

THE Portobello REPORTER

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The independent voice of Portobello

Your Community Newspaper
produced by local people since 1980.

NEW SCHOOL GETS GO-AHEAD

PLANS for a new Portobello High School to be built on Portobello Park were approved on 23rd February by the Council's Development Management Sub-committee.

Work on the site, at the corner of Milton Road and Park Avenue, is expected to start towards the end of this year, and the Council funded £41.5 million project should be completed by January 2014. The development will include the latest teaching facilities, a 25-metre swimming pool, two all-weather sports pitches which will be accessible to the community, and car parking.

Peigi Macarthur, Head Teacher at the school, said: "Staff, pupils and local people have enjoyed close involvement in the development of designs and have been supported by a terrific team of people from within the Council and beyond. The school and our community can benefit hugely from this development. These are exciting times and I'm thrilled for the whole school community that this decision has been taken."

Parsons Green parent, Ruth Pearson said: "This is wonderful news for the children of Portobello. The new school will provide a fantastic environment in which to learn".

The Portobello Park Action Group remain opposed to the development of common good land and the loss of green space. Chair of the Group, Roz Sutherland said: "Our legal advice is that we have grounds to force the Council to seek permission of the court to develop on this site and we are now considering how to take this forward".

Since the Council first announced its proposals for the new school in 2006, the choice of site has been, and remains, a divisive issue for the community.

THE PORTY LOONY DOOK



Some of the brave folk who took the plunge on January 1st in the second aptly-named Loony Dook, which may possibly become a regular event.

HOVERCRAFT ON HOLD

THE proposed Cross Forth Passenger Vehicle Service has been put on hold. A recent marketing exercise carried out by the Council indicated that any potential operator of the service, whether hovercraft or ferry, would be likely to require public sector funding for a port infrastructure and some form of operational subsidy. In the current economic climate, the Council

has decided it is unable to meet these requirements.

More than 32,000 passengers were reported to have used the 20 minute Forthfast hovercraft crossing between Kirkcaldy and Portobello during a two-week trial in July 2007, and it had been hoped that a regular service would boost tourism and businesses on both sides of the Forth.

STORM DAMAGE REPAIRS BEGIN



THIS picture was taken during reconstruction of the section of wall at Joppa Salt Pans which collapsed during the storms in March 2010. As this is a historic site, archaeological monitoring was carried out, uncovering brick flues and tunnels which can be dated back to the 19th century.

The bricks on the seaward side had been burnt red in places by the hot air being

pumped through the furnaces to boil off the seawater deposited by the tide in metal tanks, leaving salt behind.

An operation to return sand levels on Portobello Beach to something approaching 1988 levels is due to begin soon. Sand will be moved from the middle and west of the beach along to the east end which was severely depleted by the storms.

GOLF COURSE SEEMS SECURE

A SPOKESMAN for Edinburgh Leisure, who run Portobello Golf Course, has assured *The Portobello Reporter* that, despite recent rumours, they currently have "no plans to close or significantly alter the course".

"We would like to encourage the people of Portobello to come and enjoy the course, which is a great place to spend the day with family or get in a quick nine holes after work with a friend", he told us.

"We have made some improvements to the course, with modifications to existing bunkers and the addition of some new ones. We have also added a family-friendly short course, which provides an option for junior golfers aged approximately 6-11 years, or beginners, to play alongside adults or more experienced golfers. The course now has holes measuring from 80-180 yards, marked by blue tees set to the side of the fairway, usually providing as direct a route to the green as possible. We want juniors and beginners to feel the thrill of reaching a green in one shot, making pars and having fun. The short course is also intended to reduce playing time for families, allowing them to complete the course in a similar time to more experienced players."

NEW PORTOBELLO MAP IN PLACE

A NEW map of Portobello has been mounted in the information boards outside the Bank of Scotland in Portobello High Street, near Joppa Pumping Station, and on the Prom at the mouth of the Figgate Burn.

This large-scale well-illustrated map includes places of interest, such as Sir Harry Lauder's birthplace, the Coade stone pillars in the Community

Garden, the pottery kilns and Portobello Tower. The sites of eight local information boards and 11 historic building plaques are also shown, plus the Library, recreational facilities and lots more.

The map was designed by local resident Nick Stroud and produced by Portobello Community Council.

CHRONICLE TO LOSE FUNDING



CRAIGMILLAR'S community newspaper *The Chronicle* faces closure in March after its funding was withdrawn in February. The cuts were agreed at the council's budget-setting meeting last month, and unless alternative financing can be found, two permanent and two part-time jobs will go, as well as the paper's successful journalism training programme.

Editor Sally Fraser says: "We were surprised and disappointed by the decision to cut funding. Over the last few years we have worked hard to develop the work experience and training opportunities we offer to young people, volunteers and long-term unemployed people from the local area and across the city. We will continue to investigate any sources of alternate funding which may be available."

