

# THE **Portobello** REPORTER

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

## CAMPAIGNERS WIN MORATORIUM

**OUR FORTH** Portobello's campaign against Underground Coal Gasification (UCG) has met with some success. By imposing a moratorium the Scottish Government has bowed to the pressure they and other campaign groups have exerted.

The Portobello campaigning group has only been in existence since 2014, but has already organised a series of local consultations and meetings to help inform local people and to build alliances with other concerned groups.

Juliana Muir, a founding member, set up a 38 Degrees online petition that gathered almost 8,000 signatures. "People all over Scotland are adding their voices to the call for a complete ban on all forms of Unconventional Gas", she says. "Our community council has local opposition at 90%. It is vital that those who don't want to see the central belt wrecked by Unconventional Gas make their voices count in



the Scottish Government's moratorium public consultation."

Although the moratorium had already been announced campaigners from all over Scotland gathered at the Forth Road Bridge on 11th October to hold hands, spanning the bridge as a symbol of their opposition to UCG.

The Scottish Government's Energy Minister Fergus Ewing said: "We should never close our minds to the potential opportunities for Scotland from new energy technologies - but we must also ensure that

community, environmental and health concerns are all fully taken account of."

The Scottish Government has appointed the former chief executive of the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Professor Campbell Gemmill, to lead the examination of the issues and evidence on the impact of UCG. Once the research has been done they will begin a public consultation.

Our Forth's next event will be on 23rd January 2016 at the Town Hall. For more information see [www.ourforth.org](http://www.ourforth.org)

## CATCHMENT CHANGES

**FOLLOWING** a consultation in May and June this year the City of Edinburgh Council has decided to apply changes, as outlined in Option 4, to the catchment boundaries for schools in the area. This will allow for the increase in the number of children living in the old catchment area for Towerbank Primary School. The changes are deemed necessary because the school could not accommodate the increased demand in the long term. Projections suggest that by 2016/17 roll numbers will increase from 643 to 660, and to 700 by 2019.

The catchment boundary changes will affect not only Towerbank Primary School but also Craigentiny Primary, The Royal High Primary, Duddingston Primary, Brunstane Primary, Portobello High and Leith Academy.

The council has also agreed, in certain circumstances, to offer younger siblings places if these changes would split their family between schools.

In addition to catchment changes, they will improve routes to school by "looking to" add a Toucan crossing on Milton Road East and upgrade signs between Baileyfield and The Royal High Primary.

The boundary changes will take effect immediately.

## PRIMARY SCHOOLS TRAFFIC BAN

**A TRAFFIC** ban has been imposed around six Edinburgh primary schools at drop-off and pick-up times, including Duddingston and St John's, after they reported road safety issues with cars parking too close to school gates. Towerbank will be included in the New Year.

Edinburgh City Council's pilot scheme will see cars banned from streets outside the schools for an hour at the beginning and end of each day for 18 months. Residents or businesses within the school areas will receive a permit to allow access. The ban does not apply to vehicles displaying a disabled badge, emergency vehicles, those being used for roadworks and certain school transport vehicles.

"This builds on work local school communities already do to encourage children and families to walk, scoot and cycle to school", says Councillor Maureen Child. "We all want a safer, more pleasant environment for kids going to and from school, and we need to tackle congestion and pollution levels through initiatives like this."

## ALLOTMENTS SITE PLAN

**A PLANNING** application has been submitted by Avant Homes for the development of 28 homes and 42 allotments on the Craigentiny and Telferton allotments site, with the loss of over 50% of plots. The allotment holders were recently granted a Certificate of Lawfulness by the City of Edinburgh Council, which gives them a legitimate right under planning law to cultivate the site as they have done for over 90 years, and could be taken into account when the plans are considered.

An online campaign to prevent development has almost reached the 3,000 signatures needed to demonstrate widespread support for allotments and public green spaces. To sign, go to [www.you.38degrees.org](http://www.you.38degrees.org) and search for Craigentiny Allotments.

## TRADERS ORGANISE CHRISTMAS STREETFEST TO LIGHT UP PORTOBELLO

**THERE** will be lots happening on Portobello High Street on the evening of Thursday 3rd December from 5-8pm as the Porty Christmas Streetfest organised by Portobello Traders gets into the swing.

The Christmas lights will be switched on at 6pm, and there will be carol singing and a performance by Lothian Dance Academy on the high street. Santa will be in his grotto in Maddie & Marks, with other events and entertainment at Tribe Porty, Lothian Dance Academy, the Baptist Church Café, Potten Computer School, The Skylark and The Dalriada.

