

THE Portobello REPORTER

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

BABY MOBY'S SAD END



Photo by Lee Kindness

IN mid January a stranded sperm whale was spotted off Joppa beach and reported to the Scottish Marine Animal Strandings Scheme. It was first thought to be a basking shark, then a bottlenose whale or a minke whale, before it was finally correctly identified.

Sperm whales are not normally found in the Firth of Forth and are even rare in the North Sea which is thought to be too shallow for them and a 'whale trap'. They are widely distributed and normally live in deep waters where they hunt for squid. They are the biggest of the toothed whales, the largest toothed

predator and males can grow to 20.5 metres.

Unfortunately it was already dead when the rescue attempt was initiated, and had to be towed to Burntisland to be lifted into a lorry and taken to the Viridor landfill site at Dunbar. There, a necropsy was performed which revealed that the animal was a sub-adult, 14 metres long, weighing over 26 tonnes, and had a kilo of squid beaks in its stomach. It is thought to have become lost when hunting squid off the Norwegian coast, ending up trapped in the Firth of Forth as it attempted to head west.

The case was investigated

by SRUC's Andrew Brownlow, a vet who heads the strandings scheme. "There had been reports that the whale had been injured, possibly by a boat, but we found no evidence of that," says Andrew. "We have taken various samples which we can use to piece together what happened. However, it looks as though our casualty was one more of the many that have been recorded over the centuries: sperm whales lured into the North Sea chasing food and then getting disoriented in the relatively shallow waters off the east coast."

Peter E Ross

PUBLIC ACCESS DEFIBRILLATORS CAN HELP SAVE LIVES



Photo by Peter E. Ross

SCOTMID Co-operative, in partnership with the Scottish Ambulance Service, has installed a community public access defibrillator in its Portobello store as part of their national project to provide automated external defibrillators (AED) in areas where they can help save lives. The portable device is for emergency treatment of a heart attack wherever it is needed, not just in the store or its grounds.

Staff have received training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of the AED - a device that gives the heart an electric shock to restart it in the first few minutes following cardiac arrest - while awaiting the arrival of an ambulance. Store manager Graham Phillip, pictured on the right with senior sales assistant Ali McCondochie and sales assistant Adam Varga, says: "Four or five members of staff have been trained to use the defibrillator which is really straightforward to use. You could save somebody's life, so it is well worth having."

According to the Scottish Ambulance Service, emergency treatment given within four minutes of a heart attack can improve survival rates by between 40-60%. The national public defibrillator partnership is now in its fourth year and has so far installed 30 devices in stores throughout Scotland.

There is a growing awareness that public access defibrillators are as essential as fire extinguishers in public places. There may be others already installed in the area and to help people locate them, *The Portobello Reporter* is compiling a list of local devices and would be pleased to hear from organisations and businesses that have one.

Karen Combe

KILN FINALLY RESTORED

AT last we are able to report that the 1909 pottery kiln has been rebuilt. The brickwork has been completed to a very high standard and it is well worth visiting to see this. A 2013 date-brick marks the start of the rebuilt brickwork and can be seen from the pavement. Councillor Maureen Child and Portobello Heritage Trust Chair Margaret Munro inserted the brick at the 'topping out' ceremony on 20th November 2013. The 1909 and 1906 kilns are the last remaining buildings of the pottery industry in Scotland and are scheduled monuments. Trust Directors will continue to work with

the Council to ensure that the agreed maintenance programme is carried out.

After the collapse of the kiln, during repair work in August 2006, members of the community worked with the City of Edinburgh Council to ensure that it would be rebuilt. It was decided that a formally-constituted group would have greater success with negotiations, so Portobello Heritage Trust was established, a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. It has been a long and, at times, difficult project, working through the failures of various contractors and departmental reorganisa-

tion within the Council. This makes the successful completion of the work a great cause for celebration.

The Trust plan to hold a celebratory community event on Saturday, 10th May. Put this date in your diary and look out for posters with more details nearer the time. An illustrated exhibition about the kilns and Buchan's pottery, by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, will be on display in Portobello Library throughout May. Photographs from the 'topping out' ceremony can be found at www.portobelloheritagetrust.co.uk

Margaret Munro

PORTY PROFILE No. 53

MORAG MYLNE

MORAG MYLNE is a busy woman: she is an advocate, wife, mother of two, Trustee of Christian Aid, Chairperson of Christian Aid in Scotland and an elder at St Philips Church.



Photo by Kathleen Byron

Morag came to Portobello 12 years ago as a newlywed, as they wanted to be near the sea. "This is the longest I have ever lived in the same place," she tells me. Prior to this she had lived all over the world.

Although Morag was born in Australia she spent a part of her childhood in Fife while her father was studying Divinity at St Andrews. They then went to Kenya for three years and lived in Nairobi. "It was a big contrast to rural Fife and quite challenging in terms of the contrasts between wealth and poverty," she says.

