

# Belle's View

Hi fans

I hope you all had a ripping yuletide and a fabulous New Year, as I did. Now we are faced with those long, dreich, dark days, and even longer, dreicher and darker evenings, I hope to bring a little sparkle and glamour into your dull lives with a few titbits gleaned from my various glittering social forays in **Broughton** this season.

In the faded elegance that is **The Bellevue**, the domino team is trembling in anticipation at rumours that the establishment is to be "done up". One would hope this is not in the current fashion of being styled into an Irish theme bar (they could call it O'Neills - there's only two in the city already) or even worse, a blue-and-orange bar with uncomfortable bottom-bruising art-house furniture. Regulars are chapping as we eagerly await further details.

**Cafe Graffiti** was again pulling in maximum crowds over the festive season with their lusciously decorated **Winter Palace** - we're looking forward to the Festival in August because the use of **Mansfield Church** as the world-renowned **Dream Palace** has been given the go-ahead for one more fest. Hurrah!

A recent Saturday night in the **Graffiti club** saw a brace of celebrities in attendance, including **Big John Duncan**, twirling round the dance floor, fresh as a daisy from his cameo appearance in Channel 4's **Young Person's Guide to Becoming a Rock Star**.

Till next time, darlings, do it - I would.

Persephone Belle

## New Exhibition at Bellevue Gallery

Cameron Morgan is a natural and prolific creator. His exuberant use of colour, his confidence of line and his outrageous disregard for perspective animate his pictures with zest and playfulness.

Born in Ayr, he is a member of **Art Trek Ltd**, a co-operative run by six disabled artists, formed to support them in the development and pursuit of their artistic careers, to take on public commissions and create workshop and teaching opportunities.

19 February - 7 March  
Wednesday - Sunday 12 noon to 6pm or by appointment.  
4 Bellevue Crescent phone/fax 557 1663

## Singing for Spurtle

Local folk singer and guitarist **Ken McKay** is offering benefit performances to raise funds for **Spurtle**.

If your group or organisation would like 30 minutes or an hour of entertainment at one of your meetings, contact **Ken** through **Spurtle** - phone 556 0903 or drop a note in at **Broughton Books**. Terms to be negotiated.

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## Contacts

**Bellevue and Claremont Residents Association**  
Alan McIntosh 556 4848

**Broughton Place Residents Association**  
Judith Hallam 556 4595

**Gayfield Association**  
William McNair 556 4493

**McDonald Area Amenity Society**  
Bob Stewart 557 1267

**New Town Broughton and Pilrig Community Council**  
Allan Wilson 554 9144

**Broughton History Society**  
Gavin MacGregor 556 7727

**BROUGHTON BOOKS** in **Broughton Place** are our "postbox". You can put a letter addressed to us through their letter box at any time  
PHONE - 556 7727

**BROUGHTON Spurtle** is now on the World Wide Web on <http://www.tpuntis.demon.co.uk>

**BROUGHTON Spurtle** is printed on recycled paper.

**Spurtle team for this issue:**  
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Gavin MacGregor, John Dickie,  
Jane Coville, Alan McIntosh,  
Eileen Dickie & Tim Puntis.

**Phone Spurtle**  
**556 0903 or**  
**556 7727**

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# BROUGHTON Spurtle

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## Drummond - the way forward?

**Spurtle's** New Year interview with our local Community High School's Head Teacher, Frank McGrail found him in an upbeat frame of mind. Improvements worth £0.4m have recently been completed and, according to Education Committee minutes, another £1m will come through as part of a rolling programme - "the most urgent items receiving priority over the next few years." If this seems like a few clauses short of an unconditional guarantee, Mr McGrail is "sure that the Authority will maintain their commitment to Drummond."

Meanwhile the School now has two science labs newly refurbished, a new music/drama studio, community lounge and staff-room, a new (and

effective!) central heating system and partial replacement double-glazing. Among the priorities for the future are completion of the window replacement and two further science labs.

