

THE Portobello REPORTER

Quarterly: Summer 2013

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The independent voice of Portobello

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DR NEIL'S GARDEN GOLDEN YEAR

DR NEIL'S garden sits on the edge of Duddingston Loch behind the 12th century kirk. It was established 50 years ago by two GPs, Drs Andrew and Nancy Neil, and is now reputed to be one of the most beautiful small gardens in Scotland due to the enthusiasm, horticultural skill and prodigious physical labour of this remarkable pair. They transformed a piece of overgrown land into a series of colourful terraces and the garden is now run by Dr Neil's Garden Trust who employ a full-time gardener funded by the National Trust for Scotland.

As a memorial to the Drs Neil and to mark this golden year, the Trust has developed a physic garden in the centre of the site. Each plant has a medical association and a description is provided in an arbour alongside the garden.

Within the garden is the historic Thomson's Tower, originally a curling tower, built in 1825 by Duddingston Curling Society, famous for having written the rules of curling, an adaption of which is used the world over, to this

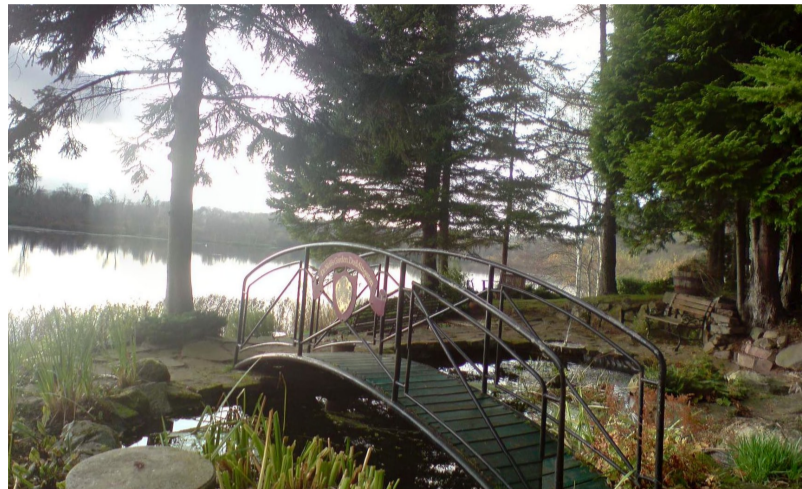


Photo by Stephen Ritchie

day. Restored to its former glory, the tower's two chambers are used as a museum of curling and an interpretation centre.

Thomson's Tower is open to visitors during July and August from 12 noon till 4pm, free of charge, and the whole garden is open daily, all year-round, free of charge from 10am until dusk. Two special garden open weekends are held every year for charity and this year will take place on 15th/16th June and 24th/25th August from 2-5pm, entry £3. Teas with home baking are provided in the church hall during open weekends.

To celebrate the garden's golden year a number of spe-

cial events have been organised:

15th-23rd June, *From Straw to Gold*, an exhibition in Thomson's Tower featuring Linda Green's work on spinning and weaving reeds from Duddingston Loch.

30th June from 2-5pm, Music in the Garden, in aid of the Edinburgh Medical Foundation for Freedom from Torture. Entry £8.

6th October at 2.30pm, *The Garden in Autumn*, a concert of poetry, prose and song with tea and cake afterwards in the kirk hall. Tickets £10.

The garden can be reached via the car park off Duddingston Road West.

Jim Baird

THE BUSKERS ARE COMING

THE fourth annual Big Beach Busk is almost here, when Portobello seizes the last Saturday in August and turns out en masse with musical instruments, songs, dances, poetry and more. There's also talk of crafts, cakes and stalls this year. We'd like everybody in Porty to get involved, get creative, find a way to join in. If you're a musician or performer it's simple; turn up at noon on 31st August, find a spot you like and do your thing.

Bring your mates, bring a crowd, make some strangers smile with a rendition of your new song. The Girl with the Orange Wellies brought her mum and her gran, Collinson & Son make it every year, and of course it wouldn't be the Busk without the Golden Nuggets all the way from Fife with their coachload of fans. Not to mention Porty locals Joe Madden, Sandra Macbeth, Lorna Thomas and all the rest. Will Billy Watman be there this year? - That cat girl?

Over the past three Busks we've seen mad scientists and tightrope walkers perform alongside talented singer-songwriters, pub bands, signed-up and new-comers and seasoned pros. There are people who have played every Busk and who improve every year. It's been great to watch their stories evolve. The Busk is a chance for everyone to get in and play together. People travel from all over Scotland with tents and garden gazebos, ready to barbecue and picnic and enjoy the spectacle. It's all about being by the beach with your friends and family. It's about setting the music free!

For more see the Big Beach Busk's page on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/bigbeachbusk) or on twitter [@bigbeachbusk](https://twitter.com/bigbeachbusk) plus loads of videos on youtube and photos on flickr.

Paul Lambie

WORK ON KILNS STARTS AT LAST



Photo by Peter Ross

WORK has begun to rebuild the collapsed bottle kiln in Bridge Street. The contractors are C.R. Crane & Son Ltd, Leicester, who are brick specialists. The work will continue throughout the summer and it is hoped it will be completed by the end of September. Portobello Heritage Trust plan to celebrate the completion of the project. Look out for more details in our September issue.