She finished school in Dumfriesshire and did a degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Oxford. She then spent a year teaching English at a College of Traditional Chinese Medicine in China, during which she developed appendicitis. "They gave me Chinese herbs, which tasted vile and vast quantities of penicillin, in order to avoid surgery. Then acupuncture for the pain. It worked perfectly. It just drained the pain away," she says.

Morag then came to Edinburgh; she got her Law degree and qualified as a solicitor, later becoming an advocate who specialises in public law cases. She tries to do her legal work part-time, spending the rest with her children.

From 2004 to 2008 Morag was Convenor of the Church of Scotland's Church and Nation Committee, then of the Church and Society Council. Having been a spokeswoman for the Church on matters of public concern, she was asked by Christian Aid to become a Trustee and Chair of their organisation in Scotland. "My role is one of governance," she says. She is also involved with the outreach group at St Philips.

Morag and her family are now in their second house in Portobello. "We were in Joppa Road first and moved to this house in October 2012", she says. "So we moved five minutes down the road, or up the road, as we were very keen to stay in Portobello."

Kathleen Byron

ON THE BEAT

THE Community Policing Teams (CPTs) covering the East Neighbourhood area, and those across Edinburgh, have been restructured, to ensure that local officers are visible and accessible when needed, and able to prioritise and tackle the issues that are important to their community.

From 13th January 2014, the number of officers in CPTs has increased and they will be available seven days a week, and for greater periods of the day and evening when the call demand is higher. They will also be undertaking nightshift duties at the weekends, providing additional support for response officers dealing with antisocial behaviour. Sgt John Young is available as a point of contact for Portobello/Joppa and is able to manage specific local issues that emerge in the area.

Edinburgh Division has also implemented an appointment system which enables people to see officers about non-emergency issues at a time and place convenient for them.

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CRIME REPORT: Over the past few months there has been a spate of housebreakings and bicycle thefts in the Portobello and Joppa area. In response, both uniform and plain clothes patrols have been increased and crime prevention advice has been circulated to householders. With the help of information from the community, arrests have been made, resulting in a significant decrease in these crimes.

For information on your local team and crime prevention advice, log on to www.scotland.police.uk and click on 'Your Community'. We also have a local community policing twitter account @EdinEastPolice that provides information on crime appeals, updates and matters affecting the local community.

The Local CPT

TIMEBANK LAUNCHED

THE Portobello Timebank event at the Library in January was a great success and there are now over 20 members. This great idea is about to become a reality and people will soon be able to start requesting and offering time. Those long put-off tasks are close to being ticked off the to-do list – by someone else.

The Portobello Timebank is organized by a very small group of time-short volunteers and needs a time broker, or preferably two to share the organization of the exchanges. If you could commit 3-4 hours a week and would be interested in finding out more, please get in touch

by email to: portobello@edinburghtimebank.org.uk

To join the Timebank, please email for a membership form, which will ask for information on what you would like to offer/receive with your time, and details of two people who can provide a reference for you.

Time is the great equalizer. That is the fundamental concept of timebanking: everyone's time is worth the same, no matter what skills and experience they bring to share. 1 hour of shopping = 1 hour of gardening = 1 hour of knitting = 1 hour of translating = 1 hour of dog walking.... Join the bank!

Laura Plumb

NEWS IN BRIEF

FIGGATE BURN PARK was formally opened on 30th April 1938. Today, it is well used by walkers, dogs, bikes, scooters, runners and wildlife experts, and over 140 identifiable species of plants grow there. See more on the park's Facebook page.

There are plans for a belated celebration of last year's 75th anniversary of the opening and Geoff Pearson would welcome any memories, stories or photographs to add to the collection. Please contact: gspearson@btopenworld.com

MARIE CURIE Cancer Care needs volunteers to give out daffodil pins in return for donations, for just one hour, during the Great Daffodil Appeal in March. Please contact Fiona Beaton on 0131 470 2291 or visit www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil. Marie Curie Nurses provide free care to people with terminal illnesses in their own homes and the Marie Curie Hospice. The Appeal will help this care to continue.

THE BURNS SUPPER on 18th January in the Portobello Old Parish Church Hall raised £1,000 for Christian Aid, bringing the total over the years to £24,358.

The Portobello Reporter
is produced by volunteers, with contributions in this issue from 32 local people. If you have something you would like to see in print call **669 3466** or email us at portyreporter@btinternet.com JUNE DEADLINE 6TH MAY.

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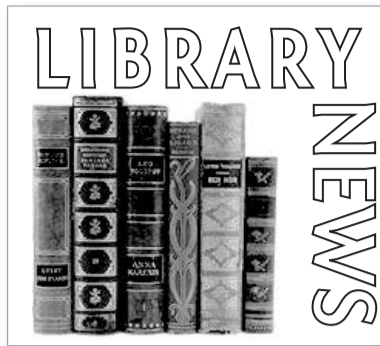
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EASTER holidays start on 4th April this year and we are already planning our Easter activities for children, which are looking great. For more information, ask a member of staff before the holidays, or check us on Facebook - www.facebook.com/PortobelloLibrary



Please remember that we only run one Wednesday Rhymetime over school holiday periods instead of the usual two; this is at 10.30am.

