

THE Portobello REPORTER

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The independent voice of Portobello Your Community Newspaper
produced by local people since 1980.

BOOK FESTIVAL DELIVERS AGAIN

FROM the entertaining opening evening, celebrating the 50th birthday of the current Portobello Library, to the final session on Scottish independence, the fifth Portobello Book Festival in early October was a notable success, with capacity audiences at almost all of the 22 events.

The programme featured a wide-ranging mix of talks, discussions, walks and events to suit all tastes, including history, poetry, politics, football, writing, and readings for children.

Two sessions with writers on local history featured Archie Foley and Margaret Munro on *Portobello and The Great War*, and Scotland's Historiographer Royal Prof. T C Smout, on *The Firth of Forth: an environmental history*.

Edinburgh's Makar (Poet Laureate) Ron Butlin entertained with readings from his recent collection *The Magicians of Edinburgh* and his wife, novelist Regi Claire,



Photo by Peter E Ross

talked about her recent book *The Waiting*, set in Edinburgh.

Journalist and broadcaster Lesley Riddoch shared the books that have influenced her, and talked passionately about Scotland's future needs, the theme of her latest book *Blossom*.

There was a particularly interesting session on *Criminalising Football Fans in an Age of Intolerance* with Stuart Walton, author of *Snobs Law*.

Jo McFarlane, poet and mental health activist (pictured here) read from two of

her affecting collections at the *Imagining Scotland* session. She shared the platform with educator and psychotherapist Colin Kirkwood and Gary West, academic and traditional musician, imagining how Scotland might become from a human aspect, rather than a political one. That task fell to Alan Bissett, Douglas Dunn and Gerda Stevenson, contributors to *Unstated: Writers on Scottish Independence*, in the final session.

Brenda Molony

"SLAP IN THE FACE" FOR VICTIMS OF VEHICLE CRIME

VICTIMS of vehicle crime could be in for a nasty shock when they go to try and retrieve their vehicle after it has been stolen or broken into. The situation was highlighted by the recent spike in crime in Portobello. If Police Scotland attempt, but are unable to contact the owner, under The Removal and Disposal of Vehicles Regulations, 1986 (amended), they can instruct a contractor to impound the vehicle. The owner has no right to see the vehicle or retrieve personal belongings from it but must pay hefty fees to be allowed to take it away. A police spokesman said: "Charges applicable for the vehicle recovery and subsequent storage are set by statute and fall to the owner of the vehicle. Most insurance companies are sympathetic to the above principle and, in most cases, people may recover the costs incurred through their

insurance company."

Bob and Dani of Portobello had their camper van stolen just two days after buying it. "The police didn't tell us it was in the pound, it was only by chance that we found out it was there", they told *The Reporter*. "When we went to pick it up we were still waiting for the paperwork." Without the registration documents they couldn't retrieve their van which led to further fees. As Bob explained, "For every day that you don't take it away you're charged a storage fee." They also discovered that they were not covered for all the costs. "The insurance will pay for towing once," Dani pointed out, "but because our camper wasn't drivable we had to pay for it to get towed to the garage."

A local tradesman whose van was broken into when he was on holiday was forced to pay £530 before he could get it

back. Colin Cornwall, another local man, was expected to pay £230 after returning from holiday to find his vehicle missing. "It is a total injustice," he said, "and I can't understand why it hasn't been exposed yet, never mind investigated!"

For those unlucky enough to be unable to collect their vehicle within seven days the Chief Constable has the power to sell or scrap it. Proceeds from auctioned cars are used to pay the recovery and storage costs with any remaining money going to the Police Fund. According to Colin: "The whole thing stinks to high heaven!"

Car crime victims suffer a great deal of inconvenience, cost and sometimes heartache and are victims not only of criminals but also the law. As Bob pointed out. "It's not right to get one slap in the face after another when you are already hurting."

Peter E Ross

VILLAGE SHOW - BIGGER AND BETTER



Photo by Karen Combe

BANNERS, flags, music and merriment heralded the opening of the Portobello Village Show 2013 on 8th September. Record numbers joined stall holders, volunteers, star bakers and beer makers to enjoy the fun.

Local community groups did us proud, with tasters from Joppa Tennis and the rugby club, Portobello Hornets. The tea tent went full steam ahead, selling some fantastic baking, and special thanks to Porty High School pupils for helping. Steam also billowed out in our ever-popular tent of train delights.

This year we were delighted to welcome Mischief La Bas with some curious street entertainment, and regulars Puff Uproar who were in great spirits.

There were over 80 excellent competition entrants. The new homebrew category caused a stir, with some exceptional contributions that impressed our expert judge. We are keen to keep you brewing for next year, so now is the time to start off your cider, wines and liqueurs. We were also pleased to see contributions from our Porty men, who in recent years have not been big cake, jam or craft contributors.

A big "thanks" to everyone. 2014 is already in our sights. For information on forthcoming events, see www.the-pod.org or [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/portobello).

Jane Hogg, POD

PLEA FOR STOLEN BIKE WORKS!

