

THE Portobello REPORTER

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

LOCAL MUSICIAN'S SUPPORT FOR "DESPERATE" REFUGEES

PORTOBELLO musician Gica Loening volunteered for a month over the festive period at a refugee camp on the Greek island of Samos, which is one of the islands nearest Turkey.

Largely unreported in the media, Samos has been a hotspot for thousands of refugees escaping war-torn and impoverished countries. Originally a Greek army base, the camp was set up in 2016 with an official capacity of 650. In the past six months the island's refugee population has grown to 4,300, according to UNHCR. Most of the additional people are living in 'the jungle' spill-over, with no sanitation or running water, and queues for food lasting five hours. "People



Photo by Gabi Klein

are desperate," says Gica. "The asylum process takes anything from a few months to two years. They are in limbo, with limited access to human rights and are forbidden from moving off the island."

Gica's timetable included helping out in the laundry

service, which was vital because the refugees could only expect to get their clothes and bedding washed every five months. She also helped at the community centre, where over 500 people a day came to take shelter, play board games, learn a language or use a

sewing machine.

She led music and song sessions for the camp children, 300 of whom were unaccompanied minors, and also at the Saturday women's sessions and guitar group. "The passion and skill for music-making and singing of many of the refugees was impressive and moving," says Gica, "and was a reminder that music and the arts can have a powerful effect amid all the hardship and injustice. It was an unforgettable and tough, but amazing experience that will stay with me."

If you wish to make a donation, or to find out more about Samos Volunteers and the refugee situation go to www.samosvolunteers.org or read Gica's blog gicaloening.simplesite.com.

KILN TO BE REPAIRED



Photo by Margaret Munro

FOLLOWING a routine inspection, the city council's structural engineer raised concerns about the stability of the 1906 kiln in Bridge Street. The hoarding, shown in the photo, has been erected as a protective measure. Once contractors have been appointed, the kiln will be taken down to a stable level, then reconstructed to match the 1909 kiln. As the kilns are Scheduled Ancient Monuments, the council, under the direction of Historic Environment Scotland, is obliged to maintain and preserve them. Dr Margaret Munro, Portobello Heritage Trust chair, said: "These kilns are of great importance, as they are the last buildings above ground that remain from the pottery industry in the whole of Scotland. As such, they are a significant part of the industrial heritage not only of Portobello, but the whole of the country. It is vital they are preserved."

PROGRESS ON BRIGHTON PLACE



Photo by Peter E. Ross

THE relaying of setts in Brighton Place restarted on 7th January and the road was closed again after being open over the festive period. Bus services are again diverted from their normal routes. The section from the high street to Lee Crescent has been completed and the next phase, Lee Crescent to Rosefield Avenue, is in progress. The work is estimated to be completed by late autumn 2019.

OTTERS IN FIGGATE PARK



Photo by Anthony Robson

OTTERS are no strangers to the Figgate Park. With a connection to Duddingston Loch, which houses a breeding population, the park usually attracts young otters making their own way out into the world, seeking their own territory; or short-lived raiding parties out on a day trip. Recently the fish in the pond in the park have been thriving, and that has led to more frequent sightings of a pair of young otters. This has created a buzz around the park, and they've been watched performing on a regular basis, before disappearing for days at a time, then making a sudden re-emergence. They may stay as long as there are fish to make the trip worthwhile, and while they do, we hope more people are able to spot these usually secretive and elusive animals.

Deborah Holloway, Friends of Figgate Park.

BRUNSTANE CLOSURE

FROM Sunday 10th March, Brunstane Road will be closed to traffic at the railway bridge, due to concerns raised by some residents and local councillors about increased traffic and road safety since the closure of Brighton Place. The road will be closed until November 2019, when Brighton Place is due to be re-opened, but will remain open to cyclists and pedestrians. Residents' car turning areas will be provided on either side of the bridge.

PORTY PROFILE No. 71 SAMMY CAIN

DECORATED naval engineer, and maintenance fitter at Portobello and Cockenzie Power Stations, Sammy Cain was also an accomplished athlete who won the prestigious Powderhall Sprint in 1945 at the age of 19.

Sammy attended school at Regent Road and Bellevue and soon became noted for his ability to outrun his classmates on the track, and as captain of the football team. After leaving school, he became an apprentice marine engineer, but his sporting career continued to flourish as he played for juvenile team Broughton Athletic, as well as playing for the East of Scotland junior team.