Margaret Munro

PRIVATE BILL SUBMITTED

A TOTAL of 12,018 responses were received to the consultation carried out earlier this year by City of Edinburgh Council on its proposal to take a Private Bill to the Scottish Parliament, which would remove the existing legal impediment to using Portobello Park as the site of a new Portobello High School. Of these responses, 2060 were discounted because the required personal details were incomplete, they were duplicate responses, or they came from outwith the City of Edinburgh area. Of the remaining 9,958, the Council's proposal was supported in 76 per cent of local responses and in 70 per cent of those from the wider Edinburgh area. A Bill was submitted to the Parliament on 25th April, after which there is a 60 day period for objections.

The Council anticipates that the Bill could be passed by February 2014, but since the existing planning permission is due to expire that month, it will be renewed in the autumn to prevent further delay in the building of the school. No changes will be made to the design of the school building or the associated works on Portobello Park.

The Council say the Bill has been specifically worded to permit the land to be used solely for educational purposes, that it would change the Common Good category of Portobello Park only, to allow it to be built on, and that it would have no impact on any other Common Good land in Edinburgh or elsewhere in the country. Portobello Park Action Group say they will make a formal objection, as they are concerned that such a Bill would set a precedent for a special case and put Common Good land and open space across Scotland at risk.

1963 THEME TO OPEN BOOK FEST

PORTOBELLO Library moved from its old home, upstairs in the Police Station building, to the new modern premises in Rosefield Avenue 50 years ago, when *Where the Wild Things Are* was hot off the press, *She Loves You* was a hit and everyone was talking about the Profumo affair.

To celebrate the anniversary, the Book Festival team are planning a groovy themed event at the Library, *1963: The start of the modern era*, for the opening night of Portobello's fifth Book Festival on Friday 4th October. With talks by invited authors and displays of memorabilia, including books and fashion pieces, and music, the event will kick off the festival in style.

The team would like to get as many people as possible involved and welcome ideas, memories, or items from the era that could be used to furnish the background set. They would particularly like to hear from those with a special connection to 1963, their birth year or wedding day, for example, if it was the year they first moved to Portobello, or any other life-changing experience.

In addition, local actress, Sybil Bacica will read contributions of 63 words on the 1963 theme, written from any angle. Anyone inspired to put pen to paper is invited to submit their prose to the email address below, preferably by the end of August.

If 1963 was a special year for you in any way, or you wish to write 63 words on the theme, please contact portobellobookfestival@gmail.com

The festival team promise the programme will once again have something for everybody. Details will be published in the next issue of The Portobello Reporter and on the website.

Karen Combe

PORTY PROFILE No. 50
DOUG JOHNSTONE

DOUG JOHNSTONE is a multi-talented writer and musician who came to Edinburgh to study physics from Arbroath in 1988. By the late 1990s he had a Physics PhD and a job as a systems engineer designing radar for Marconi. His true passion, though, was playing in bands and writing a fanzine. This led him away from his well-paid job and into music journalism. After gaining his Diploma in Journalism from Napier University he was soon picking up work from *The Evening News*, *The Big Issue* and *The List* and these days he writes for the likes of *The Independent on Sunday*, *The Scotsman* and *The Herald*.



Photo by Peter Ross

Doug has been in the music scene in many guises. Back in the day he drummed for Edinburgh bands, playing gigs at the likes of Sneaky Pete's and Bannermans. He formed *Northern Alliance* in 2003 with Craig Smith and Viv Todd, "when we were long in the tooth", and is very proud of the four Ks they once received in an album review from *Kerrang!* magazine. "It was only when we stopped dreaming of stardom that we had any success," Doug noted. In 2008 he invented a fictional band *The Ossians*, who released an album to some acclaim, but for the real musicians it was all a bit galling as their fictional counterparts were 10 years younger. His most recent music project is his debut solo EP *Keep It Afloat* which has been warmly received in the music press.

Perhaps Doug is best known as a novelist, with five novels under his belt and one in the pipeline. His 2012 novel *Hit and Run* was an Amazon number one bestseller and his latest *Gone Again*, published in March, is set in Portobello and turns on the disappearance of photographer Mark Douglas' wife. "I write thrillers about ordinary people in extraordinary situations. All my books are about things that could happen to you or me."

Doug and his wife Tricia Edington moved to Marlborough Street from Marchmont almost 10 years ago when they were planning their family and needed more space. Now in Hamilton Drive with Tricia and their two children Doug says: "We are very settled. I love being in Porty. It has a really nice community spirit, a really nice atmosphere. I am excited about all the community stuff. It's heart-warming that people can get together and make a positive difference to their community."

Doug will be appearing in this years Portobello Book Festival and if you want to read or listen to his work go to his blog at dougjohnstone.wordpress.com

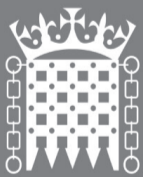
Peter Ross

The Portobello Reporter

is produced by volunteers, with contributions in this issue from 30 local people. If you have something you would like to see in print call

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or email us at portyreporter@btinternet.com
SEPTEMBER DEADLINE 6TH AUGUST



Sheila Gilmore MP

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MONTHLY SURGERIES (from April 2012)

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E: sheila.gilmore.mp@parliament.uk

W: www.sheilagilmore.co.uk

ON THE BEAT

CONSTABLES Graham Peiers and Scott McLennan are still the beat officers covering the Portobello area under Police Scotland and are part of the Craigmillar Portobello Community Policing Team. They have the same remit and responsibilities and will continue to focus on local issues. They can be contacted by email at EdinburghPortobelloCraigmillarCPT@scotland.pnn.police.uk or on the new national 101 phone number for all non-emergency calls.



