

Spurttle



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BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free

**March
2012**

No 204

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LOCALS BID GOOD RIDDANCE TO BAD BIOMASS PLAN

After over two years, Forth Energy last month abandoned plans for a biomass energy plant in Leith Docks.

Congratulations are due to the people of Leith and Edinburgh who – across all social, party and geographical distinctions – made their opposition abundantly clear (1,800 signed a petition objecting). Congratulations go too to the volunteers who ran a reasoned and effective campaign in the face of better-resourced professionals, and to the politicians who – through conviction or a shrewd appraisal of which way the wind was blowing – fought the proposal in Holyrood and City Chambers.

The Greener Leith website led the way in calmly articulating and disseminating the case against, for which its contributors deserve praise. You can read their summary of the debacle (9.2.12) and speculation about the reasons for Forth Ports' 'change of heart' at [<http://bit.ly/J1ak0>].

Locals, however, should stay alert. The Forth Energy which was capable of foisting so spectacularly inappropriate a development on us before needs to be watched carefully in future.

AU REVOIR, CECILE



Broughton will miss Cecile Paul and her retro clothes emporium Threadbare, which has vivified Broughton Street since 2002 but sadly closes in late March: see p.2.

BROUGHTON BRACED FOR TRAFFIC TROUBLE



A new set of tramwork-related diversions will come into effect this month with potentially major consequences for Broughton.

From 3 March until the autumn, the single bus lane currently operating between South St Andrew Street and Waverley Bridge will be closed. North-south traffic will instead run via York Place, Leith Street and North Bridge.

Also on 3 March, Hanover St and the Mound will reopen ahead of schedule, but only to taxis, buses, cyclists and emergency vehicles.

There is understandable concern that major congestion will result from these developments, particularly if traffic turning right into Broughton St from York Place begins to back-up into Picardy Place and Leith Street. A spokesman for Trams in Edinburgh told *Spurttle* they would monitor the situation, and if necessary ban the right turn.

How displaced traffic might then be channelled north is unclear, but residents in McDonald Road, Annandale and East London Streets fear the worst.

Some 27 different bus services will be affected by the diversions. For revised Lothian Buses timetables and route maps, visit [<http://bit.ly/yXTCns>].

MP FIGHTS TAX CREDIT CHANGES

Mark Lazarowicz, MP is urging the Government to rethink changes to the Working Tax Credit (WTC) rules.



At present, adults who work 16 hours a week or more, and are responsible for at least one child, are eligible for WTC. From 6 April, the hours to be worked will rise to 24.

Lazarowicz says this is unfair at a time when many businesses are in no position to offer more work. 'In North and Leith alone, these changes will affect 265 households and 520 children. It is unacceptable that low-income families earning less than £17,700 are being targeted in this way.'

The Coalition Government proposes to replace WTC with the Universal Credit by 2016. They say it will cut costs and make sure people are better off in work.

SPRING?



Observed in a secluded garden in berry bushes behind Drummond Place on 20 Feb., a small flock of long-tailed tits. Arguably the most exquisite of the tit family, they ignored this observer as they shimmered and danced between the branches. A proclamation of *actual* Springtime?

Briefly



The **Printmakers Workshop** on Union St have a packed programme this month, but one item in particular tickled our fancy/gullet: a free **Entomophagy Bug Lunch** event on 24 Mar. at 12.30pm. **Sweet and savoury** treats are promised (such as crickets, pictured), displaying 'the versatility and importance that insects play in the future diet of mankind'. Pre-booking essential.

The next meeting of the **Broughton History Society** will be at 7pm on Mon. 12 Mar. in Drummond CHS. **Lindsay Levy** will talk on 'Walter Scott and the Bad Boys: Scott, Burns and Byron'.

Can hospitality ever be taken too far? Perhaps it had something to do with St Valentine's Day, but the **Mezz Bar's A-board on Broughton Street** was last month advertising 'complimentary nibbles to parties of 25 or more'.

Shops in the new **St James Quarter** could be open for business by 2016, according to agents **GVA Grimley Ltd**. Other elements of the development would be finished 2 years later, subject to planning consents. (See *Breaking news*, 14.2.12.)

Repairs to the **Bake House Co.** on Broughton St – damaged by fire on 17 June 2011 – have started. Staff expect to reopen in April.