Eventually, coach George McKinlay spotted Sammy's potential and encouraged him to train for the Sprint. The 110m, handicap race was an important event attracting thousands of spectators, with much speculation amongst bookies. Currently run in Musselburgh as the New Year Sprint, it is still going strong after nearly 150 years. George entered Sammy and he qualified to compete against world class athletes, with odds of 5-2 against. As George anticipated, Sammy was able to take the lead and won by nearly a yard, taking the gold medal and £100 prize, equivalent to £4,240 in today's money.

Within weeks, Sammy was called up and went to serve in Germany. In 1946 he entered the race again, but had little time to train and didn't reach the final. After three years in the army, he joined the Royal Fleet Auxiliary as a naval engineer, and long tours made pursuing his sporting career difficult.

While fuelling an American United Nations Task Force ship off the coast of Korea, Sammy's ship was shelled by Korean shore battery. Sammy says: "I was on the deck at the time and we had to help lads to safety. People were being injured in the blast". Fortunately nobody was killed, and Sammy and the crew were awarded the Battle Star for bravery.

Sammy settled in Portobello in 1953 with his wife Jessie and they had three children. He says he is now kept very busy with his four grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. After retiring, he learned to play the piano and became a volunteer entertainer at nursing homes and schools throughout the area. He says: "Portobello is a lovely area with a nice community centre and good neighbours"

Sammy says the story of his win came to light again recently after his son posted it on Facebook. It was seen by journalist Jack Davidson QC, who much to his surprise featured him in articles for *The Herald*, *The Scotsman* and the *Braemar Gathering Annual*.

Karen Combe



Photo by Karen Combe

ON THE BEAT



Photo by Peter E Ross

I'M Gemma Knox, the new Community Beat Officer for Portobello. I have eleven years service in the police and I've just come to Portobello in January.

To me, community policing is at the heart of policing. If the community beat officer doesn't know what's going on then nobody else will.

I am getting to know the area now and I love having this place as my office.

PC Gemma Knox

TIME TO PUT THE CLOCK BACK

FOR 15 years Portobello Amenity Society and Portobello Heritage Trust have been campaigning to get the municipal clock put back on the Baptist Church building, which was Portobello's first purpose-built town hall. With help from the City Archivist, they have proved that the clock is owned by the City of Edinburgh Council and is on the Common Good Register. Planning permission has been granted for the re-instating of the clock, which was removed in 2004 after parts of the cast iron detailing fell into the street.

The clock was gifted to the people of Portobello in

1868 by Sir James Falshaw. The only condition attached to his gift was that it should never be removed from the building.

The clock casing and mechanism have been fully refurbished by Smith of Derby and one clock face has been renewed. The casing has been powder-coated in black, and gold leaf will be applied to the detailing. Unfortunately the timber and copper roof of the clock went missing while it was in storage, and this will be replaced.

The clock is an important part of Portobello's history and it will be marvellous to have it back where it belongs.

John Stewart, PAS

NEWS IN BRIEF

THE CHARITY SHAW TRUST, at its Wellbeing Works hub at Duddingston Yards, seeks volunteers with knowledge of the local community. It provides wellbeing support to about 350 local people who can't find work due to disability, poor health or disadvantage. For details email volunteers@shaw-trust.org.uk, phone 0300 247 222 or visit shaw-trust.org.uk/volunteer.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED at the Friends of Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home shop at 104 Portobello High St. Please call in for details.

A NEW information board, giving details of the potteries and the harbour, has been installed at the pottery kilns in Bridge Street.

CYCLING 500 MILES FOR CHARITY

AT 8 am on Sunday 24th March, Gordon Barclay will set off by bicycle from Portobello promenade for Portobello Road in London, aiming to cover the 500 miles in 6 days.

He is raising money for Clarrie Mendy, a survivor of the Grenfell Tower tragedy who now has motor neurone disease, and for the My Name's 5 Daddie Foundation, established by former rugby international Daddie Weir, who also has MND.

The event has been organised by Councillor Ian Henderson of Kensington and Chelsea Council who, like Gordon, is originally from Portobello, went to the High School and played for Portobello rugby club. More details at www.portbellotoportobello.co.uk.

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EASTER Holidays start on 19th April this year and we are already hard at work planning our activities for children. For more information, ask a member of staff before the holidays or check us on [Facebook](#).