A much more fundamental development involving several schools including Drummond is the Public Private Partnership (PPP), which **Spurtle** queried briefly in our last issue. This is proposed as an alternative source for the major upgrading funds School and community thought had been secured in summer 1997, but were told in spring 1998 wouldn't be forthcoming from the Education Department's budget in the foreseeable future.

Story continues on page 2

## Greenside - onside at last?

**Spurtle** said as much back in July when the plans for the Greenside development were rejected. This isn't any old gap site. A natural valley, overlooked by the open spaces of the Calton Hill, a World Heritage Site, an outstanding town centre asset - and right on Broughton's doorstep.

Have we, at last, got the solution in the new proposals - to be considered by the City's planning authority next month? There was a helpful and informative display of drawings and models (now closed!) at the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland - plans are still available at the City Planning Department, by arrangement.

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Traction, by Cameron Morgan from an exhibition of his pictures at the Bellevue Gallery, 19th February to 7th March.  
Story on back page.

**Broughton Spurtle is free and completely independent**

## New Deal

*The Government's New Deal invites unemployed folk to take up one of four prescribed options - or start losing benefit. Last May we published opposing views of the scheme - and looked forward to hearing from local people once they'd had time to experience it in practice.*

What exactly is New Deal? This is a scheme set up by the government to help people back into the workforce.



New Deal interviewee  
Ken McKay

Maybe for some! But not for all. **Ken McKay** (53) of Melgund Terrace knows from personal experience: "It's a load of rubbish. There's this ageism factor - although the government doesn't seem to recognise this, it's happening all the time, even with jobs on the market. What the government need to look into is more help for the 40+ who are forced into the situation of part-time work, particularly people who have no dependants and very low income. The New Deal is only suitable for young people who are long-term unemployed as they will eventually move into the workforce".

How are the people forced into part-time jobs supposed to provide for their own pensions if they can't get decent jobs to safeguard their futures? Mr McKay is also an actor - which isn't recognised as a job by the Employment Agency!

If you have personal experience of this issue, and would like to comment, we would like to hear from you.



## Drummond and the PPP

Continued from page 1

The scheme is a complex one, beyond detailed explanation here! (The Council have issued information sheets and started school/parent consultation; and there's also a PPP Project Team query line on 469 3313/3314). According to the Council, this "enables Councils to form new partnerships with the private sector - the private sector provides funds and support services usually for buildings, and the local authority provides the direct services". Briefly, under a leasing arrangement probably for 30 years, and possibly extendible to 50 years involving a number of options, the private sector would provide and maintain school buildings; the Authority would continue to provide all education and ancillary services. And the Council is at pains to point out that during the immediate time-scale of 18 months to 2 years plus, the advantages of such a long-term

commitment will be thoroughly investigated before any deal is entered into.



Refurbished science lab at Drummond

As Drummond would be in the first phase of schools to be affected, and Frank McGrail has been appointed to a City-wide Management Board to monitor the plans, the relevance to our local community is clear. He acknowledges that the first reaction of some will be that this is not the direction in which a local authority education

provider should be heading. However, to quote the City's recently appointed Director of Education, Roy Jobson -

"We wish to offer the best possible teaching environment for all our children and at a time when local authorities across the country are facing a backlog of repairs to their schools, Public Private Partnerships will give us an opportunity to tackle this problem".

Mr McGrail promised a continued commitment to Drummond's school

and community role, and that information and consultation is a prerequisite of such a radical development. We would like **Spurtle** readers to let him know what they think. Contact us in the usual way on 556 0903 or 556 7727. We will certainly be reporting further as matters proceed.

## Opposition to PPPs

Education Convenor Elizabeth Maginnis floated the idea of finding money for Drummond through a Public Private Partnership at a School meeting last March. This worried many of those present, including teachers: recent moves towards a PPP by Glasgow City Council had been branded "wholesale privatisation" and "an expensive way of borrowing money".

Since then criticism of the Government's Private Finance Initiative (PFI), under which PPPs are promoted, has grown. Unison and other trade unions see it as a misuse of public money and a step towards privatisation. The British Medical Association has condemned the PFI funding of the new Edinburgh Royal

Infirmery because: in the long run it will cost millions more than it would cost the Government to build a new state-of-the-art hospital itself; the hospital building will never become public property; and they believe private sector involvement is already influencing Infirmery management decisions to the detriment of patients' interests.



