

Spurtle

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BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free

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REFUSENIKS SHOCKED BY WASTE MEASUREMENTS

In Issue 184 we reported City of Edinburgh Council's (CEC) hopes to limit New Town containerisation through reducing waste by a third. Some scoffed at this target, but more recent CEC analysis of black bin-bag contents shows 37 per cent comprises (at some time) edible food.

The revelation, made at the 17 June Neighbourhood Partnership meeting shocked those present. Obviously, filling East Lothian holes with food is wasteful. More efficient recycling is almost certainly the solution. Trials of specialised bins are expected soon in the World Heritage zone, with New Town Broughton Community Council (NTBCC) favouring the 2nd New Town for this.

Seagull-proof bags will also be tested, possibly on Great King and Dundonald Sts. As reported in *Breaking news* (1.7.10), gulls now know how to open railing-mounted bags (and may soon start cloning credit cards).

Meanwhile, NTBCC members have learned that if and where wheelie-bins are introduced to the New Town, it is likely to be at a ratio of 24 households per wheelie-bin. Coincidentally mirroring our front-page photo (here and in Issue 184), CEC officials now suggest wheelie-bin appearances could be adjusted to blend in.

CONTAINER CAMOUFLAGE



A number of years ago, reader Peter Verity was frustrated by some locals' attitude to containerisation, in particular those who 'decried the ugliness of wheelie bins (which are basically boxes on wheels) and, without pause, called for more parking for cars (which are boxes on wheels) ...' Verity illustrated a brilliant compromise with the collage shown above. By adding to a basic wheelie bin a windscreen, number plate, headlights and mirrors, it is rendered completely invisible.

QUEEN OPENS BIODIVERSITY GARDEN



HM The Queen officially opened the John Hope Gateway at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh on 12 July. On her first visit since 2006, and accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, she toured the new centre, an area in memory of her mother, and the Biodiversity Garden (pictured), where she planted a Japanese rowan tree. (Photo courtesy of RBGE.)

McDONALD RD PLANS SUBMITTED – MIXED BAG FOR LOCALS

Following public consultations in March and April (*Breaking news* 16.5.10), Foremost Properties (Scotland) LLP lodged a formal planning application for the site at 132 McDonald Road (Ref. 10/01514/FUL).

Amended proposals for 86 flats show some concessions to residents and community councils' suggested amendments. Removing retail units has allowed a reduction in height, but the back remains 'somewhat overpowering'. Bathroom windows in the gable ends of an adjoining tenement will now survive.

The building's rear, unrelieved brick surface will not be replaced by stone, as suggested, and the overall scale still dwarfs nearby 1930s dwellings. Critics say gardens are too small.

Overall, the proposal is generally considered one of the better ones for this site recently, with at least some visual interest, modelling and articulation.

More controversial is Foremost's continued determination to exclude affordable housing here. It will instead be built elsewhere in Leith (where land is cheaper), so circumventing government guidelines meant to ensure balanced communities emerge from such major developments (*Breaking news* 13.5.10). Unfortunately, it is unclear how objections to Foremost's sidestep can be presented as 'material' in today's planning process.

Briefly

Supervised **summer sessions for young people** will run on **Thurs eves, King George V Park, 7.30–9pm**. Games, sports, trips, arts, challenges, your ideas. Contact Callum McLeod (Inverleith Community Learning/Development Team) on Tel. 332 6316.

Coffee/cakes at **Broughton St Mary's** fundraiser (Bellevue Cres) on Wed. 11 August, 7.00–8.30pm.

Narcissus Flowers seek takers for composting of green waste (2 bags per day). **Free delivery:** email [info@narcissusflowers.co.uk.] or Tel. 478 7447.

Floods felled two of 'our' Gormleys in July (*Breaking news* 23.7.10).

Alas! Joyous **Seesaw** – the children's emporium at **109 Broughton St** – is moving to **17 St Stephen Street** on 1 Aug. (Tel. 226 4141). A hairdresser's will replace it.

In Issue 184 we reported **Kimberley Reed's** search for extra funding for her meteoric field athletics career. A commercial sponsor is still to be found, but Kimberley's mother says **generous Bellevue neighbours** have bought the Drummond CHS pupil a new throwing hammer.

State schools resume for the **Autumn Term on Wed. 18 August**.

Bill Smith – late Canonmills bookseller, 'menace to machinery', flawed goalie, Confucian careers adviser – upon being upbraided by a customer for an **untidy box** blocking part of his Canonmills shop, replied: '**Madam, this is a life in progress.**'

Coincidence 1. Compare *Breaking news* (1.7.10) with *Evening News* (19.7.10), p.15.

