

Belle's View



Hi fans

Its sooooo, soooo warm! I am reclining on my chaise longue as I write this, dear readers, basking in uncharacteristic but very welcome hot July sunshine! Cast off those cloots and join in the perpetual party fever that pervades Broughton and Bellevue I say!

I hear on the grapevine that **Jongleurs**, the UK comedy club chain, which helped launch the likes of **Julian Clary**, **Paul Merton** and **Harry Enfield** is opening at the **Omni Complex at Greenside Place** at the end of July. It promises a range of alternative comedy all year round, as well as musical theatre during the Fringe. The Jongleurs motto is eat, drink, dance, laugh - and needing no further encouragement, Estelle Murgatroyd and myself are already dragging out our bat-wing blouses and fluorescent socks for our first visit to the club, which converts to an 80s disco after the show!

The Festival Fringe is fast approaching, so get along and support your local venue, the **Sala Café Bar**, at **60 Broughton Street** - during the Fringe, **Fizzy Entertainments** will be putting on **Pink Pop** - free live music every night from 27th July-29th Aug. Also locally, **The Second Floor**, a flat at **6 Mansfield Place**, will be turning into a small but select venue for **Grid Iron Theatre Company's** production of **Those Eyes, That Mouth**, on dates from 2nd Aug-25th Aug. Hope someone has told them what day the bins go out!

Till next time, just do it!

Persephone Belle

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!

Spurtle team for this issue:

Meg Neal, John Dickie, Gavin MacGregor, Eileen Dickie, Alan McIntosh, Ken McKay and Norma McKendrick.

BROUGHTON BOOKS in Broughton Place are our 'postbox'. You can put a letter addressed to us through their letterbox at any time.
Phone & Fax: 556 0903 / 556 7727.

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REDBRAES

Residents set to celebrate success

Not so long ago, the old pavilion in Redbraes Park was a dilapidated eyesore, long unused. But last year the local residents association, with City Council agreement, decided to see what they could make of it as a community centre. Adopting the motto "go ahead and do it yourself - and then look for help when you really need it", before the end of the year half the building had opened as a meeting room, a kitchen and toilets.

This year they've been working on the other end of the building - more toilets, and a room which faces out towards the play area, ideal for young families. With this second phase near completion, local activist Dave Thomson says: "A derelict structure ready for demolition has been transformed by a dedicated group of residents into what will be a unique multipurpose building for social and educational activities, enquiries regarding housing, community development, etc. It will be a

REDBRAES Community WORKSHOPS

Redbraes Residents Association open their new venture in Redbraes Park on Sunday 27th July at 1.00pm. Why not join us in a day of celebrating what is a unique facility for the use of the people of Redbraes and Broughton. Look out for our posters with details of what will be happening.

cornerstone in building up community awareness". Redbraes residents will be celebrating their achievement on Sun. 27th July. You're invited to join them in the Park, from 1pm.



This 18th-century cottage at 34b Haddington Place is under threat of demolition, to make way for redevelopment of the site. It was the senior gardener's house when the Botanic Gardens were in the Hopetoun area - before eventually moving down to Inverleith. Apart from its place in the history of the Botanics, the house also shows the level of the roadway on which it once stood - its current front door is actually at first-floor height! Back in 1998 Broughton History Society and others asked Historic Scotland to list the building, without success: we hope they'll now reconsider, and that the City Council will refuse permission to demolish. If you agree, send your comments to the Planning Department, 1 Cockburn Street (Ref No 03/01355/CON), and to our local councillor Trevor Davies, City Chambers, EH1 1YJ.

BRIEFLY

Many local organisations and individuals registered their objections to the **school building at 35 Rodney Street** being demolished to make way for 24 flats. The City Council has now refused planning permission to demolish.

The Friends of Hopetoun Garden now plan a **social event in the public garden at Hopetoun Crescent** - on **Sunday, 27th July**. For more details, look out for posters nearer the time; or phone 556 0903 after 19th July.

Archie Bell of Bellevue Street welcomes the advent of **wheelie-bins**, a great improvement on burst black bags! But he's spotted one teething problem. He lives near a very windy corner: he and his neighbours are sometimes plagued by loud bangs, night and day, when the wind gets under the lids. Maybe the bins need a catch of some kind?

There's another **Open Day at the Mansfield Traquair Centre** on Sunday 13th July, 1 to 4pm. Free guided tours.

**July
2003**

Tel: 556 0903

556 7727

Solidarity volunteer reports

Andrew Dickie was brought up in Broughton, and went to London Street Primary and Drummond Community High. In mid-June he travelled to Palestine to work as a solidarity and human rights volunteer with the International Solidarity Movement. Here are three brief extracts from his emails home.

Jenin, Palestine, 17 June

The right of movement between and within towns is severely curtailed by military checkpoints and roadblocks... I have accompanied an ambulance between Jenin and Tulkarm and was told by the doctor on board that he is routinely denied access to areas where he is needed to perform surgery. Another doctor in Jenin told me that he had been shot at by Israeli soldiers as he attended emergencies. No one here knows when they can move within or enter and leave their towns and cities - maybe they will get to work that day, maybe they will get home from school, maybe they will be verbally humiliated by soldiers, maybe they will be beaten, maybe they will be shot.

