

# THE **Portobello** REPORTER

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## PUBLIC INQUIRY - OUTCOME NOW AWAITED

THE Public Inquiry to determine the appeal by Viridor Waste Management against the Council's refusal of a planning application for a waste transfer facility on Sir Harry Lauder Road, took place over eight days in February. It was presided over by two Reporters from the Scottish Government's Directorate of Planning and Environmental Appeals.

Viridor's evidence on need, planning issues, traffic impact, noise, air quality and odour was challenged by a Joint Action Group, formed by the campaign group PONGS, and its expert witnesses.

Under cross-examination by Douglas Armstrong QC

for the Joint Action Group, a witness for Viridor conceded that there was no identified need in waste strategy terms for the facility, rather the application was to meet Viridor's commercial need to position themselves in the market place, although Viridor's solicitor, Ewan McLeod, maintained in his closing submission that the need had been demonstrated.

Doubt was cast on Viridor's expert's traffic figures, as it was unclear where waste would originate and how much there would be. Viridor's assertion, that there would be a 42% saving in emissions by transferring waste movements from road

to rail, was also undermined: as the number and length of trips were unknown, a realistic estimate was not possible. The fact that waste already travels by train to Powderhall seemed to have been overlooked.

Members of the Joint Action Group then gave evidence against the appeal: the Community Council was represented by Peter McColl, Portobello Amenity Society by John Stewart, PONGS by Diana Cairns, Brightons and Rosefield Residents' Association by Frances Wraith, St John's Parent Council (supported by Towerbank and Portobello High's parent councils) by John Lauder, and the residents of the Chris-

tians by Diane White. Expert witnesses were Suzanne McIntosh, planning consultant, and local architects Juan De La Peña and Donald Canavan, giving evidence on visual impact and sustainability respectively. John Hughes, a third party witness from England, with family connections in Portobello, gave a visitor's perspective on how he believed the waste site would blight the area. All were cross-examined by Viridor's solicitor.

Evidence was then given by Kenny MacAskill MSP and local ward councillors Mike Bridgman, Maureen Child and Stephen Hawkins. Cllr Joanna Mowat, for the City of Edinburgh Council,

explained why the planning committee had refused consent in July 2008.

Following a site visit with the Reporters, to see how such a facility would impact on the area, each side summarised its case before the inquiry closed.

Each session was very well attended by local people and this was noted by the Reporters. Fundraising to pay for legal and expert representation was generously supported by many local people, a further testament to their support for the PONGS campaign.

The outcome of the appeal is unlikely to be known before early summer, possibly later.

Diana Cairns

## PERMANENT HOVERCRAFT SERVICE PLANNED

FOLLOWING the successful trial of a hovercraft service between Portobello and Kirkcaldy in Summer 2007, Stagecoach propose to operate a permanent service, with crossings every 25 minutes at peak times and hourly off-peak, using two purpose-built craft with 150-passenger capacity. Crossings are expected to take less than 20 minutes and there would be shuttle-bus links to Ocean Terminal and Waverley Bridge.

A planning application has been made to City of Edinburgh Council for land adjacent to the Lothian Buses depot at Seafield Road, further west of Kings Road than the trial site. This includes a landing ramp, passenger terminal and six car parking spaces for people with disabilities. Other cars would have to be parked on the road.

There are mixed reactions to the proposal. Some people think it could be good for Portobello, while others express concern about noise, effects on wildlife, inconvenience to walkers and cyclists on the Prom at that point, and traffic and parking problems. Stagecoach say they have carried out "detailed environmental impact assessments for the project, including bird studies on behalf of Scottish Natural Heritage and a noise impact study". They also say that the new craft will be less noisy than the one used in the trial.

The views of some local people were randomly canvassed.



**Harini Amarasuriya**  
 "I was away last summer during the trial, but it sounds like a decent idea. I'm all for public transport. If it encourages people to use the businesses here, I think that's great."



**Mike Scott**  
 "I'm all for it, going by the amount of business that came over in the summer, it'll be good. I hope there will be signs to direct people to local attractions like Sir Harry Lauder's birthplace."



**Anna Kennedy**  
 "We went over to Fife with the kids during the trial and they enjoyed the trip. In the summer people might come from Kirkcaldy and spend a bit of time here."



**Helen Stewart**  
 "Anything that will bring trade back to Portobello I think is a good thing. I go to St Andrews a lot, so I think I might use the hovercraft to go over to Fife."



**Billy Bryson**  
 "If it brings people over to Portobello and they have a walk along the Prom they might walk into the High Street which will be good for business."



**Paul Lundberg**  
 "The more we encourage people to come here the better. If people are using it to get to work perhaps that won't happen, but if it's purely for leisure, visitors might make use of the activities in the area."



**Della Morris**  
 "I have mixed feelings about it. I'm not sure about the noise as I am hard of hearing and live further away from where it will be. It may be like Brunstane Station and end taking many more people than anticipated."

## PORTY PROFILE No. 38 MICHAEL RICHARDSON

IN the early 1980s Rochdale born Michael Richardson came to Edinburgh to study medicine. But his first love was music so he joined Edinburgh University Opera and began directing operas and musical theatre. "The first one I did was a Bernstein piece called *Mass*, it got a lot of antagonistic press which meant we sold a lot of tickets. It was great!" he says with a twinkle in his eye.

