

Spurtle

BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER

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**October
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**Tel - 556 0903
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KEEP EDINBURGH GROWING GARDEN COMPETITION

Blooming Broughton

Congratulations to Broughton gardeners who won prizes in this year's city-wide gardening competition. At an awards ceremony in early September **Karen Rhodes** of Gayfield Square got the prize for best front garden in North Edinburgh, and **John Ross MacLean** of Drummond Place for third-best allotment in all Edinburgh.

Other Broughton entrants didn't quite make the city-wide prize list but were awarded Silver Gilt Certificates in three different categories: **Julie Johnston** of Gayfield Square (hanging basket), **Friends of Hopetoun Crescent Garden** (community garden) and **St Paul's and St George's**, Broughton Street (place of worship). **Spurtle** has been able to organise local prizes for them – thanks to Paul Baker, manager of B & Q Superstore in Warriston Road.

The prize-winning allotment garden tended by John Ross MacLean is in Scotland Street Lane, alongside Drummond Tennis Club. Twenty years

or so ago it was a strip of wasteland used as a dumping ground for all sorts of rubbish. Then the late Marion Gayre got the City Council to agree it could be used for gardening, local volunteers helped clear up the site, and trees were planted. The first crop was potatoes, but soon a berry 'orchard' of raspberries, redcurrant, blackcurrant, gooseberry and alpine strawberries was added – all nourished by herbivore compost from the Zoo!

Ross took over ten years ago, remaining 'true to the vegan ethos, by rotating vegetables and recycling organic composts'. When **Spurtle** met him in the garden he told us: 'There have been some changes of emphases in recent years. These include intersecting pebble paths and stepping-stones, a herb garden (12 varieties), a cottage flower garden with a plum tree, a strawberry border, a wild section, stone seating, a miniature Zen garden, and a glass summer-house. Permanent features include lavender, hollyhocks, honeysuckle, asparagus,



artichoke and sweetcorn'. There are sunflowers 12 feet tall: hence the popular name for this extraordinary oasis – 'the giraffe garden'.

If you see Ross in the garden as you walk along the Lane, speak to him. 'Visitors are always welcome!'

MANSFIELD TRAQUAIR CENTRE

What's that stink?

For some time now, local people have noticed a bad smell as they walk round the Mansfield corner into East London Street. So we investigated.

Val Tesdale of SCVO, who have their offices in the Mansfield Traquair Centre, told us: 'On a bad day the smell from the drains is most unpleasant and permeates our whole

building, often resulting in our staff feeling quite nauseous'. Exhaustive tests indicated that the problem wasn't within their premises. So earlier this year their consulting engineers contacted Scottish Water, who put CCTV down the drains and found a hole in a fifteen-inch sewer pipe near the roundabout, six metres down. That was in June.

Spurtle has now spoken to Stewart Imrey at Scottish Water. He said they were going to try to reach the leak in the last week of September, via a manhole in the street. But he's not yet convinced that their hole is the cause of the smell that comes out at the lower ground level of the Mansfield building; a dye test they carried out did not confirm the connection.

Drummond students on Trans-Asia trek

Annie Scanlon went with them:
 S1 students at Drummond Community High School have been visiting the Indian subcontinent at the Mela for the past 5 years. This year we met Patrick Geddes, a Victorian gentleman who introduced us to a variety of characters including Gandhi, a sewer rat and a bunch of colourful 'peace-seeking' kites. We then moved on to Rajasthan and a very amusing set of puppets; a man who changed into a woman, a magician who could move his head to his bum, and a very annoying drummer who couldn't stop drumming. The kids in the front row were in real danger from a snake charmer and his uncontrollable snake. Our last stop was Nepal where we met Charan Pradhan, a dancer who kept us in stitches with his

antics; we learnt some fun dances and had a laugh at the teachers! Before we left, all the students were given a passport so that they could return to the Mela at the weekend to try out the art, culture and fun to be had in some of the other countries around the world.

