore complete fancy dress to match our hats. The reason we held this event was to raise money for 'Children in Need' and also for our PTA who run lots of different events for us.



Our class P5B organised the event as our enterprise project. We held a mini school assembly, put posters around the school and had a banner to show the finish line. Our class also helped younger children to make hats if they did not have one. We had a lot of fun and raised a lot of money.

Chloe Robertson, Alastair Hutcheon & Clara Keen, P5B (As we went to print £1495 had been raised, with more to come)

## E-MAILS FROM GEORGIA

**FIVE** pupils from Portobello High School, Calum Cameron, Fiona Ferguson, Millie McGlone, Ruth Murphy and Jenny McDonald, are studying in Georgia, USA, thanks to the generosity of the Georgia Rotary Scholarship Programme, which every year selects about 70 young people from all over the world to spend a year there.

Calum, 18, from Joppa, is in Augusta, home of the US Masters golf tournament, and shares a university flat with two Swedes and a Colombian. Snippets from his e-mails home show the international flavour of the experience:

"I heard one Rotarian say he wished people from the government were here to see it. He said: 'How can 70 kids from all over the world come together and celebrate their differences, tease each other and have fun, whilst the supposed leaders of the world can't come together without getting into conflict'".

There are challenges, however, not least the local gun culture: - "I knew people would have guns in the south but I didn't realise the extent... On the third day I was here my hosts wanted to take me shooting at the target range, fair enough. They both have 60+ guns, madness. Even my host brother who is 11 has four of his own".

But southern hospitality is strong: - "My host families are great. They have looked after me well, and are making sure I'm getting well fed. Food comes in mammoth sizes. Yesterday I ordered a salad in a restaurant, and this huge bowl comes, fit for a family of five. I ate just half, making me a family of two and a half."

Calum recently went to a Highland Games, taken by his 'host mother', who is into all things Scottish. She's even found him a supply of Irn Bru.

Alastair Cameron

## HOLY ROOD ON FIRM FOUNDATIONS



**THE** foundation stone for the new Holy Rood High School was officially blessed by Cardinal Keith Patrick O'Brien during the school's Feast Day celebrations on 13th September. Representatives from builders Laing O'Rourke were among the guests of honour, and Paul Sweeney, Project Manager, received the stone from Headteacher Lesley Carroll. A plan, indicating its position will be given to the school as a permanent record. Ms Carroll commented: "This stone represents the laying down of the strong physical and spiritual dimension of the new school and builds on the strength of the existing school community."

As part of the Feast Day events, Bishop Chris Toohey from Earthcare Australia and Mary Caldwell, a producer of the Planet Earth series, led pupils from Holy Rood and her partner primary schools in discussion of environmental issues and ethics.

Pupils, staff and guests felt that the Feast Day Mass, the highlight of the day, was very moving and spiritual, with the school's samba band, guitar ensemble and huge gospel choir leading the celebrations.

## TOWERBANK AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

**PARENTS** and carers may have a hard time persuading their children it's time to go home when they are having so much fun playing with friends and joining in the activities organised by the staff.

The club, based in the school, provides after-school care five days per week during term time for Towerbank pupils. It is a not-for-profit, registered charity and limited company run by qualified staff and volunteers.

This year Christmas came early for the club in the form of a £6000 Lottery grant that boosted its activity programme. Since the summer the children have taken part in exciting themed activities, including Celts and Castles and African Dream, and have enjoyed lots of adventures out and about in Edinburgh.

The club already cares for around 125 children but new members are always welcome. For more information contact Joyce on 07796 597 976, [tascc@glengyle.net](mailto:tascc@glengyle.net) or visit the school annexe in Bath Street.

Karen Combe

## TOY LIBRARY RE-OPENS

**THE** Toy Box at Portobello Library was re-launched on 19th November and is open on Monday mornings from 10am-12pm during term time, in the upstairs room. The organizers, who are all volunteers, have bought lots of lovely new toys and baby equipment, and the service is open to parents, grandparents, carers, childminders and anyone looking after a pre-school aged child. There is plenty of space for the children to play with the toys before they are hired, and the adults are welcome to stay for a cup of tea/coffee and a chat.