Michael completed his studies but after a year as a junior doctor he was offered a placement at Covent Garden Opera on the back of some "very encouraging reviews" his production of *Mass* received. To earn his keep while at Covent Garden he had to work. "I would do the week at Covent Garden, then a 72 hour shift in some London hospital. I did that for two months."

After his stint at Covent Garden, Michael got a position as staff director at Glyndebourne where he soon became involved in their education department. "That was when I realised I had a knack for working with community groups and young people. I could combine being creative with passing on skills and encouraging people to take part", he tells the Reporter. "That was the beginning of the rest of my life!"

Inspired by the challenges and joys of working with young people Michael went on to set up the Shrewsbury Youth Theatre and continued to work in schools and with community groups for the next ten years setting up a Youth Theatre for Midlands Arts Centre in Birmingham along the way.

In 2004 he moved back to Scotland to take the helm of West Lothian Youth Theatre, now Firefly Arts, where he also had responsibility for East Renfrewshire Youth Theatre and Angus Youth Theatre.

After five and a half years Michael left Firefly Arts because "it became so big" and he had to take on all the managerial responsibility. He says, "I decided to be a freelancer again, to get back into doing the creative work."

Michael, his wife Cerin and their two dogs moved to Portobello in 2004. He says. "What I like about Porty is that it is a discreet enough place to exist as a real community. I know loads of people here and to have that, only three miles from the city and by the sea, that is fantastic!"

Peter Ross



Photo by Peter Ross

## LONGSTANDING MP RETIRES

LOCAL MP Gavin Strang has decided not to stand again in the forthcoming General Election. He was elected to represent Edinburgh East in June 1970 and has been re-elected in all 10 subsequent elections.

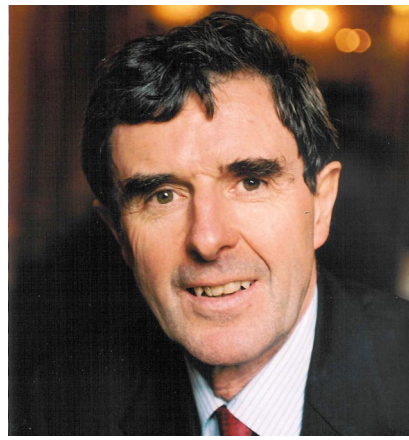
"It has been a great honour to be Member of Parliament for this constituency", he says. "I came to Edinburgh as a student and lived in Portobello for most of my adult life. Portobello is a great place to live - I have always thought that there is nowhere better in Edinburgh to bring up a family. Although I am not standing at the next Election, I will be keeping up with old friends and I hope to be in and around Portobello for many years to come".

In the Labour Government of 1974-79, Gavin Strang served as Under-Secretary of State in the Department of Energy and Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Under the Private Member's Bill procedure, he successfully introduced the 1987 AIDS Control Act. After Labour won the 1997 election, he was appointed to the Cabinet and was Transport Minister until the 1998 reshuffle.

Gavin Strang campaigned against and voted against the invasion of Iraq. His main current interests are HIV/AIDS and nuclear weapons proliferation.

He has always been involved in local issues as well, most recently the campaigns to save Meadowbank, and to prevent the building of a superstore and a waste transfer station in Portobello. He has also been a keen advocate of the concerns brought to him by the local Amnesty group. He has supported this newspaper with surgeries adverts since it first appeared in 1980.

Brenda Molony



## LOCAL TEAM BREAK THE ICE



Photo by Chris Muir

WHEN snow turned to ice in January and people were falling and injuring themselves on the pavements, Bath Street resident, Paul Lambie, decided to clear one side of his street. Then he organised an 'ice breaking' session over a wider area in Portobello on Saturday January 9th. The Council supplied plenty of grit at the request of Cllr Maureen Child, who helped a team of over 30 people to clear pavements in 12 streets. Posters distributed by Paul prompted other people to clear their own streets. Environmental wardens finally gritted Portobello High Street on Friday 8th, by which time several shopkeepers had cleared in front of their premises.

Side streets have the lowest priority for clearing by the Council, so next time it could be another case of DIY. The idea has developed that, if someone slipped and injured themselves on a pavement cleared by a householder, the householder would be liable. However, Kenny MacAskill, the Justice Secretary and our local MSP, told the Reporter: "It's a good neighbour act and the idea that you'll be sued is nonsense."

To support future voluntary efforts, more grit bins have been requested and the Council's local environment team is investigating the best places to put them in Portobello and Craigmillar.

Brenda Molony

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

**LOST COCKATIEL:** Did you or someone you know recently take in a friendly bird? If so, there is a £50 reward for his return. Please call Owen on 669 1200.

**LIFEBOATS COLLECTION:** Can you spare just one hour on Saturday 1st May to collect for Lifeboats on Portobello High Street? People are always keen to put some money in the box - over £400 was collected last year. To choose a time to suit you, please contact Patricia on 669 1150.

