

THE Portobello REPORTER

The independent voice of Portobello

Quarterly: Summer 2010
Delivered in and around Portobello; circulation 12,500
Also available online on www.porty.org.uk

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Your Community Newspaper
produced by local people since 1980.

STORMS LASH THE WATERFRONT

ONLY days after the beginning of British summer time, Portobello was hit by some of the worst storm damage in living memory. Extreme spring tides fuelled by on-shore gales combined to batter the length of the Promenade from Seafield to Joppa, leaving a trail of debris and destruction in its wake.

Amanda Caygill, owner of The Espy, told me: "Our cellars were flooded that night. Water was coming over the sea wall and up through the drains".



Photo by Archie Foley

Further east, as shown above, one of the last vestiges of the Joppa saltworks was destroyed as the old stone wall and blocked-up door that formed part of the works' perimeter was swept away. Promenade railings and sections of the sea wall were also struck, and parts were washed out to sea along with tonnes of sand. A full assessment of the damage, the cost of repairs and the resources required for future coastal defences, is being carried out by the city council and will be reported on in July.

For one 80-year-old Portobello lady, this was certainly the worst storm she had witnessed during her lifetime, as a resident of the Promenade.

Storm surges like this are likely to increase as a result of climate change. Combined with rising sea levels, predictions of coastal flooding cannot be ignored. For more information see www.scottish.parliament.uk and enter Flooding Occurrences Review in the search box.

Eilidh Bateman

IMAGINE PORTY PROM

THREE artworks were commissioned by Big Things on the Beach as part of this year's creative project which invites the community to 'Imagine Porty Prom'. The first of these, Michael Pinsky's 'Stroke', a light projection on the darkened surface of the main pool of Portobello Swim Centre, was shown to great acclaim from over 800 people on five evenings in late March. Responses included: "An utterly enchanting experience" and "Wonderful to see such a high quality art installation on our doorstep".

The Giant Avatar of Portobello made a number of appearances during the May holiday. Created by artist duo Grennan and Sperandio, its design is based on responses to the question: "If Portobello was a character, what character would it be?" Look out for it at community events in coming months.

The third commission, a sculptural work by Miles Thurlow inspired by the amusement arcades, will be launched on the beach on 31st July as part of Edinburgh Art



Festival. The artist will give a talk on Sunday 1st August at Portobello Public Art House, on the corner of Kings Road and the Prom.

Your ideas about the future of the Prom are displayed at the Art House, open Thursdays/Fridays 10am-6pm and Saturdays/Sundays 1pm-6pm until early September. An 'Imagine Porty Prom' event will be held at the Old Parish Church Hall, Bellfield Street, on Saturday 26th June, giving people a final chance to contribute to the Portobello Public Art Plan launching at the Art House on Saturday 8th August.

For event times and details of how to get involved, or register for updates, see www.bigthingsonthebeach.org.uk

Susan Grant

NEW HIGH SCHOOL CONSULTATION

PRE-Planning Consultation for the new Portobello High School on Portobello Park has started. Leaflets about the proposals are available from Portobello or Piershill libraries, or by calling 469 3161. This information is also at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/new-PortobelloSchool

Exhibitions will be held in Portobello Town Hall on Tues.8th/Wed.9th June and Portobello and Piershill libraries, 7th- 27th June.

Two public meetings on planning issues will be held in the Town Hall; dates not yet known.

Staffed sessions, open to the public, will be held from 4-6pm on: Thurs.10th June at Royal High Primary School; Mon.14th, Towerbank; Tues.15th, Duddingston; Wed.16th, Brunstane, and Fri.18th, 1pm-4pm, Parson's Green.

Full details of all events are available on the website and posters.

30 YEARS OF LOCAL NEWS



Photo by Peter Ross

Eilidh Bateman and Karen Combe, two of the Reporter's volunteers, compare the first issue of the paper from June 1980 with the spring 2010 issue.

THE PORTOBELLO REPORTER made its first appearance in June 1980. The four A4 pages had taken its founding group six months to prepare and 100 copies were sold in local shops for 10p. It proved so popular that the second issue was a four-page tabloid with a bigger print run, and its development continued until, by the end of 1990, circulation had increased to 12,500 copies delivered free to homes and businesses.

Nick Child, one of the founders, says: "Wanting, like Groucho, to belong to a community that was good enough for me, I was one of the handful of 'midwives' who, after a long pregnancy, assisted the difficult birth of a small but precious (10p!) baby *Portobello Reporter* 30 years ago! It is a constant delight that others now create and deliver it - It stands for all that's best in Porty's community".

The aims of the founders were that the paper should: "...serve the interests of people who live in Portobello ... be non profit making ... with no formal links with any political or other organisation ... report on the people and events in the news locally ... and bring you Portobello's history and reminiscences". These have been followed by the many volunteers who have been involved in its production. The paper is completely independent and funded solely through local advertising.

The Reporter has now become a record of Portobello's more recent past: local events, human interest stories and major issues. One of the first big stories was the opening of the Portobello Bypass (Sir Harry Lauder Road) in 1986, which was intended to take traffic off our High Street. But traffic increased anyway, and in 2008 the main story was the chaos caused by the replacement of the Kings Road roundabout with traffic lights.