Napier Interiors of Brandon Terrace seeks planning permission (Ref. 10/01908/FUL) for substantial alterations to, and change of use to retail unit for, the C-listed former bakery at 30 Canonmills. A 1st-floor flat is to be stripped and replaced.

NTBCC will not oppose proposed development on **SW Cumberland St Lane** (Issue 184). Materials are 'inoffensive'. The **large 'footprint'** isprecedented.

Coincidence 2. Compare *Breaking news* (22.7.10) with *Evening News* coverage the next day.

As reported in *Breaking news* (6.7.10), **3 'very motivated and high achieving' Italian students** seek separate, responsible host families during their term at Drummond CHS (**Aug.–Dec. 2010**). For details contact Headteacher Norma Prentice.

Broughton Street's much loved **Alphabet Video** closed its doors for the last time on Sat. 31 July. Farewell Godard, Truffaut, Renoir, Bunuel and Joe Fortune among others. *Spurtle* understands that, in a pleasingly retrograde step, the shop is to be replaced by a **picture framer**.

Pedestrians, pavements and bicycle black spots

Readers have contacted us about bicycles on pavements. Objections first concerned adult cyclists on Scotland Street and Fettes Row, where many joining or leaving Route 75 (in King George V Park) avoid setts.

But Rodney, London and East Claremont Streets are also affected, especially where the latter slopes or narrows beside the central reservation. On McDonald Road impatient riders dodge school patrol staff and use dropped kerbs to avoid cycle lanes blocked by parked cars. Local resident Anne Dewar fears a pedestrian will be injured here soon.

Several disgruntled readers claim too few cyclists have or use bells, and that complaining to them draws abuse.

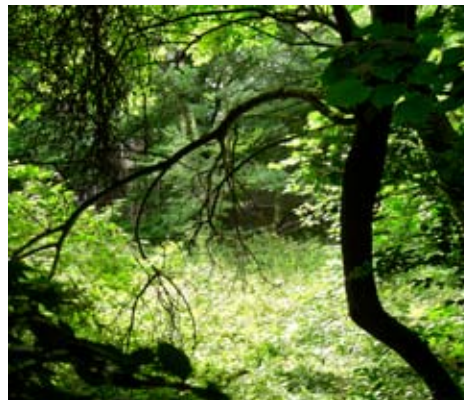
A hit-and-run victim knocked from his bike by a car on Picardy Place says no police action resulted due to insufficient damage. Psychological damage didn't count. 'I have just returned from Denmark,' he writes, 'where there are huge numbers of cycles in very safe use, and every road, traffic light and roundabout has separate cycle facilities. When we have the same provision, I will use it; until then – as the law obviously fails to protect me when I cycle – I will take reasonable steps to protect myself, whether these are legal or not!'

Elaine Thomson says: 'As parents we aim to be green and cycle to school every day, encouraging a healthy lifestyle early on. But we also feel the road is not safe for a child. As long as they are carefully supervised, I think children can still ride [on pavements] without causing a nuisance.' Finbar Young agrees: 'Some local pavements are easily wide and clear enough for pedestrians and cyclists to coexist much of the time. It's a boorish minority causing problems'.

Peter Verity mischievously concludes: 'In the UK, around 136 cyclists die in accidents every year. Only 2 pedestrians have been killed by cyclists in 30 years. So [...] if all cyclists had cycled solely on pavements this could have saved up to 4,000 lives.'



Green plan for Eyre Place



Transition Edinburgh, an environmentalist charity, wants to turn the overgrown gap-site on the south side of Eyre Place into a productive 'community forest garden'.

They are approaching owners Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS), for a 10-year lease, permission to clear weeds and saplings, and to plant edible crops.

RBS rebuffed previous approaches to use the area (where once stood a tenement block and before that a lade stream), but may – *perhaps* – be keener now to seem contrite and approachable. NTBCC is in favour.

Transition tries to mitigate 'Peak Oil' and reduce the effects of climate change: [<http://transitionedinburgh.wordpress.com>].

Cure for the summer-time blues?

The last week of the summer holidays can sometimes drag, but this year the folks at Bellevue Chapel on Rodney Street offer something different. From 7–15 August, their Around the Block event will run a range of activities inside the church and surrounding community.

A Summer Fair will start proceedings on the afternoon of 7 August. A week-long programme of events will follow: practical projects to benefit the local community; clubs and activities for all ages – toddlers, kids, teenagers and adults; an Open Doors café on weekday mornings.

