



Hi fans

Well! After all the giddy excitement of the formation of the new Scottish Parliament, I hardly have the energy or the inclination to lift pen to paper, let alone make meaningful scratches on it. But try I must, in order not to disappoint my adoring public. Here goes!

While surveying our back lawn area through my high-powered binoculars (as part of my duties regarding the local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, you understand) I noticed that a new facade has appeared on the old STV studios in **Elm Row**. It's going to become a sort of Edinburgh RADA – soon the area will be teaming with thespians, with legwarmers and luvvie air-kissing becoming compulsory in **The Windsor Buffet!** I could have become an actress myself you know – I have been told that I have a perfect ear for dialect (sadly an annoying fungal condition has prevented me from ever treading the boards).

Whatever is happening up **around the Playhouse?** It's looking very continental these days, what with all the cafes and bars dragging their tables and chairs out onto the pavement every time the rain lets off. Apparently the plan for the **Drum Cinema Complex** there was deemed too boring, so now they're proposing another cinema with an exotic roof garden. It sounds super – I look forward to sitting there of an evening, enjoying the night air mingled with the fumes of the traffic as it roars past up **Leith Street**.

Till next time darlings, *just do it* – I would!

Persephone Belle

Persephone Belle

What a life!

You only have to stand on the corner of London Street and Broughton Street, buffeted by wind, lashed by rain and baked by sun (all in five minutes when I was there) to realise that Marilynne Pace has to enjoy being a lollipop lady.

She may be small but most Broughton residents know that Marilynne is a big woman round these parts. She has to be in order to be seen by traffic that often hurtles round her corner, obscured by up to eight vehicles temporarily parked there.

As a mother of two children at Broughton Primary in the early '80s, she applied to be a temporary relief crossing supervisor. Still there 16 years later, she greets all and sundry passers-by at this busy intersection.



Seeing kids right through from babes in prams to senior secondary gives her great satisfaction. She says everyone is usually very friendly (that's because you are, Marilynne). However, on one occasion a pedantic driver said she had no authority to stop the traffic without her lollipop: she had put it down because it was in danger of flattening the children in the strong wind.

She has to stand in the middle of the road sometimes before she can see well enough to let children cross. She's had one scary moment, almost being knocked down by a car driver (going too fast) who'd been unsighted by vans on the corner.

Within the few minutes I was talking to her she had hailed, or been hailed by, old ladies, schoolkids, policemen and one cheeky lad with a dog: "What are you doing standing around talking, you should be working." She was, she has three times a day on most schooldays since 1983 and she probably will do till she's no longer fit. There's no real age limit, Marilynne (50) says, so lang may yer lolly pop!

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

Councillor Mark Lazarowicz
Surgery on Wednesdays at Drummond Community High School from 6 to 7pm (During school terms)

Malcolm Chisholm MP and MSP
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BROUGHTON Spurtle

No. 60

June 1999

Spurtle interviews new Councillor

Mark Lazarowicz is our new City Councillor for Broughton ward. He and his family have lived in Bellevue Place for nearly six years. Previously an Edinburgh councillor, he became leader of the ruling Labour group before standing down in 1996 to go and train as a lawyer. That past experience helps

explain why he was scarcely elected for Broughton when he was given the hot seat of transport convenor.

Spurtle interviewed Councillor Lazarowicz twice: first at a public meeting, with local residents chipping in with their own questions; then at a follow-up session to ask him the

questions we didn't get round to the first time. We covered a lot of ground: here we can only indicate briefly the issues aired. Only three weeks in office, we couldn't expect him to come up with timed commitments. That's what we'll be looking for within the next few months!

Princes Street

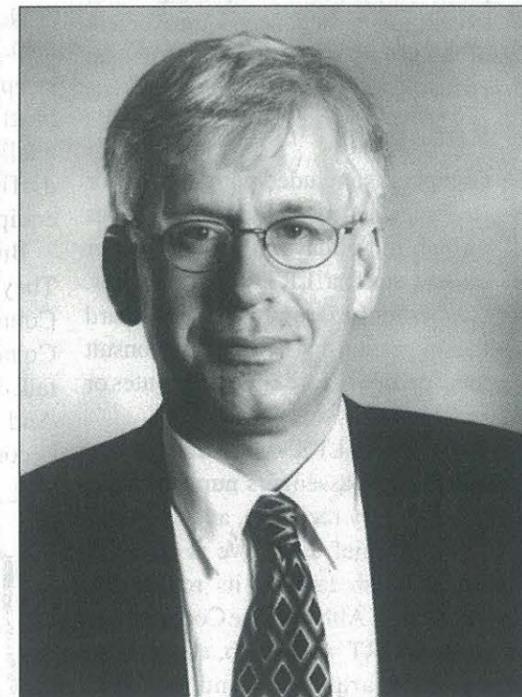
Spurtle supports the banning of cars from Princes Street; some of our readers beg to differ; but there's general agreement that the knock-on effects of displaced traffic have to be tackled. Councillor Lazarowicz intends to press ahead with the second stage of the ban: but he believes plans to deal with the knock-on effects can and must be in place before the westward ban actually comes into force. The Council will consult residents' groups on what needs doing over the next few months; he says Drummond Civic Association has already sent in useful ideas.