During the summer months and school holidays we will be patrolling the Portobello area to disrupt and detect any antisocial behaviour and under-age drinking, as part of the new Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP). A number of partners, including Portobello High School, City of Edinburgh Council, NHS Lothian, Health Opportunities Team, Scotmid, Scottish Grocers Fed. and J Sainsburys, are working with the police to help address the health of young people, reduce proxy purchasing and irresponsible supply of alcohol to under-18s, and reduce antisocial behaviour associated with alcohol consumption.

As the weather improves and evenings stretch, many of us use our bicycles for commuting and recreation. Unfortunately, thieves may steal unsecured bicycles, so to help reduce the risk, when not in use, always secure your bike to an immovable object, and lock it through the frame with a substantial lock. Secure removable parts and lock both wheels and frame together. Make the lock (and chain, if used) and bike hard to manoeuvre when parked.

Keep a photograph of your bike in a safe place, and note the serial number, make and model and any unique features. If you leave your bike in the garden it's still important to secure it, so that the opportunist thief can't 'nip in' and steal it.

Any information on thefts of bikes (persons responsible, where they are stored, how they are being sold on) can be passed to the police via the email address above, or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800-555-111.

The Community Policing Team

INDOOR BOWLING TO GO?

BOWLERS at Portobello Indoor Bowls Centre are upset and angry at Edinburgh Leisure's plan to convert it into a gymnastics hub and soft play area. Edinburgh Leisure claim the centre is under-used and losing money, while there is a growing demand for gymnastics facilities.

The centre is used by Portobello Indoor Bowls Club and many members of the public, including blind and disabled bowlers, and members of the

Edinburgh branch of Parkinson's UK. The club has a thriving youth section and in March, 10-year-old Lewis Betts and Liam McKay, 16, won the pairs competition at the Scottish Under-17 Championships.

Kenny MacAskill MSP and members of the club met Richard Lewis of Edinburgh Leisure on 20th May to put their case for keeping the rinks and to remind him that bowling is a Commonwealth Games sport and will soon have a higher profile.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

BEACH LANE SOCIAL CLUB held a fundraising event and disco on 9th March, which raised £1400 for Ward 6, the breast cancer ward, at the Western General Hospital. The club would like to thank everyone who donated prizes and attended the event.

AN EXHIBITION by Edinburgh photographer Janeanne Gilchrist, *Can I Make You Want Me?*, highlights the plight of forgotten pets that have spent a long time in Scotland's oldest animal shelter, the Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home. It can be seen at the Home from Monday to Saturday, 10am-4pm, until Saturday 22nd June. General Manager David Ewing said the animals featured are the 'least likely to be adopted' and hopes the photographs will lead to new homes for them.

POOPER SWOOPERS IN ACTION: Several people were fined recently after environmental wardens launched under-cover operations in response to complaints about dog fouling.

The number of offences dealt with, including littering and domestic and trade waste, has increased over the last two years from 228 to 519 thanks, they say, to information from the public. To report a problem call 529 3111 or email eastteam@edinburgh.gov.uk

CHRISTIAN PATH: It has taken a long time, but the path and cycleway between Brighton Place and Windsor Place, behind East Brighton Crescent, has finally been adopted by the Council and should now be regularly maintained.

STRAITON PARK on the Prom has been refurbished, with a bigger pirate ship the main feature, and new equipment for toddlers and older children.

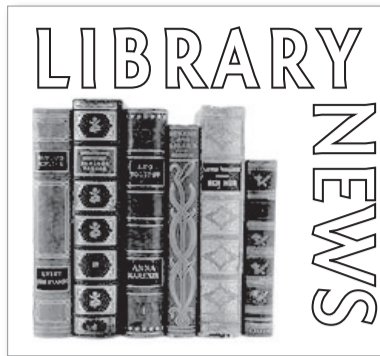
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THE school holidays always mark the start of an exciting series of activities and events for children at the library. We will be asking them to be especially brave as they take on this year's Summer Reading Challenge, which has the spooky theme of Creepy House, created by award winning illustrator Chris Riddell. The Challenge will run throughout the holidays and is open to children between the ages of 4 and 11. All children will be invited to read six books to win stickers and prizes, including a special medal. As part of Creepy House we will have a creepy creative craft event for 5 to 12 year olds every Friday from 2pm. Under-8s have to be accompanied by a parent or carer over 12. Everyone who completes the Summer Reading Challenge will also be invited to our scary end of summer holidays party on Friday 9th August.



We are very excited to be welcoming a very special guest to the library on Wednesday 3rd July. Children's writer Jonathan Meres, author of *The World of Norm* series, will be visiting us for our Grand Launch of The Summer Reading Challenge. Jonathan's books are great fun and anyone who likes the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* books will love *World of Norm*. Tickets will be available at the library; ask staff for details or check out our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/PortobelloLibrary

We will, of course, be exhibiting our Creepy House craft creations in the gallery area during the summer holidays. Other exhibitions over the summer include a photographic display by library staff member Abid Nazir from 8th June.

Our book group meets in the library on the first Tuesday of every month. On 2nd July we will be discussing *Snowdrops* by Andrew Miller. On 6th August - *Girl in the Polka Dot Dress* by Beryl Bainbridge. On 3rd September - *The Sea Detective* by Mark Douglas-Home. All books will be available from the library. Please ask staff for details.

We also have a teenage book group that meets on the last Thursday of every month and a Chatterbooks children's book group for 8-12 year olds that meets every third Saturday. If you would like to come to these, please ask staff for details.

Paul Hudson

COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS

ELECTIONS for community councils will take place this autumn. Community councils consist of elected individual members and nominated members of local interest groups. They play an important role in local democracy by representing the views of local people and conveying them to a range of organisations. They can influence areas of City of Edinburgh Council's work, such as local planning applications, licensing, transport, community safety and the environment.