PORTOBELLO newcomer Silvia Neretter, from Germany, had her late Grandfather's bike stolen at the beginning of October. The bike was of great sentimental value to her so she posted reward notices all over Portobello, offering £500 for the return of the red vintage Colnago gents racing cycle. Her pleas worked and on Friday 1st November she had it returned - by the chap who took it!

Silvia had propped the bike

on The British Heart Foundation charity shop window at 10.30pm while she nipped across the road to check the opening times of another shop.

Along with his pleas of poverty, the chap told her that he "thought that the charity shop was throwing it out!" as it was unlocked.

"I am incredibly happy to have the bike back and I am glad that the person finally got in touch", she said.

Kathleen Byron



The **Portobello Reporter** wishes
a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
to all our Readers,
Contributors and Advertisers

PORTY PROFILE No. 52
TOM BLACK

SETTING up Portobello's market was, Tom Black believes, a highlight of his employment with local environmental group PEDAL - Portobello Transition Town, but Tom has achieved much in his career working with various environmental and voluntary groups.



Photo by Emma Dempsey

Brought up in Dundee, Tom moved to study geography and philosophy at the University of Sunderland, subjects he loves. He then volunteered as a teacher in India, spending six months at a Tibetan monastic school teaching English, maths and geography. As Tom only spoke English, a drawback in a country where the first language is Hindi, he often used illustrations to aid his teaching.

After gaining a Masters Degree in Environmental Management at the University of Gloucestershire, Tom worked with two community environmental groups based in Cheltenham. He then worked with the Environment Agency before moving to Glasgow to work with the Big Lottery Fund for four years.

He and his wife came to Portobello in 2005. Tom says: "We moved to Portobello because of the sense of community, the beach, the High Street and the close proximity of the town centre for the commute to work. It only takes twenty minutes to cycle to work, which helps keep me fit."

Tom worked for the Development Trust Association Scotland, the trade association for community enterprises, for four years and initially became involved with PEDAL in 2006 as a volunteer.

He then worked for them in 2010-2011 and thinks the energy advice they gave to community members, along with the market, were valuable parts of his work. He led on the plans for a local wind turbine and is still working with Greener Leith on these, hoping they will eventually come to fruition. He now works for Foundation Scotland, a charitable body distributing money from philanthropists to community groups across Scotland.

He loves hill-walking and rock-climbing and climbs at Alien Rock regularly, managing to get outdoors some weekends. Tom is also a member of the Toddlers Hut Rebuild Group and Towerbank School Playground Funding Group, raising funds for playground improvements.

He now has two sons aged five and seven and loves living in Portobello. "It's a great place to bring up kids", he says.

Margaret Munro

ON THE BEAT

ALL THAT GLITTERS... MAY not be gold, but it usually catches someone's eye... try not to make it the thief's.

The 'Festive' season is when people are busy, decorating the house, shopping and wrapping presents... or for some, watching where you put your purse or wallet, checking to see what's been left on display in the back of the car or beneath the Christmas tree... Don't let the thief ruin your Christmas.



When out shopping: Stay alert in crowded shops and streets and be wary of pickpockets. Be careful with your wallet or purse; keep it close to your body and don't carry too much cash. Always keep your cheque book and card separate and do not have your PIN written down. Always park your car in a well-lit area; lock all the doors, windows and boot, and do not leave any presents or other valuables on view.

At Home: Don't leave your curtains open for people to see your decorations; this makes it easy for thieves to look into your house. If you go out for the evening, make it look like someone is at home; leave the lights and radio on or use a timer switch.

By following this simple advice you will make things more difficult for the criminal.

Remember - If you see a crime being committed, call 999 if an emergency and urgent police assistance is required, or call 101 for non-urgent calls. You can also give information anonymously by phoning Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

The Community Safety Team

HIGH SCHOOL PRIVATE BILL

THE Scottish Parliament's City of Edinburgh Council (Portobello Park) Bill Committee took evidence on 11th September from the Council, and on 9th October from Portobello Park Action Group (PPAG) and Portobello for a New School (PFANS), on the general principles of the Bill and whether it should proceed as a private bill. Such a bill, if passed, would allow the Council to build a new

school on Portobello Park. The timetable for the Bill gives an "indicative" date for publication of a Preliminary Stage Report as the week beginning 16th December. A Preliminary Stage debate in the Chamber and a Consideration Stage, if appropriate, will follow. For further information see www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentary-business/Bills

NEWS IN BRIEF

REVISED BUS TIMES: For changes on some routes from 8th September see www.lothianbuses.com The good news for train travellers is that the west-bound 15 and 15A now stop at Waverley Steps. The bad news is that the 26 and 44 stop has moved from near M&S to a windy site with no bus shelter at the side of Jenners.

FREE DEBT ADVICE: The Council's Advice Shop offers free advice and support to Edinburgh people struggling with debt. It also provides free access to the Scottish Government's Debt Arrangement Scheme (DAS), which enables people to pay their debts over a reasonable period, while the interest is frozen. The DAS also acts to protect people's homes while they pay off their debts, provided they can keep up mortgage repayments. For an appointment call the Advice Shop on 0131 200 2360 or email advice.shop@edinburgh.gov.uk

SPEAK UP SPEAK OUT. If you or anyone you know is experiencing harm or abuse of any kind, the Council and their partners, Police Scotland, NHS Lothian and the voluntary sector have a wide range of services to help. They will help ease the situation by providing practical support, so please get in touch: Social Care Direct 0131 200 2324, www.edinburgh.gov.uk/speakupspeakout, socialcaredirect@edinburgh.gov.uk, Police Scotland 101 or in an emergency call 999.

