

Belle's View



Hi fans

Fanatics of idle gossip and scurrilous rumour will be pleased to hear that due to popular demand, this column will now be running monthly – you're too kind!

Broughton History Society was approached by a TV company recently for 'experts' on old Edinburgh cinemas and, naturally, Estelle Murgatroyd and yours truly were thrust into the limelight. **Eat Cinema** will feature the local delights of **Pringles Picture Palace, The Salon, The Playhouse**, and the **Omni Centre** - on Sky TV in March, don't miss it!

Estelle and I recently stuffed ourselves with cous-cous and slurped mint tea while listening to a host of talented musicians at **MacDonald Road Library's Moroccan Hafla**, part of the 3rd International Festival of Middle Eastern Spirituality and Peace (until 12 Mar - www.mesp.org.uk). Another MESP event is **Print Your Own Precious Book**, at **Edinburgh Printmakers**, 23 Union Street - make your own sacred book using precious paper and beautiful materials! (3 March 1-5pm, - £4 - bookings 0131 557 2479).

Valvona and Crolla have a free **St Patrick's Day Tasting** on 17 March (11am - 4pm). Savour their beautiful rind-washed cheeses from Co Cork - Ardrahan, Durrus and Gubbeen - great with stout or whiskey. We don't have to be asked twice to fully embrace this cultural celebration with gusto!

Finally, if you haven't already had enough of sick parrots/bird flu in the press, **Doggerfisher** has a new untitled exhibition (17 Feb - 1 April). It features a brace of internationally acclaimed artists, including Hanneline Visnes' topical screen prints of repeated crows heads and fanned peacock tails!

Till next time, just do it!

Persephone Belle

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New Town Broughton and Pilrig Community Council

Vacancy for Community Councillor

The Community Council represents the views of local residents to Edinburgh City Council. There is a vacancy on the Community Council. If you think you might be interested phone the Secretary for a chat. The next meeting is on Monday 6th March, 7.30pm at Drummond Community High School. Secretary Annette O'Carroll 556 7586 E-mail aocarroll@onetel.net

Mark Lazarowicz MP for Edinburgh North and Leith



Constituency office: 86-88 Brunswick Street
Edinburgh, EH7 5HU.
Tel: 0131 557 0577
Fax: 0131 557 5759
Email: mark@marklazarowicz.org.uk
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Pat Eccles 556 7550

Broughton Village Association
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(daytime)

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Scott Richards 557 8879

**Friends of Hopetoun Crescent
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Mitchell Manson 557 1933

Gayfield Association
William McNair 556 4493

Hopetoun Village Owners
hopetounvillage@yahoo.co.uk

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George Hosey 467 6151

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

Broughton History Society
John Dickie 556 0903

Drummond Community High
556 2651

Cllr Trevor Davies
Broughton Ward 529 3221
Surgery at Broughton Primary
School, Weds. 6.30pm to 7.00pm
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Cllr David Guest
New Town Ward 558 8823 or
529 4268. Surgery at 67
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A message from our local Pakistani community

Bashir Malik and Mohammed Saleem write: Pakistan Association members extend the hand of friendship to fellow Edinburghers.

Although, unlike other parts of the world, no demonstrations regarding the depiction of the prophet of Islam as a terrorist by Danish newspapers have taken place in Edinburgh, we, the members of the Pakistan Association, Edinburgh & East of Scotland, have been very upset by the whole affair.

For us, the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be With Him) is the messenger of peace for the whole of humankind and his whole life was one of reconciliation and the advocating of justice.

Unfortunately there are a few bad apples amongst the 'Muslim' community who use religion for their own political and economic ends. The majority of Muslims – just like other members of the world community – are peace-loving. We, on behalf of the Pakistan Association, would urge members of the community to not be afraid of us. We are all brothers and sisters in humanity and the doors of our mosque are open to non-Muslims just as other places of worship are also open. Come and sit with us, find out more about us. Let us get to know each other – and maybe we can become friends.