Most community councils in Edinburgh have 14 elected and seven group-nominated members, but when Portobello Community Council was inaugurated in 1983, it was allocated 15 elected and 15 nominated members to reflect the number of active local groups. During recent public consultations, by the City Council, on a review of the regulations for the running of community councils, differing opinions were expressed on whether the balance of elected and nominated members on Portobello Community Council should now be brought into line with the others. This will be considered at a City of Edinburgh Council meeting on 27th June.

Individuals standing for election must be on the local electoral roll and be nominated by two people. The nomination period this year will start on 2nd September and nomination forms must be returned to the Returning Officer by 23rd September. If there are more candidates than seats for any community councils, elections will be held in October.

Any group wishing to nominate a member must register with the Community Council Liaison Officer and have a publicly available constitution; help will be offered to prepare one if necessary. Nominees should be selected soon, as the Minutes of the meeting at which this was agreed must be sent to the Liaison Officer, with a registration form, by 23rd September. If there are more nominees than places, these will be allocated by ballot at a special meeting.

The means of obtaining forms will be publicised at the end of August. More information on community councils can be found on the Council website www.edinburgh.gov.uk

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

CONGRATULATIONS to Edinburgh College HND Television and Film Studies student Lewis McCathie, who has just finished writing, casting, producing, directing and filming his six minute drama *Retribution*, with help from his fellow students and actors looking for experience.

Produced on a non-existent budget, the film's theme of the international mortgage crisis with a dramatic twist reflects his challenges in making the film. Internal scenes were filmed locally, but his plan to film on Portobello beach was hindered by difficulties in gaining official permission. *Retribution*, however, is now complete and is available to watch on YouTube.

Lewis graduates from college this month and the film, which was his final project, has been entered into the Canon online competition. He now plans to gain more experience working at the festival in the summer and aims to study film and television at university. The film will be screened to college students, staff and invited press at the end of the month. "I had a lot of fun doing it and would love to do it again", he says. "The feedback has been good and everybody has been very encouraging."

Karen Combe

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Hair's Looking at You Kid

ALTHOUGH there are over 20 hairdressing salons and barbers locally, my husband insists on taking our boys all the way to his barber in Leith Walk where he has been getting his hair cut for years. Depending what's in fashion, they have come home with all kinds of haircuts including skilfully shaved zigzag patterns, and mock Mohicans. Once, when my daughter was four, she went along with them and came home with a raggedy fringe. I suspect she wouldn't sit still and no doubt the barber hadn't been asked to trim a little girl's fringe before. I haven't always been entirely happy with the boys' choices, but when even their school's administrator remarked to me "that's quite a haircut he's got," referring to the shaved zigzag, it was time to take action.

This hasn't always been easy. When I go to the barbers now, I feel as if I am intruding into another world. I sit in the queue reading *Men's Health* and *What Car* as the youngest discusses what cut he would like to the kind and patient barber: usually "similar to Messi but no Styles, thank you very much." The barber listens respectfully and then catches my eye to check that I'm okay with whatever has been decided. I always agree.

But now that they are all growing up and developing their own style, I'll take my good friend's advice and choose my battles carefully, and butt out of their taste decisions. I've also taken the precaution of hiding incriminating photographs of myself taken when I was going through my rebellious punk phase. I don't want to give them any ideas!

THE local market in May had a guest visitor, Nico the llama, who posed for photographs when not cropping the grass of Brighton Park. His

presence led to probably the worst joke of the year - that his real name was 'Dalai'! Unfortunately the Steam Punk coffee van was absent and will not be with us for the next few markets, as they have expanded their business in North Berwick. We are trying to find a similar replacement. Nevertheless, the usual wide range of traders made the event a success. The market is one way in which PEDAL supports the Transition movement by encouraging local, independent traders who attract shoppers to Portobello, both to the market and the high street. It is held on the first Saturday of every month except January from 9.30 to 1.30 in Brighton Park.

Elsewhere, we had sad news that the beehives had been attacked during a bout of wanton destruction at the community orchard. Bees are having a tough time coping with contagious diseases and this past winter has been long and cold, but the ban on neonicotinoids will possibly help. The stress from having their hives attacked was probably the last straw, resulting in the loss of both colonies. This is particularly galling, as Portobello honey has been shown to have very similar anti-microbial properties to the famed Manuka honey. So the bees have lost, we have lost, all through the stupidity of a mindless act.

On a brighter note, the search for a suitable site for our community wind turbine is entering an exciting phase as, in partnership with Greener Leith, we have commissioned consultants to take forward a firm proposal. Whilst the negotiations have taken longer than expected and the turbine will not be as close to Portobello as we would have liked, this may still be the first successful project for an urban community group. Thank you again to all who supported this by voting for us to win the Energysshare grant.

Stephen Hawkins, PEDAL

HAPPY MEMORIES OF BRIDES AND BABIES

ON Saturday 11th May an exhibition of wedding dresses was held at Portobello Old Parish Church. They were worn by brides who were married there, or at Windsor Place Church.

Christening robes of babies baptised in the churches were also on display, along

with photographs and cradle rolls, all telling some of the churches' social history.

This fund raising event, hosted by Old Parish Congregational Board and Flower Committeemembers, inspired reminiscences of happy days and the organisers thank everyone for their support.

