

Broughton's poet

Robert Garioch was the pen name of one of Scotland's foremost poets of the twentieth century. Later on in life he lived over in Nelson Street, and there's a plaque there to mark the house. But he was brought up here in Broughton as Robert Sutherland, at 109 Bellevue Road, and went to the former St James's Episcopal School at 103 Broughton Street. One of his early poems, written in the 1920s when he was at Edinburgh University, is full

Fi'baw in the Street

Shote! here's the poliss,
the Gayfield poliss,
an thull pi'iz in the nick fir
pleyan fi'baw in the street!
Yin o thum's a faw'y
like a muckle foazie taw'y
bi' the ither's lang and skinnylike,
wi umburrelly feet.

Ach, awaw, says Tammy Curtis,
fir thir baith owre blate ti hurt iz
thir a glaikit pair o Teuchters
an as Hielant as a peat.
Shote! thayr thir comin
wi the hurdygurdy wummin
tha' we coupit wi her puggy
pleyan fi'baw in the street.

Sae wir aff by Cockie-Dudgeons an
the Sandies and the Coup,
and wir owre a dizzen fences tha'
the coppers canny loup,
and wir in and ou' o backgreens an
wir dreepan muckle dikes,
an we tear ir claes on railins
ful o nesty irin spikes.

of local references – 'the Gayfield poliss', 'Cockie-Dudgeons', 'Puddocky'. "We used to stick our poems on the board of the English Library. Vexed by the englishness of other people's poems, I reacted by presenting 'Fi'baw in the Street', glottal stops and all. I thought I was being rude, but it was well received."

('Shote' means look out, a 'foazie taw'y' is a flabby potato, 'owre blate' is too scared, and a 'puggy' is a cart.)

An aw the time the skinnylinky
copper's a'r heels,
though the faw'ys died or deean,
this yin seems ti rin on wheels:
noo he's stickit on a railin wi
his helmet on a spike,
noo he's up an owre an rinnan, did
ye iver see the like?

Bi' we stour awa ti Puddocky
(that's doon by Logie Green)
an wir roon by Beaverhaw whayr
deil a beaver's iver seen;
noo wir aff wi buitts and stockins
an wir wadin roon a fence
(i' sticks oot inty the wa'er, bi'
tha's nithin if ye've sense)
syne we cooshy doon thegither
jist like choockies wi a hen
in a bonny wee bit bunky-hole
tha bobbies dinny ken.

Bi' ma knees is skint and bluddan,
an ma breeks they want the seat,
jings! ye git mair nir ye're eftir,
pleyan fi'baw in the street.

Contacts

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Gayfield Association
William McNair 556 4493

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New Town Broughton and Pilrig Community Council
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529 3283 fax 529 4764
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6 to 7pm

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 MP and MSP
555 3636
Surgery on Saturdays at
Drummond Community High
School at 1pm.

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BROUGHTON Spurtle

No 70

May 2000

Princes Street project – more cars in Broughton?

The City Council's plans for Central Edinburgh traffic continue to arouse fierce debate. At an April meeting in the Nelson Hall, McDonald Road, the Community Council invited its member organisations to have their say.

The result was a mixture of plain silliness and genuine worries. Someone argued that pollution in Princes Street was actually worse since the ban on cars in one direction, because buses pollute more than cars – try working out the logic in that! Others spoke as if Princes Street belonged to the tourists: anything done to improve things there was irrelevant to Edinburgh residents. The City Council was accused of callously planning to displace pollution from the centre of town down the hill to the gates of Edinburgh Academy. It seemed the opposition of some would be unshakeable no matter what the Council did to meet their concerns.

Room for doubt

But there were genuine worries too. At the meeting we all had copies of the City Council's proposals for the New Town, listing street by street what might be done to protect residents from the onslaught of through traffic. Some residents groups had serious doubts about the likely effects of particular junction closures, changes in traffic flows and so on. No one can be sure until they're tried. So a suggestion from the Bellevue and Claremont Association could make good sense: introduce the New Town

measures on a trial basis, with temporary bollards etc. as far as possible, so that each can be removed or modified depending on its effects.

