

# Spurtle

**BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER**

**September  
2007**

**Tel: - 558 8574**

**No 151** broughton.spurtle@blueyonder.co.uk

**Free**

## DRUMMOND CHS FIGHTS FOR ITS LIFE



City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) has proposed drastic changes for 5 local schools. Under plans publicised on 17 August: Drummond CHS would close — pupils joining Broughton High School in session 2008–09; Stockbridge Primary School would close next year — pupils from Stockbridge joining Broughton PS. Nearby Bonnington PS also faces closure. An enlarged Broughton PS would eventually move to the former Drummond site, perhaps sharing it with St Mary's PS. Both schools' old properties would be sold off.

Consultation on the proposals will start in February 2008 for Drummond, and April 2008 for Stockbridge, with a decision due in 9 months from now. The proposals follow an 18% drop in the number of Edinburgh primary pupils since 1997. As this drop now affects senior schools, Gillian Tee (Director of Children & Families) aims to 'improve the whole education experience rather than spending money on running and maintaining half-empty buildings'.

Not everyone is convinced. Critics say the cuts are more about CEC's £10m debt than improving standards. Education Leader Marilyn MacLaren admits the financial crisis has accelerated the review, and that projected savings of £9m over 3 years have proved a powerful incentive. Educating a child at a small school costs, according to CEC figures, £6780 per year compared to £3400 in a large school. Reaction to the proposals has been hostile in Broughton, and a "Save Drummond" campaign has already begun, *Spurtle* has already

canvassed the local opinions below, and will cover the campaign in forthcoming issues:

*I am absolutely against the closure of Drummond. A lot of money has been spent refurbishing this school and it is an important resource for this area. (Angela Blacklock, Labour Councillor)*

*Drummond is a successful school and I'll do everything I can to support a campaign to save it. This is an appalling decision which makes no sense, particularly given the growing population of North Edinburgh. (Malcolm Chisholm, MSP)*

*I'm shocked — my son is really happy at Drummond and the school has been getting better. What does Gill Tee know about Edinburgh anyway — she's only just arrived in post from Oxford! (Karen Paterson, parent)*

*Are the proposals practical? How would pupils fare in a suddenly expanded Broughton High School? It all sounds very disruptive. (T.J. Lustig, parent and education professional)*

*I'm not sure the Council will find reallocating Drummond's facilities easy. Under PPP it only leases the property from owners Amey, and that contract will have to be renegotiated. Who's to say Amey won't have other ideas? (Local education professional)*

*Drummond isn't half-empty - its occupancy rate is 85%, way over the 60% threshold mentioned by officials! (Elfreda Crehan, parent)*

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Briefly

Visually impaired people can now enjoy the sounds and smells of the Botanic Gardens by taking part in special guided tours. The event is to coincide with an exhibition by the blind photographer Rosita Mackenzie, entitled *Two Voices*, at Inverleith House. Garden guide Jane Corrie will lead visitors on the tours on Sunday 2 September from 2–4pm, and Ms Mackenzie will speak about her approach to taking photographs and the creation of the exhibition at a free talk at Inverleith House Saturday 8 September at 2pm - call 248 2983 to book.

**Andy McKean** has contacted *Spurtle* to let us know about local football team the Edinburgh Ladies FC, based at St Mark's Park, Warriston. ELFC play in the Scottish Women's Premier League, and finished 3rd in their first season last year, after taking over Whitehill Welfare FC and moving to Edinburgh. With several international players, the standard is very high despite being predominantly amateur, with the SWPL having the same status as the men's SPL. More details on the club can be found at [www.elfc.co.uk](http://www.elfc.co.uk)

*Spurtle* has noticed that building has now started on the site of the old Kwik-fit garage in Leith Walk and Hopetoun Crescent, and builders are currently blocking the pavement in the lane next to the library. This is used by parents with young children going to and from the nearby nursery, and access needs to be retained – if this is affecting you, you can ask Edinburgh City Council to intervene on 200 2323.

*Spurtle* spies have noticed that dog fouling is becoming more prevalent in Broughton recently, and Rodney Street is particularly bad. Dog mess is a nuisance and it's associated with various diseases including toxocara canis. Dog owners have a responsibility to clean up after their dog in public places – you can report dog fouling that isn't cleaned up to CEC on 200 2323 or fill out an online complaints form on [www.edinburgh.gov.uk](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk).