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# MALECON MATINEE

AFTER a successful launch in November, Malecon Matinee will continue each month: the next dates are Sat 19th Jan, 2.30-5.30pm; Sun 17th Feb, 3.30-6.30pm; Sat 15th Mar, 2.30-5.30pm. Malecon Matinee is inspired by afternoon social clubs in Cuba and celebrates the beautiful traditional Cuban music and dance called Son. The name 'Malecon' comes from the famous Havana sea front and instead of the Buena Vista Social Club, we've got the Beach Lane Social Club, just behind the Police Station on Portobello High Street. Come at the start for Nick and Margaret's introduction, then enjoy the music and dancing in good company. £5 entry at the door includes a free drink or two. Tell your friends. Contact Nick on 07803 097727. Because dates are not regular, get on the e-mail service MaleconMatinee-subscribe@googlegroups.com

## MUSIC REVIEW:

### Salsa Celtica, Town Hall, Portobello

A coup for POD (Portobello Open Door), and a potent shot of Scots-Latino energy for the town hall: the inimitable Salsa Celtica played Portobello on 26th October.

The by now infamous blend of Latin beat and Scottish folk wooed the local audience, and Portobello's municipal auditorium became as steamy and swinging as any Havana jazz club.

Gig goers were treated to brimming jugs of Sangria at the bar and were encouraged to get up on the dance floor for some complimentary salsa coaching before the band hit the stage. The hall itself was moody in candlelight and decked out in delicate paper butterflies reminiscent of a García Márquez fantasy.

Far from jarring, the bold balance between musical styles creates an emotional alliance that moves the listener between delight and desire. The result is a heart-swelling, foot-stomping sound experience that sweeps revellers at this Cuban style ceilidh from reel to mambo.

The eleven piece jazz-folk fusion outfit marries brass and banjo, celtic pipes and congas, fiddles and vocals, and the musicians themselves further add to this collision of cultures with members hailing from Venezuela, Scotland, Cuba and Ireland.

Eilidh Bateman

POD are keen to plan more big nights that fill venues and bring top quality performance to the people of Portobello. "The true feeling of community in Portobello should be cherished and developed and the area needs to be given a higher profile", they say.

A GREENHOUSE is a great place in the winter to 'play' in, especially when the weather turns wet and cold. Give it a good clean and bubblewrap before January at the latest - I move out any spiders or ladybirds and use environmentally friendly washing-up liquid. Move tender plants in over the winter and the new growth in February/March can be used for cuttings, especially from geraniums or marguerites.



with Susan Burns

Don't use the greenhouse to store things that could be kept outside - those tall cold frames make better storage for pots and so on, but can also be used to over-winter plants with a bit of extra bubblewrap. Wash pots and trays too - it is a bore, but anything done now makes the spring rush more manageable.

Order seeds early to get the exact varieties that you want. I'm a great fan of the Organic Gardening Catalogue, from 0845 130 1304 or [www.OrganicCatalogue.com](http://www.OrganicCatalogue.com). Try something new or a new theme. Some years I try only scented annuals or very tall ones - it's great fun experimenting.

Now is a good time to move plants, trees or shrubs as long as it's not frosty. Hardwood cuttings are the easiest way to propagate roses or buddleia, in fact any deciduous shrubs are worth trying - I was successful with a quince. With secateurs, cut between a half and one metre length of shrub, about pencil thickness, and stick it into the ground to a third of its length. I take off any leaves along the length but leave a tuft like a pineapple at the top. The soil has to be well draining, so as our Portobello clay is good for pots but not for cuttings, I use the kitchen garden where the soil drains more freely.

After one year you can move the cuttings to where you want them to grow. In a small area you can squeeze them in about 20cm apart each way - a cheap way to get a buddleia hedge, for example.

Check any stored vegetables such as potatoes or carrots, and fruit such as apples or pears (best eaten before Christmas) for rot and throw any rotting fruits to the birds.

Finally - A few apples studded with cloves make a great natural room fragrancener over the festive period.

## PORTOBELLO WILDLIFE WATCH

THERE have been a number of sightings of unusual wildlife around Portobello lately such as pheasants and foxes. If readers would let *The Reporter* know of anything they have seen, where it was and when, and what it was doing, it should make an interesting article for the Spring 2008 issue. If you can also manage to take a good clear photograph, so much the better. You have until the next deadline of 7th February.

## LOCAL SWIMMER WINS GOLD

CONGRATULATIONS to 20 year-old David Fergus of Portobello who won a gold medal for swimming at the Special Olympics World Summer Games in Shanghai in September. This was a magnificent achievement and David, his family and friends want to thank the many generous people who contributed towards the £3000 total that David raised for Special Olympics GB. A programme featuring David and four other team members was shown on BBC2 Scotland on 3rd October.

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