Paul Graham, pastor of Bellevue Chapel, said 'Around the Block' is all about being good neighbours. It's about wanting to help the community in very practical ways, but we also simply want to get to know our neighbours better, hopefully introduce them to some new friends, to have a bit of fun together and meet some local needs. And just about everything will involve food or home baking at some point!'

For more details go to [www.bellevuechapel.org].

Miss Otis will lunch today



Locals and Festival celebrants still lament the departure of the inimitable Lost Sock Diner (surely a 3-star Michelin contender for the best ever name for an eating place) in E. London Street, but Broughton St's current range of places to eat and drink indoors or out still is a cornucopia of delights. There are now 26 eating places – ranging from delis, take-aways and pubs, to bistros and restaurants. Several have won awards and received glowing notices in the UK press and a plethora of good food guides. 'Best of Scotland' is often promoted as is French, Indian, Italian, Polish and Thai cuisine. As for Miss Otis, after lunch and with a supper *chez elle* in mind, we fancy she will call in at Something Fishy for the sole meunière and famous Mr Crombie for the boeuf bourgignon. For the rest of us, there is always Piccante and Rapido's equally famed fish and chips. *JRM*

Broughton Festival highlights

Broughton once hosted memorable, ground-breaking events at three of the city's most thrilling venues in what are now the Mansfield Traquair Centre (Café Graffiti), Lyon & Turnbull's Auction House (The Palladium) and the Rifleman's Lodge at 32a Broughton Street (soon to be residential apartments). Despite the paucity of venues today, the area has several scintillating Fringe shows on offer this year.

Theatre: Hawke & Hunter, 12 Picardy Place – Tantrums Ltd present *Hot Mess*; Traverse @ Scotland Yard, George V Park Grid Iron's, *Decky Does a Bronco*; Valvona & Crolla, 19 Elm Row – Mike Maran Productions, *Italia n Caledonia*.

Dance: GHQ, 4 Picardy Place – ponydance, *Where did it All Go Right?*

Music: Jazz at The Outhouse, 12a Broughton St Lane – Barbara Morrison & Tom Finlay Trio, Craig McMurdo; Valvona & Crolla – Chitarra Virtuosa, David Vernon and Dick Lee; *Queen Victoria's Parlour*; *Unsung Heroes*; *Wham! Bam Thank You, Ma'am!*

Art: Art Amatoria, 10 Bellevue Cres – 'The Weird and Wonderful World of Rob Hain'; Printmakers Workshop, 23 Union St – 'Prints of Darkness' (LP cover art), 17 July–4 Sep.; Union Gallery, 45 Union St, 'Seven Artists. Edinburgh Soul', 5 Aug–6 Sep.; Mansfield Traquair Centre, 15 Mansfield Place, The Murals of Phoebe Anna Traquair, 11am–1pm, 9–12, 16–27, 30 Aug.

Nooks and crannies – Broughton Court

This building, with its impressive chimney-pots which would have added considerably to the reek of Auld Reekie, once stood adjacent to the present Lyon and Turnbull building at the north-east end of Broughton Place.

Known as Broughton Court, it was part of a much larger complex in what is now St Mary's Primary School playground off East London Street. While there is no exact record of the date of its construction – 1826 is a possibility – it was definitely in existence in 1839.

The three-sided, two-storey building with outside staircases was built around a cobbled courtyard. It housed a close-knit community whose heads of household were chiefly skilled workers – blacksmith, joiners, coachbuilders, slaters – with large cheek-by-jowl families who shared water closets and wash-basins in communal lobbies.

One of the 20th-century residents was a now obscure but nonetheless interesting actress: Peggy Desmond, mid-20th-century participant in music-hall and pantomime. *Spartle* knows little about her and seeks readers' advice.

Broughton Court was one of many victims of the Grim Reapers who obliterated many of central Edinburgh's buildings and squares in the 1960s in favour of the wan and the bland. The site was transferred to the city's Education Authority in 1964. The last vestige of this courtyard community – of which a former resident, Ella Brodie, said '... everybody was your relation ... would share, and nobody ever went hungry' – is a stone staircase with a padlocked gate.

Thanks to Edinburgh Photographic Society for permission to use the 1912 photograph from their collection in the Edinburgh Room, Edinburgh Central Library. Special thanks to John Dickie. *JRM*



Briefly

More pane less gain? Residents at A-listed 65 Northumberland St seek **shibboleth-busting** permission to replace front-elevation **astragals** with **windows** (Ref. 10/01928/LBC).