Reports of Portobello's fight for leisure facilities make interesting reading. In 1993 Edinburgh District Council reneged on its promise of a sports and leisure complex on the outdoor pool site, building a bowls centre instead; and in 1996 local people mounted a campaign against the closure of Portobello Swim Centre which resulted in its complete refurbishment.

The campaign against a superstore at the west end of the High Street occupied the front page for eight issues; the proposal was rejected in May 2005, following a public inquiry.

The adverts in back copies show how much Portobello High Street has changed in 30 years. There are no longer shoe shops, sports shop, music shop or book shop, but despite competition from several superstores, we still have excellent food shops, places to eat and drink and a wide range of other businesses. It is important to support them, so that our High Street will survive as a centre of the community, somewhere to meet and catch up on the latest news.

For anyone interested, a set of copies is held at Portobello Library, the National Library and Central Library, and from Summer 2002, on the community website www.porty.org.uk

Brenda Molony

WASTE TRANSFER APPEAL

AS this issue went to press, there was no news of the Public Inquiry into Viridor's appeal against the Council's refusal of permission for a waste transfer

plant on Sir Harry Lauder Road. A decision is imminent and will be posted on www.portobellopongs.com and www.dpea.scotland.gov.uk

PORTY PROFILE No. 39

SUSAN BURNS

SUSAN BURNS will be known to green-fingered readers as the author of our Growing Organic column, which she has been writing since the end of 2002. She says: "My interest in growing things started with house plants and tomatoes. Then, in 1988, we moved to a house with a huge garden that needing cultivating, and things really took off. I had always been interested in doing things the natural way, and I was inspired to grow things organically by the late Geoff Hamilton on Gardeners' World". For several years Susan and her husband, Mike, have held open days in their varied and fascinating garden to raise money for the charity Garden Organic.

In 1995 Susan joined the Craightonny Allotment Holders Association and three years became its secretary and led the fight to save its Telferton site from development.

Susan went to Parsons Green Primary School and Portobello Secondary, then worked as a secretary before marrying Mike and having two children. When she felt they were old enough, she took a job in a private bank, where she progressed to investment administration manager. In her leisure time, she was a keen outdoor sportswoman.

Then in 2001 Susan sustained serious neck injuries as the result of a car accident, which she says "changed my life completely". She is now mostly housebound and able to do just a few hours activity each day. "I can manage a wee bit of gardening, writing or studying and I really love writing for The Reporter", she says. "It was difficult at first because my brain wouldn't work, but now it almost writes itself - there is so much I want to say!"

By 2005, Susan was starting to feel a little better and says: "Because I'm not physically able, I decided to try something completely different to stretch my brain". Mike had a telescope and she had become interested in astronomy, so she started Open University courses in astronomy and physics. She is full of praise for the support she has received from the OU, who found grants for an electrically-adjustable desk and a special chair, to making working at her computer as easy as possible. "I hope to be able to start the equivalent of third year in astrophysics, if my maths is good enough", she says. "I'm working on it!"

Brenda Molony



Photo by Mike Burns

ON THE BEAT

THE winter months saw a change in community policing in Portobello with the introduction of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT), dedicated to working with partnership agencies in identifying and responding to the concerns of the community.

People may have noticed increased police activity in and around Portobello High Street at the end of April, when police, in conjunction with council staff, were responding to analysis of housebreaking in the area, which indicated that insecure doors and windows were the popular points of entry. The prevalence of common stairs also allows thieves the opportunity to try doors without being noticed. If you see any suspicious activity, please call the police and we will gladly challenge those involved. Such assistance has recently led to several criminals being traced and arrested.

Educating the public about the benefits of home security will hopefully deny the opportunist thief rich pickings. Residents are reminded of the importance of locking doors and windows, removing valuables from sight, both in the house and car, and being mindful of anybody looking lost in a common stair. This is particularly important in the summer months due to the influx of visitors.

Portobello SNT officers will be implementing more preventative and enforcement plans in the coming months. These will reinforce the educational 'self-help' theme and encourage people to be pro-active regarding their security and that of their property.

Anyone seeking advice on this or any other matter should contact the Safer Neighbourhood Team at Portobello Police Station.

PC Matthew Higson

ON THE BEACH

THE Great Storm, which battered and pummelled our Eastern Seaboard and finally brought an end to winter, left much in its wake. What of Portobello Beach? Of the five structures which help to hold the shore and stop the natural migration of sand, the four groynes which are built of wood emerged a bit weed-bedraggled but largely unscathed. The pipe casing further east at the Joppa end of our beach, being made of concrete, was smashed to pieces. The brittleness broke for it had no other option; the wood withstood, for it had a little give.

After the storm crows hopped and picked among the detritus, and so did I, keen to see what Nature had thrown our way. It is likely that the tempest had combined with a tidal surge to scour the seabed to some depth and throw it bodily onto Portobello. We had the usual display of ancient tree-trunks, massive and somber, mute testament to the power of the elements. Seaweed hung crisping in the sun and through it all lay the dead. Everywhere were razor clams, constellations of starfish and hundreds of creatures similar to giant wood-lice. Growing to anything from three to six inches this is the rarely seen sea mouse. It has a pale underside with a myriad of tiny legs and its back shows as a matted mass of short brown bristles. Living in silt, *Aphrodite aculea* is in fact related to the common earthworm. The fine hairs that fringe the upper parts shine with an iridescence similar to that found on a sunlit starling.