Many thanks to Chief Cycling Correspondent **Tim Smith**, who – in the absence of any cycling news – asks whether readers can name a **Bob Dylan song** mentioning this part of the world. Answer at the foot of 'Briefly', p.3.

At its 6 Feb. meeting, the **New Town and Broughton Community Council** cautiously welcomed outline proposals for development of Royal Bank of Scotland property on **Eyre Place and Terrace** (*Breaking news*, 12.1.12). **Councillor Hinds** raised the issue of commercial uses for some sections, highlighting local concern about the possible arrival of yet another supermarket.

Flamboyant Edinburgh restaurateur **Pierre Levicky** has told the *Spurtle* that his popular *Pierre Victoire* will certainly close whenever building work begins at Eyre Place/Terrace (see item above). He says that in his experience, **no restaurant can survive** the two or more years' disruption such construction brings. 'A restaurant nearby becomes quite simply a place where people do not want to go.'

Threadbrae (not)

Vibrant is an overused word, but it certainly applies to Cecile Paul and her wonderful knitwear and retro clothes shop which has been a joyful part of Broughton Street for an eventful decade.

The name belied a cornucopia of riches which banished thoughts of horizontal rain and banshee winds outside. Cecile's own knitwear label is of great distinction and a prized work of art in itself. She has reluctantly decided to move on, with Sydney in her sights.

The front room of the shop will remain open until late March/early April. Happily, Cecile's legacy is likely to continue. Her successor will purvey fine knitwear and Scottish yarns.

We wish Cecile and her family *bon voyage* and *bonne chance* in the next big adventure.

Big bands and big fun to raise funds



The **Drummond Community Big Band** and **No Strings Attached** (local wind band) are to play at Spring Fling on 23 March – a concert to raise funds for the Kenya Educational Partnership and school music department at Drummond CHS, and for **No Strings Attached**.

Expect tunes from *Shrek*, *Pick up the Pieces*, and a sing-along for everyone; refreshments from the Safari Café.

Time 7.30pm. Venue: Drummond CHS. Tickets: £5 (under-12s go free) from school office.

Warm parkers disturb sleep

Residents of Hillside Crescent and Regent Terrace are being disturbed in the small hours by stationary vehicles on London Road, a delegate has told the New Town & Broughton Community Council.

Coaches occupy free parking here whilst waiting for spaces to become available at St Andrew Square Bus Station. They began arriving after roadworks displaced them from Harry Lauder Way in October, and now taxi drivers and even Council vehicles have started following suit.

The nuisance arises as drivers switch on engines in order to start the heating. When environmental wardens ask them to switch off, they politely agree, only to switch on again a moment later. By such manoeuvres, they artfully juggle compliance with regulations on road traffic emissions (2003) and working conditions (2005), remain within the law, and drive sleepless neighbours round the bend. The problem may only get worse when windows are left open during summer nights.

Councillor Rankin has promised to look into the problem. However, a solution may require legislative changes be made at Holyrood.

Teenage woes sound familiar

As SNP politicians controversially advocate granting Scottish teenagers the right to vote in an independence referendum, we wondered how young people elsewhere find their place in society. Felix Kimathi (aged 17 and hoping to become a journalist) visited Drummond CHS from Muthambi Boys School in June 2011. Here he gives a Kenyan perspective.

Kenya is a nation made of communities with diverse views, but about teenagers they are all similar. Kenyan youths experience very different treatment from that enjoyed by their parents and the community. They are seen to have a very low sense of judging issues by the older generation, and as being mostly influenced by worldly pressures and luxuries.

Their parents and the 'Old' violate most of their rights. There are very few parents who listen to the young, and others call them inexperienced. Their aim is to fight to their best to have full control over their sons and daughters, and they are overprotective.

Many girls are never allowed to be near boys, nor are boys allowed to be near them. They retaliate by hiding from their parents, and this has forced many teenagers to rebel since they're never honoured.

In the past, teenage boys would be viewed as adult after being circumcised. Nowadays, things are quite different – a Kenyan teenager is considered an adult after he/she is through with education and has acquired a job and can earn their own living. But even after their children have become independent, some parents are unreasonable, not honouring their sons' or daughters' decisions.



