

Spurtle

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BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free

**February
2010**

No 179

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BROUGHTON ST MARY'S OPENS IN STYLE

The congregation and friends of Broughton St Mary's Parish Church dedicated and opened its new rooms on 17 January.

In a service attended also by Lord Provost George Grubb, Peter Graham (Moderator of Presbytery), Mark Lazarowicz, MP, and Malcolm Chisholm, MSP, the Rev. Joanne Hood spoke of her aims for the new facilities. She wanted the church to reach out with extravagant and Christ-like generosity. She intended it to become a place of 'recreation, fellowship, nurture and mission', a place of 'love and laughter, where the lonely can find friends, the frightened find peace and protection'. The real work, she said, was just beginning.

Later, the Lord Provost – himself a retired Minister – spoke of reversing today's loss of community, the need for inclusiveness and compassionate care. Project Manager Dick Smith recalled the challenges successfully faced in removing 360 tons of compacted sand from beneath the building. The church's foundations are now 6ft deeper, but the structure itself hasn't moved an inch. Architect Ben Tindall described as a privilege the job of renovating to the highest standards a burgh church which was built to the highest standards in the first place. His floorplan and photographs of the process are expected to be available in 'Extras' online soon.

One of the first organisations to benefit from the 'Inside Out' project will be 'The Bellevue Project'. This City of Edinburgh Council Health and Social Care service will have an office here and a room in which to work with and train adults with learning disabilities.

A VIP closely associated with Inside Out is expected to visit the church for a tour of the new facilities in February. See 'Breaking news' online nearer the time.



Lord Provost George Grubb and the Rev. Joanne Hood



WINTER VISITORS EAT LOCALLY

© Mircea Costina 2009 www.photo.net/photos/mircea



It's an ill wind... a whorled brilliance of snow buntings visited trees and back gardens in East Drummond Place during the cauld blast. Usually, these charming birds are fleeting migrants from Scandinavia to the Northern Highlands. For two days, they fed gloriously on berries and seeds, and then were gone as suddenly as they had come ... another dream for the winds.

TRAMWORKS UPDATE

Expect disruption during further tram-related works between Annandale St and York Place, from February to mid-March. Five sites are affected. For full details of these and other works (25 Jan.–early/mid-Feb.) see 'Breaking news' (18 Jan.) online.

1. Annandale St/Montgomery St junction (Gas and water) Once Broughton St reopens, no access into Annandale St from Haddington Pl. and Elm Row. Some parking on Hopetoun Cres. will be suspended. Only southbound traffic will access Montgomery St from Leith Walk.

2. Haddington Pl., Gayfield Sq./Pl. (Gas) Suspension of loading and parking 'where applicable'.

3. Antigua St (Electricity, water, telecoms) Suspension of loading and parking 'where applicable', including just south of Gayfield Sq.

4. Union St/Leith Walk junction (Water) Union St will be closed at this end.

5. Greenside Pl. (Water) Parking and loading restrictions. Suspension of taxi stance.

Meanwhile, Broughton St traders are making their presence felt. They've tapped TIE funds to create giant banners at the York Place end announcing business as usual. They've also used Lucy Tanat-Jones's powers of persuasion (Issue 171) to get misleading yellow signs replaced by more accurate ones. The new versions make it clear that not the whole of Broughton St is closed.

Briefly

Broughton History Society's next meeting will be in Drummond CHS at 7pm on 8 Feb. **Charlotte Neary** will talk about 'Conservation, Cleanups and Canonmills – the Water of Leith and the Work of the Trust'. **No shopping trolleys.**

Closure of **Broughton Street** at York Place and the opening-up of **Dublin St** on 9 Jan. were postponed due to exceptionally bad weather (vole-height snow). The diversions – necessitated by tramworks – were rescheduled for 16 Jan. and will last until mid-Feb.

If you've turned 18 since May 2005, or are about to turn 18 in the next few months, you may have the chance to vote in the **forthcoming General Election**. Check you're on the electoral register by emailing enquiries@lothian-vjb.gov.uk or phoning 344 2500.

Still exhausted by Christmas and Hogmanay? **Gathering strength** for Easter? Get your deckchair out and doze in the garden as state schools begin a **mid-term break** on Fri. 12 Feb. Classes resume on Mon. 22 Feb.

Smoke Stack, at 53–5 Broughton St, has won planning permission for a **major refit**, with new internal finishes, a new stair, relocation of the downstairs loos, and a new paint colour at the front. **Manager Richard Forbes** will schedule work once the Building Warrant is finalised.

In May 2009 (Issue 170) we featured work by talented Drummond CHS pupil **Lindsey Mclean**. Her former teacher and now Acting Deputy Head **Vaila MacLaren** reports that **Lindsey** indeed won a place at **Glasgow School of Art**, is in her 1st year on the painting and drawing course, living in halls of residence, and loving every minute of it.

The controversial basement **backpackers' hostel** at 30a Dublin St (Issue 175) has been granted permission to continue after an appeal to the Scottish government's reporter (Ref. PPA-230-1081).