These taster sessions at the Mela have grown over the years and encourage students to go to the Mela, where they can experience new activities and meet people from all over Edinburgh and the rest of the world. Drummond would like to thank the Mela Committee for a great event and for something a little extra special this year...

A trip to Bollywood for a Drummond student! More about that in next month's edition.

The case for?

Eleanor Robertson of West Annandale Street argues:

People who have hard-surfaced their gardens have probably done so for the same reason we did ours, to get a parking space in your own street; also, with the new parking permits coming into force, why would you prefer to pay to be able to park in a zone when there is space already free (your front garden)?

Just because you have a front garden does not mean that you will necessarily keep it as a lawn. If you look in my street, you will see that some people have paved over their gardens anyway. Probably for no other reason than easy maintenance; as you get older a garden can be a lot of work that maybe you are not able for. As regards myself, I have done my best by having a hanging basket and four tubs of flowers.

DRUMMOND STUDENTS AT THE BOOK FESTIVAL

'Nobody keeled over but ...'

Annie Scanlon reports:
 Nicola Morgan's new novel *The Fleshmarket* is enough to turn any



Nicola Morgan

second-year Drummond Community High School student's stomach, and they were all looking a bit peekie when they emerged from a session

with her in the booktent at The Edinburgh Book Festival.

The book is set in Edinburgh in the early 19th century when Dr Knox is performing public operations for medical students and thrill seekers. A small boy sees his mother operated on without anaesthetic and watches as she subsequently dies. Years later as a teenager he hears the same doctor joke about the operation and sets out to avenge his mother... it gets worse, much worse!

Nicola kept them all spellbound as she told them about some of the unpleasant medical treatments of the past. One (how to amputate a leg in less than 60 seconds) is so bad that people have fainted in the past, so she asked the students if they thought they could stand it. You won't be surprised by the answer, they all wanted to know! Nobody keeled over but there were a lot of 'eeks' and 'ahaas'.

Our students thoroughly enjoyed it, my library stock of Nicola Morgans are all out, and my reserve list is growing. They're all desperate to visit Surgeon's Hall, and Malcolm Chisholm will be glad to hear that they have a new respect for the National Health Service!



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Centenary celebration



Joy Hendry of Broughton Place writes:

Chapman started as an 8-page coverless pamphlet in 1970 and the Centenary editions (100-104) extend to 750 pages. Sheer throwness has spurred me on, and the sense of living in exciting, challenging times, in which a 'little' magazine like *Chapman* could do something. In the 70s, our literary and cultural infrastructure was pitiful. Scottish authors were ignored outwith Scotland and, more disgracefully, within it; it was incredibly difficult to get a book of poems published, and there was little public literary activity – readings and so on. Scottish theatre was in a similarly parlous state.

By offering an independent platform for debate about Scottish culture, theatre, language, literary issues and, inevitably, politics, *Chapman* has made a difference – see Editorial, 100–1. We have provided an outlet for work by Scottish writers, new and established. From Sorley MacLean and Norman MacCaig to the latest hopefuls, the magazine has helped develop the 'careers' of many writers, international as well as Scottish, with many of whom we have a real relationship going well beyond the printed page. I thought I could assist, at least, in the creation of the Scotland we have now.

So the Centenary is a celebration of all the writers, artists and others who have 'joined in' over the years. The general invitation to send 'something special' for 'a party

between two covers', soon elicited enough material for not one 144-page issue, but five, and a party between six covers. Each issue has a featured artist, and I enlisted Jack Vettriano for 100–1 and John Bellany for 102–3 (the former to the disgust of some). The last Centenary edition features unpublished poetry by Hugh MacDiarmid and the neglected artist William Johnstone. I also republished key-note material from earlier issues, like the seminal essays by Norman, Sorley, George Mackay Brown, Iain Crichton Smith,



Tom Scott and Kathleen Raine on what makes them write, from *Chapman* 16. I can't here name all the writers published, but the Centenary amounts to an impressive showcase of contemporary Scottish writing, and a 'working' history of 30 years of cultural life.

So, to the next 100 issues! The effort's been killing, but I can't wait to move on.