We are delighted that Fair Start Scotland is now providing advice and support in the library on Monday mornings and Wednesday afternoons. Its programme aims to help people overcome potential barriers to gaining and retaining employment, so if you are a jobseeker and think you would benefit from some support, Fair Start Scotland may be able to help.

We will be displaying the art of Edward Mclaughlan from Monday 11th March. Following his diagnosis with dementia, Edward found his sense of colour had radically changed and gave his art a new vibrancy and energy. To coincide with this display, copies of *Vivid Rebellion: The Art of Edward Mclaughlan MBE* by local author Christeen Winford will be available for loan.

This spring in the library it's looking good for anyone who has an interest in local and/or family history. We will be hosting two sessions on how to get the most out of our online local and family history resources, such as Find My Past and the British Newspaper Archive on 18th and 28th March, and the Wikipedia local history Editathon will return on 6th April. We will also be hosting displays of Edinburgh libraries' local history resources throughout March. For more information please speak to me.

The Macmillan information and support drop-in service is going from strength to strength. A trained volunteer is available every Monday and Wednesday from 2-4pm, offering a listening ear, and help and information to people affected by cancer.

The Portobello Book Group meets on the first Monday of every month, and over the next three months we will be discussing the following books:

1st Apr: *The Book Collector* by Alice Thompson

6th May: *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens

4th June: *A Cat a Man and Two Women* by Junichiro Tanizaki

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

Paul Hudson



TIMEBANK - 'GUERRILLA GARDENING'

FOR the past three years Portobello Timebank have been very active in cleaning litter from the local area, particularly around Brunstane Burn/Magdalene Glen. Meanwhile they have identified several plots of land that the Council owns, but does not have the resources to maintain in an imaginative way. With permission and professional

advice, the Timebank plans to take over the management of some of this land, in order to enhance attractiveness and biodiversity. Planting of bulbs and trees has commenced although the scope of this work is still fluid. If this 'guerrilla gardening' approach interests you, please contact communitygarden@portbellotimebank.co.uk.

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT

THIS year's Fairtrade Fortnight takes place from 25th February to 10th March. Edinburgh's Fairtrade Festival is being held on Saturday 9th March at Portobello Town Hall from 10.30am to 3.30pm, featuring stalls with a range of fairly traded products, speakers, choir, children's activities and free tea, coffee and cakes.

The Fairtrade Foundation granted Fairtrade Town status to Portobello in 2013 for its support of fair trade by retailers, catering outlets, work places, and local schools and churches. The Just World Shop in Portobello High Street, the main local stockist of fairly traded goods, celebrates its 25th Anniversary this year.

'GARDENERS' QUESTION TIME'

JOIN George Anderson and his band of gardening chums for an evening of Horticultural Fun and Frolics at 'Gardeners' Question Time' on Thursday 11th April at 7.30pm, in Portobello and Joppa Parish Church Hall.

The panel of experts with George will be Ann

Burns, Head of Horticulture at Oatridge College, John Williams, past chair of the Scottish branch of the National Vegetable Society and Beryl McNaughton of Macplants. See if your gardening questions can stump the panel.

Call 669 5946 for tickets, costing £7.00.

PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

PORTOBELLO Community Council meets on the last Monday of each month, except July and December, in Portobello Baptist Church hall in Portobello High Street at 7.30pm. Meetings are open to the public. Agendas and Minutes can be seen on www.portobellocc.org and in the library. For an item to be put on the agenda, email: secretary@portobellocc.org a week in advance, or write c/o the library.

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IT had been a long time since I gave blood, as I got out of the habit when the children were small. As I am O negative, the group that all blood type recipients can receive, I was keen to start donating again as soon as possible.

It was easy to register to donate and I received an appointment within a few weeks.

Fortunately, I don't have any problems with the sight of needles and blood, which is just as well, as I am a nurse. My blood was collected very discreetly and I hardly felt a scratch when the needle went in.

The atmosphere at the donor centre was upbeat and cheerful as staff sang along to a country and western song, as far from being cold and clinical as you could imagine. I even received a little enamel badge for the donation, and a cup of tea and a chocolate biscuit afterwards.

I went home very pleased with myself and promptly tried to encourage (coerce) the whole family to donate. They were initially a bit reluctant, even when I said they would be lifesavers, but funnily enough, as soon as I mentioned the chocolate biscuits, they were in!