Everyone is looking forward to World Book Night on 23rd April when, to celebrate reading and books, volunteers give out books supplied by The World Book Night charity in their communities. Once again Portobello Library staff members have signed up to be book-givers. Hopefully all three of us will be selected and we will have three very different titles to give away on the night. We are also signed up as a collection point for any volunteers who would find it convenient to pick up here the books they will be giving away. You can find more information on World Book Night at www.worldbooknight.org

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War and to commemorate this we are very pleased to be hosting a series of talks on The Great War - Portobello, Edinburgh and Beyond. Starting with the Edinburgh's War Roadshow on Saturday 26th April, when you can bring your artefacts and questions to the Edinburgh's War experts, the talks will cover the role that Pipers, Scottish Rugby Internationals, and animals, played in the First World War. Finally, on Tuesday 20th May, authors and local historians Archie Foley and Margaret Munro talk about their book *Portobello and the Great War*, which documents the impact of the First World War on life in Portobello. The book is available to buy at the library. You can find more information about Edinburgh's War at www.edinburghs-war.ed.ac.uk

In a year when everyone in Scotland has a big decision to make, we will be hosting a four-week Road to the Referendum course from Wednesday 21st May - ideal for anyone who wants to make the best-informed decision on 18th September. If you are interested, ask library staff about booking a place.

The Portobello Library Book Group meets on the first Tuesday of every month, when we will be discussing the following books:

- 1st April: *Birdsong* by Sebastian Faulks
- 6th May: *The Panopticon* by Jenni Fagan
- 3rd June: *Flight Behaviour* by Barbara Kingsolver

All books will be available from the library. If you are interested, ask staff for details.

Paul Hudson

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU?

PORTOBELLO and Craigmillar Neighbourhood Partnership know you are the best people to ask what the local issues really are. Your views will help set the local priorities and shape the planned update of the Local Community Plan for the next three years. There are lots of ways to 'Have Your Say': Call 0131 529 6374, or e-mail: graham.rowan@edinburgh.gov.uk You can also visit our website: www.edinburghnp.org.uk and click on Portobello and Craigmillar or talk to us on the consultation bus outside the Town Hall from 12noon-2.30pm, on Friday 14 March. If you're part of a group, please encourage them to input the group's views.

What is the Portobello & Craigmillar Neighbourhood Partnership? Neighbourhood Partnership (NP) work is a driver for change and improvement. NPs aim to encourage and support community involvement and ensure that community views and concerns are considered. It helps drive more joined-up service planning and delivery.

The NP Board has representatives from the local community (often Community Councils), the local Councillors, Police, Health, and Voluntary Sector. Their focus is to ensure local service providers, groups, community representatives and interested individuals work together and tackle the issues you say are important. It co-ordinates and monitors work undertaken to tackle the local priorities included in the Local Community Plan. This plan will be updated soon and will set the priorities for the next three years, so please 'Have Your Say'.

Graham Rowan

RECYCLING COSTS HIT SCHOOLS' BUDGETS

SCHOOLS are being treated as part of the Scottish business community when it comes to responsibility for waste. Under new Waste (Scotland) Regulations launched on 1st January, all businesses including schools must now present dry recyclables for separate collection, and food businesses must comply with food waste regulations which are being phased in over two years. Fines of up to £10,000 could be charged for non-compliance.

As yet, there is little information available concerning how the laws will be implemented and enforced locally, but "drafted discussions are taking place." *The Reporter* has been told by a spokesperson for the City of Edinburgh Council that details of the costs to schools of recycling can only be obtained through a Freedom of Information request.

Portobello High School already recycles paper and cardboard and a clothing bank has been installed. According to head teacher Peigi MacArthur, recycling uplifts currently cost around £800 per annum. She says: "We are an Eco School and this is an important part of our ethos."

The new regulations fulfil a European Union directive to greatly reduce the amount of waste going into landfill or being incinerated and will help Scotland become a 'zero waste society' and benefit economically, using waste as a resource.

Karen Combe

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

ON a sunny morning in Portobello on 1st February, the Scotmid store was busy and Portobello Community Councillors were there to consult local residents on how they feel about living in the area.

You told us that you love Portobello's community spirit, you like the parks, the Prom and the open spaces, the High Street is seen as a great asset, and people like the location of Portobello, near the city for easy access but close enough to rural areas to get away from it all.

You also told us that our outdoor spaces could be better. Too much traffic is an issue and the High Street could be improved. Some said Portobello Park should be kept as it is and others that the new High school should be built there soon.

Approximately 100 people spoke to us on the day, which was brilliant. A massive "thank you" to everyone who took part.