CANNABIS FARM WEEDED OUT: Portobello tattoo parlour Sick Ink was raided by police in May where approximately £20,000 of cannabis plants were found. A Police Scotland spokesman said: "A 29 year old man has been arrested and charged under the Misuse of Drugs Act after police in Edinburgh recovered cannabis cultivation from within a business property in Portobello High Street." This business has now closed.

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 **669 3466** or email us at portyreporter@btinternet.com
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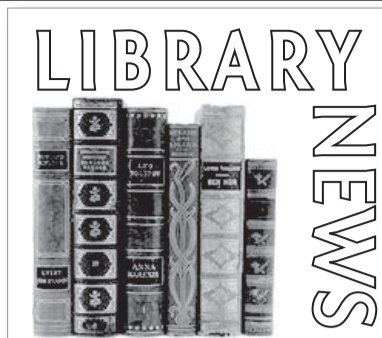
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MONTHLY SURGERIES (from April 2012)
On the **second Friday** of each month
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Between 14.00pm – 15.00pm.
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E: sheila.gilmore.mp@parliament.uk
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WE would like to thank the organisers of the Portobello Book Festival for, yet again, delivering a fantastic event. We particularly enjoyed the opening evening this year which, amongst other things, celebrated the 50th birthday of the present library. Congratulations to all involved.



If you know of any 5 to 8 year-olds who love books and stories, why not bring them down to our weekly Storytime on Thursdays at 3.30pm and watch Ian inspire and enthral a new generation of readers with stories old and new. Babies and younger children are also catered for by our Rhymetimes on Wednesday and Saturday mornings.

Are you between 8 and 12 years old and love books and anything to do with reading? Do you know anyone that would like to share their love of reading with like-minded children? Our Chatterbooks group is for all young bookworms out there in Portobello. It meets every third Saturday at 2pm. Speak to Lesley at the library if you are interested, or phone us on 529 5558.

As the Christmas song goes, "It's the most wonderful time of the year". We are already looking forward to it and are planning to run some Christmas creative crafts sessions. If you are interested, ask staff for details, keep an eye out for our posters and check our [Facebook](#) page.

Christmas is also a giving time and we are happy to be a collection point for the Senior Santas programme co-ordinated by HomeInstead Senior Care. If you would like to give something for an elderly person for Christmas we would be happy to accept it on their behalf.

The Portobello Book Group meets on the first Tuesday of every month; over the winter we will be discussing the following books:
3rd December - *My Epileptic Lurcher* by Des Dillon
7th January - *Life of Pi* by Yann Martell
4th February - *The Hare with the Amber Eyes* by Edmund De Waal
All books will be available from the library. If you are interested, ask staff for details.

We also have a Teenage Book Group that meets on the last Thursday of every month. It will have its 10th anniversary in December, which makes it one of the oldest book groups in Edinburgh libraries - definitely something worth celebrating!

Paul Hudson

NEW COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTED

IN the election for a new Portobello Community Council (PCC) held on 24th October, 1276 people voted out of 9098 eligible - 14.03%.

The following individual members were elected: Max Blinkhorn, Mark Cameron, Brian Cosford, Emma Dempsey, Maria Devoy, Gillian Eunson, Bob Jefferson, Lee Kindness, Geoff Lynn, Ben Mcleish, Thea Mcmillan, David Medcalf, Clare Slifer and Sean Watters.

The office-bearers elected at the first meeting of the new community council on 4th November were: Chair, Geoff Lynn; Vice-chair, Lee Kindness; Secretary, Sean Watters; Treasurer, Mark Cameron.

At the same meeting, the following seven local groups were allotted seats out of eight standing, in a vote by the elected members and the group representatives: Brightons & Rosefield Residents Assoc, Gilberstoun Residents Assoc, Joppa Tennis Club, PEDAL - Portobello Transition Town, Portobello Older Peoples Project, Portobello Sandpipers Woodcraft Scotland and Towerbank School Council.

Portobello Amenity Society was out-voted. It got the fourth highest vote in an online PCC public opinion poll, but this was not reflected in the vote taken at the meeting.

For future information about PCC see www.portobelloc.org or the screen and dedicated area in the library. Residents and business owners with email addresses who would like to receive updates on community matters can go to www.portobelloc.org/maillinglist.php and add their details.

PORTOBELLO - THE ALBUM

PORTOBELLO is the title track of a limited edition album by Jen and the Gents. Lead singer Jen Ewan is accompanied by jingly jangly pop guitars as she sings about the attractions of Porty in this up-beat track from the album. Find out more and listen to tracks at: www.jenandthegents.co.uk

"POLE DANCING"

MANY readers will be familiar with recent developments at The Porty Light Box Project, the phone box at the top of Bellfield Street. In the year since project fundraising the phone box has been painted and re-glazed and acrylic panels and lights have recently been installed.