### Have You Got a Story?

*Spurtle* is your community paper. Phone 0131 558 8574 or e-mail: [broughton.spurtle@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:broughton.spurtle@blueyonder.co.uk)

## DRUMMOND CHS FIGHTS FOR ITS LIFE:

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**WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE:** Full details of the Council's proposals are available at [www.edinburgh.gov.uk](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk) or can be ordered on 529 7311 To contact the Save Drummond Campaign, contact Chair of Drummond's Parent Council Linda Flex on Tel.: 669 9953. Broughton Primary School's Parent Council will be formed imminently. In the meantime, address any mail to the school's office. An Edinburgh activist, Tina Woolnough, has set up "Stop Edinburgh School Closures" to help coordinate campaigns and spread information: see [stopedinburghschoolclosures.info](http://stopedinburghschoolclosures.info), email [tina@kristina.org.uk](mailto:tina@kristina.org.uk) or Tel.: 337 3486.

**SPURTLE SAYS:** We expect our Council to balance its books, but rationalising the city's school estate will truly succeed only if pupils' needs are put first. In this process, transparent, competent and genuinely open-minded consultation is vital. CEC cannot be allowed to get away with a show of concern followed by a cynical smash-and-grab. If 'difficult choices' must be made, let them be based on solid evidence not prejudice, sentiment, timidity or short-term self-interest. Whilst CEC will have to work hard to convince locals of its motives and methods, it is proper that supporters of Drummond should have to prove how the strengths of their small school can and do outweigh any weaknesses, and that it offers value for money to Edinburgh as a whole. Whatever is finally decided will affect the future of local young people and perhaps permanently shape the character of this community. So, in the coming debate, all Broughton residents should demand that our politicians nail their colours to the mast and follow conscience before party-political convenience.

## Doors Flung Open in Broughton!

**St Mary's Metropolitan Cathedral** is taking part in **Doors Open Day** on Saturday 29 September from 11am – 5pm, when the church, Café Camino and the halls will be open to visitors. This year saw the completion of the Cathedral's new organ, by **Matthew Copley**, which reutilises the pipework from Preston Town Hall organ dating back to 1882. The organ, which has a beautiful flamed copper façade, including rare 32' contra basso pipes, will be played at 12 noon. Other Open Doors in Broughton are **Gayfield Square Police Station** (10am – 2pm), **The Glasite Meeting House**, 33 Barony Street (9.30am–6pm), nearby **Smith Scott Mullan Associates** architecture practice, 378 Leith Walk (10am – 4pm), and **Calton Hill City Observatory** (10am – 4pm). The full programme can be seen on the Cockburn Association website at [www.cockburnassociation.org.uk](http://www.cockburnassociation.org.uk).

## Nooks and Crannies

*Spurtle's* roving photographer, **Davie Thomson**, found this vintage mailbox somewhere between York Place and Albany Street. Readers are invited to send us similarly detailed photographs of the Broughton area. Published photos will be preserved in the archives of *Spurtle* and the Broughton History Society. Please leave your stills and details c/o Narcissus, 87 Broughton Street OR email them (at maximum resolution) to the address on page 1.



# A Constellation in London Street

*Ross Maclean writes:* Now that another Festival has departed, what memories will we hold of the 2007 event in Broughton? For this observer, there was an outstanding official Festival phenomenon, housed at 26 London Street, which arrived without fanfare. 'Jardins Publics' was a major exhibition featuring commissioned art work by three internationally noted artists. It examined the garden as a social place rather than a natural one, and highlighted four locations in Chessels Court, East Princes Street Gardens, St George's Well, and 26 London Street.

The London Street address encapsulated the work and vision of Richard Wright, who lives and works in Glasgow. It comprised two grand rooms on the ground floor painted entirely in white, save for the bare, unsanded floorboards. The front room contained only a large gilt mirror, with a simple candelabra, above the fireplace. The larger back

room, overlooking two idyllic walled gardens, seemed empty of ornament until one looked up at the ceiling. This was dappled with many hundreds of interweaving arrowhead 'footprints', or microcosms, forming a whorled constellation whose meaning was open to interpretation by the viewer. The overall design had a mesmeric, dreamlike effect. It linked both rooms with the actual gardens, and suffused the space with the serenity and timelessness of a summerhouse or pavilion.

The catalogue states that 'Richard Wright's works last only as long as the exhibition and as fleeting moments.' However, *Spurtle* understands that the owners of No. 26 are hoping to retain the wonderful Richard Wright ceiling in perpetuity. *Spurtle's* many art lovers will wish them well in achieving this, and thank them for sharing such an audacious and luminous work with the public in the dreich summer of 2007.

## Broughtonian or Student?

*Adam Ramsay writes:* A sociologist friend tells me children are the key to community building. Most students are childless, and you won't meet us at the nursery, swings, or school gates – which is a shame. We may be younger, somewhat dishevelled, and keep odd hours. But we are usually quite friendly.