We hope more people will keep in touch. 'Like' our [Portobello Community Council Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/PortobelloCommunityCouncil) page, write Porty Reporter on our 'wall', and be entered into a draw to win a £10 voucher for Scotmid. If you are not online, to keep in touch write your name and address and Porty Reporter on a piece of paper, put it in the PCC suggestion box at Portobello Library before 1st April, and you'll be entered into the draw.

We are hoping to keep in touch with more local residents by updating our space at the Library and holding regular consultations at Scotmid.

Emma Dempsey, PCC

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Neigh Gangsta' Gran

MY children are always fascinated to hear my mother's stories about her experiences growing up in wartime Liverpool. Sometimes, however, I think her tales about her more recent exploits are even more entertaining.

Not long ago, she travelled by train on her local west coast line to see her horses Bailey and PJ to treat them to their favourite horse pellets. When the guard checked her ticket he showed an interest in the feed and she explained where she was going. Off he went, and she didn't think any more about it until he appeared again, this time accompanied by a Transport Police officer. They conferred in hushed tones as they meticulously examined the bag of horse feed, looking serious. To her amazement, they suspected she was carrying a large bag of cubes of the illegal plant variety, which apparently look very similar to horse pellets.

After a prolonged chat, if not an interrogation, she somehow managed to convince them she wasn't a mule and her bag really did just contain horse feed and they let her go, record intact. After her close shave with the law, she was certainly in need of a cup of tea when she got home that day.

With two knee replacements and approaching her 80th birthday, my mother can no longer look after her rescue horses, so my daughter and I are going with her by train next month to visit them at their new home in Brighton. Needless to say, I'm not taking any chances: I plan to keep mum's horse snacks well out of sight!

THE annual general meeting of PEDAL – Portobello Transition Town, was held at St James' Hall and, as usual, was well attended. Four new Board members were elected.

The key speaker was Dr Lorna Fyfe from Queen Margaret University, who gave a fascinating talk on the anti-microbial properties of honey. Her research, now recognised internationally, was triggered by a comparison of the first batch of Portobello honey with the world-famous Manuka honey. From pre-Roman times, honey has been used to treat infection, particularly on the battlefield, but with the development of antibiotics this knowledge was lost. As more pathogens develop resistance to antibiotics, however, there is an urgent need to find alternatives.

Research is continuing, with samples from all over Scotland, to find the combination of active ingredients that make honey so special. It seems to be this combination that makes it so effective, unlike antibiotics which only have one active component. Most uses involve applying honey dressings to affected skin, although it may also help to control some gastro-intestinal infections. It's important though, not to forget that the honey also tastes fantastic.

A practical description of how to improve the energy performance of older properties, jauntily named 'Draughtbusting', was given by Jane Lewis and Chris Booth, who demonstrated how to draught-proof timber sliding sash windows. The strips used are relatively unobtrusive, which is important in a conservation area, and an inexpensive way of reducing heating bills and increasing comfort levels in the home. Please e-mail: info@pedal-party.org.uk for more information.

Reference was also made to a new project in Bath Street, to clear the derelict site of the former suite factory and bring it into use for local food growing. This has been initiated by local residents coming together.

Just a reminder that the market is held on the first Saturday of the month from 9.30am-1.30pm in Brighton Park, and that monthly work days at the orchard are on the last Saturday of the month from 10am-2pm. Hope to see you there!

Stephen Hawkins

SUSTAINABLE PORTY

GROWING ORGANIC



with Susan Burns



A NEW pair of secateurs is a great present for any gardener for the new year's gardening. The quick and efficient way they cut through stems and branches seems to save a lot of time, effort and energy. I run a lighted match along the blades after pruning to keep passing on of cross-infections to a minimum. My other favourite tool that makes a worthwhile investment is long-handled loppers. Check all your tools to ensure they are in good working order.

Make a note to prune all spring flowering shrubs immediately after they've flowered, then they won't increase in size but will increase in flower power for next year. Shrubs like forsythia, deutzia and camellias can even be kept hedge-like, albeit informally. Cut out dead, diseased and crossing branches and cut one in three right down to the ground.

Trying something new is always exciting and this year I'm having a go with lots of different oriental spicy salad greens, such as Vietnamese mustard, which is available from seed catalogues. Last year I grew some very dark purple potatoes. They keep the colour when cooked, so looked great in soup, but the downside was that if harvesting them in dull light I couldn't always make them out, as they are not a big potato, so I probably missed a few.

Get some fleece (or net curtains or newspapers) and some clothes pegs ready and watch the weather forecast until mid-May when the risk of frost is over, and be prepared to nip out and protect tender acers, or anything newly planted.