For the past two years, the paper has been funded as an employability project by the Portobello/Craigmillar Neighbourhood Partnership Fairer Scotland Fund. *Chronicle* reporter and Edinburgh Napier University journalism student, Lauren Witherspoon, says: "I originally came to work at *The Chronicle* as a volunteer. I am now employed at the paper part-time and it inspired me to go back to university and study for a journalism degree. I am now in the third year of my course and it's been really helpful to have the practical experience of working at *The Chronicle* while I've been studying."

The Chronicle was established in the 1960s as *The Craigmillar Festival News*, and is read by an estimated 23,000 people. It is one of four community papers facing closure across the city. The others are *The North Edinburgh News*, *The Speaker* in Restlarig and Craigentinny and *The Link*, serving Liberton and Gilmerton.

Karen Combe

PORTY PROFILE No. 42

MEL YOUNG

WHERE would most Hibs fans like to work? In an office overlooking the pitch at Easter Road perhaps (even if the blinds have to be drawn on match days)? Social entrepreneur Mel Young does exactly that, making the short commute from his Willowbrae home to the nerve centre of the Homeless World Cup, which he co-founded in 2001.

At the heart of the enterprise is the idea that football as an international language can offer opportunities for homeless people. Mel says: "We have amazing success stories. Some of them are professional football players and others have gone on to do other amazing things."

Mel has worked with homeless people since 1993 when he co-founded *The Big Issue* in Scotland. "I've always been entrepreneurial, but I've not cared about making millions, I'm passion about the wider community," he says.

Born in Edinburgh, his early life was nomadic, but he returned to study economics at Heriot-Watt University after leaving school. It was experiences around his studies - editing the university paper *Omega* and his student activism - that set him on his path as a journalist and social innovator.

"After university I started up the magazine *City Lynx*. It was like a rock band. There were all these strong personalities. It was the late 70s, at the time of a lot of punk stuff, so there was a lot of energy and creativity around in Edinburgh."

He went onto edit *The Wester Hailes Sentinel* in his twenties and developed the business and publishing skills that he says helped him in subsequent projects. "I learned a tremendous amount and hopefully I put in a lot, because we helped develop the paper which acted as a kind of binding, giving the area an identity."

A few years later, he and former Wester Hailes colleague Tricia Hughes established *The Big Issue* in Scotland and helped form the International Network of Street Papers whose connections underpin the Homeless World Cup. His book, *Goal*, documents the story of the organisation and nowadays his work takes him around the world.

He has no plans, however, to move their offices to sunnier climes as, he says, "Scotland compared with other countries is way ahead, possibly the best in the world for homeless legislation." Besides, his wife Rona is a social worker here and his two sons are also around, with his youngest working in his office, while his daughter is training to be a nurse at Edinburgh Napier University. "Where else in the world can you find somewhere like Arthur's Seat?" he asks.

For more information on the 2011 Homeless World Cup in Paris see www.homelessworldcup.org

Karen Combe



Photo courtesy of The Big Issue

ON THE BEAT

SINCE Safer Neighbourhood Teams came into existence last year, neighbourhood concerns have been identified with residents on a quarterly basis, and agreed priorities targeted. This method of addressing community issues has been extremely effective, with a continuing reduction in recorded crime and anti-social behaviour.

Recent priorities in our area have included anti-social behaviour in Magdalene, Whitehall and Portobello High Street, and improving road safety around local schools, which has been compromised by inconsiderate and dangerous parking. Graffiti and vandalism in and around Meadowbank Sports Stadium have also been targeted.

Priority issues are tackled by increased patrols, both high visibility and plain-clothes, by identifying and reporting offenders where appropriate, and by educating people about the purpose of these. All are dealt with in conjunction with our partners, such as the Community Safety Wardens and the Council. It should also be remembered that without the help of the public, and the information passed to the Police on their concerns and issues in the areas they live in, priorities would not be identified.

The Safer Neighbourhood Team at Portobello are organising a 'Have Your Say' week from Saturday 19th to Friday 25th March inclusive, to enable future policing priorities to be identified. Further information about how you can influence policing in your area will be publicised nearer the date.

PC Sarah Potter



2011 CENSUS DUE

SCOTLAND'S biggest population count, the 2011 Census, is under way. Your questionnaire will be delivered by Sunday 27th March. You can fill it in as soon as it arrives, provided your answers cover the people living or staying with you on that date.

It is important to include everyone in your household, because the census results are used to help to target and deliver billions of pounds worth of services such as edu-

cation and transport, and business investment. So painting a picture of Scotland helps to shape our future.

For the first time there is the option to complete online in English and Gaelic. Census questions can also be supplied in Braille and large print, and in translation in a number of languages. Help is available on 0300 123 1702 or online at www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk

Personal information is kept confidential for 100 years.

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The Portobello Reporter

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NEWS IN BRIEF

LOOKING FOR WORK? The Edinburgh Cyrenians project for Craigmillar and Portobello aims to help unemployed people in the area into work, training or education, by means of a range of services from confidence-building to updating CVs and interview preparation. Specialist short vocational training courses will also be provided over the next few months.