**PORTOBELLO REPORTER CONTRIBUTOR MOVES ON:** Lorna Sinclair, contributor to the Reporter for the past few years, has moved out of the area. We wish her luck in her new home and thank her for all the time she volunteered to ensure the successful publication of the paper.

**CREDIT UNION:** A membership recruitment and collection point will operate in Portobello Library on Mondays from 8th March, from 1.00-3.30pm. For details of how to join, just call in or contact Margaret Evans on 661 9942 or by email to craigmillarcu@googlemail.com

**HIGH STREET IMPROVEMENTS:** At last Portobello High Street has the quality pavements it deserves. It's a shame, then, that the Council still haven't fixed the puddle that forms in the bus shelter opposite the Town Hall every time it rains. Portobello Amenity Society has been requesting this for two years, since the last new paving was laid. A shelter is supposed to keep people dry, and that includes their feet!

**THANKS FOR HELP:** The residents of Coillesdene Sheltered Housing Complex are delighted with their new paving and landscaping and want to thank the Portobello/Craigmillar Neighbourhood Partnership for helping them get funding.

### GARAGE WANTED

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**HURRAH!** Portobello Library is open again - We've dumped the drab and installed the fab! It opened quietly on 21st December 2009, but was officially launched on 15th January by Cllr Deirdre Brock (Convenor of Culture and Leisure) who cut our ceremonial ribbon.



People from the community, including local authors, mums and children, our Library Link readers, local councillors, other guests and staff made it an occasion to remember. Local musicians added to the excitement and fun. Our 'Linkers' reminisced and reminded us about when the Library was above the Police Station, before it moved in 1963 to the current building. It was a good time to reflect on the changes seen in the Library over the years and remember its importance to the local community.

There is still a bit of finishing off to do, including new signage for the shelves and installing notice boards, but the new design is receiving many positive comments. People tell us they particularly like Cuddlebook Corner, the new layout, the impact of the new lighting, and that the self-service machines are easy to use. The café area is also very popular. The Library has generated interest from neighbouring authorities, with Heads of Libraries from Fife, Lothians and the Scottish Borders visiting and giving good feedback.

Please drop in, have a coffee and a look around. If you are not a Library member, why not join now. It's easy to do, and we have computers and classes and lots of new books and exhibitions to tempt you.

We host a wide range of events in addition to our normal programme. Regular events include: Toy Box toy library on Mondays at 10am; Rhymetimes at 10.15 and 11.15am on Wednesdays; Story Time at 3.15pm on Thursdays; Book Group on the first Tuesday of every month at 6.30pm. Games include Wii and Xbox.

Teens Book Group for readers aged 12-18 is on the last Thursday of every month, at 4pm. If you want to join, speak to a member of staff to find out which book is being discussed.

**NEWSFLASH**

Carry a Poem, jointly run by Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature and the Scottish Poetry Library, have two events here in March: On Friday 5th at 2pm we have a 'Carry a Poem Aloud Session', so come along and share a poem that means something to you. We will also read a few from our roving collection. It's free - No tickets needed. Then on Tuesday 9th at 6.30pm we have a Poetry Workshop with some writing exercises to get your inspiration flowing.

Author visit: Karen Campbell the crime writer will be discussing and signing copies of her new novel *After the Fire* on 2nd March at 6.30pm. Tickets are free from the Library.

## COMMUNITY COUNCIL A New Member's View

I WAS elected (slight misnomer with no opposition to any of the candidates!) to Portobello Community Council towards the end of 2009; a chance, I thought, to do my bit to protect and build on the fine community we have in Portobello.

A few months on, am I horribly disillusioned with the harsh reality of local politics? No, not at all. Good people, good discussion and a respectful forum for members of the community to put forward their views on what should happen in Portobello. I see small decisions, and the way they are made, having a large impact on the tone and sense of togetherness of our community. Portobello has an admired character which draws new people to live here and the Community Council plays its part in nurturing that character by scrutinising proposals on such things as development (Viridor, hovercrafts), safety (Kings Road Junction), events (Big Things on The Beach) and giving a thought-out local response.

The whole undertaking, of course, depends on volunteers and I was surprised to learn how little, virtually none, the Community Council has in the way of funds. Time and resources are precious; that leads to a pleasing lack of unnecessary formality in proceedings, linked to an acknowledgement that ways of doing things can evolve and be improved on.

So in exchange for a minimum of one evening a month in my life I get to play a small part in community life. Is it worth it? I think so.

Tom Ballantyne

## COST OF SEAFIELD JUNCTION DOUBLED

NOT only did it take six months longer than expected to replace the roundabout here with traffic lights, but the cost increased from an estimated £1.7m to a massive £3.5m. The delay was blamed on bad weather and an unworkable

traffic management scheme that had to be re-drawn. The Council has to meet the extra cost. Add to that the trade lost by local shops and the general inconvenience, and it's to be hoped it was worth it.

## THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

FOLLOWING last year's successful decision to support a road crossing for older people in Coillesdene, the community again has the opportunity to decide on developments that can be funded from the roads budget.

You can nominate any project you wish for the £100k available from the Road Capital budget, and £175k from the Housing Area Board fund. It can only be used on Council owned assets, and can be used to add to other funding. Contact me on peteramccoll@yahoo.co.uk with any suggestions.