Many shops will stay open until 8pm for late night shopping, from The Just World Shop at one end of the high street to In-house Design at the other, some offering tasty nibbles and drinks and others discounts on goods.

Wooden Christmas tree decorations will be on sale - write a message and hang them on the tree. There will also be a tombola with prizes including gifts and money-off vouchers for local shops and traders.

The money raised from all events will go towards future Christmas lights and decorations for Portobello.

For full details see local posters and flyers.



Portobello strong men are cheered on in the tug 'o war by some of the hundreds of people who enjoyed another great Village Show at the beginning of September. There was a real family atmosphere, with lots to do for children and adults and the sun shone yet again.

# PORTY PROFILE No. 60 CAL MacANINCH

**DECIDING** to move to Portobello after spending 20 years in London was a major decision for Cal, as it means he has to travel away for much of his acting work. It is a decision he has not regretted, saying: "Coming home to Porty is brilliant. It is a great cosmopolitan community, sporty, active, artistic and caring."

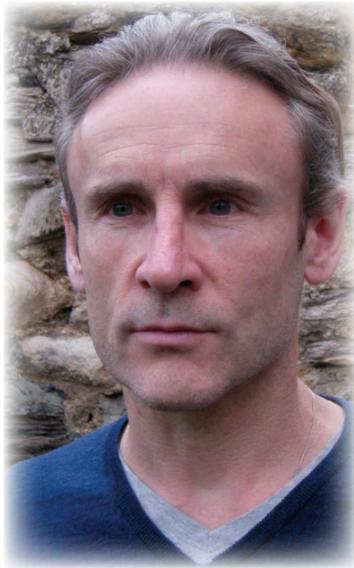


Photo by Brenda Molony

Cal grew up in Cathcart and studied Philosophy and Drama at the University of Glasgow. As part of his honours studies he had to act in a drama production, which was his first time on stage and he says: "It was the best feeling I ever had." He was shy and appearing on stage gave him a voice. "Most actors start on stage, which makes you a better actor," he says, "but tv and film work are more lucrative."

He was previously a successful sportsman, particularly at football and athletics. Football scouts were interested in him, but as a goal-keeper he was too small. Stage appearances replaced the adrenalin rush he had felt on the pitch, as did rock-climbing, a skill he learned when he appeared in the BBC tv series Rockface. Cal drove up to the Highlands from London at weekends to climb and thought that as Edinburgh was closer he would be able to climb more often, but his commitment to his family does not allow time for this. He also became involved with fund-raising for children, to help them make films using the natural environment of the Highlands.

Cal met his wife Shauna Macdonald, from Portobello, in London. They have three daughters. He has appeared in many stage productions and tv series, including Mr Selfridge, Downton Abbey, Wild at Heart, filmed in Africa where his second daughter was born, and Banished. He is travelling to Toronto and New York next year, appearing with Rupert Everett in Judas Kiss.

Running marathons helps keep Cal fit. He has run to raise funds for Bloodwise and runs regularly with Porty Dads. He was part of the initial conversation to set up this local group, who meet for coffee every Wednesday morning in the Beach House. When at home Cal takes the girls to school and nursery. "I love walking along the Prom to Towerbank School, which is a wonderful school", he says.

Margaret Munro

# ON THE BEAT

**AFTER** dealing with incidents on a daily basis, we prioritise local issues which are included in our local ward plan. Between April and September 2015 overall reported crime in the Portobello area was down compared with the same period last year. Crimes of dishonesty were reduced by 14.2% (94 fewer), housebreaking by 6.9% (36 fewer homes and businesses), break-ins to cars by 72.2% (89 fewer) and crimes of violence by 21.1% (4 fewer).

As winter approaches, one of our focuses is keeping people safe on the road. We would urge drivers and cyclists to check that their lights are working and their vehicles well maintained, with regular checks of tyre treads and pressures.

Another ongoing campaign is 'Beat Doorstep Crime' such as bogus workmen crimes, and there are some simple steps to help prevent this, including using a door chain and, if someone turns up unexpectedly, putting it on and checking through a spy hole or window before answering the door.

If you see something suspicious or want more advice contact us on 101 and try to note descriptions or vehicle details. If you want to remain anonymous, contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555111. More advice is available on the Police Scotland website [www.scotland.police.uk](http://www.scotland.police.uk)

For information on the Multi-Member Ward Plan visit that website and click on 'Your Community'. We also have a twitter account @EdinEastPolice

The Community Policing Team

## ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL CHAPTER

**THE** popularity of the Portobello Book Festival was demonstrated yet again when over 1,200 tickets were picked up for the 25 free events on offer at the beginning of October.