The service is free and available to any unemployed person in the EH15 and EH16 4 postal code areas. There is also a drop-in service on Wednesday afternoons in Portobello Library.

For more information call 657 5099 or see www.cyrenians.org.uk

LITTER SPOILING YOUR AREA? Why not take part in National Spring Clean 2011 and organise a clean-up: just visit www.keepsotlandtidy.org/springclean and register. A free clean-up kit, with everything you need to support your event, will then be sent to you. The campaign period has been extended to the last two weeks of March and the first two of May, and nearly 2,000 volunteers have already signed up to spring clean in Edinburgh.

RECYCLING EXTENDED: Plastic bottles can now be put out for collection in the red boxes and batteries, in sealed bags, in the blue boxes.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETINGS: Portobello Community Council meets on the last Monday of each month (except July and December) at 7.30pm in the Baptist Church Hall in Portobello High Street, opposite Boots. Notice of meetings, with agenda, appear on the plasma screens in the Library a week in advance. A list of members and latest minutes are also available in the Library.

THE PORTY SHOPPER: These popular shopping bags are still available, price £2, from Woodwares, Banana Republic, Portobello Stationers and Williamson's fishmongers.

PLEASE HELP! Volunteers are urgently needed to help entertain the elderly people who so much enjoy their get-togethers at Portobello Older Peoples Project in the Baptist Church Hall, Portobello High Street. If you can spare a few hours on Tuesdays or Wednesdays, please contact the organiser, Rita Aitken, on 657 4264, between 10am-2pm either day.



Sheila Gilmore MP

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THE Portobello Library Parent Information Point was launched in February. This should be the first point of call if you are looking for support and information on issues of importance to parents and families. Project Co-ordinator Steff Kaye will be available in the library to answer questions on Wednesday mornings and Friday afternoons.

WE are looking for any old photos of Portobello High Street to help us 'Turn Back Time' by showing the way the High Street has changed over the years. If you have any photos or other items of interest, we would be delighted to use them. If you have anything you would like to loan us, please get in touch with the library and ask for George or Paul.

THE Easter school holidays start on Friday 8th April. The library will be running activities for children throughout the break in addition to our regular Wednesday morning rhymetimes. We will also be running extra weekend rhymetimes on Sunday 20th March and Saturday 16th April, at 3.30pm.

OUR teenage book group recently had the opportunity to vote for their favourite titles in the Royal Mail Awards for Scottish children's books. They are also looking forward to chatting with author Sam Young, who is visiting the next meeting on March 24th from 4 pm, about her book *Lunamorte*. Pop into the library and pick up a copy, or ask library staff if you'd like more information about joining the group, which welcomes all S1-S6s.

IF you are an artist looking to showcase your work, or a local community group looking for a platform, our gallery is available for displays; contact us for a booking. Leith Art Club will display their work from 4th April, followed by a display by Susina Design on 18th April.

POET in Residence, Ryan Van Winkle, will visit our Chatterbooks group on Saturday 2nd April to talk about poems and rhymes. Chatterbooks is a fun way for 8-12 year olds to share their thoughts on books they have read; they meet one Saturday a month. For more information, please ask staff for details.

OUR adults' book group meet on the first Tuesday of every month at 6.30pm. The next three books for discussion, and available from the library, are:

- 5th April: *The Slap* by Christos Tsiolkas.
- 3rd May: *The Junior Officers Reading Club* by Patrick Hennessy.
- 7th June: *Right To Die* by Hazel McHaffie

Paul Hudson



Photo by Margaret Munro

After the Loony Dook?

PORTOBELLO - PLOT TO PLATE

PEDAL (Portobello Transition Town) and Portobello Heritage Trust are together planning a project on food heritage, Portobello - Plot to Plate. The aim is to provide a history of growing, processing, shopping, cooking and eating food in Portobello over the past 100 years. The project will collect reminiscences and artefacts, and research archives, to explore the story and cultural traditions of local food, from farms and mills to the High Street shops and homes of Portobello. The past 100 years have been a time of great change in food culture and we hope to capture recent changes, ranging from wartime rationing and traditional dairies to fast food and supermarkets. We can learn from our past and use previous traditions and practices to guide and influence the way we produce food locally in the future.

We are preparing a submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a Your Heritage grant,

after an encouraging response to our initial enquiry, and have already found partnership funding. We will also be working in partnership with Portobello Library and their High Street 'Turn Back Time' project, and Jewel & Esk College who will be making a short documentary film of the project.

A successful grant application will allow us to pay for approved training for volunteers. We hope local people of all ages, who are interested in adding to their skills with training in recording and conserving oral histories, will contact us.

We are also inviting local people to participate by sharing their memories, photos or documents on any aspect of food and food production. Please contact Margaret Munro on 657 2866, email: munroporto@hotmail.com if you are interested in participating in our project in any way.

Margaret Munro (PHT)
Tom Black (PEDAL)

I NAME THIS BOAT....