Neighbourhood Partnerships were meant to devolve funding and decision making to a more local level. They haven't succeeded yet, but this opportunity to determine a small slice of the environment budget is an important and welcome development. It shows how other parts of the Partnership could function better. This is a good start, but there is much still to be done. We should make the most of it.

The opportunity to decide how budgets are spent should be a right of fully-constituted and representative groups, like community councils. The more the Council trusts genuine community-representative groups to spend money, the better use that money will be put to and the more trust communities will have in the Council. The question is: how long will it take the rest of the Neighbourhood Partnership to follow suit?

Peter McColl

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**THE PIRATES OF PORTOBELLO**

“WOW! Look at the white mice chasing the waves onto the shore. Did you know Mummy, they used to think the whole world was like the sea and you would fall off the end.” The voices rise as the children circle the playground, then become pirates on a ship and a cowgirl who is annoyed that, when she shoots, no-one falls down!

We’ve decided to pass a late Sunday afternoon at the pirate boat play-park overlooking the sea. I feel a bit superfluous today. In the summer I would shift nimbly from one foot to the other, then dive forward to catch a pirate jetting down the slide into shark-infested waters. Now everyone has moved on, and no-one needs me to catch them as they climb, jump and slide around the ship. Maybe I could be like Dad and duck out to buy a Sunday newspaper and not return for ages. No-one would notice. Or I could try to work out how to get into the Tardis-like toilet.

“MUUUMMMM”... I’m drawn back to the land of make-believe. “Come on the pirates’ bounce machine with us Mum”, three pirates demand as a very low seat beckons. I crouch onto the cold plastic, knees scrunched up. The pirates fly into the air, giggling and squealing. “I’m a pirate dog”, barks one. “Me too”, yelps the second. “I’m a pirate cowgirl”, squeals the other. “Take me back to the old city. Let me off!” They scarp and my bottom hits the tarmac. “Ouch!”

**The GREEN COLUMN**  
 PEDAL has just received funding to work with local people to run a Community Carbon Reduction Initiative. This means Porty will be leading the way, showing how other communities can cut their carbon footprint and be more self-sufficient. We’re now looking for a new office and three staff:

A Food Worker will help people to grow and use more organic food by running classes, a pilot organic market, planting fruit trees in gardens and public spaces, and more work on the Donkey Field orchard.

An Energy Worker will help people save energy and money by offering low-cost insulation, an energy efficiency scheme for tenements, and looking into mass installation of solar heating;

A Project Manager will make sure everything goes to plan.

There will be lots of ways for people to get involved. For a start, we’ll be answering questions on the project at our AGM & social on 24th March in Bellfield Parish Church Hall, from 7-9.30pm. Once the formal stuff is out of the way (as quickly as possible!), there will be a pot luck meal and speakers from PEDAL plus Changework’s Kitchen Canny project (focussing on food waste). We hope to see lots of people there!

PEDAL also received funding last year from Community Energy Scotland to explore the possibility of a community-owned wind-turbine on land beside the Prom, behind the Lothian Buses depot. If this goes ahead it would save lots of CO2 and make money that can go towards local projects. Our consultants say wind-turbines here would produce useful amounts of energy (and cash) for Porty, but there is more work to do before this is certain. The next step is to measure wind speeds over six months and consult local people to find out whether they support the idea.

Tom Black

**WANT TO SHARE A GARDEN?**

ARE you worried about your weeds? Struggling to manage your 5-a-day? Years down the allotment waiting list?

The Edinburgh Garden Share Scheme, at Care and Repair Edinburgh, matches people struggling to look after their gardens (particularly the elderly and disabled), with volunteers looking for growing space. In return for their patch of earth, gardeners can share their produce with the owners, or help with mowing, weeding etc.

Funded by the Climate Challenge Fund, the scheme has environmental aims in line with Transition movements like PEDAL: growing more food locally reduces carbon emissions, and our dependency on oil before it starts to run out. It’s a small step, but it’s in the right direction.

Join our quickly-growing band of Garden Sharers! Meet folk you might not otherwise have met, learn new skills together, and be kind to your body, mind and the environment.

Find out more on [www.edinburghgardenshare.org.uk](http://www.edinburghgardenshare.org.uk) or [www.careandrepairedinburgh.org.uk](http://www.careandrepairedinburgh.org.uk) or call (0131) 220 7636.



**GROWING ORGANIC**  
 with Susan Burns  
 I MADE a big mistake this year and, for the first time in 20 years, didn’t put the greenhouse heater on to keep it frost-free. As a result I’ve lost lots of plants, especially things like coleus that are fleshy, with cell walls that burst when frozen. Before discarding a precious shrub or tree, however, scrape the base of the stem and, if it’s not green, chances are it is dead or will die. If in doubt “wheech it oot and git anither!” My fig and apricot are fine though. They were in large pots, so probably didn’t freeze solid.