SUSTAINABLE PARTY

GROWING ORGANIC



with Susan Burns



THE long winter means that the soil has taken a long time to warm up, but you can still sow sweetcorn, pumpkin, sunflowers, annuals etc. direct into the ground, at the latest around the beginning of July, where they will provide a crop or flowers in the late autumn.

Mix different lettuces, rocket, mizuna, mibuna, etc. in one packet, i.e. the ones you like, and sprinkle a pinch of the mixture every few weeks so that you can harvest them over a long period. Use scissors to cut them about 1cm above the soil once they are about 7cm high.

Keep on top of weeding and you'll have a lovely summer pottering around without the strain of feeling you have lots to do, although I find weeding very therapeutic. Also watch out for any weeds that try to start flowering, like dandelions (unless you want more of them) and nip their heads off, making a mental note to dig the root out when you have time.

Any new plantings of shrubs or trees, whether in sandy or clay soils, always benefit from a generous mulch of home-made compost. Compost grass clippings mixed with drier material or, if there is only a small amount, sprinkle them under hedges or around potatoes to save earthing up, but you may need to support the foliage to stop it flopping onto paths. I use an old bed frame for this, although canes and string work just as well. Make sure some clippings are added each week, so that no potatoes go green with exposure to light.

Greenhouse plants will benefit from water thrown onto the floor on (let's hope) hot days. This cools the air dramatically. Nearly all plants only grow between 45F and 75F, so if it's too hot they will stop growing.

Look out for pests and deal with them before they get to monumental proportions. Biological controls should be used and there are now many available: The Organic Gardening Catalogue is great for these: call 01932 253666, or see their website www.organiccatalogue.com Although I squash green and blackfly and Hoover up whitefly, I also order seaweed extract from there to supplement my comfrey/nettle brews.

Our garden at 39 Nantwich Drive will be open on 3rd and 4th August this year, from 2-5pm, in aid of Garden Organic. We hope to see you then.

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FROM THE ARCHIVE



One of our readers sent in this shot of a slushy, wintry Joppa Road. The photograph was found while rummaging through a box of old family photographs. Can anyone hazard a guess as to when such a traffic-free scene, with no parked cars, could possibly have been taken? The registration number of the car is 8165 U. If you can suggest a date, please contact Archie Foley at alfoley21@sky.com



These evacuated children have just arrived at Buckie railway station from Edinburgh in September 1939. In the foreground is Police Sergeant John Simpson, overseeing their transfer to the lorry that would take them to their temporary homes. Sergeant Simpson's son sent the photograph because two children from Portobello who were part of the group, but not necessarily in the photograph, were taken in by his parents. They were brothers, Joey and Billy Hunter, and Mr Simpson believes that Joey, who was the younger of the two, died not long after returning to Portobello. Would anyone who has information about the brothers please contact alfoley21@sky.com so that he can pass it on to Mr Simpson.

LOOKING FOR SCHOOLMATES

DJ Bill Prentice is looking for anyone who might remember him from his schooldays at Portobello Secondary School in Duddingston Park. He left school in 1937. Bill was Class Monitor of Class 3A and his teacher was Miss Cope. The Headmaster at the time was Dr JH Hamilton-Birrell.

Bill, aged 90, now lives in Bonnyrigg. He and his team-mate Ted, aged 88, are Scotland's oldest DJs, presenting a weekly programme on Black Diamond FM, based in Gardiner Place, Newtongrange. The show is on every Sunday from 5 to 6pm on 107.8FM. If you would like to contact Bill, you can call him on 0131 663 6895.

Margaret Munro

READERS RESPOND

WE received a welcome response to the article in our Spring Issue on May Krause, ice and roller skating star, from reader Rosemary Wilson. May was Rosemary's first skating teacher in 1949, and Rosemary's friend Muriel McGarrol was the girl mentioned in the photo caption from *The Edinburgh Evening News* dated 22nd November 1949. Muriel is now married and lives in Ontario, Canada.

Rosemary wrote an article, published in *The Evening News* on 18th January 1986, in which she recorded her memories of being a member of the East of Scotland Figure Skating Club at Haymarket Ice Rink. Club meetings were on Monday and Thursday evenings, where Rosemary met up with her friends. There were two other instructors, Eric and Vera Batchelor, who gave their guidance for the price of 1 shilling (5 pence).

Curling was also played at Haymarket Ice Rink and Rosemary remembers a man on a "sort of snow plough" driving over the ice until it was smooth enough to be sprayed with water ready for the skaters to practise on. The ice rink was demolished and there is now an office block on the site.

It is always a pleasure to hear from readers in response to our articles and to know that they have brought back happy memories.

Margaret Munro

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FILM AT THE WASH HOUSE

THE musical drama *Les Misérables* was screened by POD, in partnership with the Wash House Community Centre, on Saturday 4th May. A throng of eager cinema-goers of all ages gathered, indicating that this venture has struck a chord in providing a movie experience matching anything offered by the multiplexes. The operation was thoroughly professional in terms of sound and visual quality, and excelled in conviviality and friendliness, with the option to BYOB and bean bag.

If the enthusiasm of the audience is any guide, the venture seems to have a future. One of the organisers, Mark Tweedie, was quietly confident whilst acknowledging the ambition of the enterprise. "We've learnt a lot from this first screening", he said. "It took a lot of effort and commitment from the small team who organised it, but we are delighted with the result and the feedback we've received. Thanks to all those who came along. We hope it will be the start of regular screenings at the Wash House."

Anyone interested in helping to develop this venture is invited to contact POD at info@the-pod.org. In particular, they are looking for someone with audio visual skills to support their specialist technician.

The next screening will be after the summer holidays. To keep in touch with our plans check www.the-pod.org or 'like' Portobello Open Door on Facebook.