OVER 30 people, young and old, have been busy building a second rowing boat to join *Ice Breaker* on the water and we hope to unveil this beautiful vessel in April. We need your help, however, to give it a name.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, we have been able to retrace Portobello's rich rowing history and unearth old photographs and memorabilia, going back to 1885. We have also been able to contact older members in the community who rowed in the past. So, we would like the name for the boat to be in keeping with the heritage/history theme. Maybe you have a strong memory of Portobello which could be reflected in a name? Perhaps you could delve into the story of the vessels that sailed to Puerto Bello in times gone by?

Please send your suggestions for a name, along with your reasons for choosing it, to agrant@sailporty.org.uk or hand them, in a sealed envelope marked 'Row Porty', to the Beach House Café at the foot of Bath Street before 31st March.

Following last year's success, Porty will welcome rowing boats from all over Scotland at its second regatta on 30th and 31st July; put this in your diary now.

Ali Grant

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3



OOPS! I DID IT AGAIN!

APPARENTLY, accidents tend to happen in the home more than anywhere else and in our house they seem to come in threes. Lately, I've been the one blinking back the tears and trying not to swear, a tall order indeed when you have just cut off a chunk of thumb cutting up a carrot. This mishap earned me the title of Dumb Mum Square Thumb, from my three Sponge Bob Square Pants fans. Whatever will they think of next?

As it happens, it wasn't long before they were calling me Captain Jack, after a morning of bed-making turned into a nightmare when the elastic designed to hold a sheet in place got caught and snapped back straight into my eye, Velcro side up. With sympathy in short supply, and with my eye watering behind a makeshift patch, I Googled eye/bed-linen /injury. The advice I found recommending urgent medical attention was spot-on, as it turned out I had two corneal abrasions requiring antibiotics and eye drops. Ouch!

To end the run of bad luck, it wasn't me but my poor daughter who cut both her thumbs with a lethal gadget designed to slice an apple into eight pieces. Naturally, I was sympathetic and after swathing her fingers in plasters, I ordered an XL first-aid kit, with double band-aids. Statistically we should be accident free for some time to come, but I'm not taking any chances. From now on I'll be doing a risk assessment and wearing goggles and gloves before starting the housework!

GROWING ORGANIC



with Susan Burns



I CARRY a basket into the garden that contains 'stuff' that I may need; this saves time and energy by reducing visits back to my shed for things. In it I have: secateurs and sheep shears for pruning and trimming, and a lighter (matches blow out in the wind) to run a flame along the blade of secateurs to sterilize them; string, old tights, elastic bands, small pieces of wire and pegs for tying things in; pen and pencil to make notes of things to move, etc; a plastic bag for rubbish - it's amazing how old crisp packets can appear in the garden (I blame the foxes); a few small pots filled with compost, so that I can plant up any little seedlings I wish to keep.

I use the 'step on and squash to the side' technique when clearing borders of last year's old stems, especially after a hard winter when they are very brittle. It's really satisfying hearing the snap of old stems; then it's a simple matter of gathering an armful and putting them onto the compost heap.

After another hard winter there will be casualties in the garden. Some plants may succumb, having just managed to recover from last year's winter, but leave them until summer to see if they put on new growth. For you lucky people with sandy soil this will not have been such a problem, but wet cold clay can just drown plants. The secret in both cases is to improve the soil with compost, with the addition of grit to clay; an extra few handfuls when planting anything also helps to maintain good drainage.

Snowdrops may still have green leaves showing and it's not too late to dig up some clumps, divide into clumps of two or three and replant. When spring-flowering shrubs have finished flowering prune them back, taking out some of the old wood right down to the ground.

Get set up for sowing, using best quality seed compost (certified organic of course). I file my seeds in date order, then whether they need to be sown inside or outside, then whether they need bottom heat or not. If sowing a lot of seeds, somewhere to harden them off is a must, as it takes a few weeks to get young plants used to outside conditions. Keep fleece or net curtains to throw over plants with dubious hardiness if frost is forecast, which could happen even in late May.

Show kids how to plant a few peas in a small pot of compost, remind them to water it, and they can pick the tops for a sandwich once they're about 10cm high.

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AS OUR current funding nears an end, PEDAL have been looking back at the huge range of activities we have run over the past year, and thought this would be a good time to give a summary.

Working with Energy Saving Scotland, we have enabled 260 householders to examine their home energy use and 30 to get their lofts and/or cavity walls insulated. Seventy-four people attended one of our nine courses on growing or preserving food or reducing food waste. Energy saving advice was given on 36 tenement flats, while 19 households are considering installing solar hot water systems. We have helped five people share their gardens with seven others who wanted somewhere to grow fruit and veg.

Volunteers and school children planted 90 trees at the community orchard, where three busy celebrations were also held, and 83 children learnt about fruit growing and apple pressing. A total of 291 fruit trees were bought by 81 local people, through our Fruitful Porty scheme. We have run six organic markets supporting 16 new or recently-started traders, plus a Gardening and Growing Fair and an Energy Fair, both attended by over 100 people. We have also explored the feasibility of a community farm, for which land investigations are ongoing.

