

Belle's View



Hi fans

Here I am, back after another very successful festive season - so many glittering forays to attend to dear Readers, I am quite drained! But not too exhausted to attend to my raison d'être - tapping into the rich seam of thrilling gossip that runs through swinging Broughton and Bellevue!

Regulars of the Bellevue Bar were in for a shock recently - gone is the brown'n'orange sticky carpet, dominoes team and fruit machines. In its place is a whizzy new blond-wood style bar, Mezz, so called because the new layout features a mezzanine floor. After a bit of growling from the old soaks, Mezz has settled in to become one of the places in Broughton Street for the discerning drinker. Lovely big squashy sofas to snooze wet winter afternoons away in the company of a frothy cappuccino, or whatever you fancy - and dominoes are not actually banned, as far as I know!

Time to say farewell too, to Just Junk of Broughton Street. It has now been replaced by a swanky new art gallery, Merz. The shop has a wide stock in at the moment, so if you're looking for something contemporary and striking to cover up that ghastly damp patch, get in there! Finally, with Burns night just past, I would like make the timely reminder that haggis is for life, not just for the 25th January, so get along to Real Foods of Broughton Street for your veggie haggi (I just don't do the other sort!).

Till next time - just do it!

Persephone Belle

Contacts

Drummond Community High School
556 2651
For questions or information about building work, ask for Charlie Traylor or Muriel Buchanan

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

Sovereign Court Residents
John Davies 478 4463

New Town Broughton and Pilrig Community Council
Annette O'Carroll 556 7586

Broughton History Society
David Watt 556 5271

Cllr. Trevor Davies
Broughton Ward 529 3221
Surgery at Broughton Primary School, Weds. 6.30pm-7pm during school terms

Cllr David Guest
New Town Ward
558 8823 or 529 4268
Surgery at 67 Northumberland Street on Mondays from 6 to 6.45pm

Malcolm Chisholm MSP
555 3636 Surgery on Saturdays, Drummond High School, 1.00pm.

Mark Lazarowicz, MP
Advice sessions every Friday at 274 Leith Walk, 12.30pm and every Saturday at Stockbridge Library, 10.30pm.

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BROUGHTON Spurtle

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BROUGHTON MARKET SAUNA

Storm in a teacup?

In mid-January councillors on a regulatory committee granted a licence for an all male sauna in Broughton Market, in premises previously occupied by 'Le Bistro'. This was in spite of many objections from local residents and organisations.

Some of the reactions to the proposed development had been near hysterical: the streets around would inevitably become a no-go area; Broughton was fast becoming a red light district. And some protestors' comments were obviously anti-gay.



TRAFFIC

"There's no gain without pain"

Super Gran's haven in the midst of the storm



Some real improvements for pedestrians in Broughton Street recently. First, the re-laying of pavements which we've noted previously. Then dropped kerbs with tactile slabs at junctions on the east side, installed with wheelchair users and folk with a visual impairment in mind - but very welcome to anyone with a pram or pushchair too. And now two traffic islands near Albany Street.

Our local councillor tells us he's already had some complaints about those

But of course there were perfectly understandable worries too, about parking, noise and litter - as there would be for any new social facility on this scale (the sauna would provide for up to 120 visitors). The committee convenor claimed most of the objections were based on the late opening hours requested (3am on weekdays and 5am at weekends): the councillors imposed an 11pm closing.

Some of the objectors are threatening to challenge the councillors' decision in court. Maybe it would be better to give the sauna a chance, and see if any of their fears are realised. There are saunas in Broughton already, both heterosexual and gay: do they cause the neighbours any trouble? The 'Townhouse' in East Claremont Street is owned by the same company behind the Broughton Market project: residents there that **Spurtle** spoke to reported no problem.

The company's director is quoted as saying this is a part of town where his clientele feel safe. Surely we should take pride in that?

traffic islands: "Particularly that they slow the traffic down! My response was yes - that's the point. Safety has to come before speed. But more to the point - one complainer also said that the slower the traffic, the greater the local pollution from cars. And this is true. As ever, with managing the city as with so much else, there's no gain without pain. In the longer term, the only solution to that pollution problem is to reduce the

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Former pupil sends appeal from Australia

David Richardson now lives on a farm in Victoria, Australia. But as a youngster he lived here in Broughton, at 11a Rodney Street and at 30 Logie Green Road. And he attended Canonmills School – from approximately 1940 to 1946.

“I am desperately trying to get in touch with anyone that remembers me”, he wrote to **Spurtle**. “I was in Richard Golan’s class when he was Dux of the school. I remember some of the people in my class: there was

Robert Nimmo, Patricia Coleman, Sheila Dale, Richard Clapperton, Gordon Snell, John Laport, George Wallace, Betty Degan.” If successful, David would like to discuss a reunion.

“I have sent you a photo of me at age nine or ten, when I was at Canonmills. The other photo was taken about six years ago, when I worked as an extra on the serial ‘The Man from Snowy River’; I finished my last few years working as an extra on TV and movies – ‘Neighbours’, ‘Blue Healers’, etc.”