Jim Morrison

NEWS

IN BRIEF

KITCHEN CANNY is a new Changeworks project to help householders with practical ways to reduce food waste, which is good for the pocket and the environment. The Householder Action Kit will give you some ideas. For more information see www.changeworks.org.uk/kitchencanny

THE PORTY SHOPPER: Some of these popular shoppers are still available, price £2, at Woodwares, Banana Republic, Portobello Stationers and Williamson's fishmongers.

BOOK FESTIVAL: A second Portobello Book Festival is planned for Friday 8th to Sunday 10th October, with events, talks and activities for children, youths and adults in a number of venues. The library will be the hub for organising and information. More details in our next edition.

THE KILNS: Restoration of the collapsed kiln has reached the stage of reconstruction of the chimney portion and work should be completed by mid-June. Arrangements will then be made for an official 'topping out' ceremony.

ALL ABOUT PORTY: Anyone interested in local music and art should visit the community website www.porty.org.uk There they will find a Music Gallery with nine albums of tracks by local musicians and an Image Gallery with 15 albums of local art and photographs, plus old postcards.

There are also links to the public art trust Big Things on the Beach (BTOB); Portobello Open Door (POD), an arts and culture group; and Portobello Telly, a library of current and historical film clips.

Other links are to Sail Porty and Row Porty, local environmental group PEDAL, the Community Council, the Amenity Society, and Talk Porty.

Sheila Gilmore MP

for Edinburgh East

THANK YOU

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the constituents of Edinburgh East for electing me as your new MP, and for placing your trust in me.

I have pledged to work hard for you on the issues that matter to you most.

I have provided some provisional details of my surgeries and contact details for the next two months. Please note these details may change in the future.



No appointment necessary.

SURGERIES

Friday 11th June	Friday 25th June
Castlevie Community Centre 10.00am-11.00am	Augustine United Church 10.00am-11.00am
Portobello Town Hall 7.00pm-8.30pm	Restalrig Lochend Community Hub 11.30am-12.00pm

CONTACT DETAILS

t: 0131 667 8538
e: sheila.gilmore.mp@parliament.uk

To contact

The Portobello Reporter
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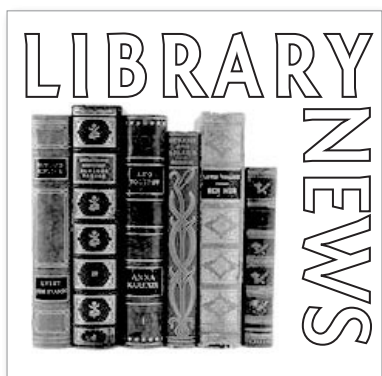
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AS part of the Portobello High School Pre-Planning Consultation events, plans for the new school will be displayed in Portobello Library during June. Come along and view them during normal opening hours (10am-8pm, Monday to Thursday; 10am-5pm, Fridays; 9am-5pm, Saturdays; 1pm to 5pm, Sundays).



SPACE HOP will land in libraries this summer. It's all about Space, the final frontier! Children - beam into the library as often as you can during your summer holidays and join our big Space Hop. Collect stickers, novelties, win a gold medal if you read six books in the holidays, have chances to win prizes in the citywide prize draw and local competitions. Our cosmic events include Make a Universe in a Jar, Cosmic Clothing, Solar System Wall Chart, and an Alien Autopsy! Look out for library staff, boldly going to your school assembly in June, to show you the fabulous new books we are getting in for you and tell you more about our special events. Our Space Hop journey blasts off at the end of June and touchdown is at the end of August. So don't miss this fantastic voyage!

MEET THE AUTHOR: Come along and enjoy hearing Caroline Dunford read from her crime novel *A Death in the Family* in the Library on Wednesday 30th June from 4.00-4.30 pm. Tea and biscuits are 'on the house'.

REVEALED Photographic Group will hold an exhibition of new photographs, each paired with a 'tactile' version alongside, from 5th-23rd July. The exhibition title is *Edinburgh Old and New Towns*. Organiser, Rosita McKenzie said: "This is a wonderfully inclusive accessible display created by visually disabled adults which we think will amaze you". The display was created by the group in response to an invitation from Edinburgh World Heritage Trust. To increase accessibility to everyone, headphone sets will be provided, with an audio description and a booklet version of the display.

MUSSELBURGH Camera Club returns to the library with a display of photographs from 27th July-7th August.

The **BOOK GROUP** continues to meet on the first Tuesday of each month, for further information ask at the desk.

Joyce Campbell

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

THE Community Council has received grants for a display area in the Library, where material relating to it, and to current Portobello issues, can be accessed. Along with a Community Council notice board, this will increase our local presence. Details of meetings are now displayed on the plasma screen in the Library

We have set up two new committees. The first is looking at the use of the Town Hall and how the Council market it as a venue; the second is looking at various local traffic issues, with a particular focus on the streets between Bath Street and Bellfield Street.