Since April 2010, PEDAL has helped Portobello reduce its CO2 emissions by an estimated 193 tonnes, and 836 people have contacted us or been involved in the projects in some way. Thank you all.

We are now fundraising for new projects. This year we aim to work with local schools on saving energy and reducing waste, support folk who are ready to take action on climate change but are not sure where to start, and run a cycle-to-work scheme. We also want to promote locally-produced food, create new community growing spaces, and explore whether a community bakery and a large-scale composting site might work in Portobello.

For more information visit www.pedal-porty.org.uk or call us on 0131 258 4483.

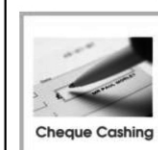
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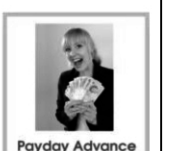
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FROM THE ARCHIVE: TOWERBANK SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPH 1939



Photo courtesy of Jim Smart

JIM SMART has sent us his class photograph taken at Towerbank School in 1939. He would love to know if any of the children in the photo still live in Portobello. Jim has given us the names he remembers as follows (all rows left to right):
Back row: 2nd: ? Jeffries; Billy Webber (Bath Street); 7th Willie/Billy Lauder (Tower Street); 9th ? Lawrence (King's Road); Bobby Dalrymple.
3rd Row: 2nd Ian Wood (Bath Street); 4th Isabel Lambert?; Margaret Armstrong (Bath Street); Ray(?) Bell (Mount Lodge); ? Coltart; Alice Brown; 10th ? Hughes.
2nd row: ? Fyffe/Fife; 4th Sheila Paton; Dorothy Lawrence; Isabella (Isa) Young; Helen Hood (Mount Lodge); 11th Irene? Lennox.
Front row: 3rd Alex Gilchrist; 5th Willie Armstrong (no relation to Margaret Armstrong above); Jackie Innes (Bath Street); Jim Smart (Bath Street).

If you can provide further names or information, please contact Margaret Munro: tel. 657 2866 or email: munroporto@hotmail.com

FANCY DRESS 1948-1950



Photo courtesy of Arnot McDonald

Arnot McDonald thinks her Auntie Dorothy may be in this photograph taken around 1948-50. Do you recognise anyone here? If so, please contact Margaret Munro, as in above article.

James Scott
—(PORTOBELLO)—
Funeral Director

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READERS RESPOND

MANY thanks to all who responded to the queries in our Winter Issue.

We received a lot of information about the photograph taken at Duddingston Station:-

The train standing in the station was a 'special' or excursion train, probably for railway enthusiasts. The board on the engine has a number on it, which is a reporting number, and these were only displayed on 'specials'. One reader's research indicates that the Stephenson Locomotive Society Lothian Lines Tour was visiting locations in and around Edinburgh on 6th September 1958.

The number of lamps on the brackets, just below the chimney, indicates the type of train: in this instance a class B (stopping, passenger) train.

The engine is an LNER C16 No. 67492 and appears in a photograph from 1958, polished and ready for an excursion, in a book about the North Berwick and Gullane line.

Railway enthusiasts in the 1950s apparently wore the style of jackets shown in the photo. The men would be walking away from the front of the train, i.e. towards the camera, to take photographs of the engine or to visit the signal box, which was in that direction. They were not leaving the station, as there was no exit in that direction.

We also learned that train was the established means of transport for the nearby golf course. There was an unspoken agreement that no running was allowed after disembarking the train, so that the young men would not arrive at the golf course before the older men. Tee-off times could not be booked, so were on a 'first come, first served' basis. How gentlemanly!

We were also told that Bonella Marr, about whom we were seeking information, had no children, so there is no family for us to contact.

Margaret Munro

THE "SQUEAK"?

READER Jim Smart tells us that he remembers *The Portobello Advertiser*, which is no longer published, being called the "Squeak", but is unsure why. Does anyone remember this

and the reason for it? He also says that the office was opposite the Masonic hall in Tower Street, now Figgate Street. (Contact details as elsewhere on this page).

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PORTOBELLO HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

AT OUR first meeting of 2011, Neil Fraser showed a selection of the electronic images held by SCRAN. The wide selection of art, buildings and photographs included images of Portobello. It was a very interactive evening, with members making comments and contributing their own knowledge to SCRAN's archive.

Kate Love, our March speaker, was unwell and unable to visit us. We wish Kate well. Fortunately, Laura Brovard, from Lothian Health Services Archive, stepped in and brought along a selection from the archive's holdings. It is amazing how much all aspects of our health services have changed over the years. We greatly appreciated Laura's visit.

Peter Stubbs makes a welcome return on Wednesday 6th April, with a *History of photography in Edinburgh*. Peter's highly regarded website www.edinphoto.org.uk has a wonderful selection of information from participants around the world and is well worth a visit. We look forward to hearing of the part Edinburgh played in the development of photography.