This seventh annual event featured sessions with new and established writers reading from their work, answering questions and engaging in discussion with their audiences. Their themes, fiction and non-fiction, included the intelligence and security services, national and cultural identity, mental health, wildlife, the kitchen garden, the graphic novel,

railway engines and writing a first novel. The highlight for many readers of crime fiction was a session with renowned writer Val McDermid, who talked about some of her favourite books and authors and the characters in her own books.

Spin-offs from the main event were writing and story-telling sessions at Brunstane and Towerbank schools, two sessions at The Dalriada, including the launch of the Poetry Circus magazine *Freak Circus*, and Portobello High School's third week-long book festival for the pupils.

# NEWS IN BRIEF

**CRAIGMILLAR'S HELP-ING HANDS** project which is run by Fresh Start and Castle Rock Edinvar, delivers social and practical services to adults with a history of homelessness and the socially isolated, including a cooking class, community growing space and decorating service. They are currently recruiting volunteers; if you could help, contact Emily Arthur, Project Worker, Fresh Start on 07464 541 796. For more details see: [www.freshstartweb.org.uk](http://www.freshstartweb.org.uk)

**THE NEW HEAD TEACHER** at Portobello High School, Ruth McKay, took up her post on 9th November.

## BOOKS

**Filmish - A Graphic Journey Through Film** by Edward Ross

Portobello comic artist Edward Ross' *Filmish* was launched in London in November. Over two years in the making, the graphic novel explores the art of cinema in an entertaining and engaging way. It is available from high street bookshops and online. Published by Self Made Hero priced £14.99. ISBN 978-1910593-03-5.

**The Sender** by Toni Jenkins, local author.

*The Sender* follows an anonymous and inspiring card that connects the lives of four women from different backgrounds, facing unique adversities, in different parts of the country. This story with a mysterious twist, which begins and ends in Edinburgh, is about the power of kindness and empathy and how one seemingly small kind act can hugely affect lives. But who is the sender and what is the motive? And why were they chosen? New Generation Publishing, £13.99/£7.99.

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

# TOMMY SHEPPARD MP

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**PORTOBELLO**  
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**CENTRAL**  
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Quaker Meeting House

**WILLOWBRAE**  
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WE would like to begin with a big "thank you" from the library to the organisers of the Portobello Book Festival for yet again delivering a fantastic event in October. The festival continues to go from strength to strength, with this year's being the biggest to date. We are proud to be one of the main venues and are looking forward to next year. Congratulations to all involved in its organisation.



We have moved our weekly Storytime to Tuesdays at 4pm, following feedback that 3.30pm was too soon after school. If you know of any five to eight year-olds who love books and stories, why not bring them down to Storytime? Listen to Ian inspire and enthral a new generation of readers with stories old and new.

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

We have launched a new weekly craft activity for children at 2pm on Friday afternoons. This is ideal for any creative children looking for something to do after school. We will also be running some Christmas creative crafts over the season. If you are interested in any of our craft activities, ask staff for details, keep an eye out for our posters and check our [Facebook](#) page.

We are looking to start up a new Teenage Book Group in the library. If you are between 13 and 16 and love reading and talking about books, this could be the very thing for you. If you are interested, come into the library and speak to Lesley or Paul.

The Portobello Book Group meets on the first Tuesday of every month; over the winter we will be discussing the following books:

1st December - *H is for Hawk* by Helen MacDonald

5th January - *The Siege* by Helen Dunmore

2nd February - *Burial Rites* by Hannah Kent

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

Paul Hudson

## PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL UPDATE

**PORTOBELLO** Community Council has been working with Edinburgh Council's Community Learning and Development team to gather views on services for young people in the area. A special meeting will be held on Monday 30th November from 7.30 to 9.15pm at Portobello High School, to hear the results of that research and discuss how services and facilities for 10 to 17-year-olds can be shaped or improved in future. The meeting is open to anyone, but it would help if anyone wishing to attend could register in advance so we know the numbers to expect. Anyone who misses the meeting will find a report on our website.

At October's Community Council meeting there was a presentation on North Berwick's Beach Wheelchair project, providing free hire by the hour to wheelchair users and their families. The

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP New Park and Winter Weather

**THREE** draft designs for a new park on the present Portobello High School and St John's Primary site will be displayed in libraries, community centres and elsewhere from mid-January until the end of February 2016; dates will be publicised. It is hoped that the designs can also be circulated electronically for local information and final comments. The preferred park name and design will be submitted at the end of March and the new park will be created in 2018. To receive regular updates, join the e-mail distribution list on [www.newparkforeh15.com](http://www.newparkforeh15.com) - contact ELGT at [yoursay@ELGT.org.uk](mailto:yoursay@ELGT.org.uk) - or ring 0131 445 4025.