In a joint project with Portobello Amenity Society, we have just erected a plaque on the Tower, detailing its history, while a trial map of Portobello has been put in the notice board at Joppa. Finalised maps will be put in all three community boards. We have also written the text and provided photographs for a new navigational board that the Council are installing as part of the town centre improvements.

On 12th May the Council planning committee voted against the proposal for a mixed use development, including 710 residential units, and commercial and office use, on the former Scottish Power site. The Community Council had objected to this, not because it is against residential development on the site, but because of the density and the heights of the blocks. There were also serious traffic and air quality issues. The developer, of course, is entitled to submit a revised application, which we hope will address these issues, with a design which is more sensitive to the Portobello Conservation Area.

John Stewart, Chair.

A FICTIONAL PORTY

PORTOBELLO is the backdrop to local author Alice Thompson's latest novel *The Existential Detective*. William Blake is a private detective who is asked by an eccentric scientist to find his missing amnesiac wife Louise. The case takes

Will to brothels, nightclubs and amusement arcades in the town, and draws him into a web of deception and disappearances linked to an unsolved mystery in his past. *The Existential Detective* is published this month by Two Ravens Press.

SHOWFOLK – AN ORAL HISTORY

SHOWFOLK – An Oral History of a Fairground Dynasty by Frank Bruce is the story of the Codona family who are very much associated with Portobello and its heritage as a seaside resort, and the history of the Fun City fairground features prominently. The Codonas arrived from the continent in the late 18th century and Frank Bruce drew on original archival research for the earlier part of the book, but most of the story is told in a series of oral history interviews with the fairground folk themselves.

Frank will give an illustrated talk on how he came to write the book, and will sign copies, on Wednesday 30th June at 7.30 pm in St John's Church Hall, Brighton Place.

The event has been organised by Portobello Heritage Trust.

The book is published by NMS Enterprises Ltd. – Publishing, for whom Frank Bruce also wrote *Scottish Showbusiness, Music Hall, Variety and Pantomime*.

Archie Foley

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NEVER JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER

LIBRARY Elf had been emailing me for days to renew our books, so the troops were rallied to retrieve them because, as usual, they had mysteriously disappeared into the depths of duvets, newspapers and worst of all, the bookcase.

My sense of relief at the all-clear from the library desk - nothing missing, no fines - was short-lived. Five minutes later my youngest, who was fruitlessly trying to log on to the computer, received a deadly kick from his older sister. A mother and child sitting nearby dropped jaws simultaneously, as they witnessed the tears and tantrums, and me in the middle hopelessly trying to regain order in a very public and supposedly quiet place.

Harassed, but with peace restored, I dashed off to find a few recipe books for tea-time inspiration accompanied by my youngest, who obligingly chose me a novel. Not wishing to hurt his feelings and risk more tears I dutifully took it home. Actually, *Alternatives to Sex* turned out to be quite a page-turner. I do wonder though if he chose it because he knew I'd enjoy McCauley's "deadly serious eye on the human predicament", or maybe it was just because the bright green and white cover reminded him of his favourite football team. Another two weeks until our next visit - I can't wait!

THE new PEDAL staff team has been busy setting up our new office at The Stables, 38 Bailey-field Road, and developing this year's projects.

Energy Worker, Charlotte Bickmore, is running the Warm Tenement Scheme, providing advice on energy efficiency and insulation to tenement residents; if you are interested in taking part, please contact us. Information about the Hotspot insulation campaign will be coming through letterboxes in July. This will offer deals on loft and cavity wall insulation through accredited installers, in partnership with the Energy Saving Scotland advice centre. Look out for our Energy Fair on 10th July at the Town Hall.

Plans for a community-owned wind turbine are moving ahead: we have permission for a wind-monitoring mast at Seafeld Road and our consultants will soon begin preparing our application for planning consent. We will be running local consultations on the turbine from August.

Peter Upton and Polly Cooke are our Food Workers. Their first projects are 'Fruitful Porty' and 'Dig In Porty', offering ways to get you growing, picking, preserving, cooking and eating your own food (see the leaflet delivered with your *Portobello Reporter*). If you don't want to grow your own, or can't, but still want locally-grown food, we are also planning an organic food market. PEDAL is also hosting a mid-summer party at the Donkeyfield orchard on 19th June, and fun activities at Telferton Allotments open day on 18th July.

Tom Black is the new Project Manager, responsible for ensuring that projects are on track and putting in place a lasting legacy.

More information on projects and events can be found on www.pedal-porty.org.uk - or you can contact us on 0131 258 4483.

Tom Black

HEALTHY EATING: COUSCOUS SALAD

Light and tasty for a summer lunch.

225g couscous	300ml boiling water
2 ripe tomatoes	1 red pepper, de-seeded
3 spring onions	Black olives, pitted and chopped
Chopped coriander, mint or parsley	
Extra virgin olive oil	Fresh lemon juice

Chop the salad vegetables small.
Put the couscous in a bowl and add the water, stir with a fork, cover with a tea towel and leave for 5 minutes.
Tip into a serving dish and add salt and black pepper.
Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice, and mix in.
Add prepared vegetables, olives and herbs and serve.

[From *A Taste of Porty*, the Portobello High School Young Enterprise book].