Don’t miss seed-sowing time. There’s a bit of leeway, but you can’t catch up with plants that need a long season, like lobelia. For sowing use good quality-assured organic standards compost that will be peat free, and tap water rather than butt water. If re-using supermarket containers, remember to punch holes for drainage. For feeding I use seaweed extract, as it is easy to apply. It is expensive, but a lettuce sprayed with seaweed extract seems much better than one that may contain chemicals. If you don’t like squishing pests by hand, put your hand inside a poly bag.

If you are new to vegetable gardening, a classic mistake is not waiting until the soil is warm enough before planting. If you have clay soil that hasn’t been covered, don’t attempt to plant until the beginning of April, unless it’s been improved with grit or compost. Lighter sandier soils warm up more quickly, but leach out nutrients fast because they are well drained, so add bulky compost (not grit) and you can plant in March. Even then be aware of cold snaps and ready with a bit of fleece or net curtain to cover vulnerable seedlings. If possible, it is better to start plants on a windowsill and plant out by mid May, after gradually weaning them off the warm inside temperatures.

Plant easy crops like potatoes, lettuce and radishes so that you have successes, but also invest in a few fruit trees, or something you like to eat that may be more difficult to grow. If you have no room for vegetables take up a bit lawn, and try herbs like parsley and chives which make a neat edge.

Be aware of safety. Don’t leave rakes lying around to be stood on or hoses, etc; put corks on top of canes and use a residual current breaker (RCD) on electrical equipment. Dangers for children are uncovered ponds, and greenhouse or coldframe glass which may not be toughened; you can buy stick-on plastic sheeting to cover the glass if necessary.

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# FROM THE ARCHIVE



Photo courtesy of Gordon Rankin

THIS wonderful picture was received in response to our request for photographs. It is the original for Valentine's postcard number 35843 and was bought at a car boot sale. The detail here is much clearer than in the postcard. You can see uniformed soldiers standing on the balcony of the baths building, which looks magnificent. On the gable end of the tenement building someone is sitting on the windowsill washing the window. I wonder if they knew the photo was being taken?

## PORTOBELLO HERITAGE TRUST FORMED

WORK on the repair of the collapsed kiln at the foot of Bridge Street finally began when the scaffolding went up at the end of January. No firm date for completion has been given, but estimates are that the work will take between two and three months.

Following the collapse, the community-based Kilns Working Group suggested that a local trust be set up that could take responsibility for and work with the Council on future maintenance of the kilns. Council officials accepted the idea and the Portobello Heritage Trust came into existence as a com-

pany limited by guarantee in November last year. Councillor Mike Bridgman is arranging an early meeting between representatives of the Trust and Brian Sibbald, Property Conservation Manager in the City Development Department, and other officials to discuss how a partnership might work. Securing the future of the kilns will be the Trust's first priority, but its aims are much wider:

- To record, promote and encourage the conservation, protection and enhancement of the historical, architectural and landscape heritage within Portobello and its environs.

- To advance knowledge and understanding of all aspects of Portobello's cultural and industrial heritage within the community and beyond.

There will be a public exhibition and presentation of plans for the coming year at 7.30 pm on 14th April in St John's Church Hall in Brighton Place.

This is a radical and ambitious community initiative that requires and deserves wide support. The membership list is open now. Contact Margaret Munro (munroporto@hotmail.com) or Archie Foley (foleyph@hotmail.com) for more information.

## READERS RESPOND

WE were delighted to receive a response to our request for information about the photograph of the schoolgirls in costume in our last issue. It came from the daughter of the girl sitting first from the left in the picture, which was taken in either 1932 or 1933. The girls were dressed for a school concert, with two classes involved in the performance. We were given the names of many of the girls, and this information is much appreciated.

In response to our request for more photographs, one reader, Gordon Rankin, sent us the one featured on the left.

Following Anna Robb's request for help to find a publisher for adventure novels written by her father the late John Robb, Anna was contacted by a book collector in Willowbrae familiar with her father's work. She learned for the first time of many more novels written under pseudonyms that she had been unaware of, and now hopes to trace them to add to her collection.

Many thanks to readers for their responses.

## REMINISCENCES REQUEST

IF you have any reminiscences you would like to share with us about Portobello, whether at work or play, please contact Margaret Munro, tel: 657 2866 or email munroporto@hotmail.com

## PORTOBELLO HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

OUR first meeting for 2010 was held on Wednesday, 3rd February. Jim Scanlon gave an interesting and informative talk on 'Greetings from Leith: Postcards from early 20th Century Leith'. Jim pointed out that the messages on postcards could be as interesting as the views and make an important contribution to social history.

Simon Green makes a welcome return to the society on Wednesday, 3rd March. His talk on *Dunfries House* will use details from the extensive research he has undertaken on this historic building, saved so recently for the nation.

Our talk on Wednesday, 7th April, has a distinctly outdoor feel. Jane George presents *Sporting Scots on links and rinks*. Given the recent opportunity to curl on frozen ponds, notwithstanding health and safety implications, this should prove to be a topical subject. Golf lovers should also enjoy reviewing Scotland's historical influence on this sport.

Dorothy Kelly promises to improve our local history knowledge with her talk entitled *Of Love and War 1914-1918* (with special reference to the Marine Gardens) on Wednesday, 5th May. Dorothy previously fascinated us with her family history of Mount Lodge, so we look forward to hearing some touching stories about wartime romances.