If you have sandy soil, sowing seeds of annuals direct into the soil around the end of March may work in a good year - on clay the best time is around the end of April - if, and only if, you've warmed the soil first with cloches or plastic sheeting. I mix whole packets of seeds together and sow thinly, raking them over lightly, then cover with fleece or netting for a few weeks and remove it once the seedlings are about 5 cm (a few inches) high. A few sharp sticks or thorny prunings keep cats and foxes off until they are well established. I need to protect pots, too, from foxes digging in them, so I cover them with rose prunings until the plants are larger.

MAKE BANANAS FAIR

BANANAS will be the main topic of this year's Fairtrade Fortnight, which runs from 24th February to 9th March.

Fairtrade bananas first appeared in our shops 13 years ago. There are now 1.2 billion sold in the UK, an amazing one in three of all banana sales. Despite this achievement and the vast improvement in working conditions for some of the poorest workers in the world, a serious problem at the heart of the banana business, supermarket price wars, could force farmers in developing countries out of business.

That is why the Fairtrade Foundation has launched a new campaign, Make Bananas Fair, asking the UK public to help end these price wars, including a petition asking the government to urgently investigate the impact of retailer pricing practices. See www.fairtrade.org.uk

Portobello Fairtrade Forum highlighted the campaign at its Fairtrade tasting stall in our local co-op during Fairtrade Fortnight.

Jim Baird

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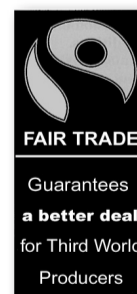
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SCOTLAND'S WAR

A UNIQUE opportunity will allow the present generation of Scots to trace the footsteps of their ancestors in order to tell the whole story of Scotland's people, their service and their sacrifice in the Great War, and to reflect on the consequences of a conflict that arguably changed our nation forever.

Since 2008, the University of Edinburgh's Centre for the Study of Modern Conflict has been working with Edinburgh, Leith and the Lothians libraries, schools and community groups to ensure that the story of Scotland's contribution to the Great War is not forgotten. Scotland's War was launched on 28th June 2013 and a partnership has been formed with The Scottish Military Research Group, the History Fest, the National Library of Scotland and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC). A number of other organisations have indicated their desire to participate. From joint efforts over the past few years, it has become all too obvious that the history of this nation at war remains largely untold, particularly the civilian

efforts on the Home Front.

From the earliest days of the project, public engagement has been central to its success and it is intended to include communities from all over Scotland. There is now a very active programme working with libraries, carrying out WW1 archival and document searches, and the public and institutions have submitted family or institutional papers for inclusion in the WW1 public engagement initiative. Many of them can now be found on the new website www.edinburghs-war.ed.ac.uk. There are strict guidelines and an ethical policy on the submission and use of documents, photographs, artefacts and memorabilia. This digital archive will be incorporated into the Scotland's War website which will be launched in the near future. The Project Team can be contacted at: edwar@ed.ac.uk

In October 2012, in collaboration with Edinburgh City Libraries, The WW1 History Hub was launched, which is supporting people to tell family stories about their contribution to the Great



Photograph courtesy of Scotland's War

Sir Harry Lauder with his only son Captain John Currie Lauder, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. John was killed in action on 28 December 1916. Harry Lauder established the Harry Lauder Million Pound Fund for maimed Scottish soldiers and sailors in September 1917.

War. The WW1 History Hub initiative is a first in the UK and is a product of years of work between Edinburgh City Libraries and the University of Edinburgh. It can be found in Central Library, George

IV Bridge.

Portobello Library is holding several events in partnership with Edinburgh's War and details of these can be found in Library News on page three.

Margaret Munro

READERS RESPOND

WE received a very full response to our request for names for the photograph of St Mark's Pantomime Group party in our December issue. The following names were given: Joan Scott; Ann Richardson; Rev. Henderson; Mrs White, Curate's wife; John Wheatley MP; Margaret Scott; Mr Sandison; Ena Osprey; Michael Gage; Eileen Smart; Julia Brown; Ann Brown; Helen Isaac; Victor Burchell; Cyril Smart; Agnes Watt and Bobby Raith. The name Noreen Gibson was corrected to Doreen Gibb. As we are unable to reprint the photograph, if you would like to match the names to the photograph, please contact Margaret Munro by email at: munroporto@hotmail.com or by telephone on 657 2866.

FROM PORTOBELLO BURG PUBLIC SCHOOL LOG - 21st November 1917: "William Barrie (a former pupil) in the Royal Engineers gained some time ago the Military Medal, was mentioned in despatches and has been promoted to the commissioned ranks." He was better known as Ned Barrie, channel swimmer.

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FROM THE REPORTER'S ARCHIVE

IN the summer 1999 issue we reported that Portobello High School had won £1000 from a Royal Automobile Club competition for their proposal to decrease traffic congestion caused by the school run by "increasing the number and safety of pupils cycling to school".

At that time the council had no plans to take up their proposals, but since then much of what they wanted was adopted by the Safer Routes To School policy. In spite of these developments the school run continues to cause congestion and pedestrian safety and air quality concerns.

