

Spurtle



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2011**

No 198

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BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free

SNP CLING ON IN WARD 11

SNP candidate Alasdair Rankin won the City Centre ward by-election on 18 August. He received 1,368 votes to beat the Conservatives' Iain McGill by a narrow margin of 104 in the last round (*Breaking news*, 18.8.11).

Labour came third; the Greens and Independent came 4th and 5th respectively. The Lib-Dems came last, and were eliminated after mustering only 251 votes.

Only 3,466 votes were cast out of a possible 14,810 (23%), raising renewed doubts over the wisdom of holding the election in mid-August.

On such a low turn-out, quite what this result proves is unclear. Some 65% of voters backed pro-tram parties in the 1st round, and yet the only surviving anti-tram party won in the end. In the 3rd round, anti-tram Independent supporters transferred their votes to the pro-tram Tories rather than the SNP. On another important issue, 'outsourcing' of Council services, 47% voted for the SNP and Tory candidates broadly in favour of this strategy, and they will not be disappointed.

At the *Spurtle* hustings on 9 August, much was made of existing councillors' perceived incompetence and the overweening influence of CEC officers (*Breaking news*, 10/11.8.11). Whilst he may have lacked anything like the common touch on that occasion, Alasdair Rankin at least emerged as an experienced administrator with the self-confidence to keep officialdom, in his words 'on tap, not on top'.



EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE ENDANGERED?



Edinburgh World Heritage Trust's latest newsletter includes surveys for city residents and workers. Their aim is to measure the value placed on World Heritage Status, and the benefits it brings.

The preamble and wording for Question 6 successfully rang *Spurtle*'s alarm bells: 'I would now like you to imagine that public spending will be reduced on the maintenance of the World Heritage Site. Without repair historic buildings in this area would in time go to rack and ruin and be demolished and replaced with new buildings. Now imagine that the decision to cut spending on the repair of historic buildings could be mitigated through your contribution. The money collected would be used to conserve maintain and restore the Edinburgh World Heritage Site.'

'6. Bear in mind that these resources would no longer be available to you for other personal use. Would you be prepared to pay the equivalent of 2 cinema tickets per year for this? Your response will not be used for imposing higher taxes.' Question 7 goes on: 'What would be the highest amount you would like to pay to support conservation and repair?'

It seems clear that EWHT is positioning itself for an extremely harsh funding environment in the not-too-distant future. See the surveys in context at: [<http://bit.ly/rc4pTE>].

'BIG FOOT' MARKETS COULD BE WEEKLY IN 2012

Edinburgh Markets (EM) have applied to run a regular community market for the 'Big Foot Territory' opposite St Mary's Cathedral, writes *Boroka Godley*.

If Council Planners approve (Ref. 11/02147/FUL), up to 18 traditional stalls – selling a variety of foods and goods, including arts and crafts, clothing and music – will open every Sunday, probably from about 10am, starting in March 2012. EM's Victoria MacDonald describes her organisation as a social enterprise aiming to offer 'good foods and goods at affordable prices, provide a platform for charities to generate income, develop opportunities for disadvantaged people through training and events (homeless, disabled, addicts, minorities etc.) and create a more attractive space for locals'.

Another aim is to tackle antisocial behaviour in the area. Frances Whitton, Manager of Café Camino, is enthusiastic. 'The temporary summer market operating [run by EM] has really helped with drunken behaviour in the area. Having a permanent market would further reduce this, and would hopefully boost business.'

MacDonald came up with the idea after being made redundant. 'Rather than feel sorry for myself, I decided to put my skills to good use and find a way to help people'. Hopefully, her enthusiasm and innovation will prove a success, and the community will come together to help the needy. See: [www.edinburghmarkets.co.uk].



Briefly



This **nonplussed puss** appears at 31 Broughton St. Can anyone tell us more about **Bruce M.** or identify other examples of his work?

Following councillors' (25.8.11) vote to run a tramline from Edinburgh Airport only so far as Haymarket Bar, **locals will naturally expect the prompt return of: Sherlock Holmes to Picardy Place; 5 pigeons to Elm Row; the clock tower to the end of London Rd; balls to Leith Walk; and the traffic island to Broughton St. We refer elected reps also to Letters (1.7.11)**

Edinburgh school session dates 2011–12 are listed at: [<http://bit.ly/fgt9Oi>].

End-of-Festival fireworks (over 100,000 of them) go up in smoke at 9pm on Sun. 4 Sept.