On Wednesday 4th May, Dorothy Kelly returns to give a talk on *Portobello's Parks*. Dorothy has a wealth of information on Portobello and shares memories from her childhood, triggering memories of our own to add to the pleasure of the evening.

Our AGM will be held on Wednesday 1st June, and will be followed by a presentation by Margaret Munro on *Portobello Gala Days*, using photographs from the society's archive.

All are welcome to our meetings, with non-members asked for a donation. Meetings are held in St. John's Church Hall in Brighton Place and begin at 7pm sharp. Latecomers will not be admitted.

Margaret Munro
Secretary

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LOCAL CHURCHES

THE Portobello Council of Churches Peace and Justice Group are setting up Carbon Rationing Action Groups, which will enable individuals to work as a team to tackle carbon reduction, and a Carbon Fast for Lent - Don't give up chocolate, give up carbon!

A series of workshops, Just Church, on justice, poverty and deprivation and what can be done about them, will be held on the Sundays in Lent in St John's church hall, Brighton Place, starting on 13th March at 7pm.

ST PHILIP'S Church, Joppa, will host a series of Lent Lectures on the theme of Faith and Violence by authors, academics, activists and practitioners with a wealth of knowledge of these subjects:

- 13th March: Paul Chapman of the Poverty Truth Commission: Faith and the Violence of Poverty.
- 20th March: Retired Sheriff, Andrew Bell: Faith and Crime.
- 27th March: Rev Dr Robin Hill, Minister of Gladsmuir and Longniddry: Faith and Terrorism.
- 3rd April: Adrian Shaw, Climate Change Officer with the Church of Scotland: Faith and Violence against Creation.
- 10th April: Dr Cecelia Clegg, Senior Lecturer in Practical Theology at Edinburgh University: Faith, Violence and Reconciliation.

The lectures begin at 7.30pm and are open to all; there will be opportunities for questions at the end. For more information go to www.stphilips.co.uk or www.stewartweaver.org

ST JAMES' Church in Rosefield Place will be open all day on Good Friday, 22nd April, for prayer and reflection. If you have never visited this beautiful sanctuary, this is the ideal opportunity. There will be short informal worship each hour on the hour, with the main services at 11am and 7pm.

On Easter Day, 24th April, at 9.30am all are welcome to 'Easter in the Garden' a short outdoor service, followed by breakfast in the halls. At 11am, an Easter Day Family Service will take place, with input from the Junior Church. All are welcome to St James' over Easter.

Full details at www.stjamesparishchurch.org.uk

PORTOBELLO TO GHANA AND BACK



AT THE end of last year, Caitlin Campbell and I, both Youth Leaders at Portobello Old Parish Church, were given the opportunity to volunteer in Ghana. We spent several months helping in the kindergarten in the village of Dwerebease, which was built with money raised in our church's bicentenary appeal. We also raised our own funds, to buy things out there to assist the teaching and day-to-day running of the classes.

The village has no electricity, and water comes from local boreholes and the river, but education is seen as important, and there is a kindergarten, primary school and high school. We were made very welcome and came home with unbelievable memories and long-lasting friendships, and we are very proud of the bond we helped to strengthen between the people of Portobello and Dwerebease.

We would like to thank all the people who made our trip possible by organising and funding the project, including the Church of Scotland World Mission, the congregation of the Old Parish, the Porty Youth Performers and all our friends and families.

It was an incredible, eye-opening experience that neither of us will forget and which we hope will give us a strong connection with Ghana.

Kate Cooke

AMNESTY LOCAL NEWS

OUR annual Greetings Card Campaign in December had an excellent outcome despite the weather. Over 150 messages of comfort and cheer were sent to prisoners of conscience, others facing persecution including death threats, and their families, in seven countries. Towerbank and Portobello High schools took part, and the public responded enthusiastically at the Human Rights Day stall on the High street.

'Amnesty at 50' will celebrate half a century of human rights promotion, initiated by Peter Benenson in 1961. From the 1000 people who responded to his article in a national newspaper and set up a national, then international movement for human rights, has grown the Amnesty International of today, over two million strong. A programme to mark the anniversary is planned for Portobello in June, including displays in the Library, a film evening, tree planting in the Community Orchard, and stalls at local events.

The Group continues its political lobbying, taking up the case of the one British resident still in Guantanamo Bay, women trapped in violent situations and destitute asylum seekers.

In this election year in Scotland, we are playing our part in placing "Scotland Stands for Human Rights" at the core of campaigning, raising key issues with candidates.

The Group meets on the third Monday of each month in Portobello Old Parish Hall at 7.30pm, when anyone may visit and find out more of what we do.

For more information call 669 1308.

David Turner

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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Tel. 348 5012 (Parliament).
Or email: kenny.macaskill.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

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HOLY ROOD PUPILS HEAD TO TANZANIA



A GROUP of 12 senior pupils from Holy Rood High School will set off to Tanzania on 6th July. While there, they will help in schools, live with local people and take the opportunity to embrace Tanzanian culture.