Simon Nieminski will play **Guilmant's 1st Sonata** and other pieces at the latest **'3rd Tuesday Concert'** in **St Mary's Metropolitan Cathedral** (8–9.10pm, Tues. 16 Feb.). Admission is free so bring change to avoid embarrassment during **voluntary contributions**.

Nano-architectural plans to extend **4 Dublin St Lane**, described in Issue 177 (Ref. 09/02778/FUL), have been **withdrawn**.

Parent Councils across Edinburgh are urging people to resist potentially **'catastrophic cuts in school budgets'**. They want all concerned to write/email to (and/or visit the surgeries of) political representatives, particularly SNP and Lib-Dem councillors. They stress this must be done **now for maximum effect** in advance of the Budget meeting on 11 Feb. For more details and downloads see 'Breaking news' online.

Those who can't wait for the next **New Town and Broughton Community Council** meeting (1 Feb. then 1 Mar.) may now console themselves with minutes of past ones. Visit the new website at: [www.ntbcc.org.uk].

Blenheim Place: no U-turn

A **Calton Hill** resident phoned **Spurtle** on 16 Jan. He objected in the strongest possible terms to coverage in Issue 178 of **Blenheim Place's** potential closure at **London Rd**. We had reported how some locals there opposed it.

The gentleman – who withheld his identity – left a recorded message querying **Spurtle's** remit to cover matters in his neck of the woods. 'We are a different sort of people on the **Calton Hill** from your people,' he asserted. 'I think it is silly of you to have made a comment like that.'

It is questionable how accurately one anonymous caller's views reflect those of his neighbours, but we will answer him even so.

First, this paper has always looked beyond its immediate distribution area. We will cheerfully report on **Timbuktu** if we want to. By the same token, we welcome curious **Calton Hill** residents descending from their frosty eminence in search of the **Spurtle**.

Second, regarding the supposed difference between **Calton Hill** residents and those of **Broughton**: 'The pith 'o sense an' pride o' worth/Are higher rank than a' that.'

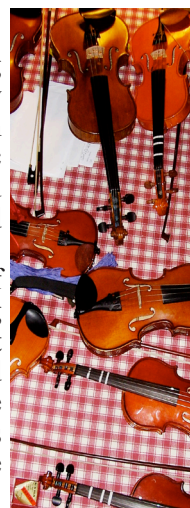
Third, **Spurtle** suspects the nameless mumper has taken umbrage at 178's last sentence: 'Neutrals suggest more meandering and less mumping mightn't go amiss.' That suggestion may or may not be silly, but it was most certainly a sentiment expressed by neutrals before we reported it.



Fiddly details

A profile of the **Pilrig Fiddlers' Friday** afternoon Scottish traditional folk music classes, for children and their families, appeared last month in Issue 178.

Now full details of times, places, booking forms and contact numbers can be found in 'Extras' online. There are still a few places left, and you don't have to live in **Pilrig** to join.



Bin there, not done that

Newspaper reports last month suggested that dustmen had deliberately delayed refuse collection by raising frivolous safety concerns over icy weather.

There were claims that this was the latest move in an ongoing pay dispute, and was effectively industrial action by other means. On 8 January the *Evening News* cited the opinions of unnamed 'council bosses' to this effect.

However, in a statement seen earlier by **Spurtle** on 6 January, the **City of Edinburgh Council** had claimed its larger vehicles could not cope with snow and ice, and that its own supervisors had cancelled refuse collections on health-and-safety grounds.

Whatever the truth of the matter, it is worth asking – as did **City** dustmen – how a major UK employer could reasonably expect outdoor staff to operate for long periods in sub-zero temperatures without appropriate (employer-provided) clothing.

Crime figures: all good news?

Figures newly released by **CEC** suggest the 2009–10 Festive Season was vastly improved by a combination of high-visibility initiatives involving **Police**, **Environmental Wardens**, **Community Safety staff**, and **mobile CCTV units**.

Apparently the crime rate dropped by 29% in the city centre during **December 2009** compared with averages for the same period over the last 3 years. Age-old Christmas traditions such as thumping the drunk, family shoplifting, vomiting on buses, buying-12-litres-of-cider-even-though-only-13-years-old, jumping the taxi queue, headbutting an unsuspecting stranger under the mistletoe, and widdling-into-letterboxes-even-though-a-pillar-of-the-community are all on the way out. Fixed penalty tickets are the new must-have gift.

However, **David Fenwick** of **Leith Walk** asks if others share both his gratitude at efforts to make us safer, and his unease at being over-policed. 'Will there come a time,' he asks, 'when **Edinburghers** who experience their Festive Seasons more safely but less freely than we do, look back and say: "2009 was when it all started going wrong"?'

Nooks and crannies: Tremulant, swell strings and Mr Lewis



Broughton St Mary's organ was constructed in 1882 by Thomas C. Lewis of London, one of Britain's foremost organ builders of the Victorian era. His architectural background is reflected in the elegant simplicity of the organ's casework.

Technically and stylistically, the organ itself combines 18th and 19th-century German and French influences, especially Edmund Schulze's. Originally, the instrument was hand-blown, which mechanism still survives. A water-powered engine was installed in 1892 but was replaced by an electric motor in 1902. Apart from refined alterations, such as the installation of humidifiers to accommodate the drying effects of the central heating system, the organ has survived tonally and mechanically unaltered to the present day.