CLIMATE change has taken a bit of a back seat in the media recently because of Brexit, even though the consequences of ignoring what is happening to our weather patterns are far more serious and longer lasting. Reports of receding glaciers, loss of Antarctic ice shelves and heatwaves in Australia seem to arrive weekly, but are treated by some as fake news and by others as being problems that are too big or remote for the ordinary person to do anything about - "Yes, climate change may lead to food shortages, but if these do affect us, we got through the War, didn't we?" Although, of course, almost everyone who says this didn't live through it.

SUSTAINABLE PORTY

It was good to see some raising of awareness recently in the national press and television when Extinction Rebellion Scotland occupied the main chamber at Holyrood (bit.ly/XR_PR1). About 40 protesters debated climate change following a peaceful demonstration outside. An imaginative stunt that was simply symbolic? Perhaps, but it did remind us that climate change has not gone away - and will not, without a change in our behaviour.

More action and initiatives are required by national politicians to make major changes, and any move aimed at focusing attention at this particularly fraught time is to be welcomed. Why not write to them? To use a trite phrase: it's time to make governments wake up and smell the coffee - that's as long as we still have coffee beans. Ground acorn coffee anyone?

Stephen Hawkins, PEDAL



SOWING seeds is one of the most delightful gardening activities, but care is needed for the best results. I hardly ever sow any seeds directly into the ground, as I find that by controlling temperature, water and light I don't lose seedlings to slugs, cold soil or frosts.

First warm the compost by bringing it into the house or greenhouse about three weeks before sowing, rather than leaving it outside, then check the seed packets for the temperatures at which optimal germination takes place. If using a radiator or heat mat for warming, layer containers one on top of another so that the seeds that need high temperatures are nearest to the source of heat, with those needing 20°C at the bottom and hardy annuals on top. Check every day to see whether germination has started.

As seedlings start to appear, remove their containers to slightly cooler conditions, such as a window-sill without heat but still in good light. If seedlings start to etiolate (stretching for light and getting leggy) use some cardboard covered in aluminium foil to reflect more light onto them until the weather improves, or move them to a lighter window-sill if you have one.

Mist seedlings, first with a hand spray, using tepid rather than cold water, then once they have their first two leaves use a watering can with a fine rose. Prick them out into module containers or pots and harden off over weeks rather than days before planting out when the risk of frosts is past.

A DRAMATIC FIFTY YEARS

IN March 1969 Portobello and Joppa Parish Church Drama Group began, producing full length plays before progressing to musicals, initially British and then American. As we grew, so did our ambition and operettas were added to our repertoire. Our group is currently 40 strong, with people of all

ages from across our local community.

In 1996, we put on our first original piece, *Brodie! The Musical*, set in 18th century Edinburgh. It was written by Gavin Booth, a founder member, with score composed by our Musical Director, Nancy Kent. The plot involves Deacon Brodie, cabinet maker and town

official by day, thief by night. The show is full of songs and local humour, and even allows us to use our own accents! In this, our 50th year, we are reviving the show. It seems an appropriate choice, as it has no 'stars' and gives the chorus plenty to do.

Brodie! The Musical runs at Portobello and Joppa Parish Church Hall

from Tuesday 19th to Saturday 23rd March at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £12 for adults and £6 for children and students, from Anne McKerchar on 669 3123. We very much appreciate the continuing support of the local folk of Portobello and Joppa and hope you will join us for this anniversary production.

Sheila Hay

Cllr Kate Campbell
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CONGRATULATIONS!

IN the golden days of my youth, one of the duties of the best man at a wedding was to read out the telegrams received sending congratulations and good wishes to the bridal couple, usually from those invited who were unable to attend. This telegram from Newport in Monmouth to 22 Eastfield and is congratulatory, with the bell on the left-hand side perhaps indicating a wedding.

Telegraphy is described as the long-distance immediate transmission of textual messages without the physical exchange of an object bearing the message. Sound familiar? Encoded messages had been sent by various means for many years, for example smoke signals or flag semaphore. The invention of electricity in the 19th century led to electrical telegraphy, which used Morse code to send messages. The telegraph operator would send the message and, once received by another operator, it was hand-written or printed and then became a telegram. A telegram



boy would set off on his bicycle, later a motorbike, and hand-deliver the message. For many years, telegrams were used to send urgent messages and later to mark important occasions and events. At the height of their popularity, in the 1930s, around 65 million telegrams were delivered annually. By the 1960s, this had dropped to around 10 million.

