

Spurttle

BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER

No. 135

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BROUGHTON AND ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Cost-cutting versus education?

Parent representatives from Broughton and St Mary's primary schools have addressed councillors in a bid to reverse unpopular measures by the Children and Families Department. A joint deputation by the school board chairs spoke at a packed meeting of the Executive Committee on 22 February. Despite a sympathetic hearing, and minor concessions, the Department's plans seem set to go ahead.

Both schools face forming composite P1/P2 classes at the start of the next school session. This policy is unpopular with parents and teaching

staff but is an effective money-saving policy for cash-strapped authorities. St Mary's also faces a cap on the number of new entrants, leading to fears of siblings not being able to attend the same school.

The Council has promised to review its calculations for St Mary's, and has offered to approach the Scottish Executive with a request for nationwide research on the effects of P1/P2 composites. 'It's not the result I hoped for,' commented Alan McIntosh, Chair at Broughton PS, 'but it's a small step in the right direction.

I'm also glad that the Department intends to make more effort to justify its policies without forcing headteachers to do their work for them.'

Caroline Johnston, Chair at St Mary's said, 'I sincerely hope that the Council will turn assurances to consider the issue of siblings into a policy which enables siblings of current St Mary's pupils to be educated at the same school. We have 5 families who risk being split up come August, with all the obvious difficulties which that would cause.'

DRUMMOND COMMUNITY HIGH

'The end of an era'

Head Teacher **Muriel Buchanan** pays tribute to departing members of staff:

Anyone who has visited Drummond over the years will know our head "jannie", Dave McNair (on the left). Dave retires this month and it is going to be hard to imagine the school without him. He has worked with four headteachers and served the school loyally for 20 years. We look forward to seeing flowers blooming in his garden beside the school.

Charlie Traylor (on the right), Principal Teacher of C.D.T., is taking early retirement to pursue his interest in adult education. Charlie has helped at every school and community event during his 23 years at Drummond. A John Lennon lookalike, he contributed much to concerts in school both musically and technically. Generations of youngsters have benefited from learning technical skills in Charlie's department.

Also in the photo is Anne MacInnes, on the staff since 1979. She is giving up her Principal Teacher post to 'wind down', but continuing at Drummond on a part-time basis.



BRIEFLY

'Victorian Edinburgh' is the subject at Broughton History Society's next meeting, guest speaker Peter Chalmers, on Monday, 24th April, 7.15 for 7.30pm at Drummond Community High School. Visitors welcome (£1).

All welcome to a **Spring Fair** at Broughton St Mary's Church, Bellevue Crescent, Saturday 29th April from 2 to 4pm. Home baking, jewellery, books, CDs and videos, bric-a-brac and plants.

The new pedestrian **crossing at Mansfield Place** is up and running.



'Bus drivers don't seem to enjoy it very much, judging from their faces squashed up against their windscreens', one local family man tells us, 'but it's made a big difference to pedestrians – especially children. It will be interesting to see whether, at peak times, it disrupts traffic flows enough to make crossing from East Claremont Street to Bellevue Crescent a less time-consuming and hazardous exercise.' A second crossing at Bellevue Crescent is still a possibility, if this first one proves inadequate.

David Sterratt of Bellevue Road wrote in about a campaign being fought '**just over Calton Hill**', where residents and others are objecting to a major development plan. Read all about it on the Canongate Community Forum's website: www.eh8.org.uk

Apart for a few final touches, work on the **Broughton Road play park** is now complete and it's ready to play in. Congratulations to the Broughton Road Group who made it happen: there will be an official opening later in April.

CROATIA

Use your trolley

This snapshot of street life in Dubrovnik comes from the latest edition of the City Talks, the quarterly newsletter published by Edinburgh City Management Company (and edited by Fay Young of East Claremont Street):

The unusually unspoilt 16th century Croatian town of Dubrovnik offers a case study in pedestrian street life. Dubrovnik has endured earthquakes, fires and recent bombing but few cars have breached the old walled town which is paved with marble, covered with café seating and buzzing with live music and street theatre.

Cars park outside the Old Town, taxis unload passengers at the gates and (Edinburgh entrepreneurs please note) porters do a roaring trade trundling heavy goods and luggage across the drawbridge.

Kids play games in the street and ride bikes down to the edge of the harbour at night. Trolleys deliver the sick and frail to and from ambulances.



Last month we published this photo of local film extras taken outside the former Broughton Place Church in 1980, during filming of Chariots of Fire. Third from the left was Ella Brodie: we asked readers to identify the others. Jean Bell of Bellevue Street thinks the lady on the left is Alison Lawrie, manager of the 'tote girls' at Powderhall Stadium 20 – 30 years ago. Betty Allan of Melgund Terrace tells us that it's Catherine McGurdy in the middle, who lived in Broughton Court (demolished in the 1960s) – just next door to the church. Ella Brodie's brother Charles confirms this: Katie McGurdy lived in the Court, where she and Ella were close friends; later she moved to The Inch, and died three years ago.