We would like to encourage the fostering of humane relations and dialogue so that we can all get to know each other a bit better, to dispel any fears there may be for the Muslim Community generally, and to look for a common solution to the problem of injustice in our world – be it religious

injustice or economic and social injustice. This Earth and Her resources belong to us all. We all have so much good to contribute to each other and we at the Pakistan Association would like to extend our hand of friendship to our fellow citizens of Edinburgh, Scotland and the wider world.

God bless you all.

In further discussion, our Pakistani friends told us they believe 'any material that is offensive to a person's religious sensibility should be made illegal.' We disagree with that. But their warm welcome to dialogue holds out the prospect of learning to understand each others' positions better – even if we still can't agree about everything!



In February's edition of The Broughton Beacon, the magazine of Broughton St Mary's Church, Hilda McCoy writes how she recently 'switched on the TV mid-afternoon and found Chariots of Fire ... the part I watch intently was still to be shown ... Eventually I saw a long shot of Broughton Place Church, then inside with a view of the pulpit (long since gone) from which Ian Charleson as Eric Liddell preached, then the congregation (where members were invited to be extras at £9 a day!)' In our photo are three of those extras, in front of the church during filming in 1980. Third from the left is Ella Brodie: can anyone tell us who the other two ladies are?

Parents oppose cuts



Nicky Jeyes has a son in nursery and a daughter in P1. 'I'm worried that a composite class will affect the amount of attention children get, and so affect discipline. It will certainly make it more difficult for teachers to get to know children as individuals.'



Simon Challoner has two children at Broughton, one in P4 and one in nursery. 'I'm not happy about this at all. I'm very concerned about my youngest child's educational development next session, and how it might be hindered. I see no merit in the proposal at all.'



Christine McGillivray has two children in P2 and is a parent member of the School Board. 'I think a key point is for us to find out how other schools have coped with P1/P2 composites. For the Council to make assurances to parents based on anecdote rather than research is completely inappropriate.'

Parents at Broughton Primary School are fighting City Council proposals to cut one class and one teacher for the new session in 2006/07. The Children and Families Department plan is a response to a forecast reduction in the number of children at the school. The cut will result in larger class-sizes and a composite P1/P2 class.

Parents and teaching professionals consulted by the School Board do not accept Council assurances that current very high standards will be maintained for children in their first year of primary education. So the School Board is now lobbying elected representatives of all parties to reallocate funds to preserve separate P1 and P2 classes throughout Edinburgh.

Donna Douglas is a mother of four, one of whom is in P1. 'I think it could have a negative effect on P1s and P2s. Staff can't possibly provide the same standard of education and learning as before.'

'We don't see how cutting the number of teachers can improve or maintain educational standards,' said School Board Chair Alan McIntosh. 'Children in P1 are at a crucial stage in their learning lives, and deserve to be protected from the effects of wider budgetary problems in the Council. On the one hand officials claim there is no problem with composites; but on the other they do not allow headteachers to voice their professional reservations in public.'

Malcolm Chisholm, MSP, has written to parents offering his support. He told **Spurtle**: 'I've written to the Director expressing concern and have asked that there should be a freeze on the number of teachers, especially in view of the fact that the maximum class size for primary one has to reduce in any case in 2007. It is especially important to have smaller class sizes at the start of schooling and I strongly support the superb campaign that has been conducted by the Broughton parents.'

In the longer term, Broughton Councillor Trevor Davies hopes to see the downturn in the number of children reversed: 'We have a consultation out at the moment for a policy which will require all private developers to ensure that 25% of the houses they build will be Affordable Housing. This Affordable Housing will be for a range of people including families.'

Primary schools across the city are facing rationalisation as the number of children continues to fall. In a separate but related development, outline proposals were revealed in February for the closure of nearby Bonnington Primary School, and amalgamation of Leith Walk with either Lorne or Abbeyhill. These are outline proposals only, and will not be effected until 2008 at the earliest. However, the slowness of the process and the uncertainty hanging over nearby schools has drawn widespread criticism from education insiders.