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What's On

PORTOBELLO COMEDY NIGHT Festival of Ireland Special, Fri. 14th March, 8.30pm, The Dalriada. Part of the Edinburgh Festival of Ireland. For more details and tickets go to www.brownpaper-tickets.com/event/562483

ST PATRICK'S PORTOBELLO PROMENADE PAGEANT: Sun 16th March. A family day out as the community celebrates Scottish and Irish culture on the Promenade. Pipe & Drum bands will lead a pageant of local community groups along the Promenade, beginning at The Dalriada at 2pm. Please contact office@edinburghsfestivalofireland.org if you wish your club/group/society/school/church/etc to be involved.

AMNESTY COFFEE MORNING and Book Sale: Sat. 22nd March, 10am-noon, Old Parish Church Hall, with input by Woodcraft Folk and local musicians. Donations of books, toys, bric-a-brac and baking will be very welcome.

CAR BOOT SALES (Rotary Club of Portobello): Sundays 23rd March, 27th April, 25th May, 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

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

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.

PORTOBELLO MARKET: First Sat. of each month, 9.30am-1.30pm, Brighton Park. Organic fruit, veg, meat, bakery, crafts, etc. For more information or to book a stall, contact portobello.market@live.co.uk Next dates: 5th April & 3rd May.

PORTOBELLO HERITAGE TRUST, AGM: Wed. 16th April, 7.30pm, Portobello Baptist Church Hall, 185 Portobello High Street, followed by a talk on *Broadcasting in Edinburgh: BBC Scotland's First 50 Years: The Edinburgh Connection* by Mike Shaw, retired BBC Radio Producer. All welcome. Admission free.

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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 Magdalen 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

AMNESTY - LOCAL NEWS

AMNESTY'S annual Greetings Card Campaign in December was well supported by two classes at Portobello High School who signed 90 cards, and by visitors to our stall at Portobello Market, the total coming to 143.

The speaker at our November meeting was Matthew Naumann, who has long experience of work in the former Soviet republic of Kyrgyzstan, an area of long-standing ethnic conflict. His knowledge of the background and the human rights violations that ensue, brought the problems of this part of Central Asia to life, but with encouraging aspects.

The film *Echoes of Pain of the Many* shown at the Baptist Church Café on 7th December, featured the "disappeared" in Guatemala during the civil war in the 1990s. Attendance was disappointing, and Edinburgh Filmhouse has been approached about a possible showing there.

A court hearing in Turkey in December, after seven years delay, resulted in a finding of guilt on some charges against Ferhat Gercek, our long-supported "individual at risk", and a prison sentence suspended for one year. The police officers who shot and paralysed him received custodial sentences. Appeals will follow and our support will continue until the case is closed.

The letter-writing group will meet at 7pm at The Dalriada on Wednesdays 5th March, 2nd April and 7th May. All welcome. Our stall will feature at the Portobello Markets in April, May and June, and our coffee morning will be held on 22nd March details in What's On.

The Group meets on the third Monday of each month in Portobello Church Hall or Café at 7.30pm. Visitors are warmly welcomed, without commitment. Enquiries to 0131 669 1308.

David Turner

GIFT TO THE GARDEN GANG

A PRESENTATION was made to the Garden Gang at St John's Primary School on Friday 14th February on behalf of the Christine Pugh Trust, a new charity being set up in memory of Christine Pugh who passed away last May. Christine was a well-known character around Portobello and one of her greatest joys was working with the children in the Garden Gang. The charity will sponsor projects for children and young people. Christine's partner Jeremy Devlin-Thorp is pictured with fund-raiser Pauline Connarty, presenting pupil support assistant Cath McTernan and some of the children with £200 to spend on tools, plants and whatever else they would like, to make the playground garden ready for the spring.



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AS many of you may know, our dedicated Wash House Team have been transforming your local Community Centre and now, to complement our fresh bright and shiny interior, we're about to launch our brand-new website: www.thewashhouse.org Here you can keep up-to-date with all our classes and activities, be in touch with our activity leaders, find out about special events, and enquire about and book the halls. We hope to include a virtual tour of the centre, technical specifications of our theatre space, table and seating arrangements and price lists.



We're very excited by the prospect of hosting our very own Portobello Street Band: samba style percussion (no experience necessary and instruments provided) plus brass and woodwind (bring your own instrument and a little playing experience); horn section led by Oi Musica, percussion by Jenny Gardner. Initial workshops will take place on Saturday 3rd May from 1-5pm, and Sunday 4th from 12-2.30pm which will culminate at 3pm in a giant musical train along Portobello Prom with Fun Fiddlers and friends.

For information on all our activities, to let us know about other community issues and initiatives, to enquire about hall hire, or to show interest in becoming a volunteer or board member, you can contact us on 0131 669 8275, drop by at 3 Adelphi Grove, check our Facebook page Porty Wash House, or check that brand-new website.