IN the event of severe winter weather, the Council's focus will be on priority routes for buses and emergency vehicles, and ensuring access to hospitals, health centres and schools. But there's a lot members of the public can do to keep the city moving. If you would like to be a volunteer snow warden, contact Portobello and Craigmillar Neighbourhood Partnership by email to [graham.rowan@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:graham.rowan@edinburgh.gov.uk), tel 529 6374 who can arrange training and equipment.

Community Council is keen to gauge whether there would be sufficient support to run a similar scheme in Portobello. In the first instance a team of volunteers would be required to set up a steering group to organise and launch the service, with a larger group of volunteers needed

once up and running. If you're interested in lending a hand please contact the Community Council.

More information can be found on the PCC website [www.portobellocc.org](http://www.portobellocc.org) or by e-mailing [secretary@portobellocc.org](mailto:secretary@portobellocc.org)

Sean Watters

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## The Times They Are A Changin'

AUTUMN has been the backdrop to many changes in our household as our eldest son has left school and started at college. I started a course at university in Glasgow, my daughter is doing her Highers and my youngest son turned 13 and is suddenly off, doing his own thing with the assistance of his chauffeur and the family money.

It has taken time to adjust to the changes in routine, as my course involves long shifts on placement, masses of studying and frequent trips to university, catching the 900 bus at 7am which is a great journey for catching up on sleep. Everybody seems to be doing just fine, although my youngest did mistake a packet of lard for butter and made himself a lard and cheese toastie for lunch one day, then rang me in a panic asking if lard is poisonous. My eldest son confessed to eating seven packets of crisps in one day.

It definitely feels as though we have entered a new chapter, and things we used to do such as family days out seem to be over for now, as rounding up reluctant participants and blackmailing them to come is exhausting. I breathed a sigh of relief when I read that collective outings aren't best practice for parenting teenagers, and as I closed that book and put it away along with the baby book, challenging toddlers and how to manage siblings at war, I realised that perhaps all the hard work is nearly done for now. But I'm sure somebody will tell me there's still a long way to go!

## COUNCILLORS' SURGERIES

Portobello & Craigmillar Ward

### 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](http://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

*A Merry Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year*

## APPLE DAY

THIS annual event at Donkeyfield Community Orchard goes from strength to strength, with over 120 people enjoying a sunny afternoon in late October.

Many different local varieties of apple were available for tasting, along with the famous Portobello Apple Juice and homemade jams and chutneys. Tea and buns were enjoyed round the fire while listening to the Ladies Guerilla String Quartet and, for youngsters, games were organised by our local Rainbows leader. But the most exciting bit for many was pressing their own apples and getting the juice. It tastes so fresh, and it fascinates children and adults alike when the first trickle of juice turns into a torrent.

The orchard is open all year round with work days usually on the last Saturday of the month, and all are welcome to come.

Stephen Hawkins, PEDAL

## SUSTAINABLE PORTY

## GROWING ORGANIC



with Susan Burns



THE dark days of winter don't allow much gardening time, so try to get outside in daylight as much as you can and make use of dry spells. If you work from nine to five, 6th February is a date to note; it will be fully light at 5pm, signalling the approach of longer days.

It's a good time to tidy the shed though - mine always gets untidy when I've had to quickly put away tools and then it becomes a health hazard. I try different ways of arranging my shed every year and have never come up with an exact solution. I like small stackable containers, though, and do label those that aren't transparent. Odd-shaped pots that won't nest take up a lot of room, so I only keep small, medium and large ones that do, and recycle the rest to the garden centre or school.

Check stored produce every week and use anything that's going over, to try to reduce waste. Planning meals ahead to use stored vegetables and fruit takes some effort, but it's daft not to use them to make a great meal when you've invested all that time in growing, even if it is baked tattie with cheese and apple crumble to finish. New to me is a dehydrator, loaned by a friend, to relieve the pressure on the freezer, so dried plums, apples and pears are now a great addition to my daily porridge. The dried fruit is meant to keep in sealed jars, so I'll let you know how I get on.

Dead or diseased branches of trees and shrubs can be tricky to distinguish when the leaves are off, so I tie string to branches that need trimming to remind me to get it done before the spring growth.

### DURING COLD MONTHS

January and February are our coldest months, so keep an eye on greenhouse temperatures. Plastic bottles of water, laid under staging, will store some heat and keep frost out.

Make a to-do list for spring, ensure you have good quality seed-sowing compost and labels, and that your seeds are in date order. Pre-writing your labels can be done on a wet day to save time. But when you order seeds, don't be too ambitious in your plans unless you intend planting great swathes, or hope to give a lot away or share/swap packets with a friend or neighbour.