Thumbs up for community garden

Nick Ball reports on behalf of the Broughton Village Association:

For the last 100 years, the Barony Street Play Area has been a popular place for local children to play. Hidden by the old garages and the new Townhouses, although it is maintained by the Council, it's become a bit run down.

Now local people have shown they want it to be a garden again.

Working with the Council, Broughton Village Association distributed a questionnaire in early February, asking if people wanted the space to be restored as a play area and community garden for kids, families and the rest of the community.

It was a complete, total, 100% 'Yes' in favour of a refurbishment: a big thank-you for taking the time to reply.

There will be a BVA public meeting in late March, where we'll discuss the best and most popular ideas from the consultation and finalise a design for the garden. Ideas received include: fruit trees, bird baths, nature garden, sandpits, a weather station, benches, water features and 32 types of plants.

The next step is raising the money; begging and borrowing from funding bodies, private companies and anyone who can help. Every little bit gets us closer to having a community garden and play area.

If you have any more ideas for design or funding – maybe you can donate materials – it will all help. Please get in touch with the BVA. Call Stephanie Harvey on 557 2762 (daytime) or Meg Nelson on 07811 468 108; or e-mail Broughtonvillage@btinternet.com

LOCAL SHOPS

'We try to demystify wine'

Ross MacLean continues his look at small shops that serve our local community:

Uniquely, in one modest street, several of Broughton's traders are notable for their national as well as local reputation for excellence. Unquestionably, Villeneuve Wine Merchants feature in this exalted company.

The shop at 49A has had a long association with the wine and spirit trade. It was a tavern from 1850 to 1870, and a spirit merchants from 1890 to 1910. Other businesses listed at 49 and 49A between 1860 and 1970 include a coal merchants, an iron foundry, a motor hirer, tea-rooms, and a wholesale stationers.

In 1971 it metamorphosed into an antiquarian bookshop. The Broughton Bookshop had four proprietors – the legendary founder Z. Migdalski, myself, Bert Barrot, and Peter Galinsky. When Peter moved to Broughton Place in 1989 the rare tome

was replaced by antiques and bric-a-brac; then came wooden toys, and the noble grape thereafter.

Villeneuve Broughton is the Edinburgh branch of the parent company in Peebles, and there is another outlet in Haddington. The shop stocks a huge range of wines from all over the world, including lesser-known wine-producing countries such as Lebanon. Regardless of the origin, vintage, and range of stock, Villeneuve rightly prides itself on one simple factor – superlative quality. This applies as much to a label priced at £4 as it does to one at £40.

All the staff are passionate about wine. Manager Alan McMillan stresses: 'We like to try to demystify wine. It's not the job of a wine merchant to intimidate – rather to make people comfortable in the shop, and willing to ask questions. We're here to answer them.'

The enthusiasm and expertise of

BRIEFLY

'After a three-year struggle, we're celebrating!', Janice Donaldson of Forth Street phoned to tell us in early February. The City Council's planning committee had unanimously refused planning permission for a 3-storey block of flats on the wee car park in **Broughton Street Lane**. Evidently what actually swung the decision against Prosper Holdings Ltd's proposed development was 'low amenity' for its residents; but it would also have overshadowed her and her neighbours' homes at the back – and been far too bulky for the mews-style Lane.

Sandy Crombie is guest speaker when Broughton History Society meets on Monday, 13th March, his subject 'Doing Business in Broughton Street': 7.15pm at Drummond Community High School.

Planning permission has been granted for a **new restaurant** on the former Sundial Launderette and Lost Sock Diner site.

Villeneuve Broughton's charming and gifted staff have been justly rewarded. In 2002 and 2005 Villeneuve won the International Wine Challenge Scottish Merchant of the Year, and was the WHICH Wine Guide Scottish Merchant of the Year in 2003.

Sante! Slainte! Viva Villeneuve!



Villeneuve staff, left to right: Matt Kennedy, Betsy Reed and Manager Alan McMillan

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We need more Supporters! Put your contribution through the letterbox at Merz Gallery, Broughton Street (any cheques should be made out to 'John Dickie'). Or phone John on 556 0903.

Malcolm Chisholm MSP Edinburgh North and Leith



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