

## What a life!



*Drystane-dyker, interpreter, measuring scales production technician, pawnbroker, composer... here's the sixth in our series on Broughton folk with interesting jobs.*

Most of us will know Eileen McCallum of Bellevue Street as Isabel Blair of 'Take the High Road'. She is the only original member of the cast left from 1980.

During her childhood in Glasgow her father wrote for children's radio. She was also the youngest member of her school team on a radio quiz at the BBC, where she met 'Auntie Kathleen', who asked her to review children's books. Radio plays followed, then university and RSAMD for drama training. In the late 50s she got in at the start of TV in Glasgow. Since then most of her work has been in TV, which she still enjoys. You may remember her in 'Garnock Way',

forerunner of 'High Road', in the late 1970s.

The 'High Road' team are like a close family for four months each year: they socialise a lot, do charity events together and see each other's pantos. She met Mary Riggans (Effie) and Gwyneth Guthrie (Mrs Mack) in her early radio days, and these three friends have been back together on screen for many years.

She has done several seasons at the Lyceum since 1965, when Tom Fleming was director, and is now on the Royal Lyceum board. This summer you should see her in 'My Life So Far', a film about a young boy growing up in an eccentric household in rural Scotland in the 1930s. She has just finished a tour of 'Albertine in Five Times', a French Canadian play translated into Scots.

The work she is most proud of is Grassic Gibbon's 'Smeddum', filmed in the Mearns for TV. She still remembers the strange experience of walking for miles in long shot through a field of golden grain, feeling the barley in her hands, treading the very soil that Meg Menzies trod.

And luckily for all her fans, Eileen thinks 'High Road' will go for a while yet - so long as the ratings are high. So keep watching!

## Contacts

Updated 18 April 1998

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**Gayfield Association**  
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# BROUGHTON Spurtle

No 48

May 1998

## Labour's New Deal

*Gordon Brown says there's no Fifth Option - well I say BOLLOCKS to him and all his ilk! THE FIFTH OPTION IS TO REBEL!*



One reaction to the Government's new scheme to shift people off welfare and into work! Locally, a worker told *Spurtle* how he attended a conference accompanied by four unemployed 18-24 year-olds. A Benefit Agency spokesman explained the New Deal, putting a very positive spin on it: the four young men all reacted angrily against the proposals.

But the scheme was only introduced nationwide in April, after pilot projects in selected areas. So it's too early to expect unemployed folk in Broughton to have a clear idea of what it means in practice. Meanwhile, our Debate feature on page 2 presents two views of the scheme - one from the voluntary sector and one from our MP.

**Broughton Spurtle is free and completely independent**

## Welcome!

*Spurtle* welcomes newcomers to Broughton, including those moving into new homes in the Hopetoun area.

This edition of *Spurtle* comes with an insert from the Community Council. In it you will find information about developments in the Hopetoun area, plus invitations to:

- attend the Council's next meeting, on 4th May, 7.30pm in Broughton St Mary's Church Centre, 7 East Broughton Place
- go and see the Hopetoun Action Plan and site drawings, available at McDonald Road Library throughout May
- look out for an announcement about a garden party planned for Hopetoun Crescent in June.

BROUGHTON *SPURTLE* aims to:

- provide a contact point for local people who want to get together and change things
- help local action groups publicise their work
- make connections between "the news" and people's own lives in Broughton
- and generally stir things up a bit!

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

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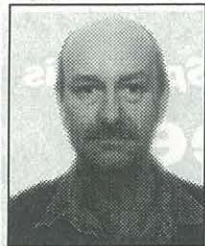
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Donald McKenzie of Broughton Road is a voluntary worker who spent four years on the dole followed by a real but temporary job in the voluntary sector. In the future he may find himself a participant in the New Deal: several issues about the scheme worry him.

## Debate

**The Government is pumping money into four options for the unemployed, starting with 18-24 year-olds:**

- 1 A subsidised job on a "standard wage", lasting six months or more, with one day a week training.**
- 2 Full-time vocational education or training lasting up to a year.**
- 3 A six-month job with a voluntary organisation, with one day a week training, for benefit plus a grant of up to £400 paid in instalments.**
- 4 A job with the new Environmental Task Force, also for "benefit plus".**

**If you refuse to take up one of those options, you start losing unemployment benefit.**

**We present two contrasting views of the New Deal. Time will tell how it works out in practice: we'll welcome further comment, particularly from those directly affected by the scheme - as victims or beneficiaries?**

We asked our local MP, Malcolm Chisholm, for his assessment of the New Deal.



The New Deal is old-fashioned redistribution in action, taking billions off the excess profits of the privatised utilities in order to help the long-term unemployed.

The rate of youth unemployment is twice the national average. Many young people have never had a job and have given up hope of ever getting one. The New Deal starts with 18-24 year-olds at the beginning of their working lives, with help to improve their skills and employability and get them on the road to lasting job prospects. In June it will be extended to those aged 25 and over who have been unemployed for two years or more.