Off the map

And there were justifiable protests from residents living farther north, including Inverleith. They seemed to have dropped off the edge of the map illustrating the proposals! Did this imply that possible knock-on effects in their areas were being ignored? As for Broughton, we do in fact know that officials are working on ideas for our area: but the map suggests restrictions on traffic coming in along Albany Street and London Street, and a traffic island in Broughton Street, are the end of the story.

Spurtle's view

A big majority of those who spoke were obviously unhappy one way or another with the details of the proposals. But when it came to the City Council's general approach to the traffic question the balance was much more even – several protesters made that clear.

Spurtle would certainly urge close monitoring of measures planned and introduced, and pressure for improvements where necessary – while continuing our support for the Princes Street project and the Council's general policy on traffic calming.

More detail, plus the bigger picture, on page 2

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BRIEFLY

The middle section of McDonald Road has now been reconstructed, complete with pinch-points and cycle lane. A big improvement. But some drivers seem to see this as challenge rather than deterrent when it comes to speeding. **Local resident Larry Fergusson** has done his bit by asking City Council officials to instruct their drivers to take more care – and for urgent installation of street signs warning of the traffic calming measures.

James Gilhooley, billed as "History Detective Extraordinaire", will be the guest speaker at Broughton History Society's meeting on 8th May – Drummond Community High, 7.15 for 7.30pm.

The next meeting of the New Town, Broughton and Pilrig Community Council also takes place on 8th May at Drummond, 7.30pm. **All are welcome** – you don't have to be a member to attend Community Council meetings.

Tam Hay reports at least a little progress on the various **projects being pursued by Redbraes residents**. After a visit to the local councillor's surgery and an exchange of letters, City Council officials now say work on the new play area in their local park will start "right away". And they now have a monthly visit form a Housing Department representative, who walks round with members of the residents committee and hears from individuals what needs doing.

Mansfield Place Church update: all the tenders from sub-contractors are due to be returned by the second week in May, and soon after that the Trust will have actual costs for the restoration and conversion.

BRIEFLY

"How many interviewers, journalists, or editors would allow someone to go unchallenged if they said 'I am not racist, but I think white people are better than black people'? How many would think there to be no link between those who say 'We must not allow it to be taught that being black is acceptable' and those who verbally or physically assault people purely because of the colour of their skin?" (From spring issue of gay newsletter SHOUT!)

Remember our cartoon on proposed housing at Powderhall, conjuring up the vision of future residents cultivating rice in their very own paddy field? Well, the developers now plan to raise the ground level for all the new buildings and access roads at least 30 feet – to avoid flooding from the nearby Water of Leith. But the scheme still hasn't got final approval: councillors have asked for more information on height of buildings, traffic calming issues and children's play facilities.

Traffic – proposals for Broughton

Here we've taken the details closest to us from a long, street-by-street list.

York Lane:

the junction with York Place to be closed – so no through traffic down into Albany Street.

Albany Street:

the junction with Dublin Street to be closed – so no through traffic along into Broughton Street.

Broughton Market:

road closure to reduce through traffic.

London Street:

only buses, taxis and cycles to enter and exit at the west end of the street, to reduce through traffic and improve pedestrian crossing facilities.

Summerbank:

closure near Cornwallis Place, to reduce through traffic.

That leaves a lot of question marks, particularly about traffic in Broughton Street. Councillor Lazarowicz told **Spurtle** officials are working on more ideas for our area, and proposals should be ready for consultation "within weeks rather than months".

Meanwhile, why not contact your councillor with your own ideas on what need doing?

Traffic – the bigger picture

What's the timescale for the various traffic schemes that seem to have been floating around for some time now? We asked Mark Lazarowicz, our local councillor and also convenor of the Transportation Committee.

The Central Edinburgh Proposals that we've discussed in this issue of **Spurtle** have to go through various statutory stages before being implemented. But if everything goes well they could be in place sometime in 2002.

The Interim Local Transport Strategy published last year has been going through prolonged consultation and modification. A final version, with a detailed list of improvements spelt out, should be ready by autumn this year.

Congestion charging proposals should be outlined clearly by the end of this year. Approval depends on the Scottish Parliament; that could come sometime next year. Charging could not be up and running until 2003: but as soon as the project has been approved the City Council can start spending money on traffic improvements, against future income from congestion charging.