Sooz Glen, Chair

FUNDRAISING FOR MALAWI

IF we in Portobello raise £5,000 by May 2016 for Malawi, the Scottish Government will increase it 7:1. £5,000 from Portobello thus provides £40,000 in total. The Portobello Council of Churches is working with Christian Aid and community groups in Malawi to "enhance community based maternal and child care services in Northern Malawi". It is one of our poorest countries: 55% of Malawians live on less than \$1 per day and 31% are in severe poverty. It also has one of the highest infant

mortality rates at 675 deaths per 100,000.

If you would like to help with fundraising, or to attend and assist at upcoming fundraising events, a few of which are in the planning stage, contact stewartweaver@btinternet.com Due to the generosity of our community during the Christmas season we raised £2,500 - many thanks - so we are already halfway there. Our children in Portobello are fortunate. Let's help others.

Rev. Stewart Weaver

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PORTOBELLO PREMIERE:

THE RAILWAY MAN

THERE was an air of tense excitement at the premiere of this film on 10th January - everyone aware that it would not be an easy watch. It tells the harrowing, true-life story of the soldiers captured by the Japanese during the Second World War and forced to work on the construction of the Burma Railway. The brutality portrayed on screen had special resonance in Portobello, as this cruelty was inflicted on Eric Lomax (The Railway Man) who was born and brought up in Joppa. His story is recounted in 1980, with flashbacks to the horrors of 1942. The film focuses on the psychological trauma he suffered post war and how he tried to deal with his demons, culminating in the dramatic reunion and reconciliation with the Japanese interpreter whom he associated with his torture.

The audience was privileged to listen to our distinguished guest, Eric Lomax's daughter Charmaine, introduce the film and answer questions afterwards. She rewarded us with a great insight into the difficult life her family had endured as a result of her father's prisoner of war experiences. This made the evening very memorable and special for all present.

POD Film is very grateful to Lionsgate for giving us permission to screen the film the day after its UK release.

Margaret Holligan

POD Film's forthcoming screenings at the Wash House will be:

- Sat.8th March, 7pm *Philomena* (12A)
- Sat.12th April, 7pm *The Great Gatsby* (12A)
- Sat 10th May, 7pm *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom* (12A)

Further information at www.the-pod.org

NEW GROUPS FOR PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA

AN ART THERAPY GROUP for people with dementia will be held in Portobello Old Parish Church, Bellfield Street on Saturdays from 29th March, from 11am-12.30pm.

Organiser Daniel Killeen, a qualified art therapist, said: "Art therapy is a form of psychotherapy that uses art as its primary means of communication. Using a wide range of materials as a way of exploring thoughts and emotions can bring people to a better understanding of themselves and their problems and improve mental health and well-being. For people with dementia, among

other benefits it can provide an experience of relaxation, reducing stress, anxiety and worry".

The group is free and will initially run for six months. No experience of art is necessary. For more information see leaflets in the Community Centre, Library and health centres, contact Daniel at killeen.daniel@gmail.com or call 07766 8259 74.

A SINGING GROUP for people with dementia who still live at home and their carers is being set up in St Christopher's Church Hall, Craigentenny Road. There is easy parking

and a bus stop outside. The group, formerly known as Singing for the Brain, will meet twice monthly and the emphasis will be on enjoyment and fun. There is no charge, but donations for refreshments will be appreciated.

For more information about the group and/or joining the volunteer team to lead the singing, play the keyboard, serve refreshments and socialise, please contact : Sheila Hardie 551 1229, Kate Walker 554 4940, Diana Kerr 552 3857 or Pam Robertson 553 7239.

WELL-LOVED PARISH PRIEST RETIRES

AFTER 33 years at St John the Evangelist Church, Monsignor James Rae retired as parish priest in September.

Ordained in 1951, the then Father Rae, spent his first 11 years of priesthood as a curate in Stirling, at what was the biggest parish in the diocese; this was followed by a move to St Peter's parish in Edinburgh. He later got his first posting as parish priest at Our Lady, Mother of the Church in Currie, which also serves Ratho and Balerno. Both before and after moving to Portobello, Monsignor Rae was part of many committees, helping to run the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh.

After arriving at St John's, he was appointed deputy director of the organising committee for the visit of Pope John Paul II in 1982. This involved organising all the events for the east of Scotland, and driving to Glasgow at least every second day to help with the wider organisation of the papal visit.

During his time at St John's, Father Rae was appointed Canon, and in 2010 was elevated to Monsignor.

In the wider Portobello community, Monsignor Rae has always felt that working with other churches is important and helped set up the Portobello Council of Churches before being elected as its first chairman.

A mass was held in St John's to mark Monsignor Rae's service to the parish. Archbishop Cushley attended in what was his first official engagement in charge of the diocese. Monsignor Rae said that he was honoured to have been part of such a vibrant and spiritual parish, and had thoroughly enjoyed his time at St John's.