Have a gardening rest in winter, but always with an eye on being organised for the next growing season.

(We have held our annual garden open days for nearly 20 years and recently received a "thank you" letter from the charity Garden Organic for almost £1,500 raised by the donations of all the people who have visited us).

## OUR COMMUNITY IN ACTION

ON 12th September Portobello Town Hall was opened as a collection centre for CalAid - the charity that provides practical support to refugees camped at Calais, France. It was coordinated by Emma Dempsey as part of Portobello Community Council's initiative. The response of the Portobello people to this appeal was overwhelming. Thirty volunteers packed most of the donations into two vans that took these much needed supplies directly to the refugees. Those items that were not suitable for CalAid were transported to Portobello's Basics Bank based at Wilson Memorial Church. Donations to the Basics Bank are always needed. For details see [www.edinburghcitymission.org.uk/ministries/basics-bank](http://www.edinburghcitymission.org.uk/ministries/basics-bank)

'ACTIVE KIDS' at two local nurseries raised £2,781 for charities this year. Rocking Horse children did a sponsored walk in their pyjamas and held bake sales for the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, while staff members Jennifer Devlin and Vivien Ross made a tandem skydive; they raised £1,861.87 in total. Seabeach Nursery raised £600 for Forth One's Cash for Kids appeal, in a Superhero Charity Challenge - a sponsored mini triathlon. The nurseries also raised a joint £320 in a Cash for Kids Big Bake. The charity helps children and families in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

A MEET THE FUNDERS drop-in fair for community groups and the general public takes place on Thursday 3rd December in Portobello Town Hall from 1-4pm, with representatives from a range of grant-giving trusts and organisations. For details see [www.edinburghnp.org.uk](http://www.edinburghnp.org.uk)

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# 26 CHILDREN'S WINTERS



Photo courtesy of Museum of Childhood

AN exhibition which captures memories of childhood winters is currently on display at the Museum of Childhood.

The 26 displays have been matched with 26 writers from across the UK who have written sestudes, prose or poems of 62 words, as their responses to the objects on display.

Local writer, Stephen Barnaby, wrote his sestude *Sinister Biological*

*Warfare* for the image above called *Winter – Coughs & Colds:*

“When friends of ours told us there were places, many of them run by local authorities, which incubate every known bug and virus, and spread colds, coughs, fevers, rashes and projectile vomiting amongst the nation’s children, their parents and everyone within a ten mile radius of them, we dismissed this as the

ravings of crazed conspiracy theorists. Then our daughter started nursery...”

There will also be a virtual Advent calendar online, live from 1st December, at [www.26.org.uk](http://www.26.org.uk), search for 26 Children’s Winters.

The museum is working with the charity Its Good 2 Give, hosting a workshop for the children and families supported by the charity.

Margaret Munro

## FROM STEAM TO DIESEL: through the lens of a Scottish Railwayman



THESE are just a few of the many fascinating and striking images that appear in Archie Foley and Peter E Ross’s new book *From Steam to Diesel, through the lens of a Scottish railwayman*.

The original negatives were discovered by Archie and represent the work-related output of an unknown talented amateur photographer who worked on the railways in the 1950s and 60s, as the system was changing from steam locomotives to diesel powered engines.

The book depicts a range of workers from engine drivers to cleaners and gives a unique insight into life on the railways over 50 years ago.

Published by A L Foley. ISBN 978-0-9934028-0-7. Price £7.99. For details on the book’s availability call 669 0184 or email [alfoley@gmail.com](mailto:alfoley@gmail.com)

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## What's On

**TABLE TOP SALE:** Sat. 28th Nov. 10am-12.30pm, Portobello and Joppa Parish Church Halls, Brunstane Road N'th. Admission free. Refreshments and tickets for Santa's Grotto on sale.

**FUN FIDDLE BIG COASTAL CEILIDH:** Sun. 29th Nov. 3-5.30pm, The Wash House, Adelphi Grove, with Porty's biggest ever ceilidh band. Tickets from the Really Wild Flower Shop, 90 Portobello High St. £8/£5 conc. Under 5s free. Details on [www.funfiddle.co.uk](http://www.funfiddle.co.uk)

**CHRISTMAS FAIR:** Sun. 6th Dec, 12noon-6pm at Tribe Porty, upstairs at Earthy, Windsor Place, with local makers and collectors, music, gift wrapping, up-cycling, craft items and more.