How soon can we hope to see practical steps to reduce the sheer volume of traffic on Edinburgh's streets?

Greenways are already in place, and more people are taking to the buses as a result of better journey times.

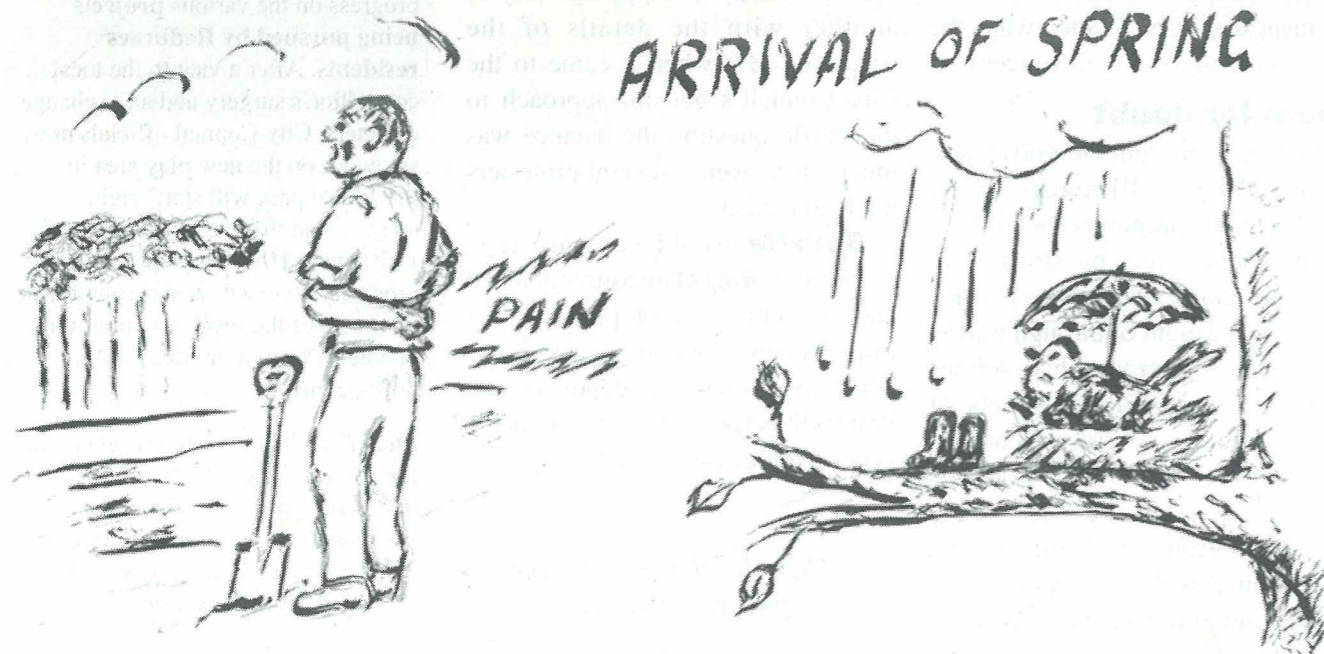
Cyclists are being encouraged by trying to make things better for them

every time road improvements are undertaken – for example, the cycle lane just opened in McDonald Road, and the toucan crossing up at the junction with Broughton Road.

Crossrail should be a reality, with two suburban stations opened, by early 2002.

Park-and-ride facilities are already being constructed north of the Forth Bridge, by Fife Council – an example of growing co-operation between neighbouring authorities. Negotiations over CERTS have become "protracted" (!); but the Council still hope that it and the linked park-and-ride at Kinnaird Park will be there in 2002.