D.L.



Photo by Brenda Molony

Doreen Alexander (centre) was the winner of a competition organised at Portobello Older People's Project (POPP) to suggest a name for the McCarthy & Stone retirement apartments under construction on Baileyfield Road. Doreen won a £50 Marks & Spencer voucher for her suggestion of 'Clifton Mews', and a cheque for £250 was donated to POPP. Doreen and POPP organiser Rita Aitken (left) are pictured here, at the presentation by Denise Findlay of McCarthy & Stone.

AMNESTY - LOCAL NEWS

GROUP membership has increased this year, making a widening range of activities possible in support of human rights worldwide.

The Annual Coffee Morning and Book Sale in March, shared with Woodcraft Folk, was lively and well supported, and raised £400 for our funds. Many thanks to all who took part.

The March and April letter-writing sub-group meetings were well attended and 36 letters have been sent to 12 countries, a number of these urgent appeals on death penalty cases. These hour-long sessions, held on the first Wednesday of the month from March to June at 7.30pm in The Dalriada, are suitable for people keen to help in a specific way that is compatible with their busy lives.

Our stall at the Portobello Market in April focussed on the human rights of women in Afghanistan and resulted in 104 signatures on a petition urging the UK Government to press for guarantees from the Afghan Government. In May the stall featured Turkey's poor record on freedom of expression and assembly and in June, will feature the Roma peoples in many European countries facing persecution and dire conditions in forced displacement camps.

Our meetings are held on the third Monday of the month at 7.30pm in Portobello Old Parish Church Hall, at which we sometimes have a speaker. On 17th June, Matthew Naumann (UNICEF), will speak on human rights issues, based on his involvements in Central Asia states, at 8pm.

All are welcomed at Group meetings, so why not pay a visit? For further information please call 669 1308.

David Turner

WHY not hop, skip and jump along to Porty Wash House, your local Community Centre, and see what is on offer? As well as our usual weekly sporty, arty, musical, doggy, youth and older people's activities and classes, we now have 'soft play' activity for pre-schoolers on Thursdays from 10-11am, £2 per child.

Our next term of singing sessions runs from Monday 20th May - 24th June inclusive, from 2-4pm (a 2-3pm class is available for those who have little 'uns to pick up from school). Please contact Ali on 07910 114715 or at singin-portobello@gmail.com

Following on from the recent successes of cinema, theatre, music and presentation events, we are pleased to host a night of fantastic music and dancing for a very worthwhile cause, from 7.30pm till 11pm on Friday 14th June. See What's On on page eight and watch out for the posters coming soon around Porty.

We are always on the lookout for new board members, volunteers and event staff to help move the Wash House forward, so if you are interested with a little time to spare every now and again, please drop your details to us. Or if you're looking for hall hire we have three spaces suitable for most activities. We also have a large Community Noticeboard where you can advertise or find out what's going on in your area.

You can drop in or contact us on (0131) 669 8275 or email admin@portobellocc.org.uk. Check out our website - portobellocc.org.uk or join us on our [Facebook page - Porty Wash House](#).

Sooz Glen



GEMMA'S GYM

Warm-ups and Cool-downs:

YOU may find yourself asking why and where do I begin when it comes to starting any kind of exercise? The main thing to remember is to prepare your body both physically and mentally.

Start with a warm-up because warm muscles and joints work more efficiently. To ensure that they are properly warm, increase your heart rate gradually. This could be achieved by a brisk walk, swinging your arms and making sure you are using both arms and legs evenly. This moves the blood supply out from the core (internal organs) and into the working muscles. Having the maximum amount of blood in the muscles enables them to perform movements more effectively.

Dynamic stretches can also be included in your warm-up and involve moving the joints, not to be confused with static stretches which come later on. Examples of dynamic stretches are shoulder rolls forward and back, high knees, lunges and squats. You are now ready to exercise.

Finish your activity with a thorough cool-down. The reverse of the warm-up, blood now needs to come back into the core from the working muscles. This should be done gradually, by a slow-paced walk or cycle, for example. Think low intensity to allow the heart rate to return to a resting state.

Static stretches are now appropriate, as the muscles need to be held under tension for 20 seconds. This means holding the stretch, and slowly releasing after the 20 seconds. You should feel no pain at this point, but muscle should feel like it's stretched.

Gemma.hopewell@edinburgh.college.ac.uk

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Alternatively you can contact Kenny MacAskill using the address and details below.



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Cllr MICHAEL BRIDGMAN, SNP:

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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 mob 07718666481 or email maureen.child@edinburgh.gov.uk
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Cllr DAVID WALKER, Labour:

2nd and 4th Mondays of the month at Magdalene Community Centre, 5.30-6.15pm
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'LOSE THE LITTER' WINNERS

PORTOBELLO High School was declared joint first prize winner, with Queensferry High School, in a competition to win £1000 as part of a recent 'Lose the Litter' project. Second prize went to Holy Rood High School and third prize to Craigmount High School.

The five-month project was delivered by environmental charity Change-works and funded by Zero Waste Scotland. Its aim was to pilot innovative ways to tackle school litter, and included a specially commissioned litter drama and a 'Bin It to Win It' competition, plus assemblies and litter action organised by the schools' Eco Teams.

After a street litter survey around the school, Environmental Warden for the Portobello area, Morgan McGuire said: "I am very impressed by the scorescongratulations on the efforts that the school has made".

Sophie Bigg, Eco Schools Coordinator at Portobello High, is pleased with the progress made during the project, but urged pupils to "keep working to improve the standard in and around the school, so they can achieve the top grade".