The Post Office abolished the service in

1977. British Telecom operated it briefly after it split from the Post Office, but finally stopped on 30th September 1982. The rights to run the telegram service were sold to a private company in 2003.

Particularly during World War One people dreaded receiving a telegram. If a soldier had been wounded, was missing or had been killed in action, his family were sent the news in a telegram. Specially

marked envelopes indicated to the delivery boy, or during the war a girl, not to wait for a reply as it contained the worst news.

Later technological innovations have superseded the use of telegrams, but it is still possible to send one to mark a special occasion, and written messages can be cherished in a way that text messages on your phone cannot.

Margaret Munro

HEALTH MATTERS

SMALL STEPS



I will let you into a secret. I am in training! Me, who prefers sitting to standing, and standing to walking. Did you know that every Saturday, weather permitting, Figgate Park hosts Portobello parkrun? All are welcome to run, walk, or cheer. I may just be cheering.

Why do it? Well, exercise matters. I don't do enough, but I am encouraged by others in our team who talk about parkrun, and they enjoy it. The same team who, when we did a little collective burst of exercise at one of our practice training sessions, cheered me on. I know I won't keep up with them all and might not complete it, but it won't be for the want of support. Come and join in. Portobello parkrun is every Saturday at 9.30am. It's free to register at www.bit.ly/2TT8lpT

Dr Portia Bella

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What's On

VOLUNTEER OPEN DAY: Salvation Army Charity Shop, Fri 22nd March, 10.30am-1.30pm, 167- 69 Portobello High Street. Call 657 4897 for information on volunteering.

CAR BOOT SALES (Rotary Club of Portobello): Sun.31st March, 28th April, 26th May, 9am-2pm, Newcraighall Station car park. Cars arrive 8am. Double pitch £10 - all fees to charity. Enquiries to 07789220583.

WIKIPEDIA TRAINING EVENT: Sat 6th April, Portobello Library. Organised by Portobello Heritage Trust, in conjunction with the library. For details and to book see eventbrite.co.uk.

PORTOBELLO HERITAGE TRUST AGM: Mon 15th April, 7.30pm, the small hall, Bellfield. Followed by an illustrated talk, *Bridgescapes*, by L Bruce Keith, looking at Scottish bridges and their engineers.

CEILIDH: Sat 20th April, 7.30-11.30pm, Bellfield, Bellfield St, with the Da Hooley Ceilidh Band. Tickets £12 (£10 conc.) from Skylark and Velvet Easel. A fundraiser for The Wash House community centre.

PORTOBELLO MARKET: First Saturday of each month, 9.30am-1.30pm, Brighton Park. Organic fruit/veg, plants, meat, bakery, crafts, coffee, snacks. For details contact portobello.market@live.co.uk

PAMOJA FASHION: Quality Clothes and Accessories, first Sat of the month, 10am-1pm, St John's Hall, Brighton Place. Supporting partnerships between schools and communities in Scotland and Tanzania

SING IN THE CITY rock'n'pop choir, The Wash House, Thursdays, 10am-noon. For a free trial contact hello@singinthechity.com No audition required

DANCING: Ballroom, sequence, line. Beach Lane Social Club, Wed/Fri, 1.00-3.30pm; Thurs 2-4pm. £3 incl. refreshments.

AMNESTY - LOCAL NEWS

THE group's 2018 Greetings Card Campaign had a record response at Portobello Market in December, in three local churches and nine Portobello High School classes. A total of 329 cards were written, and sent to bring comfort and support to the four women featured, all human rights defenders.


Ricky Brown of Scottish PEN (part of the international writers' association) was guest speaker at our meeting on 14th January. He spoke about the extent of harassment, imprisonment, torture and murder of many writers and journalists who criticise governments in the press and social media worldwide, no matter how peacefully. We heard examples of how PEN works to support victims.

Our annual Coffee Morning and Book Sale takes place on Saturday 30th March from 10am till noon at Bellfield. Donations of books, baking and bric-a-brac will be welcomed, either on the day or via the group secretary (see below).

The group meets on the second Monday of each month in the vestry of Portobello and Joppa Parish Church from 7.30-9.00pm. Visitors are most welcome, without commitment. For details, contact the secretary by email to theresa.mcmurtry@gmail.com or call 669 0295.