Broughton Street

An island just downhill from Albany Street, to help pedestrians crossing, has been approved in principle: **Spurtle** was worried about the now-familiar gap between "in principle" and money actually being spent. Councillor Lazarowicz is determined that money for such small-scale road projects should in future not be "raided" when something else demands the Council's attention.

McDonald Road

Residents are fed up with what they see as broken promises on the major improvement work required. Our new councillor is well aware of this sorry saga, and the urgency



of the issue. But "precisely because of past disappointments" he didn't want to promise a timescale until he can be sure of delivering.

Bellevue Street

"Broughton ward must stop being a rat-run for drivers trying to avoid hold-ups elsewhere in the city", read the Councillor's election address. Street residents at our public meeting protested that traffic hurtling through included many heavy vehicles, amongst them the Council's own, and called for traffic calming measures. He told us that he would be looking for more money to spend on traffic calming in our area; and agreed that such measures are best applied to areas rather than single streets – otherwise helping one street may simply penalise a neighbouring one.

East London Street

Fast through traffic is a problem here too – made worse by the lack of proper pavements at the east end of the street. The new development next to Standard Life will include a fully re-instated pavement. Meanwhile a traffic regulation order is being sought to enforce temporary safe passage alongside the site while building is in progress; and, on the other side of the street, Councillor Lazarowicz is going to make sure that Europcar stop blocking the way with parked vans.

(Continued page 2)

Broughton Spurtle is
free
and completely
independent

Speed

Personally, he'd like to see all residential streets covered by a 20mph limit – eventually. Meanwhile, a pilot area is proposed for “Central Edinburgh” – but that probably won't mean Broughton in the immediate future. He'd definitely like to see all streets with traffic calming and areas around schools covered as soon as possible. How quickly things can be done in different parts of Broughton will partly depend on whether only Scottish Office approval/regulation is required, or a wait for proposed legislation. He's promised to give us more information on timing for next month's **Spartle**.

Parking

- Parking on pavements – call the police, Councillor Lazarowicz advised!

- Parking at the westbound bus stop in East London Street makes life miserable for waiting passengers. If the road markings are not clear, that needs Council action; enforcement is for the police.

- There's confusion over the legal position on the white lines at the crossings in East Claremont Street – and over whether yellow lines are a possibility there. Councillor Lazarowicz is going to seek clarity.

- Commuters contribute heavily to parking problems in our area – StandardLife employees in McDonald Road, for example. This ties in with what our new Councillor had to say about city-wide moves to encourage more use of public transport (which we must hold over until next month!).

Annandale Street Lane

A Huntingdon Place resident raised the poor state of the Lane, where it comes out into McDonald Road. The problem is that it's privately owned: can the Council do anything about it without taking it over? (The same applies to the lane from East Claremont Street into Claremont Grove and Bank) Councillor Lazarowicz will see if something can be done at least about the section that's actually part of the pedestrian way along McDonald Road.

Blocked drains

He's been bombarded with examples in Bellevue, Hopetoun and McDonald Road. He promised he'd look more closely for himself; and within hours was spotted doing just that!

Parks and playgrounds

At our public meeting, the Council was congratulated on work done at Hopetoun Crescent garden; although there was concern over the height of weeds. In his election address, the new Councillor promised to campaign to “provide more parks and green areas, and upgrade children's playgrounds”. The play area in St Mark's Park is already being given priority: now he's set his sights on Barony Street, Redbraes and Sovereign Court (where residents believe they were promised a play area by developers Barratts).

Library hours

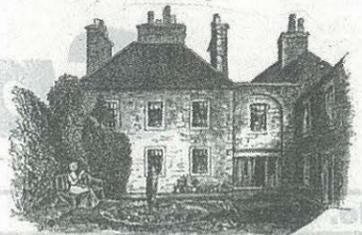
Campaign to “increase opening hours at McDonald Road library”, his election address promises; Spartle pointed out that it was the ruling Labour group who cut the hours in the first place! But he has already asked to see existing plans for general improvement of the library, to see how they can be pushed forward.

Buses

Complaints included poor service for Redbraes, and a general lack of services on public holidays. More and better trained staff at LRT were called for. Councillor Lazarowicz took on board the suggestion that LRT should consult local people before changing routes or timetables.