Initial developments included the jokingly-called "Pole Dancing" installation, and the Hallowe'en Special which was popular with children out guising. Artwork by children at St Philip's Church, Joppa was displayed for Remembrance Sunday and, while commemorating a solemn event, the bright colours and joyfulness of the poppies and other flowers were a welcome sight in these short days and long nights.

This last display marked a significant transition for the Porty Light Box project into a new stage. The Light Box is now an established part of the Portobello street scene, and to celebrate this there will be an unveiling event for a new display, to coincide with the next Portobello 'Christmas Crawl' on the evening of Thursday 28th November, when local shops stay open later. See the project's blog for more details.

If you have ideas for future installations, or if you want to have a dance in what must be the world's smallest pole dancing venue, please contact the organisers at www.portylightbox.wordpress.com

Steve Wheatley

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Mutiny on the Bounty!

I WAS reading the other day about a blog where parents can post pictures of their disgruntled children in mid-tantrum, with an explanation of what triggered their tearful meltdown. Although few and far between, moments like these are indelibly etched on my own mind, especially when they happen in public.

Another memory snapshot was added to my collection recently when a family outing to Inchcolm Island went horribly wrong, for me at least. Everything was going smoothly; we chugged up the Forth, viewing the bridges from a completely different perspective and were treated to a close up view of seals crammed onto a buoy like sardines, basking in the sun.

Perhaps the three-hour trip was too long or maybe it was the on-board snacks, but something disrupted the harmony. We were sitting quietly in the saloon, sailing home, when my daughter launched herself at my youngest son with a vehemence that I hadn't seen before. In retaliation he reached over the table and wrenched her bag with such a force it snapped the strap, and then there was an explosion of tears. At that excruciating moment all I could see was what seemed like an entire cabin of open-mouthed international visitors taking in the spectacle and I just wanted to jump ship to cool my embarrassment.

Now, I can vaguely remember parts of the beautiful Abbey, but what vividly sticks in my mind are my children's fuming faces. Luckily for them, I had forgotten my camera!

WHAT a great day we had at the Apple Day on the community orchard, when about 100 adults and children celebrated this year's bumper crop. We had harvested some of the apples and stored

them for this day, but many others were supplied from Portobello gardens, and more were brought on the day for pressing.

The juice produced can be drunk immediately for that full fruity flavour with no sweeteners, preservatives or other additives needed, or taken away in cartons for the following day. For longer-term consumption, bottles were available from Portobello Apple in six grades of sweetness, all the apples being hand-picked from a community network of local orchards and hand-pressed.

Games such as 'Bat the Rat' were played, tea and buns consumed, apple sculptures created, and an enterprising local young lady set up a face painting stall in the willow circle.

All are welcome at the community orchard at any time. Work days are on the last Saturday of the month. Look out for posters.

It's been a long time since news of our wind turbine project, but progress is being slowly made. A lot of hard work is taking place, in conjunction with our community partner Greener Leith, to ensure that when a planning application is made next year, thorough community consultation has been carried out and the accompanying reports and studies are as comprehensive as they can be, to give us the best proposal possible.

On a more immediate note, the new design of Porty Shopper is now available; 17 were already snapped up at the November market despite the miserable downpour. They are also available from many of the independent shops such as Earthy, Banana Republic, Findlay's, Fine Wine and Williamson's fishmongers. At only £3 they are a bargain. The bags, and Porty T-shirts, will be available at the market on 7th December and make great Christmas gifts.

Stephen Hawkins, PEDAL

SUSTAINABLE PORTY

GROWING ORGANIC



with Susan Burns



IT'S time for shed clearing, ordering seeds, emptying compost heaps, checking stored apples, potatoes, etc... who said winter was a quiet time! I love having time to make a list of things to be done, knowing that the garden isn't getting out of control and deadlines aren't being missed.

Cleaning and bubble-wrapping the greenhouse is high on the list before Christmas. Be ruthless and throw out plants that are borderline beautiful. I know that tiny little seedling will not survive the cold and low light levels in January and February and is taking up valuable greenhouse space; this I have learnt over many years. So out it goes.

If the winter is mild then it is worth doing a final grass cut and edging before Christmas. I still check to see if some seeds are ready for harvesting, such as poppies and marigolds, popping the whole plant into a paper bag and leaving somewhere cool, dry and dark until time for re-sowing. Old Hoover bags are good for this. I have had success in just laying out the stalks on bare soil where I wish them to grow, similar to how a meadow reseeds itself.

If you have cleared ground for whatever reason, cover it - hard rain causes panning in clay soils and sandy soils just leach out all the nutrients.

Any leafy crops for salads, except kale which is very hardy, should be covered with cloches of some type - an old window on a few bricks, or wire hoops with fleece over. That small amount of protection means the difference between enjoying salad through the winter or finding a blackened mush due to frost.