Nancy Crook has been the organist since 2002. She confirmed to *Spurtle* that the organ is of superlative quality in all aspects, as are the acoustics in the church. Scotland's leading string ensemble, the Edinburgh Quartet, has regularly used the building for its acclaimed recordings. The organ is also featured on two CDs, 'Twelve Organs of Edinburgh' (Priory Records) and 'Twenty-two Organs of Edinburgh' (Delphia Records). Nancy has planned recitals for 2010 and it is hoped that this glorious space, which resembles the Queen's Hall, will be used as a performance venue during the Edinburgh Festival and beyond. *JRM (with warm thanks to Roger and Nancy Crook)*

ABC of art



Image Credit: Magne F, Alpha-Beta 'F', 2009, Monotype with Drypoint, Ed. 46, paper size 31 x 31cm, Published by Paul Stolper, London.

An interesting exhibition of artwork by Magne Furholmen (now known as Magne F), former keyboard player with the 1980s group A-ha, is running at Edinburgh Printmakers in Union St. Thirty works in drypoint and monotype illustrate each letter of the alphabet as well as specific Norwegian letters. The exhibition continues until 6 March.

Local artist cuts a dash



Ewan Taylor – whose adverts appealing for colour magazines currently appear in *Spurtle* online – is a Bellevue-based artist who has been making collages (and other art) for over 20 years.

The originals mostly vary in size from 1m² to 50cms², and have been published in *Fresh Fever*, the experimental magazine, and online.

One admirer has described Taylor's work in terms of 'an unfolding and unfurling cosmic spiral'. To this writer they appear as surreal jewels, depicting a familiar world seen and peculiarly interpreted through alien eyes. The effect is both pleasing and disturbing. Examples of Taylor's work can be seen at: [www.myspace.com/artede_collage]; [www.viewmorepics.myspace.com] and www.youtube.com/user/ArtedeCollage. To contribute magazines contact [e.taylor-smith@napier.ac.uk]. *AM*

Edinburgh Thaw

The snow sullied as quickly as it came,
already yesterday is like a frame

from a forgotten film. Closest to home
the flowering cherry in our garden,

no longer burdened by the weight
it bore, again flaunts its own white.

At street intersections, Christmassy figures
revert to being *Big Issue* sellers.

Uncannily, slush shifting on the bronze rider
in St Andrew Square makes him appear

to move – like Mozart's Commendatore;
while in the courtyard of the Assembly

Hall a pigeon, like a dove of peace, lands slyly
on Knox's upraised arm, and meets his eye.

Stewart Conn

This, the last of three poems contributed to Spurtle by the author, is drawn from Ghosts at Cockcrow (published in 2005 by Bloodaxe Books).

Briefly

Brown Taylor Management Ltd, who run boutique hotel/restaurant/bar **Hawke & Hunter** next door, seek planning permission to convert flats into 9 hotel bedrooms at **14B Picardy Place** (Ref. 10/00023/FUL).

Locals keen on **living forever, learning to fly, or helping people to remember their names** may relish a planning application (Ref. 09/03150/FUL) for change of use at 163-5 Bonnington Rd. **The MGA Company** (with Edinburgh base at 1 St Colme St) hopes to turn warehouse and office space at the junction with Pilrig St into a **stage academy/training centre**. MGA trains students, casts professional international shows, manages and represents professional performers, produces productions and manages events, **probably with unshakeable confidence and a bright smile**. See [www.themgacompany.com/mga-about.html].

Art Amatoria (Issue 172) at 10/2 Bellevue Cres. has had its retrospective application for planning permission to use one room as a gallery **refused and enforced** (09/02866/FUL). CEC said the proposal was contrary to its Development Plan and would be detrimental to neighbours' living conditions. Caroline Hay, who runs the gallery, says it will operate normally pending the result of an appeal.

The Omni Centre's Vue Cinema presents monthly 'live' screenings of **operas, ballets and plays** throughout 2010. *La Traviata*, featuring René Fleming, was screened on 18-19 Jan. A performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, recorded at the Globe Theatre, will show on 15-16 February.

An email from Jim Inch, Head of CEC's Corporate Services, was sent to all staff on 14 Jan. (see 'Extras' online). It outlines strategies to reduce staffing costs in an effort to realise some of the **£90m savings** required by 2012. A CEC employee and friend of the *Spurtle* comments: 'I wonder what would happen if all 20,000 of us decided we wanted to take 6 months' unpaid leave at the same time, starting next Monday?' We suggest that, in order to process the forms, everyone would be re-employed in the **Human Resources Dept.**

Post-Copenhagen ...



Activist regrets cold snap

Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament
for Lothians



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Friday advice sessions:
4.00pm Stockbridge Library,
42 Hamilton Place
5.00pm Ainslie Park Leisure Centre
6.00pm Constituency Office

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New Town/Broughton Community Council

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

Next 2 meetings on:
1 Feb. at 7.30pm
1 Mar. at 7.30pm

Drummond Community
High School

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