BBC1's 9 July *Question Time* was filmed the night before in the **Mansfield Traquair Centre**. David Dimbleby wrangled Douglas Alexander, Ed Byrne, Lord Forsyth, Michael Moore and Nicola Sturgeon. Earlier that evening, **John Lewis's new Xmas TV** ad shot, amid fake snow, on Blenheim Place.

A Trinity couple seeks permission to convert the former '**Gentlemen's Club**' at **51/3 East Claremont St** into 3 flats, with a new extension and parking to the rear, and alterations to front dormer windows (Ref. 10/01911/FUL). The news will relieve those who regard the derelict, A-listed property as a **fire waiting to happen** (Issue 180).

William McKeown reports, via Dominic Echlin of London St, **late pavement presentation of a Christmas tree** in Bellevue Cres. on 12 July. Sadly, he is eclipsed by **Mark Sheffield** who sighted a similar Albany St late presentation on 15 July. **Only 127 days to go: keep them coming!**

Neighbours have completed investigations into **Premier Linen Services at 19a Abercrombie Place** (Issue 184). They assert it has no change-of-use permission, and have alerted **Planning Enforcement**.

There are **three chances** to view the beautiful interior of **St Bernard's Well, for free, this month**. Volunteers will staff the well-house (by the Water of Leith between **Stockbridge and Dean Bridge**) on 8, 15 and 22 August between noon and 3pm. See *Breaking news* (1.8.10) for further details.

Grime latest: *Spartle* hears New Town resident association *capi dei capi*, footsoldiers and toney heritage songbirds met **City Chambers on August 27** to talk turkey about Edinburgh's notorious wheelie-bin no-go quarter in the **Georgian north side**. They don't like the sound of trials now **City untouchables** are targeting sidewalk garbage (see p. 1). '**Nobody parks nothin round here** without they come see me first,' said one **influential** Heriot Row boss. '**They gotta show the neighbourhood some respect.**' Politicians are for squeezein,' said another. '**Let's say we'll waste 'em at the election.**' A third counselled compromise: 'It ain't like da old days no more. **I say we cut a deal with the E. Market St mob:** play patacake on food recycling, then put them wheelie-bins **someplace the sun don't shine ... like 6ft under**'. For alternative, late-breaking accounts of this meeting's proceedings, see *Breaking news* (29.7.10) and *Extras* (1.8.10).

Spartle has learned a **Russian money-launderer's confiscated ill-gotten gains** are being redistributed by the Scottish Government to aid youth projects around the country. See *Breaking news* (29.7.10).

Moreover



Tyrannically, the 2nd *nemo me impune lacessit Tyrannosaurus Rex* to lurk in Real Foods' Broughton St window-box has been filched. *Spurtle* hopes the miscreants have bitten off more than they can chew. Meantime, we congratulate **David Whitburn** again for this splendid hanging garden, trusting TR's progeny prosper in the lush undergrowth, **thirsting for revenge**.

Alastair Cook's b&w photos – 'The Land and the Sea' – showing northern Scottish coasts and the stretch between Edinburgh and Holy Island are exhibited free at **Out of the Blue**, The Drill Hall, Dalmeny St, 10am–5pm (not Suns), 30 July–14 Aug.

Two Broughton Rd men arrested on 1 March for **possession of card skimming and cloning equipment** (Issue 181) were each jailed on 2 July for two-and-a-half years.

Spurtle supports **City Development's** plan for a Bellevue pedestrian crossing near E. Claremont St, and northbound pavement improvements. These will improve **Claremont residents'** access to Drummond Tennis Club and the Scottish Catholic Archives, and **New Town residents'** access to Powderhall Bowls Club and Redbraes Speedway Cycle Track.

Volunteers from Lloyd's TSB joined **Water of Leith Conservation staff** last month on a day's clean-up around **Bonnington**. As well as clearing nettles, thistles, Buddleia and **invasive policeman's helmet** (Himalayan Balsam), they pulled from the water around 40 bags of rubbish plus rusty barriers, trolleys, a table, pallets, and 8 childrens' bikes/scooters. **Also an eel**.

Festival frenzy – Broughton



contains its enthusiasm

SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE
MSP – Member of the Scottish
Parliament for Lothians
(Scottish National Party)



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

Spurtle Team: John Dickie, Maria Hart, George Hosey, Alan McIntosh, John Ross Maclean, David Sterratt. Post: Spurtle, c/o Narcissus Flowers, 87 Broughton St, Edinburgh EH1 3RJ. Printed at Broughton St Mary's Parish Church.

New Town/Broughton Community Council

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

Next meeting:

6 September
at 7.30pm

Drummond Community
High School (Library).

mowats@blueyonder.co.uk

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