I only clear plants that don't look attractive, leaving some structure through the winter and seeds for the birds. If you have grasses that have been blown down but are still presentable, cut them off at the base and clump together with an elastic band, then put into a shrub that will support the sheaf to give height, interest and perhaps seeds. I cut sunflower heads before they lie on the ground and the mice get them; I hang them from trees throughout the winter, then the blue tits eat the pests as well as the odd sunflower kernel.

Keep your precious compost for putting round anything newly planted, such as a new shrub or tree for winter scent. Ask for garden centre vouchers for Christmas presents, as some of these extremely choice plants are expensive, but worth every penny.

PORTOBELLO TIMEBANK

ON 11th January 2014 from 2-4pm in Portobello Library, Portobello Timebank will hold an event offering a fabric jewellery workshop, help with letter writing and form filling, trouser hemming, shoe shining, something for the kids and maybe more. Bring a friend or the family (and your shoes for shining and trousers for hemming). There will also be a Coffee & Cake stall and an opportunity to sign up as a Member of the Time Bank.

Time Banking is a way of exchanging skills, knowledge and experiences, at the same time creating a more integrated

community where everyone's time is equally valued. It is based on the principle that for every hour of time a person contributes to help someone else they receive the equivalent in time credits. These are stored and then exchanged for services from others. For example, if you help someone for an hour decorating their home, you can 'buy' an hour of someone helping you, perhaps teaching you to cook. It's that simple and it works for any service or talent you can offer. For more info see our Facebook page '[Portobello Timebank](#)'.

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BOOK REVIEW:

PORTOBELLO AND THE GREAT WAR

THOSE who survived the conflict which broke out in 1914 always called it the Great War, even though as early as 1919 a sadly prophetic pessimist dared to write of it simply as the First World War. The respected local historians Archie Foley and Margaret Munro use 'the Great War' for the title of their new study, which will be one of many that will be coming out to mark the centenary of the war's outbreak.



Photo by Peter E. Ross

Archie and Margaret explore people's experiences and memories, using a varied range of local sources. They have accessed a cache of letters to Norah Torrance, a girl who lived with her family in a large house called Mount Lodge. It was regularly open to locally-based soldiers on short leave periods or convalescing and many of them, once at the front, took comfort in writing to her. In this book we are privileged to read a selection of these letters.

Volunteering in 1914-15, or being conscripted in 1916, could mean paying the ultimate price and the authors guide us to where we can find the names of the fallen on local church and school memorials. Thanks to them we now know where to find Joseph Brown, an Englishman in the Royal Field Artillery, who married a local girl while based at Piershill Barracks. Three years later he died of wounds in England and she brought his body back home, hoping to have him buried in St. Mark's Episcopal Church's graveyard. This was refused, so she had him laid to rest in Portobello Cemetery.

For those who want to know how Portobello helped with the food crisis created by the German U-boat offensive or how the local community tried to meet the needs of the many soldiers based in the area, before heading for the front in France and further afield, this is the book they will turn to. As reviewer my first duty, therefore, is to congratulate the authors for all the hard work they have put into giving us this informative and finely illustrated work.

Ian S Wood

Archie Foley and Margaret Munro, *Portobello and The Great War*. Amberley Publishing. ISBN 9 781445 611600 128 pages. Price £12.99

(The book can be bought from Portobello Library, or signed copies from the authors: Archie Foley, tel. 669 0184, email alfoley21@sky.com or Margaret Munro, tel. 657 2866, email munroporto@hotmail.com)

FROM THE ARCHIVE:

ST MARKS PANTO GROUP



THE performers in St Mark's Pantomime Group held this party in Portobello Town Hall in either 1948 or 1949. Ronnie McCulloch is in the second back row, 4th from right, with his sister Margaret on his left and Noreen Gibson on his right. Margaret Scott, centre front row sitting, wearing dark dress and pearls, taught dancing and the pantomime producer Mr Sandison is on her right. The Rector was Mr Henderson. If you recognise yourself, or can give us any information about the photograph, please contact Margaret Munro on 657 2866 or email munroporto@hotmail.com



Photo by Margaret Munro

THE past few months has seen the final demise of the Fun City and the start of building the new housing development on this historic site.

KILN RENOVATION MAKES PROGRESS

A NEW contractor, LTM, has September and are hoping to complete the project by the end of the year, although this is weather dependant.

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FRINGE AT THE SEASIDE RE-VISITED

MANY readers will remember Fringe at the Seaside which brought Edinburgh Fringe events to Portobello from 1986-1992. Local man Bob Sinclair was part of the organising committee and took some video footage which had been left untouched since then. Now Bob has extracted a 10 minute snapshot of the 1990 and 1992 events and put it on YouTube for all to see. "Quality is not so good", he says, "but it is a good record of the event, with sound". And lots of you may recognise your younger selves! See 'Fringe at the Seaside Portobello' on YouTube.

Bob plans to produce another couple of 10 minute snapshots with a different slant, such as local people and so on, for the historical record.

JOIN THE 'CHRISTMAS CRAWL'

LOTS of the shops along Portobello High Street will stay open from 5-8pm for the 'Christmas Crawl' on Thursday 28th November, and most will offer discounts and nibbles. The switch-on of Christmas Lights at 5pm will start things off and Towerbank School Choir will perform outside the Town Hall at 6pm. Most of the shops taking part will also be open for late night shopping each Thursday in December in the run-up to Christmas.