The relationship between Scotland and Tanzania began in the 1980s when St. John's, Portobello connected with Legho village. Since then, the bond between the two has grown stronger, and all of Holy Rood's cluster schools are now twinned with a school in Tanzania. The Holy Rood pupils will spend two weeks at their partner school, Lombeta Secondary, then go on to a school in Legho for another week.

The skills that the group hope to acquire in Tanzania will be invaluable to themselves and to the wider community. One pupil commented: "I will become more confident dealing with new people and new experiences... Hopefully my increasing confidence will translate into my being more active in the community." Another said she believed that by going on the trip, a positive image would be created, both of young people and of the community.

As part of their fundraising for the trip, the group have organised a "fun relay" from Holy Rood to North Berwick on Sunday 13th March, in which they will be in fancy dress and carrying collecting buckets. It should pass through Portobello around 11.30am, and the group would appreciate it if as many people as possible would come out and show support for them and the work they will do in Tanzania.

Lewis Dick

AN INVITATION FROM ST JOHN'S

ST JOHN'S Primary School won first prize of £500 in the East Neighbourhood section of the BiodiverCity 2010 competition, organised by the Council's Eco-Schools programme. Schools were asked to investigate their local area and suggest ideas to improve it, and St John's entry 'The Invitation' showed, in a wonderful and inspiring slide-show, how wildlife and insects could be invited to visit their school and enjoy its garden.

"We were thrilled to win this prize," said Depute Head Linda McGee and Nursery Nurse Jane Donaldson. "We will use it to build a small pond in the school grounds and pay for nectar-rich shrubs and wild flowers that will attract insects".

Finlay Tait (P6), Britney Anderson (P7) and Lucy McManus (P5) are pictured receiving a cheque and winners' scroll from Councillor Marilyn McLaren.



RAILWAY WEB SITES

IN OUR winter issue, we published a picture of a steam locomotive and received lots of feedback. Here are five websites that might appeal to our many railway enthusiast readers.

www.douglas-self.com/MUSEUM/LOCOLOCO/loco loco.htm This site features unusual railway locomotives you might not know existed. For example, Stalin's engine, the AA20-01 4-14-4 built in Russia, became famous as the largest non-articulated locomotive in Europe. It never entered service, as it was so large and powerful it ruined the track and wrecked every set of points it passed over!

www.lner.info This encyclopaedic site has masses of information about locomotives that served with the London and North Eastern Railway, from its glamorous

high-speed engines, to its work-horses that served the coalfields of North East England.

www.locomotivesinternational.co.uk Locomotives International are publishers and retailers of railway magazines and books and provide a great wander through a shed-load of reading material.

www.pleg.org.uk This site is dedicated to The Preserved Locomotive Enthusiasts Group who are interested in purely mechanical locomotives diesel and hydraulic for example, rather than steam. Good stuff.

www.elmrc.org.uk This site is a mine of information. It not only tells you about the Edinburgh and Lothians Miniature Railway Club at Piershill, it also has plenty of ideas for model railway layouts and a diary of forthcoming exhibitions.

PARSONS GREEN 50TH

PARSONS GREEN Primary School is celebrating its 50th year since a fire destroyed the old building at Lilyhill Terrace in 1958.

Are you an 'Old Parsonian'? Would you like to join our celebrations?

Thursday 24th March, 1.30pm – Pupil concert, tickets free from school.

Friday 25th March – Bake and decorate a cake in honour of the school's 50th. Win 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Highly Commended awards.

Saturday 26th March, 10am-12 noon – Exhibition of school memorabilia, and tea room service 1960s style.

Monday 28th March, 1.30pm – Assembly to commemorate the opening ceremony on 28/03/61 – All ex-Parsons Green pupils, parents and staff are welcome.

Did you, or someone you know, go to Parsons Green? Do you remember the fire? Can you remember the names of your teachers or classmates? Are you still in touch with them? We need your stories, memorabilia, school photos, uniform from the 1960s, jotters, artwork, etc.

To enter the cake competition, share your stories or memorabilia, or book a place at the assembly or concert, please contact the school on 0131 661 4459, or Ruth Currie on 07900 685813 or wordforward@blueyonder.co.uk.

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The Portobello Reporter is produced by volunteers, with contributions in this issue from 38 local people. If you have something to publicise or would like to advertise call 669 3466 or email us at portyreporter@btinternet.com

June deadline 7th May 2011.

YEAR ROUND SEA SWIMMING IS GOOD FOR YOU



Photo by Peter Ross

Sea swimmers celebrated Christmas, reviving a tradition of year-round swimming in Portobello. Following local stars like Ned Barnie, cold water swimmers claim better health and improved immune function from their regular dips in temperatures as low as 6°C.

PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY CENTRE NEWS

LIKE many other centres, our programme was disrupted before Christmas by the snow, but most of our groups are running again and a few new ones are now using our centre.

Tai Chi continues to be a popular form of exercise: the Taoist Tai Chi groups meet on Mondays, and Derek Smith’s Tai Chi Chuan groups meet on Wednesday and Thursday mornings.