THE BOYS' BRIGADE - 125 YEARS IN PORTOBELLO

THE Boys Brigade in Portobello marks its 125th Anniversary on 31st August, celebrating a history of positive impact on the lives of thousands of young people in the community. Founded as the 1st Portobello Company in Pipe Street on 31st August 1888, the company is now known as the 25th Edinburgh and meets in St Philip's Church hall, Brunstane Road North. We are the oldest BB Company in the city.

The first of many events to mark the milestone is a 125th Anniversary Dinner for staff and ex-members at The Brunton Hall, Musselburgh on Saturday 31st August. Tickets and details are available by contacting the_25th_bb@yahoo.co.uk It would be great to see as many ex-members there as possible to help celebrate this momentous occasion.

We're also on the lookout for an after-dinner speaker or two, so if you know someone willing to support us please get in touch. As a charity we can't pay much - well we can't pay anything really - but they would get a free dinner and some quality chat.

There have been a lot of changes during our 125 years in Portobello, but the constant is the difference that we know young people make to their community and the enormous potential that each of them has. If you'd like to get involved and help us continue the work you can get in touch via the email address above.

Gordon Higgs, Junior Section Leader

AIR TRAINING CORPS - 1143 (Portobello) Squadron

THE Air Cadets are a national youth organisation for young people aged 13 to 17, who have an interest in aviation. As an Air Cadet many opportunities are open to you, such as flying, gliding, shooting, adventure training, sports, camps, First Aid, educational qualifications, Duke of Edinburgh Award, canoeing and rock climbing.

Recent activities have included cadets receiving Gliding Induction Courses, Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award, Sports representation for South East Scotland, RAF camps, BTEC Level 1 in Leadership and Cadet Service Certificates, and

Adventure Training Camps. Looking forward, we will be helping at both East Fortune and RAF Leuchars Airshows.

If you would like to find out more about the Air Cadets, the opportunities available and how to join, come along for an informal chat. 1143 (Portobello) Squadron, is situated in the Figgate Park, at the Hamilton Terrace entrance. We parade on Monday and Wednesday evenings between 7.00 and 9.30pm, and have regular weekend activities.

John Carruthers, ATC Officer Commanding

50 YEARS OF THE MELVILLES

THE Melville Players was founded in 1963 by Sandy Smith as a drama group to help raise funds for a hall for Portobello Old Parish Church. The name was chosen as the church was in Melville Street (now Bellfield Street). Since Sandy was the director, rehearsals were often held in the Smith house in Joppa for the one-act and three-act plays which were performed in various venues before the Old Parish Hall was built.



Rosemary and Sandy sing on the Prom.

In 1973, the Players won the cup for Best First Time Entry in the Scottish Community Drama Association one-act play competition, with *The Happy Journey* by Thornton Wilder.

As members retired or moved away, a smaller group, The Melville Music Hall Company, was formed. Their programmes of music, dance, songs and monologues continue to be performed in costumes of all eras, either outdoors on lorries, in processions, on Portobello Promenade, or in hotels, hospitals, homes, theatres and pubs - in fact anywhere.

After Sandy died in 2008, company member Mona Fergusson took over as director. Jim Lavery continues as the superb master of ceremonies and comedian.

After 50 wonderful years of fun and friendship, acting and music, a reunion of former and present members will take place, appropriately, in Portobello Old Parish Church Hall on 10th July at 7.30pm. To find out more, or if you are interested in joining the company, please call Mona Ferguson on (0131) 657 2681.

Rosemary Smith

BEACH BONANZA

THIS fun-packed family event, organised by a host of local agencies including Edinburgh Leisure, The Health Opportunities Team and Police Scotland, will be held on Saturday 29th June from 1pm-4pm outside the Swim Centre. On offer are lots of activities with a sport and getting active theme to give a taste of what will be available for children, young people and their families over the summer holi-

days in Portobello and Northfield. Free activities may include beach circuits, climbing wall, mountain bike assault course, face painting, sumo suits, speed shot, football, family swimming, The Buz football pitch and volleyball. Further details of the planned summer activities will be available in a programme leaflet as well as from information stalls at the event. Great fun for all, and not to be missed.

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ROWPORTY TRAIN FOR WORLD CHAMPS

ROWPORTY have been out on the water almost daily, training for the Scottish Coastal Rowing World Championships which take place in Ullapool from 8th to 14th July. Teams are coming from New Zealand, Tasmania, The Netherlands, Vermont, Pennsylvania and Oregon, as well as all over Scotland. The club plan to enter around 13 races. They are also helping with the fundraising by selling raffle tickets, the top prize being a car.

Emma Griffith, the club's media spokesperson, reports: "We are all getting very excited and training hard. We are particularly pleased to be taking a youth team, and hope we may even have more than one."

The club have been modifying the seats, footrests and oar positions in their skiff *Jenny Skylark* in preparation for the championships, and may also take their other boat *Icebreaker* and lend her to an overseas team.

Rowporty is holding a small, invitation only, regatta on 29th July for nearby clubs Port Seton, Newhaven and others.

Kathleen Byron

PORTOBELLO GOLF CLUB

STANLEY Street is the home of the nine hole Portobello Golf Course. The club was inaugurated in 1856.

The major tournament of the men's section is the Sir Harry Lauder Open which starts on 13th July and is open to all clubs in the Lothians. Since 1856 members have played for the Gold Cup. They also play an annual match against Lochend Club at Craigentenny and several others.