New Town and Broughton Community Council's next meeting is on Mon. 5 Sept. in **Broughton St Mary's Parish Church** (Bellevue Cres.), 7.30pm. This will remain NTBCC's regular venue for the foreseeable future.

Dog owners whose pooches cause **alarm or apprehension** in humans, or threaten other animals, face Council action. Environmental wardens will issue: (1) an advisory warning; (2) a Dog Control Notice to remedy the problem. Failure to comply could result in a £1K fine and destruction of the dog.

Doggie Fun Sunday will set tails wagging on 11 Sept. in Queen St Gardens (East) at 1.30pm. Admission by donation. The event is to raise funds for **Canine Partners**, a charity which trains dogs to perform a multitude of useful tasks for people who can't do them for themselves. See *Breaking news* (1.9.11).

A reader emailed us in Aug. questioning our euphemistic, online description of the **Broughton Village Association** as *hibernating*. 'Since it is currently "summer", you mean "aestivating"', he wrote. We thank **Chris at Milnagar** for his observation, and respectfully suggest he has too much time on his hands.

From 11 Sept., timetable changes will affect **Lothian Buses** services: 1, 23, 25, 27, 36 42. 'Revised' timetables will affect: 49, 67. There are revised routes and timetables for: 15/15A: [<http://bit.ly/qTWWJw>].

Broughton History Society meets on Mon. 12 Sept. Simon Fairnie will talk on 'Fisherrow: A Wee Bit of Its Story'.

Reed on the up and up



Local athlete Kimberley Reed has gone from strength to strength as the summer has unfolded (*Breaking news* 17.8.11).

In late July her Championship record hammer throw helped Edinburgh Athletic Club to a win in the Scottish Young Athletes League final. A week later, another record (55.45m) at the Under-18 Scottish Championships was the second longest ever by a British U-17 female. In early August she won gold in the discus event at the U-20

Scottish Championship and silver in the hammer, and a little later represented Scotland in the Celtic Games where she won the hammer with 6m to spare. At the end of the month she won with her last throw in the England Athletics U-17 Championships, again by a margin of 6m.

Four more competitions remain this season, which we will report online in due course. But there are two further exciting developments to mention: not only has Kimberley been selected for the Commonwealth Youth Games this month [<http://bbc.in/nqyXx5>]; she has also been invited to apply as a potential member of the senior Commonwealth Games squad for Glasgow 2014.

Carping about parking



Im p o v e r i s h e d professionals will heave sighs of relief at a proposed variation to the terms of the Extended Area of Edinburgh's

Controlled Parking Zone.

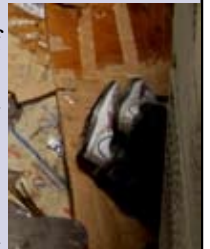
For a trial period of up to 18 months, Class-2 businesses (financial, professional and other services) may soon apply for 2 permits each allowing parking at permit-holders' and shared-use parking bays near their business outlets for up to 2 unlicensed vehicles. Permits will also be available for 2 specified, unlicensed retailers' vehicles.

If approved, the proposal would allow pedestrians on over 80 streets in Greater Spurtleshire (Zones N1 and N2) to enjoy even more automotive killer whales, and offer pre-school and partially sighted pedestrians a wider range of protruding bumpers. Some spoilsports suggest any such permits should be restricted to small vehicles with small engines unless a genuine need is proven.

Details of the pilot scheme were out for public consultation until 29 August. Spurtle understands the earliest any trial could begin would be towards the end of 2011. (See also *Briefly*, p.3.)

No more shelter from the stormy blast

Imagine yourself homeless. Imagine yourself also cold and wet and afraid. Now imagine the value of a discreet, warm, dry spot, out of sight, right in the busy heart of the city.



One such haven seems set to be made inaccessible in an outdoor basement at the corner of Broughton St and Broughton St Lane. If Picardy Place GHQ's planning application proves successful, a galvanised, welded, steel security fence will keep rough-sleepers out (Ref. 11/02616/FUL; *Breaking news* 16.8.11).

Spurtle aspires to a clean, well-ordered neighbourhood which includes clubs where bright young things can party away into the small hours of the night and pavements where pedestrians may pass unmolested. However, we also aspire to a community where those unfortunates whose most immediate aspiration is a safe kip are cut a little slack.

Cornucopia

Another Festival is over. The cavalcade has moved on. But still there are small



mercies to reassure us that our summer might yet again make its 'light escape into the beautiful', as Emily Dickinson wrote, and as reflected by these wonderful apple trees and a hanging garden in Spurtleshire. A sunny £15 book token will go to whoever correctly identifies the locations of these images and has their name drawn first from the shoogly hat.