AMNESTY - LOCAL NEWS

THIS year's major fundraising event, on 12th October at the Bongo Club, realised £530 after costs for Group funds. Thanks to all members who worked so hard on publicity and ticket sales, and to all in Portobello who supported the event. The Group's financial position will allow an enhanced contribution to Amnesty UK for human rights work worldwide.

We greatly appreciated another financial boost for Amnesty - the August charity of the month at Portobello Baptist Church, a fine social occasion which realised over £200 and raised our profile significantly.

At its meetings in September and October at The Dalriada, our Letter-writing Group wrote 13 appeal letters to 10 countries on behalf of prisoners of conscience, human rights defenders and people "gone missing" in these states which harass and imprison peaceful protesters. Anyone is welcome on the first Wednesday of the month between 7.30-8.30pm.

Group stalls at recent Portobello Markets featured Sri Lanka, one of the most brutal and repressive countries. Over 50 cards were signed, appealing to the country's President for a full investigation of the "disappearance" of Prageeth Eknaligoda, a journalist abducted just before the Presidential elections - criticism of the incumbent being the likely reason. A petition to the Commonwealth Secretary was signed by over 100 people, with the aim of a challenge on Sri Lanka's appalling human rights record being made at the Commonwealth Conference in November.

Our annual Greetings Card Campaign will feature at our Human Rights Day stall on Saturday 7th December, near the Town Hall, from 10.30am-1pm.

The Group meets on the third Monday of each month at 7.30pm in Portobello Old Parish Church Hall. Visitors always welcome.

David Turner

BASICS BANK IN OPERATION

A Local Crisis Foodshare Programme, run by Portobello and Craigentiny Churches Together, was established at Wilson Memorial Church, at the corner of Moira Terrace/Kekewich Avenue, in March 2012. Since the launch over 150 people have been helped with some basic necessities - about 20 bags of food and toiletries per person over a six-week period. Apart from supplies of fresh fruit, veg and ready meals delivered weekly by The Cyrenians for a fee, everything else is donated by church members and a growing band of other interested people.

We operate a 'referral only'

system, whereby various charities and other agencies send people to us. We are meeting people who, for a variety of reasons, find themselves in need and our aim is to provide a friendly and welcoming atmosphere, offering friendship and encouragement as well as food.

We'd be delighted to see many more people getting involved, so if any Reporter readers would like to donate non-perishable food stuffs or toiletries, please call 669 6636 for further details, or come along to one of our meetings on Tuesdays from 10am-1pm in Wilson Memorial's small hall.

Rev. Ralph Dunn

WHAT'S going on in winter at the Wash House, your local halls-for-hire and community centre?

We have oodles of activities for all age-ranges: soccer, zumba, gentle exercise, enjoya-ball, music, singing and art classes, languages, baby sensory, youth club, doggie training... and a new teenage art class beginning on Wednesdays in January. Why not call us and see if there's something for you? If there isn't, drop in a suggestion or consider starting your own activity or holding a one-off event.

Look out for events and entertainment we're keeping under wraps till the New Year.

What else would you like to see happening in Porty? Why not consider us for your next event or gathering? We have four spaces for hire, plus a working kitchen: a small self-contained lounge, computer-facilitated room, medium-sized art/music/meeting room and our main hall, which comfortably holds up to 216 folk. This has a decent sized stage, straightforward lighting and sound systems and has just been redecorated, with the addition of a lovely new floor. It is also suitable and marked out for various sports activities.

We hope to see or hear from you soon. Contact us by phone on 0131 669 8275, drop by at 3 Adelphi Grove, check out our Facebook page 'Porty Wash House'.

To all who have supported us over the years, and to those of you yet to discover The Wash House... Warmest wishes!

Sooz Glen, Chair



What's On in Portobello

St Andrew's Night **PORTY CEILIDH**: Sat. 30th Nov., 7-11pm, The Wash House, Adelphi Grove, with Belle Star Band and Fun Fiddle. Tickets £8, concess/children £5, from The 'Wild' Flower Shop, 90 Portobello High Street; under 5s free.

PORTOBELLO CHRISTMAS COMEDY NIGHT: Fri. 6th Dec., 8.30pm, The Dalriada. Tickets £10 from venue, at door, or brownpapertickets.com - Headliner, Chris Conroy; MC Steven Davidson; with Richard Pulsford, Daisy Earl and special guests. For info. call 07552762063.

PARSONS GREEN SCHOOL FAYRE: Sat. 7th Dec., 12-2pm. Tea, coffee, soft drinks and home bakes, raffle, toys, tombola, books, craft stalls and more.

Admission £1, children 50p.

A CONCERT for Christian Aid: Sat. 7th Dec, 7pm, St Philip's Church Joppa, with singing group 'Octave' and friends, and something for children. Adults £10/ children £5, including refreshments.

PORTOBELLO MARKET: Sat. 7th Dec., 9.30am-1.30pm, Brighton Park. Organic fruit, veg, meat, etc. For more info. or to book a stall contact info@pedal-porty.org.uk Next date: 1st Feb, 2014.