Students can seem separate from the local community – even when we drink in the same pubs, shop in the same shops, and take our recycling to Tesco with everyone else.

So, if a bag-bearing student is struggling up your stairs to their new flat, muster your courage and introduce yourself. Who knows – they may even invite you to their flat-warming party – or at least turn the music down when you ask!

### **Simon Challoner** (15.2.1962–11.8.2007)

The untimely death of community-figure Simon Challoner has saddened many across Broughton and beyond. Born in Leicestershire, Challoner moved north as a boy and rapidly acquired a Scottish accent for survival. Arriving in Edinburgh in the mid-1970s, he took an early and precarious interest in motorbiking, later travelling to Australia. There he worked as a postman, a job which allowed ample scope for his caring and sociable nature. Back in Scotland, he worked briefly in catering (he was a keen cook) before following his father into social work. He became a trade unionist and Labour activist, and for several years was an effective Chair of Broughton Primary School Board. Challoner was a tireless enthusiast for people and current affairs, as shown by his involvement in many

local campaigns and his talent for placing trenchant letters in the press. A devoted family man, he still found time to win an Open University degree in Social Work earlier this year. He was much loved locally, and will be sorely missed. He is survived by wife Judith and children James, Lucy, and Jack.

### ***Support Your Spurtle!***

For **£1** per month (**£11 for a year**) you get the paper delivered to your home, along with one or two other bits of information and know you're doing your bit to keep *Spurtle* independent and stirring!

Drop your contributions in at **Narcissus, 87 Broughton Street** (any cheque should be made out to *Spurtle*).

# Belle's View

Hi fans



Hi Fans!

On your knees at festival's end? Pull yourself up by the bootstraps – there's still plenty of action to be had in happening **Broughton!**

The **Edinburgh Mela** on 1–2 September promises to be bigger and better than before – dance, sing, listen, laugh, and be amazed during a weekend of intercultural creativity and entertainment. This journey around the globe features a diverse mix of artistry from Scotland to Spain, India to Iran, and Pakistan to Palestine. Chill out with a cup of chai, some kulfi, or a cold cobra beer and enjoy music, dance, poetry, puppetry, martial arts, stilt walkers, visual art, theatre, and comedy. I am particularly looking forward to **Rahat Zahid** and **Dr Suhayl Saadi's** English/Urdu performance of **Robert Burns's** poetry! See [www.edinburgh-mela.co.uk](http://www.edinburgh-mela.co.uk).

Fancy dunking a chocolate biscuit in your tea while learning a bit more about Edinburgh's smelly historical past? **Broughton History Society** kicks off its new programme on Monday 10 September with **Ian Lutton's** talk on **The Smells Of Edinburgh** at **Drummond Community High School** (7–9pm). New members are very welcome- annual membership is £6 (visitors £1), with free tea, coffee and biscuits!

The **Spurtle** gang would like to bid a fond farewell to our paperboy, **David Watt**, who is now hanging up his mailbag to engage in more diverting pursuits. Eighty-years-young, **David** has been a stalwart supporter of **Spurtle** for many years, and we will miss his cheeky grin and cheery banter – bon voyage **David**, and thanks for climbing all those stairs!

Till next time

PERSEPHONE BELLE

## New Town/Broughton Community Council

### Vacancies for Community Councillors

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

For information on next meeting, please contact

Chris Richardson 07952 755 854  
@: [chris\\_richardson1001@hotmail.com](mailto:chris_richardson1001@hotmail.com)

## Malcolm Chisholm MSP

Edinburgh North and Leith



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Saturday surgeries:  
9am Leith Library  
10.30am Royston/Wardieburn  
Community Centre  
12pm Stockbridge Library

## Mark Lazarowicz

MP for Edinburgh North and Leith



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[www.marklazarowicz.org.uk](http://www.marklazarowicz.org.uk)  
Friday advice sessions:  
4.00pm Stockbridge Library  
5.30pm Constituency office

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## Contacts

### Bellevue and Claremont Residents Association

Yvonne Pryor 466 1144

### Broughton Road Group

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### Broughton Village Association

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### Friends of Hopetoun Crescent Garden

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### Gayfield Association

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### Hopetoun Village Owners

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### Redbraes Residents Association

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### Broughton History Society

Patrick Tyler 556 5036

### Drummond High School

556 2651

### Sovereign Court Residents

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**Editorial, production and distribution:** Maria Hart, Alan McIntosh, John Ross Maclean, Adam Ramsay, Davie Thomson, Fiona Watt.

**Published** 11 months /year (not Jan). **Printed** on recycled paper by Clydeside Press Ltd, 37 High Street, G1 1LX