Albany Street: local bastion of no-longer-silent minority

No plaque yet marks the significance of 49 Albany Street for many generations of Edinburgh's population with speech and hearing disabilities. It is now the headquarters of Deaf Action, an organisation whose antecedents stretch back to the capital's Age of Enlightenment.

In many ways, Edinburgh led the world in providing scholastic and religious facilities for the 'deaf and dumb'. In 1760, the world's first regular school for deaf children was established by Thomas Braidwood at St Leonard's Hill in what is now Dumbiedykes Road (the origin of the name is sadly obvious). The world's first Deaf-led church services were conducted by Matthew Robert Burns (1798–1880) in Lady Stair's Close during the 1830s. Another first was the creation in 1835 of the Edinburgh Deaf and Dumb Benevolent Society, largely inspired by Alexander Blackwood (1805–90, pictured top-right). Various locations were used for its church services, including South Bridge and Leith Streets, Stockbridge, and – from 1873–81 – 20 Picardy Place.

In 1889, the Society purchased a townhouse at 49 Albany Street. The architect Robert Wilson refurbished it, creating a church at the rear, a caretaker's residence, offices, reading room, lecture room, and a library. The layout of the church met the visual needs of its congregation, with pews facing the pulpit and no central aisle. Services were conducted by co-founder Alexander Blackwood who, at his death, left a legacy of £500 to the Society.

While its church was pivotal, the Society provided more than spiritual sustenance. In 1892, chess, gymnastic and debating clubs were run. Meanwhile, throughout this decade, Albany Deaf Church raised £50–60 annually to support one Mrs Mills's work with many thousands of deaf people in China. The Society's happy metamorphosis from 'Edinburgh and East of Scotland Society for the Deaf' to 'Deaf Action' in the 21st century will be explored in two further articles. *JRM [with special thanks to Deaf Action]*



Briefly

Some Council-owned buildings will receive unique 'forensic identities' in a bid to frustrate **metal thefts**. Areas at risk will be squirted with '**smart water**' which can be traced if detected on a suspect. '**Dummy metals** – worthless on the dodgy scrap market – will also be tested, and normal security measures ramped up. CEC estimates that **£177,000 worth of damage** has been done to schools and other buildings (including McDonald Rd Library and the former Bonnington Primary School) because of copper and lead theft.

The Carlton Rd Bridge Centre will hold an introductory session at 36b Warriston Rd on 17 Sept. For details contact 552 3122 or email: [classes@carltonbridgecentre.org.uk].

Spurtle is unreliably informed that the former **Pani Solinska** on Broughton St will soon be an **Italian restaurant**. Watch this space.

A new CEC website detailing available Edinburgh **parking spaces** is at: [http://bit.ly/nRiJ0v].

'**Guerilla parking**' on an unmarked section of resurfaced York Place disrupted traffic in Aug. (*Breaking news*, 17.8.11). **Cllr Dundas** was informed. Wheels turned. Lines were repainted 6 days later. **Hell hath no fury like a Parking Dept scorned**.

In a separate development, Ward 11's **Cllr Dundas** has announced he will **not seek re-election** in May next year. He seeks to spend more time with his family and career.

In *Breaking news* (30.6.11) we reported alleged **racial abuse** of a mother and her baby on the 22 bus along Leith Walk. A 50-year-old local man has now been charged and will appear at **Edinburgh Sheriff Court** on 14 Sept.

In a **sour aside** at last month's hustings, one candidate suggested the event was irrelevant since over 14.5K eligible voters were elsewhere. By our calculation – **at least 6,500 people** were following the proceedings on Twitter. Hustings have **rarely been so important**.

Possible reopening of Abbeyhill Station – reported here in Issue 196 – has inched closer. David Boyce of Network Rail will address a public meeting about the **Edinburgh–Glasgow Improvement Programme** (7pm, Wed. 2 Nov.) in the Church Hall on London Rd/Easter Rd. We'll remind you nearer the time.

Category A-listed **Gayfield House** on E. London St – built in the 1760s and once a country house owned by the Earl of Leven – is for sale at offers over £570K.

Planning consent is sought for **130 new homes** at 7–9 **Newhaven Rd** (Ref. 11.02671/FUL), and **155 student beds** at 40–4 **Elm Row** (the former Gateway Theatre, Ref. 11/02696/FUL): see *Breaking news* (23.8.11).