**THE PORTY PANTO - Cinderella:** The Wash House, Adelphi Grove, starring Billy Kirkwood, Steven Davidson & Paul Lyall, with Towerbank Choir and dancers of Lothian Dance Academy and Creative Dance. Dates: Fri. 11th Dec, 7pm; Sat. 12th, 2pm & 7pm; Sun. 13th, 10.30am & 3pm. Tickets £8/£6 conc. from COVE, 250 Portobello High St, or [www.portypanto2015.bpt.me/](http://www.portypanto2015.bpt.me/) (25% of profits will go to Towerbank School).

**BURNS SUPPER** for Christian Aid: Sat 16th Jan, 7pm, Portobello/Joppa Parish Church Hall. Immortal Memory by Jean Thomson. For tickets, £15, call 669 4609.

**POD FILM** hope to have another Silent Movie Night in Spring 2016. See the [Portobello Open Door Facebook](#) page for updates.

## AMNESTY - LOCAL NEWS

**THE** group's stall at Portobello Market in September highlighted the imprisonment and ill-treatment of an Iranian woman artist whose cartoons criticised draconian laws on women's rights in Iran; 194 people signed our petition.

In October, the stall focused on abortion law in El Salvador, where women can be imprisoned for 20 years if reported to the authorities by medical staff after a miscarriage or other birth complication classified as an abortion attempt; abortion is illegal, whatever the circumstances.

Members of the public helped make 80 cardboard 'keys' and signed ribbons, to symbolise the opening of the prison gates and express support for the thousands of women at risk or imprisoned. A giant collage of 'keys' was displayed in San Salvador in November.

Our speaker in October was Alex Jackson, Amnesty coordinator for Eritrea, who lived there for several years. He spoke about a woman named Astor, who "disappeared" in 2001, to illustrate what it can mean to live in an authoritarian militarised state, where human rights are denied and dissent often results in imprisonment without charge or trial. Astor's fate is unknown, despite years of appeals. We were photographed holding posters saying "Where is Astor?" and appeals to the Eritrean Ambassador will follow.

Our letter-writing group meets for an hour on the first Wednesday of each month at 7pm in The Dalriada. Everyone is welcome and advice is given.

The main group meets in the café in Bellfield Street church on the third Monday of each month at 7.30pm. Visitors are warmly welcomed. Enquiries can be made to our new secretary, Theresa McMurtry: email, [smiley.laughran@gmail.com](mailto:smiley.laughran@gmail.com) or 0131 669 0295.

David Turner

## GOING BATS

**BATS** will have new roosting sites in Figgate Parks thanks to the MyParkScotland crowdfund for bat boxes. The appeal reached its target over the Halloween weekend, and Deborah Holloway of the Friends of Figgate Park said:

"It is fantastic that we have been able to reach our target to fund eight bat boxes. This will really help to encourage and support the bat population. We would like to thank everyone who donated to support the project."

**THE** Wash House (aka Portobello Community Centre) in Adelphi Grove, is our somewhat under-celebrated but longstanding Council community venue, offering classes and groups galore. As unsung and very much part-time co-ordinator, employed by the Council, Val Stokes is the keeper of the timetable and overseer of events programming. No easy feat with so much on offer.



Here's a snapshot of a week in the life of The Wash House: Gentle exercise classes, art classes, BeeSpanish for children, badminton, Enjoyaball, soccer academy, and new yoga classes on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. Lynn, 'The Dog Lady', is offering new training classes for puppies and beginners in early January.

Get your dancing feet on for Fun Fiddle's 'Big Coastal Ceilidh' featuring Porty's biggest ceilidh band ever, on Sunday 29th November at 3pm. And the lead-up to Christmas would not be complete without our treasured Porty Panto. For details of these events see 'What's On'.

The Wash House is run by a volunteer committee who meet on the second Tuesday of each month. If you are interested in getting involved or want to find out more, please email [val.stokes@ea.edin.sch.uk](mailto:val.stokes@ea.edin.sch.uk)

The Wash house office is open Monday to Thursday 7.30am-12noon, tel. 669 8275, website: [www.thewashhouse.org](http://www.thewashhouse.org) and find Porty Wash House on [Facebook](#).

Gica Loening

## CAMPBELL AT CONSERVATOIRE

**LOCAL** musician Mairi Campbell has been appointed by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland to teach improvisation within the folk music tradition to students on the BMus (Traditional Music) degree course. She is also keen to encourage them to get in touch with their creativity and find new ways of expressing traditional music and themselves. "I'm excited to be working with these gorgeous young musicians who are the future sound-keepers

of this precious tradition," she said. "Trad musicians don't just play tunes. They preserve and pass down the songs and stories of their local areas, and actively participate in their local communities."