Our gentle exercise classes on Monday and Thursday mornings are still open to new members, all welcome.

We have spaces available for our computer classes on Wednesdays from 1-3pm and Thursdays from 2-4pm. These are particularly suited to people with little or no knowledge of computers.

The stage renovation work will soon be under way, and if there are any tradesmen out there who are willing to help us renovate the men’s loos, we would love to hear from you.

The Youth Club continues to go from strength to strength, with the juniors meeting on Tuesdays from 5.15-7.15pm and the seniors on Thursdays from 6-8pm.

Porty Youth Theatre: After their very successful Christmas Cabaret, the group started again at the beginning of March, following the birth of drama tutor Larah’s first baby. They will be working on ‘Charlie and the Chocolate Factory’, which they hope to perform at this year’s Edinburgh Festival.

For more information: telephone 669 8275, e-mail admin@portobellocc.org.uk or visit our website www.portobellocc.org.uk
Gillian Dunn, Manager

PASSIONATE PROSE

MARK FLEMING, who describes himself as a “citizen of Portobello”, is a passionate, honest and very hard-hitting author who brings his counter-cultural and marginalised characters to life in a dynamic and fast-paced style.

His debut novel *Brainbomb* (Chimpunka 2009) follows the life of Neil Armstrong as he struggles with his mental health, drink and drugs. Mark’s writing is full of the pop cultural references that have been such an influence on him, and fans of Edinburgh’s 80s and 90s counterculture movement that came out of *Rebel Inc* magazine will love his work.

Mark’s second book *Bedlam* (Chimpunka 2010) is a collection of short stories featuring characters including: “a Joppa astronomer facing a life or death dilemma”. His writing boldly faces life’s challenges head-on, as Mark explains: “*BrainBomb* and *Bedlam* were inspired by my own mental health experiences. I was driven to explore how ordinary people confront extraordinary situations”.

To get a taste of his passion and dedication to creative writing, go to his website and blog at www.mark-fleming.net. There he writes about his views on subjects as diverse as films, TV and football, satirises business, politics and economics, and publishes the work of other creative writers.

Peter Ross



Photo by Karen Fleming

PORTY RUGBY

PORTOBELLO FP 1st XV are currently lying in second place in East Division 1. They are also still in the Scottish Bowl competition, and seeking a return to Murrayfield after their amazing cup run of three seasons ago. There are a few decent teams to beat to get there though! The cup is something that all the players are desperate to do well in. Three years ago it really brought the community together when a crowd of over 1000 supporters came along.

This season the team is captained by Craig Little, with Chris Sinclair as Vice-Captain, and the club were delighted to call on the services of Porty legend Stevie Roy to coach the team. The 2nd XV are also very competitive, and take the social side of rugby very seriously too!

Portobello Rugby caters for all players, whatever their age or ability. The youth section is hugely popular and dedicated to making rugby accessible and fun for all who take part. The “Hornets” run teams in Micro rugby (P1 & P2) & Mini rugby (P1 – P7).

For more information call 661 4554 , and for results and events see www.pitchero.com/clubs/portobelloff

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WHAT'S ON in Portobello

MALECON MATINEE: Sun. 20th March, 17th Apr & 15th May, 2-5pm with classes 1-2pm. Beach Lane Social Club, Portobello, £5/£9 combo.

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

PORTOBELLO ORGANIC MARKET, Brighton Park, first Saturday of each month, 10am-2pm. Local and organic fruit, veg, meat and more. For more information or to book a stall contact info@pedal-porty.org.uk or call 0131 258 4483.

‘WILD VISION - Images and stories from the wilderness’, with internationally acclaimed adventure/wildlife photographer, John Beatty. Wed 6th April, Town Hall, 7.30pm. Tickets £13 from www.speakersfromtheedge.com/node/270 Tel.0114 2508048 or at the door.

CAR BOOT SALES (Portobello Rotary Club): Sundays 27th March, 24th April and 29th May. Newcraighall Station car park, 9am-2pm. Cars arrive 8am - double pitch £10 - all fees to charity. Enquires: 0131 661 9570.

BOWLING NEWS

AT the East Edinburgh Bowling Association AGM at Willowbrae Bowling Club on 25th January, George Langlands of Brunstane BC was elected President for 2011, and A Skirling of Portobello BC, Vice-President. The committee thank sponsors MacKenzie and Millar and Belhaven Brewery for their support during the past year, and look forward to the coming season.

The first game of the season will take place against Edinburgh and Leith Secretaries at Brunstane BC at 2pm on Saturday 21st May.

The Belhaven Pairs will be played on 7th August at Portobello BC, and the EELBA Knockout Competition at the end of August, sponsored by MacKenzie and Millar

At the Edinburgh Retired Men’s Bowling League AGM at Craigen-tinny BC on 17th February, Stuart Shaw was elected President for 2011.

The Civil Service Bowling Club, based at Newhouse, closed on 12th February after over 50 years, due to circumstances outwith their control. This is most regrettable and a sad loss to bowling.

A Skirling

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