Bamboo on Broughton Street



Quite when the giant pandas will come to Edinburgh Zoo is anybody's guess, but they arrived early on trend-setting Broughton Street in Aug. The window at Curiouser & Curiouser displayed the pair, designed by local artist Kate McLelland as part of an MFA in Illustration at Edinburgh College of Art. Background foliage – the height of the window – was hand cut from a single sheet of paper. McLelland's stunning prints are also available in the shop. See: [http://bit.ly/eOTPC8].

Green thoughts on petrified forests

One of last month's most interesting exhibitions was *Subterranea*, featuring outdoor sculptures in Corten or 'weathering' steel by Edinburgh-based Andrea Geile.



In 9 New Town basements (including Abercromby Place, Drummond Place

and London Street), the constructions reflected the artist's passion to create structures in which visual perception and memory of nature are interposed or coalesced. Her ethos embraces 'observation of nature, environmental concerns and climate change, love of gardening, cultural identity, research in plant biology, horticulture and botany'.

Some works (e.g. outside the Scottish Gallery in Dundas Street) incorporated succulent plants within steel blocks reminiscent of ancient rocks encrusted with lichen, algae or even a miraculous flower from a seed entrusted by a bird or bestowed by the wind. Others arose like petrified fountains or fossilised stalks of papyrus (see example above in Drummond Place).

Geile echoes Andrew Marvell's beautiful, complex poem 'The Garden' in these challenging, stilled thoughts on endurance and evanescence in controlled and wild nature, as well as its fragility in relation to humanity's stewardship or the lack thereof (See *Extras*, 1.8.11.). *JRM*

Moreover ...



Jean Bell and others on **Bellevue St** are celebrating the removal of **scaffolding on tenement flats** after 3+ years. 'No more being wakened at 8am by the sound of generators starting up and workmen shouting to each other.' No such luck for **Melgund Terrace** residents where extensive work continues. Jean suggests a **street party** when it's all over. Any takers?

Popular Edinburgh twitter usernames – including **@thespurtle** – were **hacked** last month and used to spread spam. Our counter-measures contained the problem, but if you receive a dodgy-looking DM supposedly from us, just ignore it.

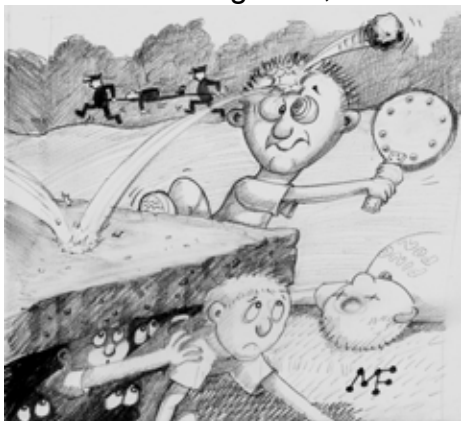
A **concrete ping-pong table**, seating and repainting of existing equipment will revive parts of King George V Park. Friends joined **Action for Children** to give young people work experience over the 6–8-week project (see *Breaking news*, 23.8.11). Work began on 29 Aug.

Drummond CHS's adult education programme (2011–12) includes: Creative Crochet & Knitting; Chinese & Thai Vegetarian Cooking; **Neurolinguistic Programming**; and Pirates – An Introduction. Tel. 556 2651 [www.drummondhigh.com].

Gifted on Broughton St is now the superbly shimmering **Dragonfly**, after a change of ownership. Long may it hover.

Mixed shows will feature at **Axolotl** (*David*, photography) and Union Gallery (*Plight of the Bumblebee*, bee-themed paintings) this month. See *Breaking news* (1.9.11).

Park fun and games, but ...



Beware concrete ping-pong balls!

Malcolm Chisholm MSP

Edinburgh North and Leith



Constituency Office:
5 Croall Place, Leith Walk, EH7 4LT
Tel: 0131 558 8358
Fax: 0131 557 6781

Saturday surgeries:
Leith Library, Ferry Road: 9am.
Royston Wardieburn Community
Centre, Pilton Drive North: 11 am.

Email: Malcolm.Chisholm.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

New Town/Broughton Community Council

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

Next meeting:

Monday 5 September
at 7.30pm

Broughton St Mary's Parish
Church, Bellevue Crescent

secretary@ntbcc.org.uk

Mark Lazarowicz

MP for Edinburgh North and Leith



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Tel: 0131 557 0577
Fax: 0131 557 5759

mark@marklazarowicz.org.uk
www.marklazarowicz.org.uk

Friday advice sessions:
4.00pm **Stockbridge Library**,
no appointment necessary;
5.00pm **5 Croall Place**;
other surgeries throughout the
constituency – phone for details

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