Our AGM will be held on Wednesday, 2nd June. This will be followed by a talk on *Place Names of Lothian*, given by Ian Fraser, recognised as an expert in this field. Finding out the reasoning behind particular place names should sharpen our awareness of our surroundings. This meeting is the last in our current programme. Our first meeting of the next session will be held on Wednesday, 1st September, hopefully after a long, hot summer.

I would remind readers that our meetings are held in St. John's Church Hall, Brighton Place and begin at 7pm sharp. Latecomers will not be admitted due to the disruption this causes our speakers. All are welcome, with non-members asked to make a donation to the Society. Margaret Munro

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 Friday 30th April 2010 - **Jay Jackson**

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## ART AT OLD PARISH CHURCH

THE Church, in Bellfield Street, is holding an exhibition of paintings, entitled 'The Laughing Jesus' featuring the work of artists from around the world. Members of the public are invited to view these exciting paintings any Monday to Friday between 10am and 2pm, and have tea, coffee or a light lunch in the café afterwards.

## DO YOU FANCY PLAYING BOWLS?

**PORTOBELLO** Bowling Club in Lee Crescent invite all would-be bowlers to join them on their Open Weekend, Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th April, from 12noon till 4pm, to meet members and see the club. There is a reduced joining fee of £50 this season and as a member you can also enjoy a variety of social nights all year round. Bowling is for all ages and there is also a junior section on Saturday mornings. For more information call 669 0316.

## YES, PORTY HAS GOT TALENT!

THIS event on 29th January was more than a talent contest. The main purpose of Porty's Got Talent was to raise money for the campaign against the Viridor waste transfer site, and the joy of the evening lay in the communal celebration of motivation, belief, endeavour and a very large spectrum of ability.

There were nine acts, performed by groups and individuals. They were: young singer, Abel; The Beat Brothers, drummers; singing group, The Porty Belles; Lothian Dance Academy; singer/songwriter and guitarist, Molly McDermott; The Fun Fiddlers; Britney Fan Club, a young comedy drag act; musicians, Transverse Trio; and fiddler Sally Simpson, with her dad, David, on guitar.

The panel of judges - Simon Grawl, Smears Morgan and Blanda Holden (aka David McDermott, John and Fiona Barr) had a difficult job.

When the audience cast their votes, 11-year-old Molly McDermott was outright winner, and tied in second place were the Britney Fan Club and Abel. A joyous aspect of the evening was the number of youngsters taking part, their abilities and overwhelming confidence. Although this was a contest, there



Photo by David McDermott

Porty's Got Talent winner singer/songwriter Molly McDermott.

was a genuine sense of enjoyment being had by all.

The compère, Sheila McWhirter, kept us informed, entertained and amused to such a degree that I can only say in retrospect: "Sheila hen - just give up the day job!"

Has Porty got talent? Yes, everywhere and by the bucket load.

Lewis Waugh

## SCIENCE AND RELIGION?

A STUDY course entitled 'Is it Possible to be a Christian and Take Science Seriously?' started in January at Wilson Memorial Church, Moira Terrace. The course is hosted by Dr Francis S. Collins, scientist, physician and former Director of the Human Genome Project, and consists of nine DVD presentations followed by discussion. The next dates this year are Sunday 21st March, 16th May; 19th September and 21st November, from 6.30-8.00pm. Anyone interested in attending should call 669 6636.

## AMNESTY - LOCAL NEWS

**DURING** the annual Greeting Card Campaign in December, when prisoners of conscience, their families and supporters are sent messages of comfort and support, 122 cards were sent by members of the public to people in Greece, Nepal, the Dominican Republic, Gambia, Turkey and Egypt. Young people showed great interest. There is now also a good prospect of an Amnesty Youth Group being set up at Portobello High School.

Up-coming activities include a Coffee Morning and Book Sale on Saturday 20th March (see What's On

on p.8), when the Woodcraft Folk have agreed to offer the fun and games that have contributed so much to the success of previous events.

The Portobello Group are currently meeting in the Café area of Portobello Old Parish Church, Bellfield Street and are grateful for this excellent accommodation.

Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month at 7.30pm. Why not come along and visit us, without obligation. You will be given a very warm welcome. For more information call David Turner on 669 1308.

## ROTARY CAR BOOT SALES

**PORTOBELLO** Rotary Club will once again be organising car boot sales in the Newcraighall station car park on the last Sunday of each month from March to October. Pitch fees are £10 for one car in a double parking space and sellers are asked to arrive from 8am. The sales are open to the public from 9am to 2pm and hot food and drinks are available.

All proceeds are given to charity, with some £2340 raised last year and £7000 over all in recent years.

Please call or text Bill Thomson on 07789 220583 for further information.

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**Cllr MAUREEN CHILD, Labour:**  
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**Cllr STEPHEN HAWKINS, Liberal Democrat:**  
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# “OLIVER, OLIVER .....



**THE** production of the ever-popular musical “Oliver” by Portobello High School last December proved to be a huge success, with sell-out shows over four nights. The school has received many letters of congratulation on the quality of the production. Over 200 pupils took part in a variety of roles, including actors, stage and sound crew, and musicians, supported by staff from a range of departments.