Forth House and Robert Burn

Last month, *AM* highlighted the architectural achievements of Robert Burn (1752–1815), which included the design of most of Forth Street (1804). The pièce de résistance in the street is undoubtedly the B-listed facade of the central building at Nos 13–17 on the palace-fronted south side. It is now Forth House, headquarters of Radio Forth which was established in 1975. In the view of Gifford et al. (1984), its elegant lines recall the centrepiece on the north side of Charlotte Square ‘on a more intimate scale’.



Originally, Forth House comprised three distinct entities. In 1840, at No. 13, there was James Orr, ‘Druggist’ and from 1870–90 the obscure Crerar’s School. No. 15 housed Reverend Cornelius Giffen from 1879–90, whereupon in 1891 Anderson & Co., ‘Rectifiers’, materialise.

In 1900, Harvey & Co. emerge at No. 17. They were ‘wholesale manufacturing and artistic stationers, paper merchants, and bevel edge and fancy card makers’. Harvey expanded in 1920 and were sole occupants of Nos 13–17 for at least four decades. The interior of Burn’s great centrepiece was reconstructed in 1974–75 after it had been sadly reduced to a warehouse following the demise of Harvey & Co..

Happily, the Rev. Giffen and the governors of Crerar’s School would rejoice in the clean, unaltered appearance of Forth House, which is much to Radio Forth’s credit. It is a serene caesura and echo of the Age of Enlightenment in the bustle of Broughton. But why has our caring Council allowed the rare, surviving gaslight outside – and its lonely neighbour at the east end of the street – to rust away? *JRM* [N.B. Can any reader add to the story of Crerar’s School?]

Briefly



Cathy Campbell – a renowned still-life artist and lecturer at Glasgow School of Art – will have her first solo exhibition in Edinburgh at the Union Gallery on Broughton St from 1 Mar–4 Apr. A review will follow online in due course. Pictured above is her ‘Little Fern’.

The **LGBT Centre** at 9 Howe St will run its 6th friendly and informal **Community Discussion** on Thu. 8 Mar., 6.30–8.30pm. Journalist **Stephanie Theobald** [<http://bit.ly/8m6H>] will get the ball rolling with a talk on ‘**Love, Labels and Bisexuality**’.

Noise from the back of Picardy Place’s **Hawke & Hunter** continues to annoy nearby residents of Forth and Union Sts. There are now growing calls to **more rigorously police alfresco smokers**, and to ban them altogether from the rear garden area after 10pm.

Police say official-looking signs on Princes St reading ‘**CYCLISTS DISMOUNT**’ have no legal force. They are thought to have been erected by tramworks contractors, and represent **wishful thinking**.

Surgery times for **Malcolm Chisholm, MSP** have changed owing to revised opening hours at Leith Library. See p.4.

Bibliominal determinism strikes again: Fergus Smith of Second Edition in Canonmills reports the recent sale of a book entitled *The Great Caledonian Forest* to a new customer: Mr Bigwood.

Pupils at **Broughton Primary School** have been using an area in Powderhall Bowling Green [beside St Mark’s Path] to make a garden, writes **Kieran Glen (P6/7)**. The Eco-Committee started this. Last year, P3a planted silver birch, rowan and hawthorn trees. P4b planted plum and pear trees. P2/3 and P4 drew the trees. **Many classes have their own plot in the garden.** They chose what seeds to plant, sowed them and watered them. They hope to make more raised beds this year, and hope you enjoy the flowers and trees.

Welcome back **Gaia Architects** (formerly of the Monastery in Hart St), who have returned to Broughton after a short sojourn elsewhere. They have now taken up new premises in Gayfield Street.

Bob Dylan conundrum answer: ‘**Simple Twist of Fate**’: ‘Felt an emptiness inside to which he just could not relate / Brought on by a simple twist of fate’. Other Spurtleshire references in popular lyrics welcomed.

Inquisitive spirit gets answers

In Issue 200, we featured Bob Rickard’s request for information about operations by the Drambuie Liqueurs Co. in Broughton. He already knew that the firm was in Union St in 1935, prior to opening the York Place office in 1940. He knew also that the spirit was bottled in a bonded warehouse in Dublin Street Lane, but was anxious to discover where it was made.