Building materials arrive on hand carts and so do barrels of booze for the bars. A beauty therapist in white supervises the delivery of her high-tech tables and lamps along gleaming cobbled streets.

You might not be able to drive a car into old Dubrovnik but huge cruise liners invade the bay almost daily in the high season. A megaship sails surreally like a block of flats past the cliffside bar where tourists watch the sun set in the sea ...

And from the same newsletter:

How far will shoppers walk? Farther than you might think. A German study found that while US shoppers think 400 m (roughly a quarter of a mile) is too far, shoppers in Essen and Dusseldorf will walk three times that distance. After pedestrianisation Munich saw daily visitors to the city centre grow from 70,000 to 400,000. What's more, the report suggests, 'pedestrians freed from the stress of driving are in a better mood to shop'.

Spurtle is looking for a volunteer with basic computer skills (preferably Mac) to help produce the paper. On-the-job training in desktop publishing skills can be provided. If you might be interested please phone John Dickie on 556 0903.

Malcolm Chisholm MSP
Edinburgh North and Leith



Constituency office:
86-88 Brunswick Street, EH7 5HU
Tel: 0131 558 8358 Fax 0131 557 6781
Saturday surgeries:
9am Leith Library
10.30am Royston/Wardieburn
Community Centre
12pm Stockbridge Library

LOCAL SHOPS AND BUSINESSES

Gallery to go

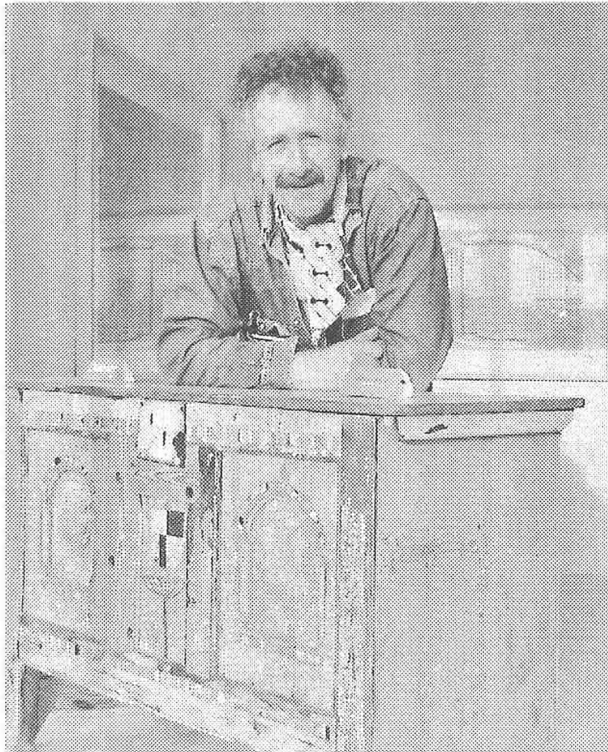
Ross MacLean reports:

Just as the superb Villeneuve Wine Company demystifies fine wine, so Calum Buchanan's Merz Gallery at 87 Broughton Street opens a luminous window on contemporary art. The name Merz, denoting images composed from ephemera, was devised by Kurt Schwitters, one of the chief exponents of the early 20th century DaDa movement. Before Calum established Merz in 2001 he had an art gallery in Bellevue Crescent; and before that he ran the memorable business known as Just Junk at his present Broughton Street address, which many will remember as a treasury of found delights.

Calum gracefully acknowledged past owners of No. 87 by preserving the shop title of 'Scott-Lyon, Bakers', whose history went back to 1850. Crawford's succeeded Scott-Lyon in the 1980s. **Spurtle** readers will recall those sinful meringues and eclairs, with a pang.

Calum preserved and streamlined the structure and facade of this prime location, including architectural details and original fireplaces. He also commissioned the striking surrealistic outside mural by the 'alternative artist' David Knight (now living in London).

Merz has gained a growing reputation for hosting exciting and thought-provoking exhibitions by artists from Britain and abroad, and



has also fostered local talents and given them a springboard for wider recognition. The March exhibition of recent prints and paintings by Jo Ganter was typical. Schwitters himself would have liked her statement: 'drawing is direct thought ...'. Certainly her haunting, subtle studies resonate long in the mind.

In the parlance of his home city, Calum is 'rare', and one of Life's enhancers, who lifts the spirits. Now he is moving on to establish a larger and even more ambitious Merz gallery, outwith Broughton. Very shortly No. 87 will re-house another of Broughton's established glories — Narcissus flowers. Long may they both flourish!

*Our thanks to Narcissus, who have agreed to **Spurtle** continuing to use No. 87 as our letterbox. Meanwhile, look out for their Sale in late April, prior to their move up the street.*

SMALL SHOPS UNDER SIEGE

In February an all-party group of MPs published a report detailing the threat to small, independent local shops from the likes of Tesco Express muscling in on the convenience store market. The Office of Fair Trading has now asked the Competition Commission to investigate the grocery market, including the role of the big supermarkets. **Mark Lazarowicz, Broughton's MP, welcomes the move:**

I know that there is an increasing concern about the way that some of the big supermarket chains are driving out smaller shops and doing real damage to local shopping centres. This is an issue which has been raised with me by people in a number of different parts of my constituency who have seen local shops forced to close by the way some of the big supermarket chains have now started to move into the local convenience shopping market.