Copies available in some bookshops. Buy from Peter Galinsky, Broughton Books, or visit the Chapman office next door: 4 Broughton Place, 557 2207, or email chapman-pub@blueyonder.co.uk for details.

BRIEFLY



There's a 'Mushroom Celebration' in Hopetoun Crescent Garden on Wednesday, 6th October, starting at 5.45pm. Everyone's welcome: admire the

new sculptured mushrooms, listen to storytellers, enjoy the sounds of the Drummond Big Band, and share in the picnic – bring along some finger food to share if you like. (If the weather's bad, the Celebration will be in the Nelson Hall, McDonald Road Library.)

'There were running battles along Rodney Street during lunch-breaks, between Drummond pupils and Canonmills pupils', we heard recently. We asked Drummond's Head Teacher to comment. She told us that a dispute between two individual students had blown up into a wider confrontation. Measures have been taken by both schools to defuse the situation, and make similar confrontations less likely in future.

When Broughton Street was resurfaced recently the **red cycle lanes** around the roundabout were not renewed. Council officials had been getting feedback that they were confusing – cyclists were taken right round the outside, so some motorists thought they would turn left rather than carrying straight on. But on 16th September a cyclist was knocked off his bike by the driver of a 4x4 vehicle, and injured. So local councillor Trevor Davies has asked the officials to urgently review safety provisions for cyclists at the roundabout.



New Town Broughton and Pilrig Community Council

Vacancies for Community Councillors

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

We are looking for two people to fill vacancies on the Community Council. If you think you might be interested phone the Secretary for a chat, or come along to our next meetings on Mon. 4th Oct. and Mon. 1st Nov. at 7.30pm in the library, Drummond High.

Secretary: Annette O'Carroll 556 7586
E-mail: aoc1@onetel.net.uk

Belle's View



Hi fans

Aye, the nights are fair drawing in, but fear not Dear Readers, for these long, long winter nights to come, there is a surfeit of stimulating experiences going on in happening **Broughton** and **Bellevue!**

I know that Estelle and I sometimes feel like a pair of dog's dinners, but we were astounded to hear that **The Olive Branch** in **Broughton Street** has developed a special menu exclusively for dogs. Cosseting your dog used to mean pooch sporting a wee tartan coat, but now our furry four-legged friends can choose from a menu which includes lamb's liver, organic carrot muffins, and chicken with seaweed crunchies (for a wet nose and a lovely shiny coat). What's next for dogs – aromatherapy massage?!

Talking of Labrador lovers, **Archie** the kilted inventor from **CBBC's, Balamory**, aka **Miles Jupp**, will be bringing his brand of canine comedy to **The Stand, York Place** on 1 and 3 Oct. Recently seen sporting a scowl and a t-shirt with 'Performing Monkey' on it, just don't ask him to sing 'What's the story in Balamory?' – he is an *artiste* darling!

A big warm **Broughton** and **Bellevue** welcome to **Trendy Wendy**, who is bringing her wheels of steel and the world famous **Tackno** to **Ego**, at **Picardy Place** on the last Sunday of every month. A kitch classic night, with fancy dress being virtually compulsory – previous dress codes have called for party frocks and lounge wear, doctors and nurses, and space age. As if we Broughtonites need an excuse!

Till next time, just do it!

Persephone Belle

Spurtle is your local community paper.

We aim to inform about local affairs; raise local issues; publicise the work of local action groups; make connections between 'the news' and people's own lives in Broughton; and stir things up a bit!

We'll support people looking for a fair deal, but not protect privilege. We're not connected to any political group or party. And we don't get a grant from anybody to finance the paper.

We invite you to contact us and:

- react to what **Spurtle** has had to say
- raise new issues
- let us know about community activities
- tell us what you feel about life in Broughton.

Telephone 556 7727 or 556 0903

Write to us c/o Broughton Books, 2a Broughton Place, EH1 3RX – you can put a letter through the letter box at any time

e-mail

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Broughton Village Association
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Gayfield Association
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