## HATS OFF TO HAITI FUNDRAISERS

**WELL** done to local school pupils and staff who collectively raised over £5000 for Haiti. Moved by news of the devastation and lives lost in the disaster, they took action and raised the money with all sorts of imaginative ideas.

St. John’s Primary School staff and pupils put their thinking caps on and asked everyone for a donation in exchange for the chance to design and don a hat for a day. Meanwhile, pupils at Royal High Primary diligently filled a metre long tube until it overflowed with coins collected from family and friends. Even the nursery joined in, selling baking.

Elsewhere uniforms provided fundraising inspiration. Thoughtful P7 pupils at Parson’s Green asked everyone to make a donation to wear casual clothes and an item of black as a mark of respect, while in Duddingston Primary white was worn as a sign of peace. Towerbank pupils on the other hand swapped clothes completely in a role-reversal day, boys dressed as girls and girls as boys!

Mary’s Meals Organisation, a charity distributing meals to those orphaned by the earthquake, received a generous donation from staff and pupils at Portobello High.

At Holy Rood High School the Pupil Council made the decision to send off a donation from the ‘Emergency Fund’, insightfully established for use when a quick response to catastrophe is vital. The pupils also raised money by a simple collection and have identified Haiti as a future issue for Lenten fundraising.

Karen Combe

## CALLING YOUNG SNAPPERS

**KEEP** Scotland Beautiful and Rotary International invite young photographers in Scotland to take part in the Rotary Young Photographer Competition 2010. The theme ‘Are we waste aware?’ allows a broad interpretation of subject and the panel of judges will be looking for imagination and style, as well as technical merit, content and composition. There will be some outstanding prizes to be won.

There are three age-groups: under 12, 12-15 and 15-18. Photographs can be taken with digital or film cameras, in colour or monochrome, but entries must be submitted to local Rotary clubs as prints no larger than A4 size, by 1st April 2010. Full rules and entry forms can be found on [www.rotary1020.org.uk/young-photographer.asp](http://www.rotary1020.org.uk/young-photographer.asp)

Rotary clubs will select a winner from each age-group to go on to the Scottish grand final, for which the judges will be selected by The Scottish Photographic Federation and will include a representative from Keep Scotland Beautiful.

Good luck and happy snapping.

## BOOK REVIEW - A Taste of Porty

**THIS** recipe book has been produced by the Young Enterprise group, p.b.design, at Portobello High School. It contains a great mix of 80 recipes contributed by local pupils, teachers, businesses, athletes, musicians and others. The book is well presented, with illustrations, and well worth the £5 price. It has been selling well and copies are available from Kitchener’s Deli and Findlay’s Butchers (10% of profits will go to Barnardo’s).

## Fruity Breakfast Parfait

### Ingredients

- 2 cups of freshly chopped pineapple
- 1 cup of frozen raspberries, thawed
- 1 cup of vanilla yoghurt (for a healthier option use low fat yoghurt)
- 1 firm banana, peeled and sliced
- 1/3 cup pf chopped dates
- ¼ cup of sliced almonds, toasted (optional)

### Method

Layer the pineapple, raspberries, yoghurt, banana and dates on top of each other in stemmed sundae glasses. Sprinkle almonds on top

Submitted by Towerbank Primary School to *A Taste of Porty* published by Portobello High School’s branch of Young Enterprise, p.b. design.

## EASTER HOLIDAY FUN

**THE JACK KANE** Community Centre will offer the following activities from Thursday 1st – Monday 19th April (with the exception of Friday 2nd and Monday 5th of April)

- Monday: Boys club for S1-S6 - 6-8pm
  - Tuesday: Children age 8- 12 - 6-8pm
  - Wednesday: Girls group S1-S6 - 6-8pm
  - Thursday: Children age 8- 12 - 6-8pm
  - Friday: Children age 8-12 1.30-3.30pm, S1 - S6 from 7-9pm
  - Saturday: Drama group for 8 -15 year olds from 10-12am
  - Sunday: S1-S4 from 5.30-7.30pm
- There is also an additional street-work shift out on a Tuesday from 6-9pm.

For more information call The Jack Kane Centre on 657 3676.

**CASTLEVIEW** Community Centre will offer the following free activities from Thursday 1st – Monday 19th April (with the exception of Friday 2nd and Monday 5th April)

- Monday: P1-P3, 3-5pm
- Tuesday: P4-P7, 3-5pm
- Wednesday: P1-P3, 3-5pm
- Friday: P4-P7 from 4.30-6.30pm, S1-S6 7-9pm.

For more activities see also Active Schools News on page 8.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

**PORTY YOUTH CLUBS:** Join the fun at the Youth Club at the Portobello Community Centre, Adelphi Grove - Arts and crafts, playstation, football, pool, group games or just chill out with mates. The Junior Club meet on Tuesdays from 5.15-7.15pm and the Seniors on Thursdays from 6-8pm.

**JUNIOR FOOTBALL:** Joppa United under-13s football club is looking for more players. Call 07748843609 for more information.