David Turner

THERE'S a lot going on at The Wash House. From Zumba and Pilates classes to dog training and badminton, there are lots of interests and activities covered. The community centre is open to all, and they would love you to get involved. It has been on the go for 27 years, and if you feel like volunteering your services, that would be great too.



Did you know you can hire the main hall at The Wash House? It's a great space in the centre of Portobello, which includes a stage, and it's very affordable, especially if you are hiring on a regular basis. Details are available on the website www.thewashhouse.org, or see the Facebook page.

BEWARE PESKY CLOTHES MOTHS

STAFF at Newhailes House near Musselburgh are dealing with large numbers of clothes moths that are threatening its historic collection of textiles.

Two industrial freezers, each the size of a shipping crate, have been installed and carpets, curtains, sofas, chairs and clothing will undergo sub-zero treatment at -35°C (-31°F) to destroy the moth eggs and larvae. Items will be wrapped in acid-free tissue paper and polythene before freezing. Specialist vacuum cleaners will then be used to clean away the moths themselves.

Clothes moths are on the increase and don't just infest historic houses; if they invade your home, they will munch holes in your best woollens, silks and cottons. There are several websites with information on how to combat them.

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TRIBE PORTY is holding its annual Tribe Wellness Taster Day on 23rd March from noon till 4pm. There will be a celebration of health and wellbeing activities, showcasing what goes on at Tribe Porty to support your physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.

Portobello Natural Health and True Pilates Edinburgh will be joined by yoga, Pilates and other practitioners, providing taster sessions of individual therapies and classes and an opportunity to meet informally to find out more about what is on offer.

To find out about what else we offer, keep an eye on Tribe Porty's newsletter through our website www.tribeporty.org, find us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), or pick up a flyer with our events schedule from 19 Windsor Place and other local locations.

Dani Trudeau



BELLFIELD was a hub of festive celebrations in December, with a visit from Santa Claus, the lights switch-on, a Christmas Fair and the sold-out success which was the Porty Panto.

BELLFIELD 2019 promises to be just as vibrant, with current classes expanding, including more Pilates with Penny Johnstone; a second block of Scottish step dancing classes with Alison Carlyle and Mairi Campbell; plus more Sunday sessions from the Little Sport Company. Edinburgh Youth Theatre will be offering some extended school holiday courses too.

New for 2019 is motivational exercise class Train Happy; singing lessons from Prince's Trust graduate Jessica Kershaw; a Scout troop to join Bellfield's Beaver and Cub packs; and Realistic Pilates with Kate Macdonald.

In a development that the whole community can enjoy, two S3 pupils from Porty High are volunteering to run a café in the foyer of the celebration hall with hot drinks, squash and biscuits available for a suggested donation, every Friday afternoon in term time.

Find out more about all our activities at www.bellfield.scot.
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TOMMY'S TALES

THOUGH it isn't always the case, there is often a disconnect between adults and children as to what happens at school (we all know the dreaded "How was school?" - "Fine" conversation).

For those who want to know more, our routines move like this: the day starts with registration and activities with a key adult teacher. Two classes follow on, each lasting 50 minutes, a short break to chat to friends, then two more classes until lunch. For early years, school generally has three periods in the afternoon but in the senior school, timetables can include time out at college, work experience or private study.

Our lessons cover English, languages, maths, science, social subjects, PE, expressive arts and technology. We also have the chance to enrich our learning by trying out such subjects as yoga, Tai Chi, cake decorating, photography, Mandarin, dancing and film making. Lessons are supported with technology, using smart TVs and tablets. We research, take notes and make presentations of our work. The school day is busy with learning from start to finish.

Next time you ask what happened at school today and the usual "Fine" is given, you might have a better understanding of what the actual answer may be.

Tommy Hurrell S2 PHS

TOWERBANK PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS



TWO SKI teams from Towerbank Primary School took part in the Boyd Anderson races at Midlothian Snowsports Centre, Hillend in December. Both teams did well and Towerbank was awarded a trophy in recognition of being the most improved school taking part in this competition.



The P7 Lego team took part in the First Lego League Edinburgh Finals. They had been working together as a team since August. They won trophies for producing the highest scoring robot and for having the best core values as a team.

Photos courtesy of Towerbank Primary School website.

ROYAL HIGH PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS



Photo courtesy of Royal High Primary School website.