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GROWING ORGANIC



with Susan Burns



SUMMER is a time to enjoy the garden and just potter, although some jobs are still worth doing. Tall plants like delphiniums can be supported with twigs cut from spring-flowering shrubs after flowering, and bent into various shapes - a wigwam or lobster pot shape is probably the easiest. I also find old lampshades, denuded of their covering, make great supports: the bigger ones are excellent for supporting wayward tall grasses without imposing too much on the garden. These must be put in place before the majority of the growth has been made.

When walking around admiring your garden, look out for pest increases and squash any on sight; the aphids on roses are particularly easy. You don't need to get every one, just leave enough for the ladybirds, lacewing, and hoverfly larvae to feed on; wasps feed on them too. In case we have a hot summer, invest in automatic greenhouse openers. These work by expanding and contracting wax that forces windows open and shut, and are worth every penny, especially as they work when you're maybe not around to notice any rise or fall in temperatures.

Feeding plants is a must if they are grown in pots. Pick a pail-full of nettles or comfrey, cover with water, steep for a few weeks and then dilute to weak-tea strength and water tomatoes, flower containers or anything needing a boost. It does smell, but that doesn't last long and it is very good for the plants.

A warning about garden centre plants that have been kept under open poly tunnel type structures: make sure the plants are hardened off over a few weeks before planting out. That cold east wind that we get in the Portobello area can easily scorch soft leaves.

Keep sowing salad leaves at two-week intervals, for a continuous supply. If you like mildly bitter leaves, cut a large dandelion back to ground level and cover with a bucket (a child's one is ideal, especially if it is dark coloured), then leave for a couple of weeks. The forced light-green leaves are delicious mixed through a salad.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to get on with our garden as much as we'd have liked, due to various factors including the harsh winter, when we had expected to revamp the pond and finish our new courtyard garden. So we are not opening it this year, but hope to do so again in 2011.

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OUR SECRET PAST

VERY few people are aware of a part of Portobello's recent past that has completely disappeared. The Royal Observer Corp (ROC), part of the UK Civil Defence organisation, had an underground monitoring unit on top of the Wisp (OS Map Ref. NT305705), built in the early 1960s in the Cold War period, and officially known as the Portobello ROC Post. The bunker was entered through a metal hatch and shaft, where a 15ft ladder gave access to an underground structure that would have become a temporary home for three ROC observers during any escalating nuclear confrontation.

In the event of a nuclear strike, the observers were

trained to evaluate the intensity of the nuclear blast pressure, and measure the level of radioactive fallout. This information would then have been passed to a central control, where it would be mapped, and a judgment made on appropriate emergency planning. Regular training continued until 1991, when the Home Office disbanded the ROC after the collapse of the former Soviet Union ended the perceived threat.

The majority of the 1500 UK ROC bunkers were decommissioned and destroyed after 1991. Cell phone operators purchased some of those remaining, as their strategic positions on high ground

were ideal for mobile phone radio masts. However, earlier reorganisation had resulted in the Portobello bunker closing in late 1968. Due to open-cast mining and landscaping on the Wisp site, no trace of the location now exists.

Further detailed information about the ROC can be found on the Subterranea Britannica Cold War website www.subbrit.org.uk/rsg/roc/history.html

If any Portobello Reporter readers have direct knowledge of the Portobello ROC bunker, would they please call 0131 669 2891.

Jim Crockett

SHEEP HEID CELEBRATION

THE Sheep Heid Inn is celebrating its 650th birthday this year and staff are hoping to gather people's stories, anecdotes and photographs of the pub and Duddingston Village over the years. They would especially like to hear from former staff or customers, or their relatives, who may have photographs from their time there that could be copied for an exhibition later in the year. Updates on activities can be found at www.sheepheid.co.uk or on the official Facebook site. They look forward to hearing from all those interested in the oldest pub in Scotland.

This photograph of the bar in The Sheep Heid Inn was taken around 1935. It is thought that the barman's name was John Conker. If you know otherwise, or can identify any of the other people in the photograph, please contact Margaret Munro, tel. 657 2866, or email munroporto@hotmail.com



NEW PLAQUE ON TOWER



Photo by Celia Butterworth

THE newly-renovated Portobello Tower, by the Promenade, now has a plaque describing its history on its wall in Beach Lane. A community grant of £483 from Portobello and Craigmillar Neighbourhood Partnership paid for the plaque, and Mark Noble, owner of the Tower, paid for it to be put in place. This is the tenth plaque to be erected on local buildings of historical or other interest by Portobello Community Council and Portobello Amenity Society.

READERS RESPOND

MR Riccardo Valvona responded to our request for photographs and kindly allowed us to copy his old photographs of Portobello.

If you have any photographs from Sunday School outings, Brownies, Guides, Scouts or Boys Brigade parades or outings, or family days out in Portobello, the History Society would be delighted to see them and copy them for our archive. Please contact Margaret Munro, tel: 657 2866 or email munroporto@hotmail.com

PORTOBELLO HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

MEMBERS of the society have enjoyed a variety of talks in this year's programme.

Simon Green's talk on Wednesday 3rd March included much of his research for his new book on Dumfries House. Simon's enthusiasm and knowledge continued to hold his audience captive as he took us on a tour of the house and encouraged members to visit it themselves.