He said LRT was now more profitable (passengers numbers have risen sharply recently), and he thinks the new chief executive is ready to take a fresh look at its routes and operations. Although the Council can't instruct LRT what to do, they are the major shareholder and so have considerable influence. In particular, he thinks they haven't yet taken advantage of the Greenways effect on journey times to modify timetables and increase frequency. He feels upbeat about improved services in the near future.

Redbraes – past, present, future



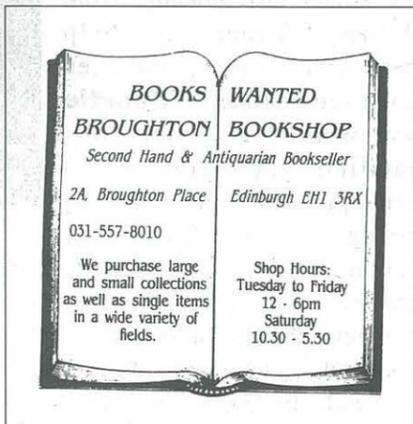
Redbraes House 1729-1929

Something's stirring down at Redbraes. Once the scene of gracious living, today's residents feel they're getting a raw deal.

Redbraes House was built by Hew Crauford, Clerk to the Signet, in 1727; it stood about 30 yards north of the entry to Redbraes Place. One of its chief attractions was its ornamental pond, and that became the focus for a leisure garden thronged by Edinburgh's wealthy in the early 1800s. The House was eventually swept away for road widening in 1929, the Place was built soon after, and Redbraes Grove followed thirty years later.

Now the residents feel they've been neglected too long. Their streets are swept too seldom, their drains are blocked, there are rats; and in the park a fallen tree was left to rot, the hut's disfigured by graffiti and play equipment has not been replaced.

But things are going to change. They've contacted the Community Council, and spoken to new local Councillor Mark Lazarowicz. There's talk of forming a tenants' association. And could that park pavilion not become a wee community centre?



Scottish Parliament

The coalition and large dollops of old-style political rhetoric are a bit depressing. But sitting in the public gallery at the top of the Mound you still catch the excitement of something new in the making. Inside the Parliament, a lot will depend on just how independent minded backbenchers of all parties are prepared to be – voting on the merits of issues, rather than allowing

themselves to be whipped in behind their leaders. Outside, how many of us will actively hold them to account – and feed in constructive ideas?

We in Broughton have eight MSPs to represent us. Malcolm Chisholm is constituency member for Edinburgh North and Leith (and also continues as MP at Westminster for the moment); and there are seven others covering the wider area of Lothian.



Malcolm Chisholm

Labour



James Douglas Hamilton

Conservative



Robin Harper

Green Party



Fiona Hyslop

SNP



Kenny MacAskill

SNP



Margo MacDonald

SNP



David McLetchie

Conservative



David Steel

Lib. Dem.

You can write to them at Scottish Parliament, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP. Finding out whom to approach for what may

be a matter of trial and error. Maybe we'll sometimes have all or most of them working together on our behalf!

BROUGHTON **Spartle** 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!

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

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 or 556 0903
FAX – 557 6752

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

Spartle team for this issue: Norma McKendrick, Ken McKay, Gavin MacGregor, John Dickie, Jane Coville, Alan McIntosh, Eileen Dickie, Tim Puntis, and Richard Love.

BRIEFLY

Local residents have won priority for the re-designing and equipping of the **children's play area** in St Mark's Park. A consultative committee will be set up in the near future, to bring together City Council and local parents and children. If you've got ideas for the play area, or want further information, contact Simon Challoner of East Claremont Street on 556 9226.

George Reiss of McDonald Road wrote to us about his experience of standing as a candidate in the recent Council election; he tripled the Liberal Democrat vote of 1996. “We enabled a debate to happen about what is going on in the area, which would not have happened otherwise. Personally speaking it has been an interesting and worthwhile experience, not least seeing what people write on spoiled ballot papers, and for having my fifteen seconds of fame on the front of the Scotsman! It was great to meet up with so many local people I know as they came to vote – a bit of a party in fact! Given the circumstances, I was really pleased with the result.”

Children's writer and illustrator Quentin Blake was recently appointed the first ‘Children's Laureate’. The five expert judges who made the decision were chosen from 76 nominations: Waterstone's promotions executive **Tessa MacGregor**, born and bred in East London Street, was one of the five.

Detailed design work for repair and alterations to Mansfield Place Church has started – taking the plans already given planning permission and listed building consent and working them up in fine detail. “Decisions have to be taken now about how the building will be used in the future”, says Trust secretary Rosemary Mann, so that engineers know what services are needed, and where. We hope those with current experience of using the building are being consulted!

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