The education option gets round the current problem of not being able to study full time and claim benefit. All the other options involve training and useful outcomes such as the energy efficiency work of the Environmental Task Force. More than half will go on the employment option, where they should be paid the going rate for the job - and where existing employees must not be made redundant to make way for New Deal participants.

The New Deal does not solve the problem of unemployment. That relates to wider economic policies. However, it does make it far less likely that particular groups of people will be excluded from the labour market. That is why it has been widely welcomed in the pilot areas - and why compulsion has been a purely theoretical issue.

**SPURTLE team for this issue:**  
John Dickie, Gill Flack,  
Tim Puntis, Jane Coville,  
Richard Love & Alan McIntosh

Should the Voluntary Sector: participate in a compulsory scheme? have people working in projects against their will? be involved in disciplining/reporting (for benefit cuts) trainees who resent or renege on their compulsory placements? The Voluntary Sector may become the Employment Service Police Force - used to compel unemployed people into working long demanding hours, for the pittance of £10 per week - with no serious prospect of a real job at the end. The Voluntary Sector, grossly underfunded following years of Government cuts, is desperate for additional resources. The Government's New Deal subsidies therefore appear attractive. What a coincidence!

Will real support and training be given to trainees? Will they be used as cheap (subsidised) labour for simple, mundane, dirty jobs which need doing but are at present paid for? Will employers behave any better than they did under the old YTS and YOP schemes? Remember the huge rate of workplace deaths and injuries among youths during these schemes. The Voluntary Sector may be willing to provide adequate resources for training, but is this realistic under existing hard-pressed conditions - how many real jobs will exist to be filled? Could the scheme actually cost jobs?

Employers' training costs have been transferred to the Public Purse. Is there an employer who will not take advantage of a scheme to subsidise their training costs even further? At least businesses will approve of the New Deal - more public money straight into their pockets. But no real jobs created.

Employment schemes can't help the unemployed unless real jobs are created. Only unemployment figures (and the Government) will benefit.

## Society's photo display



Gayfield Street Lane, 1934 - a street photo postcard, lent by Betty Allan.

Broughton History Society's photo display in early April had some interesting visitors. Amongst them was someone brought up in Barony Street in the 1930s who says his was the only non-Catholic Italian family in Edinburgh; and someone else who worked most of his life for Croall the Electrician of 54 Broughton Street, starting in 1936. According to him, the same Croall family had a hairdresser's business in East Register

Street with the figure of a bear (or a bear's head?) outside - the connection being that at one time bear's grease was used as a hair dressing.

The History Society would still welcome more photos to illustrate the social history of the Broughton area. If you think you might have something of interest to lend, please phone one of the following: Richard Love on 556 1488, Gavin McGregor on 556 7727 or David Aitken on 556 1716.

## Doctors on the move

Two medical practices are on the move over the May bank holiday weekend, from Bellevue Crescent and Bellevue Place. Their destination is a brand new, purpose-built medical centre off Annandale Street.

Practice manager Helen Highley told **Spurtle** there will be no disruption to normal services: the present surgeries will close at 6pm on Friday, 1st May; there will be the same out-of-hours arrangements as is usual over bank holiday weekends; and the new medical centre will be open for business at 8am on Tuesday, 5th May. The two practices will operate alongside each other in the new building, each with its own reception.

A much-improved service will be possible at the new centre, she told us.

The two practices will continue to share District Nurse and Health Visitor provision, but now they'll all be under the one roof. Staff will have a much better working environment (at Bellevue Crescent there's only one consulting room that doctors have to share), and there's "a lovely waiting room" for patients. Everything will be on one level, with proper disabled access.

**Spurtle** questioned the rather lurid blue colour incorporated in the exterior of the new building. Helen Highley told us the planners were anxious that the medical centre should look distinctively different from the surrounding housing; and the bright colour would make it easy for people to find their way to the centre.

## BRIEFLY

- One year after New Labour's triumph at the ballot box we now have **changed opening hours at public libraries** "due to budget reductions"! As from 14th April, the hours at McDonald Road Library are now: Monday and Wednesday 1 to 8pm; Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10am to 5pm; Saturday, 9am to 1pm.
- **The Stafford Centre, Broughton Street is looking for volunteers.** If you're interested in finding out more contact Clair on 557 0718.
- It seems there's a problem over the City Council's sale of the former **St Mary's Primary School** in York Lane, to developers proposing conversion to flats. The planning committee has rejected the proposals as not being of an adequate standard. This latest hitch will no doubt cause some wry smiles locally. Away back in 1991 the projected sale of the building for £500,000 was a key element in the Education Department's justification of the closure of London Street Primary School and the transfer of St Mary's to that site.

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