On Wednesday 7th April, Jane George spoke about *Sporting Scots on links and rinks*, a well-researched and interesting talk on golf and curling in Scotland. With links to Portobello, this talk illustrated how Scotland has led the way in the establishment of these popular sports.

Dorothy Kelly made a return visit on Wednesday 5th May, with her talk *Of Love and War 1914-1918 (with special reference to the Marine Gardens)*. Using recordings of readings of family letters and music appropriate to the times, Dorothy brought to life the correspondence of a beautiful schoolgirl with soldiers from the local community and those she had met who were billeted in the Marine Gardens. These poignant letters from young men, some of whom died at the front, revealed the harsh realities of war.

Our Annual General Meeting is being held on Wednesday 2nd June, followed by a talk by Ian Fraser on *Place Names of Lothian*. Ian is a recognised authority on this subject. This is the last meeting of the session; the next session will commence on Wednesday 1st September.

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 July 2010 - Scotland's Premier Elvis Tribute Show: ROBBIE WEST

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Friday 27th August 2010 - Top-class vocal entertainer, BRIAN LE VELL

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MARK RUNS EUROPE

ON 1st May in Amsterdam, local man Mark Cooper, 27, began a 1,300 mile endurance run through Holland, Belgium, France and Spain. This is the equivalent of roughly 50 marathons and Mark expects to complete the distance in 56 days. He is aiming to raise £25,000 for the Headway Group, and says: “I am running this challenge in memory of my mother, Sheila. She passed away in 1997 from a brain haemorrhage, and I would like to complete it for the charity that helped my family during this difficult time, for my family who are always there for me, and for people and their carers affected by traumatic brain injuries”.

Mark’s training included marathons run on treadmills at Cameron Toll and St James Centres and Princes Mall. Anyone who would like to help him achieve his target can donate on www.runwithmark.com



Photo by Feerilth Knowles

INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE COMES TO PORTOBELLO

PHOENIX House in Portobello High Street, which has stood empty for a number of years, has a bright new future as an International Foundation College, to be called Bellfield College Edinburgh.

After an extensive refit, the college will soon open its doors to students from China, Dubai, Iran, India and Singapore, providing English as a Foreign Language, Undergraduate and Post-graduate Foundation, and Pre-Master programmes.

Initially, the college will occupy the top floor, with the remainder available to other businesses. The plans to open an international foundation college have been welcomed by the Community Council and should bring benefits to the community, including local residents who may wish to let rooms to the students.

WANTED - ROOM WITH PIANO

LOCAL pianist, Colin Kingsley, offers to give a piano recital for a good cause in this area, for which he needs access to a room that could accommodate about 20 people, with a good piano.

Colin came to Portobello in the 1960s, to a post in the Music Faculty of Edinburgh University, and says: “I should be very happy to do something for this part of Edinburgh, where I have passed so many happy years with my wife and family”. He was previously solo pianist for The Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, in the days of Margot Fonteyn, and gave international concerts and made broadcasts for the BBC and foreign radio systems. Although retired, he still teaches and gives recitals, and is President of The Chopin Circle in Scotland.

If anyone can offer suitable facilities, would they please contact Colin by email at colin_kingsley@yahoo.co.uk

The Portobello Reporter is produced by volunteers, with contributions in this issue from 37 local people. If you have something to publicise or would like to advertise call 669 3466 or email us at portyreporter@btinternet.com

Sept. deadline 7th Aug. 2010.

AMNESTY - LOCAL NEWS

THE General Election provided a major campaigning focus - to approach candidates for the larger parties, outlining Amnesty’s priorities for policies designed to promote and strengthen human rights at a time when these are under threat in ever new ways. These key issues will be re-iterated at an early meeting with our new MP, Sheila Gilmore.

Members have expressed their deep appreciation of the relationship built over the years with retiring MP, Gavin Strang, and a message to this effect was sent to him.

One of the Group’s longest-serving members, Cathy Crawford, gave a moving illustrated talk in April on her travels in Africa on behalf of children suffering from HIV/Aids. The May meeting included a presentation by a young Mexican woman on the appalling violations against women in her country.

The annual coffee morning and book sale on 20th March raised over £300 for Amnesty’s human rights work in the UK and worldwide. Warm thanks to all who helped and attended.

Group meetings are held in Portobello Old Parish Church Hall on the the third Monday of each month at 7.30pm. All are welcome. For further information please call 669 1308.

David Turner

GILBERSTOUN SPRING CLEAN



Photo by Colin McIntyre

THE residents of Gilberstoun, near Brunstane, got together on 25th April to clean up their area. The Spring Clean, organised by the Residents Association, collected 45 bags of rubbish in just two hours, from local green areas and paths in the estate. Volunteers, young and old, enjoyed getting together to make a positive difference and meeting more of their neighbours. The clean-up was supported by the council who provided bin bags, gloves and litter-pickers. Contact: gilberstounresidents@ymail.com

COUNCILLORS' SURGERIES

Portobello & Craigmillar Ward

Cllr MICHAEL BRIDGMAN, SNP:

From 1st April, except public or school holidays:

1st Monday of month:
Bingham Community Complex, 6pm
Magdalene Community Centre, 7pm
2nd Monday of month:
Portobello Library, 6pm
St Francis Primary School, 7:00pm
OR call 529 4233 or email 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
Receive regular Reports by email or view on www.porty.org.uk

Cllr STEPHEN HAWKINS, Liberal Democrat:

Portobello Library, each Wednesday, from 6pm.
OR Tel. 529 3262 or email stephen.hawkins@edinburgh.gov.uk



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Duddingston Primary School
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THE PORTY SKIFF



MEMBERS of a sub-group of the Portobello Sailing and Kayaking Club, Andres Leslie and Nick Savage, have just finished building the first Shetland Skiff here in Portobello, with the help of over 30 local people (see more on www.rowporty.org.uk).