The average game takes about three hours, playing the course twice, using different tees on the second round. Non-members can 'pay and

play' the nine holes for £10. A season ticket costs £208, with free membership for first-time buyers.

Men's Section Treasurer, Kenny Craigie said: "To me it is more of a community. We have all different walks of life, and members aged 19 to those in their 80s. We have lawyers and bucket men. It's a good family club."

The club always welcomes new members; for information please phone the starter of the course on 669 4361.

The Ladies Section will be covered in our next issue.

Kathleen Byron

ON THE GREENS

CRAIGENTINNY Bowling Club would like to welcome new members, Gentlemen, Ladies and Juniors, at the clubhouse at Craigentenny Crescent. Half-price membership is available for the new season. Contact Mrs Margaret Caldwell, Secretary on (0131) 468 0357.

BRUNSTANE Bowling Club will have a Family Open Day on Sunday 16th June from 1-4pm. Be introduced to bowling with a free lesson from the coaching team, and take advantage of a special offer on membership on the day.

The Junior Section meet on Sunday mornings for tuition by qualified coaches.

The Social Club enjoys monthly cabarets throughout the season, darts and dominoes during the winter and an active Ladies Programme. For details see www.brunstanebowling.btck.co.uk

BATON TWIRLERS HEAD FOR SWEDEN

FOUR local girls - Robyn Anderson, Amy Cairns, Martina Bell and Emma Robertson - are representing Scotland in the European Championships in Sweden in July. Baton twirling is an athletic sport, combining dance and gymnastics with the use of a baton. The girls went through a vigorous selection process last year and since then have been training extremely hard for the competition. Training is based at Northfield Community Centre and at many other venues throughout Scotland, so continual fundraising is necessary. If you would like more information and/or to make a donation, email Elaina, Club Secretary at elaina05@sky.com Good luck girls. We are sure you will do Scotland and Edinburgh proud.



IN THE SADDLE

NOW that the warmer weather has finally arrived, local cycling club Porto-Velo is finalising its plans for the summer months.

"Last year, all our Sunday rides were around 50-60 miles, but this year we're taking advantage of our new 8am start-time to introduce more variety", explained Patrick Hall, one of the club's founding members. "About once a month there will be a longer ride of 70-100 miles, but we will also be offering more mid-paced rides of around 40 miles - and some slower, entry-level rides too".

In June, the club is organising a weekend away, based in Stirling. "It's a chance to explore some new roads", said Patrick, "and if it proves successful, it may become an annual event".

Further details of the club's activities can be found on its website, www.porto-velo.com or you can head along to The Dalriada on the last Thursday of each month for one of the club's social evenings.

TENNIS ON YOUR DOORSTEP

JOPPA Tennis has been going from strength to strength over the last few years and the courts and clubhouse have been extensively renovated. The courts in Joppa Grove are run by local people as part of a sub-committee of Portobello Community Council.

We have built up a vibrant membership, with very reasonable annual rates: Family Membership, £65; Individual Membership, £40; Young Person's Membership, £20. Full details from Sonja on 07905705279

A good way to see if tennis is for you is to take advantage of 'Pay and Play' during the summer holidays. During that time the courts are manned and children are most welcome.

Children's coaching is up and running on a Friday afternoon. Pop up and have a look. We hope to continue this also during the holidays. All we need now is a good summer.

For more information see our entry on www.porty.org.uk/directory

Marjorie Thomas

WHAT'S ON in Portobello

ANNUAL GARDEN FETE, St Christopher's Parish Church, Craigentenny, Saturday 1st June, 1pm-3pm. Come along and see 'Just Dance', enjoy an ice-cream or cup of tea, and see what's on offer at various stalls. The Fancy Dress Parade leaves from Craigentenny Primary School at 12.45 pm. The theme this year is Cowboys and Indians.

JUMBLE SALE, Sat. 1st June, 1-3pm, Old Parish Church Halls, Bellfield St. In aid of the Rainbows', Brownies' and Guides' trip to Switzerland in July.

MUSIC AND DANCING (ceilidh/modern), Fri. 14th June, 7.30-11pm, The Wash House, for Edinburgh Women's Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre. With Mairi Campbell & Dave Francis; Gallo Rojo; Madge Wildfire; Adam Holmes; Lisa Rigby; The Bevvie Sisters. Bar. Tickets £10/£7conc, £5 children, from 669 6555 or e.penman378@btinternet.com

PORTOBELLO AMENITY SOCIETY, AGM: Wed. 19th June, 7.30pm, Baptist Church Hall, Portobello High St. After a short business meeting, Alan Bell, City of Edinburgh Council Parks and Gardens Manager will give a talk on: "The Challenges of Managing Edinburgh's Parks and Gardens". Members of the public are welcome.

A TALK by Mark Nixon on Portobello, Musselburgh and the Political Agitation of 1884, Wednesday 25th June at 7.30pm, St. John's Church Hall, Brighton Place. Organised by Portobello Heritage Trust. It is free and all are welcome.

CAR BOOT SALES: (Portobello Rotary Club). Sundays 30th June, 28th July, 25th August, Newcraighall Station car park, 9am-2pm. Cars arrive 8am - double pitch £10 - all fees to charity. Enquiries to 07789 220583 or see www.portobellorotary.com

PORTOBELLO MARKET: 1st Sat. each month, 9.30am-1.30pm, Brighton Park. Organic fruit, veg, meat and more. For more info. or to book a stall contact info@pedal-porty.org.uk

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

BRIDGE CLUB at St Mark's Church, Mondays 9.30am-noon. Players with some experience welcome. Call Bert on 669 8040.

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