Last month, Rickard was contacted by a former and long-since retired director of the company. He revealed that Drambuie was compounded (the technical term for flavouring and/or sweetening spirit) at 19 Dublin Street Lane from about 1940, on the north side and immediately opposite the bottling plant at No. 22. This was also where the bottles were washed, by hand, before filling.

When these premises became inadequate (c.1947), compounding was moved to a former commercial garage in the middle of Broughton Market. Casks of whisky were carried by lorry between the bond at Dublin Street Lane and Broughton Market, and the Drambuie created taken back to the bond in casks by the same method. This arrangement lasted until Drambuie moved to the foot of Easter Road in 1955.

Mr Rickard says he is ‘pleased to have filled a conspicuous hole in my knowledge’, and thanks *Spurtle* readers for their help in his investigations.

Shot in the park

Rhys Fullerton is an aspiring young filmmaker in Broughton who is already attracting attention for the high standard of his short works made on miniscule budgets.

Originally from Carlisle, Fullerton (pictured right with clipboard) studied at the Leeds Northern Film School before arriving in Edinburgh about 18 months ago. His day job is in the Box Office at the Festival Theatre, but his spare time and creative energy go into scriptwriting, direction, production and the myriad other ‘people and administrative skills’ required to create a watchable product out of thin air.



Birdie is his latest 3-minute short, made by 9 unpaid volunteers for £200 and shot in Inverleith on a Canon EOS 5D Mark II – Digital camera – SLR. It tells the tale of a former champion golfer, now a lonely and forgotten man. On a walk through the park, he recalls the day that made him a legend, and is determined to take one last swing. ‘Some memories ... will never be forgotten.’

Since filming in November, *Birdie* has been submitted to numerous festivals and competitions, and has been shortlisted for the Keswick Film Festival’s Osprey Short Film Awards 2012 (at which Fullerton was a prize-winner last year).

Film buffs, professionals, and curious others can find out more in *Extras* (1.3.12).

Moreover ...



Can any reader identify the location of this **unusual local feature**? The sender of the first correct answer drawn from the shooglie hat will receive a £15 book token.

The **new market** at the top of Broughton St will start up again on **24 March**, operating from **9am-2pm** on Saturdays outside St Mary's Cathedral. Information at: [www.edinburghmarkets.co.uk].

Police statistics released last month reveal that from Dec. 2011-Jan. 2012 there were **6 serious assaults** (3 solved) and **26 minor assaults** (25 solved) in Central Edinburgh. The **majority were alcohol-related** with most occurring locally around Greenside and Picardy Place.

If you are a UK, Commonwealth or EU national who will be at least 18 years old on or before **3 May 2012**, you will be entitled to vote on that day in the **local government elections**. However, you **must be registered by 18 April**. For more information, visit: [http://bit.ly/xVgZB6].

Free and very heavily discounted **property insulation** is available in Edinburgh, **but not indefinitely** (*Breaking news*, 22.2.12). Text WARM to 81025 or email [advice@se.energysavingscotland.org.uk].

The **Edinburgh Vintage Fashion Fair** – claimed to be Britain's biggest – takes place on Sat. 17 March (11am-4pm) at the Out of the Blue Drill Hall on Dalmeny St.

Edinburgh state schools break up for the **Easter holiday** on Fri. 30 March. Pupils return to classes on Tues. 17 April.

Late-night disruption linked ...



to increase in colic cases?

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: 10am.
Royston Wardieburn Community
Centre, Pilton Drive North: 12 noon.

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 March
at 7.30pm

Broughton St Mary's Parish
Church, Bellevue Crescent
(Drummond Room)

secretary@ntbcc.org.uk

Mark Lazarowicz

MP for Edinburgh North and Leith



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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

Spurtle Team: John Dickie, MF, Ali George, Maria Hart, George Hosey, Alan McIntosh, John Ross Maclean, David Sterratt, Ella Taylor-Smith.
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Edinburgh Tenements Can be Energy Efficient

Free event for home owners
and community groups –
how to cut fuel bills, carbon
emissions and fuel poverty
7.30pm, Thurs. 15 March
Café Camino
(next to St James Centre)
Edinburgh Community
Energy Cooperative
Tel. 538 7954