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# PORTOBELLO RFC COLTS FLY HIGH WITH THE RAF



Wing Commander Dougie Potter presents Stuart Arnott, Porty Coach with one of the new RAF training balls.

THOSE who are used to seeing Portobello RFC players wearing the traditional gold and blue stripes will have to look twice when they see the Under 18 team sporting the striking red and black strips emblazoned with the logo of the Royal Air Force.

In a welcome break from tradition, the players are proud to have been given the opportunity of support from the RAF in the shape of new strips, training balls and water bottles.

Flight Lieutenant Jim Thompson said: "Sponsorship of sports clubs helps communication of key RAF values of teamwork, physical fitness and excellence that go hand in hand with aspiring youth rugby players of successful clubs such as Portobello."

The strip donation was arranged by club member Dougie Potter, a wing commander in the RAF. A navigator on Tornado GR4, Dougie has strong ties with the club, having played for Porty since he was 11. He still turns out occasionally for the veteran's team when he is home visiting his mum Sandra who lives in Joppa.

Robert Shepherd, Coach

# DUDDINGSTON TOP WINTER LEAGUE

DUDDINGSTON Golf Club had a successful conclusion to the 2009/10 Winter League campaign, with excellent results over neighbouring clubs Prestonfield, Liberton and Craigmillar Park, clinching the title in December

Match Secretary, Steve Gilhooley, commented that the benefits of a great team spirit and a great mix of both youth and experienced players were clear for all to see.

Duddingston, who are actively recruiting new members, have broken the mould of traditional clubs, with a willingness to encourage younger members, aged between 12 and 29, and as such have benefited from an enthusiastic squad to pick from.

Captain, Gavin Clark, emphasised the need for a club that caters for all ages, both men and woman. "Being part of a successful club that makes you feel welcome and is happy to accommodate is a rare commodity", he said. "We have reduced our fees for both juniors and youths up to the age of 29, to ensure everyone is given the chance to enjoy the game of golf".

If you are interested in joining or knowing more, please contact Duncan Ireland on 661 7688.



Parsons's Green P6 and P7 pupils, preparing for the The Edinburgh Primary Schools Cross Country event taking place at Cavalry Park on 8th March, take time out from their busy training schedule to say 'cheese'.

Back row: L to R: Fraser Wildgoose, Murray Watson, Susan Watson (coach), Andrew Taylor, Tom Herron (coach), Keir Gowan. Front Row: L to R: Euan Turner, Rory Watson, Jack Egan, Tommy Longman

## ACTIVE SCHOOLS NEWS

A SPORTS Relief Challenge day is to be held in each of the cluster primary schools on the morning of Friday 19th March. This will involve pupils doing a form of Sports Mile Challenge, and should be a big event in each of the schools. Events management students from Stevenson College will be helping out and it is hoped that some top professional athletes will attend.

More fun activities are available over the holidays at The Easter Holiday Camp in Portobello High School's PE Department. It is open to school-age children and all the activities run for the full week,

Monday 12th - Friday 16th April:

- Basketball Camp for P3-P6 9.30-11.30am (£15)
- Mini-Kickers Camp for nursery children 11.30-12.30pm (£10)
- Mini-Football Camp for P1-P3 1-3pm (£15)
- Dance Camp for P3-P7 (£25) 1-3.30pm

If you want to find out about these activities or any other city-wide activities please contact Colin McMillan (Active Schools Sports Co-ordinator) 07884216213/colin.mcmillan@ea.edin.sch.uk

## WHAT'S ON in Portobello

**COFFEE MORNING**, with home baking, preserves, bric-a-brac and book sale, plus tombola. Saturday 6th March, 10.30am-1pm, St James Church hall, Rosefield Place. Proceeds to Portobello Opposes New Garbage Site (PONGS).

**DRAMA:** St Philip's Drama Group present 'The Merry Widow from Bluegum Creek' on Tues.9th - Sat.13th March at 7.30pm in St Philip's Church Hall. Tickets £10, children £5. Call 669 3123.

**MALECON MATINEE**, Sun.14th Mar & 9th May, 2-5pm, Beach Lane Social Club, Portobello, £5/£9 Combo. Scotland's only Buena Vista Social Club. Cuban class, 1pm. Details on salsaceildh.com.

**ON THE RADIO:** The kilns will feature in the Forth Estuary edition of BBC Radio Scotland's *Past Lives* series to be broadcast at 11.30am on Monday 15th March.

**AMNESTY COFFEE MORNING & BOOK SALE:** Saturday 20th March, 10am-12noon, Old Parish Church Hall, Bellfield St.

**PORTOBELLO FUN FIDDLE** presents: *Spring Fiddle Fling*, Saturday 27th March, 2pm, St James's Church Hall, Rosefield Place. Tickets on the door £5 (£4 conc.), children under 12 £2.

A feast of music making, featuring Fun Fiddlers, surprise acts, and top guest musicians from Portobello and beyond.

Event supported by POD (Portobello Open Door). More information on [www.funfiddle.co.uk](http://www.funfiddle.co.uk)

**BURNS SUPPER:** This year's Burns Supper at the Old Parish Church in Bellfield Street was another great success for the organisers, and raised £1020 for Christian Aid.

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