P4 children at Towerbank Primary School were asked to write stories about the boat and give it a name. They produced 38 stories with colourful pictures, to be published in a booklet that will be on sale at the school and the Sailing Club. The name chosen from those suggested is *Ice Breaker*.

On 29th May, the boat took part in the inaugural regatta of the Anstruther Fisheries Museum "Scottish Coastal Rowing Project"; the first

regatta for this class of boat. The crew also aim to attend the Traditional Boat Festival in Portsoy on 26th and 27th June and the Boat Muster at North Berwick on 29th August.

On 24th July, the club plan to host the first rowing (and possibly sailing) regatta at Portobello in over 40 years, to coincide with the official launch of the skiff, with a number of family events on the beach, such as tug-o-war, sand castle competition and so on. Everyone is invited.

Thanks to Lottery Heritage funding, work on a second boat will start in June and help from more local people will be very welcome.

For more information on rowing contact Andres at aleslie@sailporty.org.uk

LOCAL GIRLS HEAD TO GHANA

IN 2009 Portobello Old Parish Church raised funds for a kindergarten in Dwerebease, a village in Ghana. The church and Towerbank School have since established links with the village and some of the pupils have been exchanging letters.

Porty Youth Performers is a drama group for children aged 8 upwards who meet in the church halls, and its two youth leaders, Caitlin Campbell (19) and Kate Cooke (17), plan to go to Dwerebease this year as volunteers, to work with the children. The group want to raise enough money for Caitlin and Kate to be able also to buy books and equipment for the school and kindergarten. They held a Coffee Morning and a Family Fun Day in May, and plan a sponsored Fancy Dress walk and BBQ on 12th June, and a local young bands night and BBQ.

The final push is a performance of 'OZ!' on 19th and 20th June. Tickets are available from group members, on Sundays from 5.30-7.30pm, or on the door. For more information, email porty.youth@hotmail.co.uk.

FAIR TRADE AT TOWERBANK

ON 2nd March, Towerbank Primary School hosted a very successful fair trade showcase event and award ceremony, as part of Fair Trade Fortnight. Nursery, primary and secondary schools across Edinburgh showed their work helping fair trade, and local shops that sell these goods exhibited what they were doing to help. MSPs, councillors and parents attended the event, as well as local community and international links and two very special guests, the Lord and Lady Provost. After the presentations the Lord Provost made Best Fair Trade School awards to Towerbank and Stenhouse primary schools.

Bella Baillie
and Alix Burns, P7

YOUNG ENTERPRISE AWARDS

THE Young Enterprise company at Portobello High School won three prizes for their recipe book, *A Taste of Porty*, at the awards ceremony on 25th March. Roz Lancaster won best sales director, Sarah Dimelow won second prize for marketing director, and the group won third prize for best business idea and for best use of IT. The judges were very impressed that they had used *The Portobello Reporter* to advertise the book. The company has now been wound up, but some copies are available at £3 at Barnardo's charity shop and proceeds of these sales will go straight to the charity.

PUPILS SECURE GRANT FOR CHARITY

AN EAST LOTHIAN charity recently received £3000 from their champions, a team of Holyrood High School pupils, who secured the grant from The Wood Family Trust in a winning pitch to teachers, pupils and parents.

The fifth year pupils convinced the judging panel in a two-round competition held by the school's Youth and Philanthropy Initiative, that the work of their chosen charity, East Lothian Young Carers, most deserved the award. They provide support and opportunities for carers aged 5 to 24,

All the pupils in fifth year took part in the Initiative over eight weeks, dividing into small teams to analyse the social needs of local communities. They identified what they considered to be the most pressing issues before choosing a charity to represent, visiting its base and meeting those involved.

The course, led by the Religious and Moral Education department, aims to promote responsibility, respect and commitment to building compassionate communities, and provides pupils with practical experience of assisting a charity.

A member of the winning team said: "I was ecstatic at winning. It took a lot of hard work but it was worth it to be able to help people our own age who help other people all of the time."

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PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY CENTRE NEWS

THE Drama group, Porty Youth Theatre, will be taking part in this year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe, performing the musical *The Little Shop of Horrors* at Diverse Attractions Theatre in the Lawnmarket, at 1.30pm from 9th-14th August. They will also be performing at the Community Centre on 5th and 6th June.

Regular activities include:

A new **ART CLASS** on Friday mornings.

TAI CHI, Monday evenings and Wednesday/Thursday mornings.

COMPUTER classes, Wednesday/Thursday afternoons.