BURNS SUPPER FOR CHRISTIAN AID: Sat. 18th Jan. 7pm, Portobello Old Parish Church Hall. Immortal Memory by Scotsman journalist Jim Gilchrist. Call 669 5257 for tickets, price £12.50.

PEDAL AGM - Wednesday 22nd January at 7.30 pm in St James Church hall, Rosefield Place. Includes a talk on Portobello honey by microbiologist Dr Lorna Fyfe. All welcome.

AFTERNOON DANCING: ballroom, sequence, line dancing, to the sound of Duncan McBain, Weds/Fridays, 1.30-4pm, St James Church Hall, Rosefield St. £2.50 incl. refreshments.

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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
Receive regular Reports by email or view on www.porty.org.uk

Cllr DAVID WALKER, Labour:
2nd and 4th Mondays of the month at Magdalene Community Centre, 5.30-6.15pm
Cllr Walker may also be contacted at: City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1YJ, tel: 529 4972, or e-mail: david.walker1@edinburgh.gov.uk

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POD FILM BRINGS THE RAILWAY MAN

PREMIERE TO PORTOBELLO

PORTOBELLO Open Door (POD) are delighted to announce that they will screen a premiere of *The Railway Man* on Saturday 11th January. The film, based on his book of the same name, is about the life of Eric Lomax who was born and grew up in Portobello. He was captured by the Japanese in Singapore during WW2 and taken to work on building the Burma Railway. The film, starring Colin Firth and Nicole Kidman, is due for release on 1st January 2014 and its owners Lionsgate have kindly given POD Film permission to screen it due to the strong local connection and in support of community cinema.

The Christmas classic *It's A Wonderful Life* will be screened on Saturday 7th December at 7pm, followed by seasonal drinks. Tickets at £5/£3 conc. (U18 and 60+) will be on sale at Popeye's Sandwich Bar from 30th November.

Both films will be shown on a large screen at The Wash House, Adelphi Grove. For more information see www.the-pod.org/film-night.html

Mark Tweedie

FATHER'S BOOKS BACK IN PRINT

IN an earlier issue we published a story about Parsons Green Primary School pupil support assistant Anna Robb's search for a publisher for her late father's novels, which had been out of print for more than 40 years. John Robb was a Fleet Street journalist, war correspondent with the French Foreign Legion and successful author of sci-fi, war and crime novels. He also became a prolific writer of westerns for adults and younger readers in the 1960s and 70s. One of his best Legion novels *Punitive Action* was filmed by United Artists as *Desert Sand* in 1955.

Following our article, local book collector Derek Thompson, who had collected all of John's novels, contacted *The Reporter* and put Anna in touch with Tyneside writer and literary agent Phil Harbottle. Phil's Cosmos Literary Agency specialises in restoring to print popular fiction of the post-war decade. He was already familiar with John's work and set to work retyping and retitling some of the novels for publication. Now around six have been reprinted in England by large-print publishers Ulverscroft Books and as paperbacks in America by Wildside Press. His Foreign Legion titles are available online as eBooks from Piccadilly Publishing.

Anna is delighted, and says: "I would like to thank Derek Thompson again for all his help. I've found many more of my father's books that I didn't know existed because of him and will now continue my search for the rest of his novels. Thanks to Phil's efforts, I've realised my dream of seeing his books back in print."

Karen Combe

QUILTERS RAISE FUNDS FOR CHARITIES

THE Milton Quilters held a very successful two-day exhibition of their work in October, the proceeds of which were donated to their chosen charities. Richmond Hope, Craigmillar, a children's bereavement project, received £2000 and 20 quilts, and the Personnel Recovery Centre in the grounds of Erskine House, Gilmerton, received £500. The Centre provides accommodation and specialised support for soldiers who have

been wounded, injured or are long-term sick, allowing them to recover in a structured environment. The Quilters thank everyone for their support in making these donations possible.

The group also donated 45 small quilts to premature baby units, 26 comfort quilts to care homes and residents in the community, and 33 quilts to Linus, a project helping children and young adults recover from trauma and illness.

LOCAL WOMAN AWARDED MBE

NANCY SCOTT was appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for public service in the Queen's Birthday Honours. Nancy, who lives in Portobello, retired from the Scottish Government in May after over 44 years, the last 26 as a Counselling and Staff Welfare Officer. She holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Counselling and is a member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, and used her expertise to help people who were often at their most vulnerable and experiencing great personal difficulty. Nancy is pictured here after receiving her honour at an Investiture at Buckingham Palace on 23rd October.



Photo by Ross Scott

TANZANIAN TEACHING TRIP

I RETURNED to Tanzania at the beginning of June for 11 weeks, as a volunteer with the Twende Pamoja Trust. This was a great opportunity to meet new people and for me to be reunited with old friends from my previous visit.

For the first month I was part of a group of five who ran two days of workshops at a seminar for 1,020 primary children from the local diocese. There are now 17 school- and three parish-partnerships in the trust, including Towerbank, Holy Rood and St John's, and we also travelled around, visiting many of them.