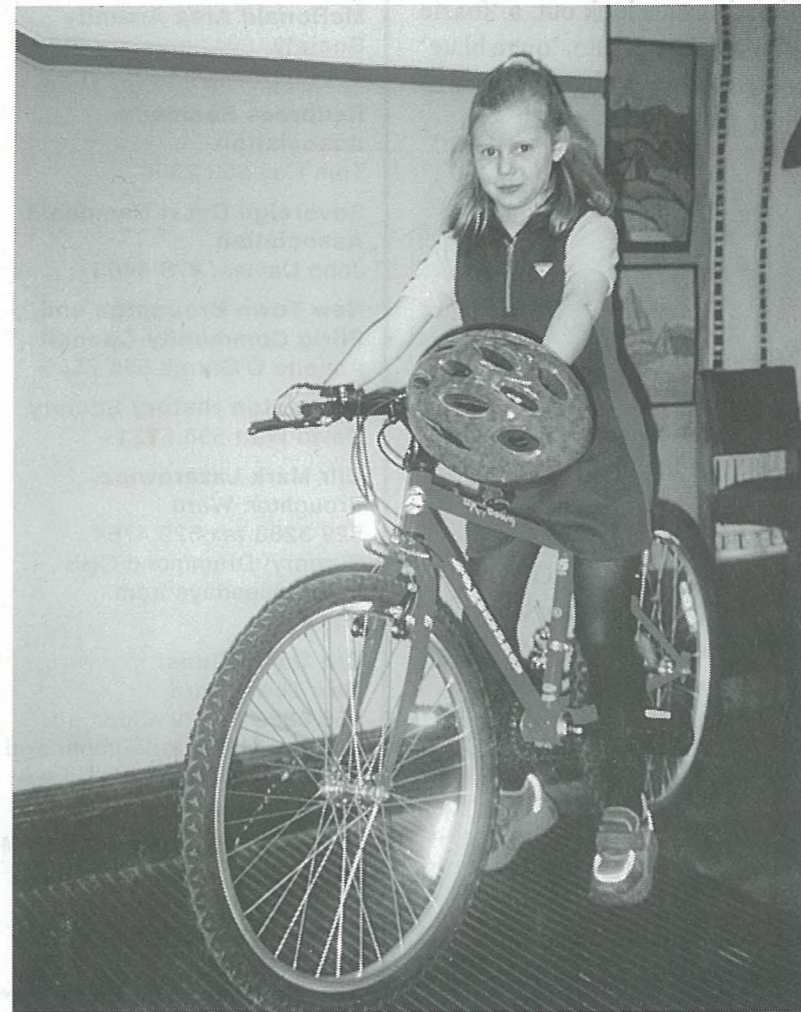
It looks like the year 2002 could see a watershed in the struggle to control traffic in Edinburgh!



Well done!

Pupils from 30 different schools took part, but Sophie Paterson of Broughton Primary rode away on the prize. The 'Colour Me' Competition was organised through school catering staff. Competitors had to design decoration for a cycling helmet, and complete the tie-breaker "I would like

to win a mountain bike because:". Sophie of Primary 4/5 coloured in the helmet with flags from all over the world, and completed the tie-breaker with "It would build up my strength and health in the fresh air". She was presented with her mountain bike at a school assembly on 6th April; amongst those celebrating her success was Sophie's grandad, former boxing champion Jackie Brown.



Women only

There's a new pub in Broughton Street, but this one is different – no men! Dolls Bar has recently opened in premises leased from the Blue Moon.

Manager Sam Ash, after many visits, moved to Edinburgh in December from London, where women-only pubs are well-established. She told **Spurtle** that all women are welcome, gay or straight, and she'd like to see a good mixture of age groups.

Dolls is run as a club, but there's no subscription or formalities involved; if you're interested, just turn up for a coffee or a drink. It's open 3pm until midnight, except Mondays. Daily newspapers are available, plus the gay press. There will be exhibitions by female artists, and maybe female musicians in the future. Come summer, there will be tables out in the sun.

This is a place where respect for women is guaranteed. But it is not anti-men. In fact, there has already been a 'bring a gay man along' evening.

Operation clean-up

Peter Galinsky of Broughton Books took part:

On Sunday 9th April some 25 people, most of them members of Spokes, met at different points along the cyclepaths of North Edinburgh. Provided with gloves and black bags they spent 3 hours collecting rubbish and litter. The event was organised and co-ordinated by Spokes.

I was surprised to see what a difference a small number of people made in a relatively short time – if only there had been more!

A general absence of rubbish bins along the walkways does not help the problem, but that is an excuse for nobody.

(Spokes, St Martin's Church, 232 Dalry Road, EH11 2JG – phone 313 2114)

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!

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.

Spurtle team for this issue:

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

BROUGHTON BOOKS in Broughton Place are our "postbox". You can put a letter addressed to us through their letter box at any time
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