Tuesday 24th June

We breakfast on falafel, pitta, hoummos and salad before heading for the Berqin roadblock that we are to clear today. The roadblock denies access between Jenin and the villages to the west of the city, turning a simple 5

minute drive into a gruelling 30-40 minute trip over a mountainous, dust-choked track... We face several tons of earth, stone and concrete... The road is clear. There is a real sense of achievement as the news spreads and traffic begins to flow.

Thursday 26th June

Today we split into small teams. Myself, a British and a Palestinian volunteer head for the villages beyond the Aba roadblock to the east of Jenin. When we reach the village of Dair Abu Da'eef we hear that a house has been demolished by the Israeli Army 36 hours earlier. When we reach the site the rubble is barely recognisable as the remains of a family home... The woman is in tears. I feel awful intruding on her anguish... The family had been sleeping on the roof when they were awoken by the arrival of the Israeli Army. They were told that their house was to be demolished in 20 minutes. The reason? Almost exactly one year ago this woman's son was killed by the



Army as he made his way to undertake an "operation" - probably a bomb attack. Now a year later the Army was here to take its revenge, and to again show its commitment to its policy of collective punishment - a practice explicitly prohibited by Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The family were ordered to leave the house at gunpoint. They were allowed to remove valuable items such as the TV and fridge, only to see the soldiers destroy them once they had been brought from the house - an unnecessary act of petty humiliation and cruelty...

Later, as most of us sleep, there is more fighting within the city. Tanks are on the move and an Apache helicopter fires into the streets. This might be an isolated clash, or it may signal the end of the relative calm that Jenin has enjoyed for the last few weeks. There is no way of knowing.

POLICE ADVICE ON DRUMMOND STEPS

'Unnecessary to remove pedestrian traffic'

The safety and security of Drummond staff and students. Officially, that's the main reason for closing the community route via the steps at Cochran Terrace. And now the Head Teacher has obtained a letter from a police crime prevention officer, supporting her proposal to make the closure permanent.

But we have found another letter from the police addressed to the City Council, dated July 2001, which gives very different advice:

"The right of way from Cochran Terrace through the school was flagged up as a possible crime generator, but as there are no existing problems with this it

would seem to be unnecessary to remove or divert pedestrian traffic from this area."

Four months after that letter was written the steps were "temporarily" closed, for the duration of the building work, and have remained closed ever since. Was there really a sudden mini crime wave around the Steps during those four months?

Fate of branch sealed?



Last month we reported on Post Office plans to close their London Street branch. We wondered if the branch could move to more suitable premises nearby, and maybe combine Post Office business with something else.

Mr Burford the subpostmaster tells us that he has in the past looked into the possibility of moving elsewhere in Broughton Street. He did find premises he thought suitable, but the rent made a move unrealistic - even combining Post Office with other business. He says there are just too many branches close together to remain viable: the steepness of the steps at his branch (which we highlighted) was only one of several factors which made it likely London Street would be

the one selected for closure. Mr Burford says he fully appreciates that our post office, like many others, has played an important part in the local community. Indeed, he'd have been disappointed if people did not feel its closing would be a loss! But he is convinced that, unfortunately, the economics of the business make it impossible to continue.

Our local MP Mark Lazarowicz understands they have now finalised their decision to close the branch: "I'm surprised at the speed - given that the consultation period only ended on the 13th June. I now intend to write to the Post Office to ask how many responses they received to their consultation process".

CLEANING AND GREENING BROUGHTON

Community Council sets priorities

The Community Council's Environment Committee is drawing up a list of priorities for action to improve our local environment:

* Work with the City Council to improve the general cleaning and maintenance of our streets and open spaces.

* Work with Friends of Parks groups for improved parks maintenance.

* Protest whenever the high density of new housing developments threatens existing trees and greenery.



Contacts

Bellevue and Claremont Residents Association
Yvonne Pryor 466 1144

Broughton Village Association
Stephanie Harvey 557 2762 (daytime)

Gayfield Association
William McNair 556 4493

McDonald Area Amenity Society
Bob Stewart 557 1267

Redbraes Residents Association
George Hosey 467 6151

Friends of Hopetoun Crescent Garden
Eileen Dickie 556 0903

Broughton History Society
John Dickie 556 0903

Drummond Community High School
556 2651

Cllr Trevor Davies
Broughton Ward 529 3221
Surgery at Broughton Primary School
Wednesdays 6.30 to 7pm during school terms.

Cllr David Guest
New Town Ward
558 8823 or 529 4268
Surgery at 67 Northumberland Street
on Mondays 6.30 to 7.15pm

Malcolm Chisholm MSP
558 8358
Phone for surgery arrangements during the summer.

Mark Lazarowicz MP
557 0577
Phone for surgery arrangements during the summer.

Other issues include dangerous car parking close to local schools and cycleways. The Committee wants to support local groups' plans for improving the area - if you have an environmental issue that you feel strongly about, phone 556 7550.