Primary 6B have been busy in the growing area in their school grounds. They have been looking at what can be done to develop this area so it can become accessible to all. They are also looking at ways in which the area can be further developed into a quality outdoor learning space for the whole school community.

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IN THE SADDLE - PORTOVELO CELEBRATES

AROUND 30 members of local cycling club Portovelo took over the Espy's restaurant space in early December for a Christmas meal, followed by a quiz and an awards ceremony. Dave Perry was named club member of the year, particularly for organising the June weekend trip to the North Pennines. There were also 'yellow jersey' awards for the best contributors to our fitness and intermediate rides and awards for most improved male and female riders, best climber, best sprinter and best young rider. The coveted café of the year award went to the Lanterne Rouge in Gifford for the second year in a row.

Sunday rides started at 9am throughout the winter, and mostly involved routes of 45-50 miles. Numbers varied according to the weather, but we had some big groups, partly thanks to a number



David Perry who was named Club Member of the Year 2018. of new members joining us. Now that we are into March, rides start at 8am, which allows us to organise longer rides of 55-65 miles while still getting home for lunchtime. Full details of the club's activities are available on the website (www.porto-velo.com).

Andrew Mylne

PORTOBELLO AMATEUR SWIMMING CLUB MAKES A SPLASH

PORTOBELLO Amateur Swimming Club's young water polo superstar, Ben Scott, is now playing full-time in Rome for Team Tuscolano. The new younger squad has been competing in the British Water Polo League Championships in February and March and is hoping for promotion to the top flight water polo division in the UK. The Ladies' team, playing for the Caledonia club, qualified for the Super 5s which started in February.

Members of Porty Swim Squad will be heading to Club La Santa, Lanzarote in October for a week-long training camp and, although this is some time away, they are already excited. This event would not take place without the accompanying volunteer coaches.

Meanwhile, on the social calendar, trophies and medals were presented at the annual family ceilidh held at Duddingston Golf Club in January.

Linda Forrester

PORTOBELLO GOLF CLUB PREPARES FOR NEW SEASON



Jimmy Burns, club captain 2017-18, enjoys a round on a sunny winter's day.

DESPITE the threat of closure of the 9-hole course, Portobello Golf Club and the two Ladies' clubs are always looking for new members. We have handicaps from 1 - 28, so all abilities are catered for. This is a wonderful amenity for the local and wider community, and perfectly suited for all ages, gender, ability and health due to its flat terrain. Our season starts on 1st April and annual subscriptions have been reduced to £30. Children aged 11 and under can register (with a parent) with the starter at the course for a season ticket giving them free access; conditions may apply and numbers may be limited.

We await justification for closure from Edinburgh Leisure. Meanwhile, our Action Group and Portobello Community Council have agreed with EL and the city council that the community should be consulted on options for increasing the use of the course. A questionnaire will be available shortly in local venues and on www.edinburghleisure.co.uk.

Lylla Scott, PGC

GOOD YEAR FOR BEACH VOLLEYBALL

2018 was an exciting year for our sport and our club, with our national teams making history, representing Team Scotland at the Commonwealth Games. The club delivered a fantastic programme of coaching and competition opportunities. We can now outline some exciting opportunities for Edinburgh Beach Volleyball Club and the local Portobello community.

We have received funding from 'You Decide' to work with women and girls to support them to become more active, and have also been helped by the Arnold Clark 'Gear Up For Sport' campaign.

In its first year, the club has grown to 88 members. We were shortlisted as finalists for the Scottish Sports Awards 'Local Club of the Year' and the Scottish Women In Sport 'Community Club of the Year' for the work we have done to engage local people.

We want to deliver more, so watch out for a new schedule of events at www.scottishvolleyball.org.

Lynne Beattie

ABERCORN SPORTS CLUB - CENTENARY

ABERCORN Sports Club, a tennis, squash and racquetball club, celebrates its centenary this year. Situated in Abercorn Crescent just off Willowbrae Road, it is a small and friendly community club. For further information visit its website at clubspark.lta.org.uk/AbercornSportsClub or e-mail: info@aberncornsportsclub.co.uk

Linda Forrester



PORTOBELLO Community Football Academy's Under 13s (2006 age group), pictured here, are having a fantastic season. They are in three cup semi-finals and two other quarter-finals. They are also on course to claim the league title, hopefully establishing a great Portobello legacy for all other age groups. To get involved in the club or to have your child take part, please visit us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/portobellocommunityfootballacademy).

John Griffith

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