GENTLE EXERCISE classes, Monday/Thursday mornings.

For full details see www.portobellocc.btk.com.

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Until the holidays, **Junior Youth Club** meet on Tuesdays, 15-7.15pm, the **Seniors** on Thursdays, 6-8pm, and **Open All Hours** is on Friday nights at Portobello Swim Centre.

Free activities for young people aged 11+, including Sumo suits, beach golf, beach athletics, volleyball and athletics, start 5th July for six weeks, on Tuesdays 2pm-4pm and Thursdays 7pm-9pm, outside Portobello Swim Centre, and Fridays 7pm-9pm inside.

A **summer programme** for children aged 8-9 years will run on Mondays, 1pm-3pm, in the Community Centre

For more information contact Dawn Casey on 669 8275

EAST EDINBURGH

BOWLING COMPETITIONS

THIS year's East Edinburgh Bowling Association competitions, sponsored by McKenzie and Millar Funeral Directors, will be played on Tuesdays in August, starting on the 10th.

The senior final will be played at Brunstane Bowling Club on Tuesday 24th at 2pm, and club finals at Willowbrae BC on Fridays 20th and 27th August.

The East Edinburgh BA Pairs, sponsored by Belhaven Brewery, will be played on Sunday 8th August at Brunstane BC.

All competitions are open to full members, male and female, of clubs in the Association.

Congratulations to Willowbrae on their Centenary and Luton Place BC on their 150 years.

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WILLOWBRAE BOWLING CLUB CENTENARY



WILLOWBRAE Bowling Club, situated in Baronscourt Terrace, celebrates its Centenary this year with two weeks of special events in June.

Originally, a local builder laid out two bowling greens in 1907, as a recreation area, following the purchase of a feu from the Abercorn Estates. In 1910 a meeting was held in Restalrig United Free Church, at which the present club was established.

Original membership was limited to 65 and, in a ground-breaking move, this number included ladies. As reported in *The Dispatch*: "The Willowbrae Bowling Club is being run on rather new lines. Ladies will be seen bowling on the green and already there is a keen excitement among them as to who will turn out the champion lady bowler".

Photographic records include a 1914 tournament, with a background of nothing but fields where Willowbrae Road now stands, as can be seen in the picture above.

The club has gone from strength to strength over the years, with over 200 members now on the roll. It is fortunate to have two greens, excellent club facilities and, looking to the future, an active junior section.

New members are always welcome and coaching is available for beginners. Pop in or phone 661 3833 and ask to speak to a committee member.

Jim Denholm

JOPPA TENNIS

JOPPA Tennis is going from strength to strength, with approx. 70 family memberships and the courts busy most nights.

The courts were repainted last year at considerable cost, and now look great, and members are working tirelessly to keep the clubhouse and surrounding area looking up to scratch.

During the summer holidays there will be the usual Pay and Play, when youngsters can enjoy themselves, with adult supervision, from 11am till 6pm, and coaching will also be available. Coaching this Spring was totally booked out.

Memberships can be purchased from the treasurer Elsie Thom on 01875 811183 at a cost of £60 for a Family Membership and £35 for a single.

The Open Day is on Saturday 5th June when, again, free coaching is on offer, for youngsters from 2-4pm and adults 4-5pm.

Look out your racquet and get along to Joppa Grove.

Marjorie Thomas

WHAT'S ON in Portobello

ANNUAL GARDEN FETE:

St Christopher's Parish Church Craightinny, Saturday 5th June, 1pm-3pm. Lots of stalls, craft activities for children, dancers from 'Just Dance', jazz band. Parade leaves from Craightinny Primary School at 12.45pm.

BEACH VOLLEYBALL:

At foot of Bellfield St: Sat. 5th June, East Coast Junior Festival.

Sat/Sun, 12/13 June, Scottish Tour event (seniors).

MALECON MATINEE:

Sun 13th June, 11th July; 15th Aug; 2-5pm, Beach Lane Social Club, Portobello, £5/£9 Combo. Scotland's only Buena Vista Social Club. Cuban class 1pm. Details on www.salsaceilidh.com

PORTOBELLO AMENITY SOCIETY AGM:

Wed. 16th June, 7.30pm, St Mark's Church. Mike Brown and Archie Foley from Portobello Heritage Trust will give an illustrated talk on *The Buchan Heritage*. Refreshments provided. All welcome to this open meeting.

COFFEE MORNING:

Sat. 19th June, 10am-12.30pm, St James Church hall, with bric-a-brac, plants, clothes, books.

A fund-raising event for Portobello Open Door (POD). If anybody has any quality goods they want to donate, please email info@the-pod.org or contact Joe on 0759 3699682.

N.B. POD are also planning another Village Show on Sun. 26th Sept. (see www.the-pod.org)

TEA DANCES:

Weds. 1.30-4pm, Town Hall; Fridays 1.30-4pm, St James Church Hall, Rosefield Ave, to the sound of Duncan McBain. Tickets £2.50 incl. refreshments.

FREE OPEN DAY at Portobello

Indoor Bowls Centre, Sat. 13th June, 10am-2pm. Indoor bowls, boules on the beach, hula hoops, soft play. Café. For more information call 669 0878.

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