If any readers do remember David Richardson, please contact us. Phone 556 0903, or drop a note in at Broughton Books, 2a Broughton Place.

STORAGE NEEDED

Mural

Because of the renovation work being carried out at McDonald Road Library, the mural of Broughton’s history that was in the Nelson Hall there had to be taken down temporarily. Now alternative storage space for the mural is urgently required, for up to two years – until it can be safely re-instated in the Library.

Dismantled, the mural consists of nine panels, each 8’ by 4’. If any reader has any suggestion for its secure and dry storage, please phone John Dickie on 556 0903.



Continued from page 1 Traffic

number of cars coming into the centre of the city, particularly at rush hours. The city’s New Transport Initiative provides for increased public transport paid for, in part, by congestion charging for motorists coming into the centre.”

As to Broughton Street, we hope the recent improvements are only the beginning: it will take more to make it really people friendly. Councillor Davies is already aware of one more thing that needs putting right. He’ll be pressing the Council for an audible signal at the complicated pedestrian crossing right at the top of Broughton Street.

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:

Eileen Dickie, Tim Puntis, Norma McKendrick, Ken McKay, Gavin MacGregor, John Dickie, David Aitken and Alan McIntosh.

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Local artists to celebrate urban trees

Next month will see an exhibition of special local interest at the Bellevue Gallery, in Bellevue Crescent. It will illustrate with photographs and text the vital importance of trees, parks and gardens for the city – and the need to re-invest in the green environment of Broughton, parts of the New Town and Stockbridge.

On view from 2nd to 16th March, the artwork exhibited will celebrate, with poetry, the beauty of trees and plants in the urban setting and focus on the inspirational qualities of colour, seasonal change and form which we gain from nature. Twenty professional local artists will be exhibiting works in oils, watercolour, wood, pottery and mixed media. More details in our March edition.

The exhibition is the inspiration of Pat Eccles, and will conclude her millennium award ‘Edinburgh Trees’ project, set up to explore the value of trees in the cityscape. **Spurtle** has a special interest in this, as following a walkabout in autumn 1999 we drew up our own wish list for a ‘greener’ Broughton: more window boxes; more trees, shrubs, grass and flowers; more benches; more good play equipment; more sculpture; and more ‘softening’ of buildings.



Exhibition preview: ‘Birch Tree’, by Jillian McDougall

Fortunately Pat Eccles is now a member of the Community Council, and on its re-invigorated environmental committee. And we hope we can also look forward to increased support on such matters from the City Council, who’s new ‘Open Space Strategy’ includes “considering the creation of new parks and gardens” and “improving civic spaces in the city”.

If you’d like to share ideas with Pat Eccles, phone or fax her on 556 7550.

THE CITY COUNCIL AND US

Learn to love your LDC

Six Local Development Committees were set up across Edinburgh by the City Council to enable you to “play a part in your area’s future”. **Spurtle** was invited to be part of a small ‘focus group’ run by an independent strategy and research firm commissioned by the council to assess the impact of LDCs.

No doubt the researchers will come to their own conclusions and

report back to the Council on what useful purpose the LDCs have. Presumably the report will be made public. **Spurtle** certainly hopes so because, if our focus group was anything to go by, there’s still a long way to go in making the public learn to love their LDC.

Meantime, if (a bit like us) you wonder what they’re for, log on to www.edinburgh.gov.uk. You never know what you might be missing.

BRIEFLY

It was good to see our constituency MSP, Malcolm Chisholm, described by a seasoned commentator in the mainstream media as “a man of his word, and one of the most honest and intelligent politicians in Holyrood”. He certainly got a hot seat when made Health Minister! We wish him success – for all our sakes.

The Community Council meets on **Monday, 4th February, 7.30pm** in Drummond Community High School. Included on the agenda is a chance to question a planning officer from the city council – on issues such as the height of new buildings. Members of the public are welcome to attend. The next meeting after that is on 4th March – same time, same place.

Work on Drummond Community High continues on schedule, including demolition of the old gym hall next to Cochran Terrace. Headteacher Muriel Buchanan and the School’s Liaison Officer for the project, Charlie Traylor, reported to the Community Council’s January meeting. One question arising was the upheaval caused by the creation of vehicle access from Mansfield Place: assurances were given that trees and landscaping removed would be replaced.

Local parents are complaining about the scaffolding and hoarding erected around the front door of Mansfield Place Church. They say there’s not enough pavement space left to handle the pressure when pupils from both St Mary’s Primary and Drummond are on the move.

End of a long-running saga – refurbishment of McDonald Road is now complete! And the zebra crossing at the corner with Hopetoun Crescent is very welcome: but Broughton Primary parents are worried that double parking just beyond its restricted area is obstructing drivers’ views and creating a hazard at the crossing.

Broughton Primary held a Road Safety Week recently. One spin-off was that the police promised a blitz on unsafe driving and parking around the School.