Anne Dana, the local SNP candidate for the Scottish Parliament, summed up the case against for **Spurtle**:

"The Government is presenting PFI as the only means of providing many of the Council services our

communities need. But what we must understand is that, under PFI, we will be paying over the odds, over many years, with ambiguity of ownership at the end of that period, and possibly with loss of pay and conditions for some staff.

"No one would argue that the work planned for Drummond Community High School should not take place. But instead of PFI being the only option, the Government should make money available to the Council by increasing its annual grant. Or they could allow councils to borrow money themselves to put up the funds for such projects. This would dramatically reduce the overall cost of the work and ensure public ownership when the work is completed."

## Greenside project

Continued from page 1

Generally, an impressive improvement on the previous scheme, the cinema/leisure complex now occupies the lower part of Leith Street, incorporating the sliver of masonry which once was Lady Glenorchy's Church and extending up Leith Street to a break for a public square and new access to Calton Hill. The office block then continues onwards, culminating in a "focus tower" at the start of the Low Calton. The general mass of the development is reduced and its impact from the Calton Hill improved - a roof garden on the leisure complex is welcome, as is its glazed "open" frontage at street level.

Not yet specified, the general finish in natural materials must be ensured. We also have reservations about the open expanses of the office block roof, the intrusive (unnecessary?) tower and the finishing materials of the roof - the aspect from the Calton Hill is paramount - think St James Centre!

But no matter what the merits of a scheme such as this, considering the need for people to know what is happening, couldn't some much more open and available information and consultation process have taken place - just this once! This project is as big as they come hereabouts.

## Mansfield Place Church

Mansfield Traquair Trust has just received planning permission and building consent for change of use and alterations to the Church. Work proceeds on removing asbestos from the heating system, and on tree surgery around the building. Trust Secretary Rosemary Mann has assured **Spurtle** that diseased trees will not be replaced by a big car park. The only car parking will be down the slope at the Cochran Terrace end of the site; and the area used for the Graffiti outdoor cafe will have grass and new trees.

We've had compliments for the Trust on their helpful information sheet to nearby residents. At the risk of stating the obvious, communities work so much better when they KNOW things! **Spurtle** hopes the Trust will continue with this - and maybe encourage others.

## Belly dancing in Broughton

Hilary Thacker of Bellevue Terrace is offering a 6-week lunchtime course in Egyptian Belly Dancing, starting 4th February. "Open to any women of any age and any size. Please bring a scarf to tie round your hips and bare feet." Venue - the Castle Centre, 14a Broughton Street Lane, round the corner from Real Foods. Booking essential - ring Hilary on 556 7976.



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## BRIEFLY

Outright Scotland's January newsletter looks forward to a campaigning year ahead, with special focus on the new Scottish Parliament.



"There are any number of important opportunities opening up for lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgendered people in Scotland in 1999. The question is, are we as a community going to be ready to take that great leap forward? Well, Outright Scotland will do its damndest to make sure we get what we can, working as always alongside other progressive groups both 'gay' and 'straight'". (Contact: Brian Dempsey, 228 6147)

Following objections lodged by Community Council and local residents, Miller Homes' planning application for 44 flats at 54 Annandale Street (recently Champions) was turned down. Now an amended plan has been submitted: but it would still mean more housing where once there was a leisure facility for young folk.

After a rave review in the Scottish Educational Journal, an upgraded edition of Drummond Community High's 'Game for Equality' will soon be available. "Boys learn how it feels to face the disadvantages a girl confronts in growing up; white youngsters learn about prejudice, discrimination and the cultural marginalisation faced by Asian Scots; players watch the white middle class male forge ahead while the disabled player is increasingly left behind." Enquiries - phone 556 2651.

Putting the customer's needs first - the Lost Sock now has baby-changing facilities. Re-opened after freshing up for Spring(!) - long, warm days and balmy evenings, remember to look out also for the new outside seating later in the year.