Early in July we were joined by teachers from schools in Scotland, three of whom climbed Mt Kilimanjaro before spending a week with their partner schools. Meanwhile, during our travels my group ran workshops in the partnered secondary schools.

I stayed on in Tanzania with one of the group when the others returned home at the end of July. We worked in St Ursula, an English-medium primary school, helping in English and computing classes and spending time with the children in after-school activities, before returning home at the end of August.

Lewis Dick

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NEW YOUTH HOCKEY CLUB

CALA Edinburgh Hockey Club has recently started up a youth satellite club, CALA East, open to all boys and girls in the school age range P5-S1. Training takes place on Wednesday afternoons from 4.15 to 5.15pm on Holy Rood High School's Astro pitch. The club is working closely with Active Schools and has received support funding from the London

2012 legacy charity, Sported. Over 45 boys and girls are already registered, and more are welcome. If your child is interested, please contact Mark at cala.east@gmail.com for further information.

The club is also looking for coaches. If you have a hockey background and would like to get involved, they would be delighted to hear from you.



AT their Charity Day and other fundraising events during the summer, the Ladies Section of Willowbrae Bowling Club raised £1500 for Macmillan Cancer Support. Lady President Linda Cassels (right) is seen presenting a cheque to the charity's Jayne Forbes.

PORTOBELLO RFC DEVELOPING FUTURE TALENT

PORTOBELLO Rugby Club has been running Mini and Youth Rugby for a number of years and we are currently fielding teams from Primary 2 to Under-18 level. Our Mini Rugby section, the Portobello Hornets consists of teams from Primary 2 to 7.

We are based at Cavalry Park, and train there on Sundays at 11am and at Jack Kane Sports Centre on Thursdays at 7pm. You may also see us training on Portobello beach, our own 'all weather' surface.

During the season, from August to May, we play home and away matches and go to tournaments which give us the chance to compete for trophies and medals. We are also conscious of children's development within rugby and our coaches are all SRU qualified. The club has an appointed child protection officer and all coaches undergo annual disclosure checks.

Portobello RFC is a friendly club where children can gain confidence, make friends and play rugby in a structured, disciplined and safe environment.

To find out more contact the Mini Rugby Convenor at mccowans@virginmedia.com or call 0754 999 4584.

Fraser McCowan

IN THE SADDLE



PORTOBELLO'S cycling club, the aptly named Porto-Velo, has completed a very successful summer season. The regular fitness rides have attracted groups of a dozen or more at the bandstand each Sunday morning. In early October, the club ran its first "century" ride - a route of just over 100 miles, taking in a 1 in 5 climb from Talla reservoir up to Meggett reservoir before the descent down to St Mary's Loch. Rides will continue (weather permitting) throughout the winter, and now start from the later time of 9am. The club is also offering bike maintenance sessions to help members improve their confidence in fixing punctures and keeping gears and brakes working smoothly. New riders are always welcome. For information about the club's activities, visit www.porto-velo.com

Andrew Mylne

PORTY PLAYERS MAKE SCOTTISH WATER POLO TEAM

SCOTLAND will host a Commonwealth Water Polo Tournament in Aberdeen next April. Although water polo is not an official sport in the Games, most of the major Commonwealth countries are expected to send their national teams, which will allow Scottish teams to play at this level. Portobello will be well represented in both the Scottish men's and women's teams.

Meanwhile, Portobello men are again in the Super 5s competition, in which the top five teams in the British Water Polo League play each other twice to decide the overall winner. The other four have players from the Team GB side who played in the London Olympics, making Portobello the underdogs. Portobello, however, have assem-

bled a strong squad, a mixture of youth and experience with local and international talent, and will be fighting hard in all the matches.

Portobello's new women's team made their debut in Scottish competitions this season. Some of them also play for Caledonia, a combined Scottish team, who have also qualified for the British Women's Water Polo League Super 5s competition for the first time.

The younger age groups are making good progress, with the Under 15s sitting second in the Scottish League table and on track to qualify for the final stages of the competition.

For more information see <http://polo.portobelloasc.com/>

Kathleen Byron

Gemma's Gym

How well do you move?

THIS may seem a strange question, but if you look around at people going about their everyday business, do they walk with heads held high and with ease? Next time you are in front of a mirror, check your own posture. Look at what your shoulders tend to do when you are relaxed.

As a personal trainer, I see people with postural issues come into the gym with fitness goals and exercises that they love to do, but are they the correct ones? The answer can be "no", and that is why it's important that posture is checked and corrected before continuing with exercises.

The way the body is designed, we should be able to squat, lunge, push, pull and walk with great technique but, as we grow, this can worsen depending on our daily activities. If you sit at a desk for eight hours a day, for example, your body will adapt and change, which can be a bad thing. Hip flexors can become tight and glutes become stretched and weakened, leading to a painful curvature of the lower spine. It is therefore crucial that when you are in the gym you do exercises to help correct this. Lunges, squats and stretching will help, but consult your fitness professionals and aim to have perfect posture as well as achieving those fitness goals.

Gemma Hopewell,
gemma.hopewell@edinburghcollege.ac.uk

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