Joshua Dickson, Head of Traditional Music at the Conservatoire said: "Mairi Campbell has been an inspiration to her peers and students for many years ... our students could not be more excited to work with her".

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## AWARD FOR BRUNSTANE MUMMAS

THE Mumma's Club at Brunstane Nursery were recently presented with a Highly Commended Award for Making the Difference by the City of Edinburgh Council, in recognition of their support of the nursery, and the difference the group has made for its members.



In 2012 a mum asked staff if they could help her learn to sew. This sparked the idea of a weekly group for mums and friends, where talents are shared and new skills learned. Over tea and cake mums, grans, dads and friends teach each other new skills and help create crafts to raise funds for the nursery. The Mumma's Club have already raised nearly £3,000 and helped transform the nursery garden into an exciting and stimulating environment where children can learn through play.

Group members also support and encourage each other. Mums have started college, found jobs and gone on to become members of more formal groups, including the School Parents Council.

## JOPPA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

JOPPA Residents Association was formed in 2014 out of the dormant Coillesdene Residents Association following renewed interest at a public meeting at the King's Manor Hotel. The name was changed to reflect the streets other than 'Coillesdenes' in the Association and to allow expansion of its area. So far the committee have dealt with matters concerning security, condition of roads, traffic speed through the area, flooding at Joppa bus stop, the closure of Joppa toilets, graffiti on Morton Street footbridge and Joppa Pumping Station and pavement weeds. It has also supported Brunstane residents over the proposed loss of green belt land at Brunstane Farm. To join the Association (cost £1 per household per annum), which is open to all resident households in the Joppa area, complete the form on the webpage: [www.jopparesidentsassociation.org.uk](http://www.jopparesidentsassociation.org.uk) or write to Chairperson, JRA, c/o 38 Coillesdene Crescent, Edinburgh, EH15 2JL.

## PUPILS VISIT GALLIPOLI



IN October 2015, pupils from Portobello High School and Leith Academy were given the opportunity to take part in an educational visit to Gallipoli in partnership with the Gallipoli Centenary Education Project ([www.gallipoli100.co.uk](http://www.gallipoli100.co.uk)).

The project, led by the Gallipoli Association, was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, private donors and the Association's members. Both schools are incredibly grateful for this support.

After months of research, Portobello pupils traced the steps of four soldiers from their roll of honour, who died in Gallipoli. Leith pupils focused on soldiers who survived the Quintinshill Rail Disaster. They visited sites, such as V Beach and Anzac Cove, to learn more about the Gallipoli landings and walked in trenches dug during the conflict. They also visited several memorials and cemeteries for the Turkish and Allied troops, where they left commemorative crosses for the soldiers who they had been researching. The pupils are now looking forward to sharing their experiences with their classmates and communities.

Lauren Thow

## WILSON MEMORIAL'S MINISTER TO RETIRE

THE Rev. Ralph Dunn, who celebrated his 70th birthday in September, will retire at the end of this year as Minister of Wilson Memorial Church when he holds his last service on Sunday 27th December. Mr Dunn and his wife Anne have enjoyed 10 happy years there, and he says: "I must commend the congregation for their dedication and hard work in many new programmes and initiatives over the years, the most important of which has been a joint-church Food Bank project which has helped more than 600 people over four years. It has been a great privilege to serve the people here", he adds, "and we will both forever remember our time in the Portobello area with great fondness and gratitude".



Photo by Nigel Archdale

Ralph and Anne moved back to their hometown of Dalkeith in May but intend to be frequent visitors to Portobello in the future. Apart from some travel plans and opportunities to help out in local churches, they have no major retirement goals and are just "open for anything". One significant landmark in 2016, however, will be their Golden Wedding Anniversary in March.

## NEW START FOR LEGION BRANCH

AFTER an absence of five years, the people of Portobello can once again enjoy the comradeship of a Legion Branch after the Trustees purchased the Rockville Hotel in August as a Branch HQ.

The Branch will continue to run the hotel and restaurant, with the values and objectives of the Royal British Legion Scotland Portobello Memorial Club and the benefit these offer its members.

In 1947 the people of Portobello approached the British Legion with a view to forming

a Portobello Branch, incorporating a "War Memorial" in the form of a "Branch Club" which would display a "Marble Stone", to commemorate those who had made the supreme sacrifice. By public subscriptions they raised the sum of £1,250, and the new Branch moved into its first home in a disused railway hut in Baileyfield Road. Clifton House in Baileyfield Road was subsequently purchased and the move was made in April 1968.

In April 2010 the decision was taken to close the Branch, as a steady decline in business had become terminal, and Clifton House was sold.