Lewis Dick



Photo by David Robertson

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JOPPA TENNIS - YOUR LOCAL CLUB

JOPPA Tennis is gearing up for the new season and memberships will be available from 1st April; see Facebook for details. It is good to report that our coach Callum will be continuing his very successful sessions again this season, and that our close liaison with Portobello Community Council will continue following the recent Community Council Elections; it is important to the club that we maintain this continuity with the community.

Being a member of Joppa Tennis allows your name to go into the Wimbeldon Draw for tickets for the famous championship. The number of members decides the number of tickets available to each club, and a club representative attended an Edinburgh-wide meeting to discuss allocation.

The committee has plans to improve the landscaping within the club and is looking for a local firm to complete the work. We also hope to improve the interior of the clubhouse this year.

If you like tennis and want to play, do check us out. We are right here in the heart of Joppa, just off Brunstane Road.

MT

ROWPORTY ALL SET FOR NEW SEASON

ROWPORTY goes from strength to strength, with an increased membership of nearly 130, many of them rowing throughout the winter. Besides regular training and social rowing sessions, the club has been trying some successful new ventures: circuit training for stamina and strength and technique training sessions, run by two qualified coaches.

Our training will hopefully stand us in good stead for the crowded Regatta season that will soon be upon us. As well as a series of traditional inter-club races taking place around Scotland from Ullapool to North Berwick, there will be more unusual ones: the Excise-man's Chase from which last year's crews went home

with a bottle of malt, and the equivalent of a triathlon involving a skiff, a runner, and a sailing boat organised by Newhaven. We also plan to take our boats as far afield as Lewis.

In addition to annual maintenance of our two skiffs *Icebreaker* and *Jenny Skylark*, we will be renovating a vintage 'jolly boat' - a lightweight sculling type boat last seen on local waters in the 1950s.

Rowporty is part of the Portobello Sailing and Kayaking Club, and a joint in-house ceildh will be held at the end of March, to raise funds and to celebrate the continued growth and development of community water sport in Portobello.

Peter Ashe

IN THE SADDLE NEW 'NICE 'N' STEADY' RIDES



LOCAL cycling club Porto-Velo has kept its Sunday 'fitness' rides going throughout the winter, despite some cold, wet and windy days. With spring under way, these rides are shifting up a gear - starting at the earlier time of 8am to allow longer routes to be fitted in, while still getting everyone back by lunchtime. But regular ride-leader Andrew Mylne says: "We recognise that not everyone has the time or energy for a brisk 60-mile ride on a Sunday morning, and that joining a group of lycra-clad enthusiasts can be a bit intimidating. So we are introducing new 'nice 'n' steady' rides once a month. These will be shorter, and at an altogether more leisurely pace. As with all our rides, we'll provide an experienced leader to choose an interesting route, and make sure no-one gets left behind."

For details of other forthcoming events, including family rides, keep an eye on the club website: www.porto-velo.com

Andrew Mylne

WATER POLO CLUB UPDATE

THE Portobello men's team finished fourth in the British Water Polo League Super 5s in the 2013/14 season. They also reached the semi-finals of the British Championships in Manchester on 22nd February, but lost 12-7 to Cheltenham, the eventual champions. They went on to beat Invicta, from Kent, 9-6 for third place.

The women's team will compete in Scottish competitions in 2014; some members also play for the combined Scottish team, Caledonia, who finished fifth in the Women's British Water Polo League.

With improved coaching and training time the younger players now have U14, U16

and U18 teams in the Scottish National leagues. Two of the girls, Carys Hardy and Bethany Livingstone, have been selected for the Great Britain development squad; Clayton Woods, Felix Charlton and Jamie Davidson join the Scotland Junior team who travel to the Czech Republic for an 8 Nations event in April.

Scotland is hosting a Commonwealth Water Polo Tournament in Aberdeen in April and Portobello will be well represented in both the men's and women's teams. As part of their preparation the men will play in an 8 Nation's tournament in Dublin, while the women will head to Denmark.

Kathleen Byron

Gemma's Gym

SETTING GOALS

SO here we are - a new year and a time to set those all-important goals. How has it been going so far? Have you managed to stick to what you set out to do at the beginning of January? If the answer is "yes", then well done and keep going, even on days when you really can't be bothered. You are doing brilliantly. Don't forget to tell yourself that.

If like many, the answer is "no", don't despair; tomorrow is a brand new day and time to put some more thought into making those goals more realistic. Start small and take it week by week. For example, aim for sessions that fit into your day; don't try to make it impossible before you even start, by making sessions too long. You can achieve the results you want by making good use of your time and by aiming to eliminate all barriers, thinking of solutions rather than problems.

Remember, exercise is great for stress relief and for making you feel good, but it also puts stress on your body, so be good to yourself - book that massage or try that Pilates class. Relaxation and rest are just as important as training days. You only have one body, so look after it and don't forget to give yourself some 'me time'.

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

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