I hope that the Competition Commission will carry out an investigation which is both thorough and speedy, before any more damage is done. I also urge the Scottish Executive to make sure that planning decisions don't give the big supermarket chains and the out-of-town shopping centre an unfair advantage over shops and shopping centres in towns, who have to work within constraints which often don't apply to out-of-town centres.

TESCOPOLY

Every little hurts

Recently local anti-Tesco groups have been springing up across the UK, including very active ones in Inverness and North Berwick. (Last year campaigners in Portobello successfully blocked a superstore development; rejection of the application was greeted by dancing in the streets!) Sometimes big out-of-town supermarkets are the targets, sometimes it's a Tesco Express in a city high street. Now more than 200 local groups have joined an online alliance: www.TESCOPOLY.ORG

Spurtle is your local community paper. We aim to inform about local affairs; raise local issues; publicise the work of local action groups; make connections between 'the news' and people's own lives in Broughton; and stir things up a bit!

We'll support people looking for a fair deal, but not protect privilege. We're not connected to any political group or party. And we don't get a grant from anybody to finance the paper.

Contact us and:
- react to what **Spurtle** has had to say
- raise new issues
- let us know about community activities
- tell us what you feel about life in Broughton.

Telephone 556 0903 or 556 7727

Write to us c/o Merz Art Gallery,
87 Broughton Street, EH1 3RJ

Email
broughton.spurtle@blueyonder.co.uk

Belle's View



Hi fans

Whadd'ya mean British Summer Time? Are you *serious*? It's Baltic!

Never mind – get cosy down at the **Botanics**, by hanging out in the **Temperate Palm House** for exhibition **No End To The Banana** (10am – 6pm, £3.50, until 14 May), which reveals all you ever wanted to know about bananas, but were afraid to ask! You can also catch a one-off screening of **Bonita** there (13 April only, 6pm, £3), artist Jan Nimmo's documentary about a banana worker's strike in Ecuador. Both events (plus lots of others) are part of the Edinburgh International Science Festival – and any nibbling of the exhibits is strictly prohibited!

If fruit's not your thing, and you prefer a hunk of cake, get along to weekly club **Vibe** at **Ego, Picardy Place** (Tuesdays 11pm – 3am £3). This night certainly seems to have plenty on offer, including the **Dancing Stud Muffins**, a **Singing Hairy Bloke**, a **Miming Nun** – something for everyone then!

Finally, unless you have been hibernating the past few months, you will not have been able to avoid the brouhaha accompanying the new smoking regulations which affect smoking in public places, especially in that sacrosanct establishment, the Scottish boozier. I personally could not give two cheroots about it, but dear **Estelle** is sorely missing a cheeky wee Embassy Regal with her Taboo and lemonade! For all the fag-fans, it's still possible to 'ave a fag' in relative comfort at some local establishments with an outside area – **The Star Bar**, **The Cumberland**, **The Outhouse**, **Baroque**, and **The Basement** – enjoy! Till next time, just do it!

Persephone Bell

Have you got a story?

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New Town Broughton and Pilrig Community Council

The Community Council represents
the views of local residents to
Edinburgh City Council.

ELECTIONS

Nomination papers must be returned
by 25th April
Contact Annette O'Carroll 556 7586
E-mail accarroll@onetel.net

The next meeting is on
Monday 8th May, 7.30pm at
Drummond Community High School.

Mark Lazarowicz

MP for Edinburgh North and Leith



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Email: mark@marklazarowicz.org.uk
Website: www.marklazarowicz.org.uk
Friday advice sessions:
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5.30pm Constituency Office

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61 Broughton Street
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E-mail:
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Contacts

**Bellevue and Claremont
Residents Association**
Yvonne Pryor 466 1144

Broughton Road Group
Pat Eccles 225 4633

Broughton Village Association
Stephanie Harvey 557 2762
(daytime)

**Dicksonfield Owners and
Residents Association**
Scott Richards 557 8879

**Friends of Hopetoun Crescent
Garden**
Mitchell Manson 557 1933

Gayfield Association
William McNair 556 4493

Hopetoun Village Owners
hopetounvillage@yahoo.co.uk

Powderhall Owners Association
info@powderhallvillage.co.uk

**Redbraes Residents
Association**
George Hosey 467 6151

**New Town Broughton and
Pilrig Community Council**
Annette O'Carroll 556 7586

Broughton History Society
John Dickie 556 0903

Drummond Community High
556 2651

Cllr Trevor Davies
Broughton Ward 529 3221
Surgery at Broughton Primary
School, Weds 6.30pm to 7.00pm
(term time only)

Cllr David Guest
New Town Ward 558 8823 or
529 4268. Surgery at 67
Northumberland Street on
Mondays from 6.30pm to 7.15pm