A new chapter is about to begin, so come along and be part of it. New memberships are available and if your membership has lapsed since the closing of the 'old club', we would be delighted to see you back.

Keith MacLeod, Branch Chairman



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# IN THE SADDLE

LOCAL cycling club Portovelo has made some changes to its rides recently in an effort to broaden its appeal. These implement some decisions taken at a meeting held in The Espy in September, which considered in particular how to keep on attracting new riders to the club while building on its popular Sunday 'fitness' rides. As a result, the first Sunday of each month now involves a combined fitness and leisure ride. Everyone starts together, but with two ride leaders to ensure everyone can choose a pace and distance that works for them. One of the aims is to encourage more women to become involved. Regular attendee Harriet Munro (pictured) says she doesn't mind sometimes being the only woman in a group of men, but she is also keen to see more women getting as much out of cycling



Photo by Jamie Hunter

as she does. "I've always found it a friendly club that welcomes new riders, and I'd say to any woman who likes the idea of riding in a group to come along and give it a try", she says. Over the winter, Portovelo Sunday rides leave at 9 am, get back by lunchtime, and always involve a cafe stop. For full details, see the club's website [www.porto-velo.com](http://www.porto-velo.com).

Andrew Mylne

# ONE WILD SWIMMER

PORTOBELLO resident and stalwart member of the Wild Ones open water swimming group, Marion Martin, completed the two mile event in the Great Scottish Swim in Loch Lomond on 29th August.

Over 2,500 people took part in Scotland's biggest open water swimming festival despite a water temperature of a chilly 16C. Marion's time of 1:22:49 won her first place in the women's 65-69 age category and third place in that category over all, behind

two men.

She raised £1,030 plus £250 Gift Aid for her chosen charity Special Olympics, which provides sporting opportunities for people with learning disabilities, focusing on equality of opportunity for all regardless of their level of athletic ability.

Marion, who had donated a kidney only a few months previously, is now getting ready for her next challenge: the Big Chill Swim in Lake Windermere in February (no neoprene allowed!).

# ON THE GREENS

## JESSFIELD BOWLING CLUB

IN end of season matches in September, Jessfield Ladies Cathy Drummond, Margaret Turner, and Joan Charleston won the Scotia Triples, and Gents Jimmy Charleston and John F Cameron won the East Edinburgh Bowling Association Pairs. Ronnie Crocker, Vincent Morison, John F Cameron and Ricky Lacey won the South Edinburgh Seniors Bowling Association, Rinks. Club Champions for 2015 are Robert Pelosi and Doreen McNulty.

The club's Annual Christmas Fayre will be held on Saturday 5th December from 11am-3pm at the clubhouse in Adelphi Grove, featuring stalls with Christmas items, jewellery, toys, home baking and tombola, a Grand Raffle and a visit from Santa. For £3 any child/children or adult can have their picture taken with Santa, and receive a gift. Pictures will be developed in minutes and put in a cardboard Christmas frame.

# ARE YOU A TALKER - OR A DOER?



THERE are the Talkers ... and the Doers. The guys in the pub who talk of how good they were at sport when they were younger. Well, how about putting your money where your mouth is and actually proving something, even though you're older now. I've just turned 70 and am recently back from the European Masters Games in France, which includes 25 different sports. Mine is badminton, and I was lucky enough to win gold medals in the

singles and doubles.

Competitions are organised in five-year age-groups from 35 plus, which means you play against people your own age. There are team events, such as football, if you want your pals along and there is great camaraderie. If you are struggling to get a partner, they have a blog where you can find somebody to team up with - <http://www.worldmastersgames2017.co.nz/>

Well, are you a Talker?

Colin Hepburn

# Gemma's Gym

CAN you believe that's 2015 nearly over? Thinking of how quickly a year can go by makes me think of planning - What do I want to achieve in 2016? The years have a tendency to get lost, so if I make a point of setting a goal and following it through, I can say Wow! 2016 was a great year, this is what I did. Living in such a great area gives you opportunities to pursue so many different things: walking, cycling, sailing, running - the list is limitless.

I have spoken a lot about goals in previous issues, but I feel it's so important. It can make the days when you really can't be bothered that bit easier, as you know you have to follow the plan to get the results you need. Goal setting is the key to success. I would love everyone to make the right choices about what they eat and how much exercise they do, as your life style choices are key to keeping you fit and healthy. By having short, medium and long-term goals you are sure to succeed.

It's hard not to reflect as we get to the end of a year, and I would really like you to think about what you would like to remember about the coming year. So, let's say Goodbye 2015, Hello 2016!

Gemma Hopewell



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