

Spurtle



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BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free

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SURVEY SHOWS SUPERMARKETS SQUASH RETAIL DIVERSITY

City of Edinburgh Council's City Development Department has published 'Edinburgh's Shopping Centres, 1986-2010' (*Extras* 1.8.11). One such is Leith Walk (from Duke St to Leith St).

The survey appears to contradict itself over the number of supermarkets here, saying there were 2 or 1 in 2010 (Points 3.7, 4.7). This turns on the existence of a floorspace of 1,000 square metres or more, thus overlooking smaller outlets at Brunswick Place, 368-70 Leith Walk and Picardy Place.

For Leith Walk, Appendix 1 states: 'There were two supermarkets within the centre in 2010 [...] The number of non-supermarket food stores fell by more than half since 1986. Within this category there was a fall in the number of butchers, bakers and greengrocers. There was also a fall in the number of small general food stores. The number of fishmongers increased overall to 2 units. There were also fewer newsagents in 2010 than in 1986.'

In Stockbridge, with 1 supermarket, 'The number of non-supermarket food stores fell by 38%. The centre has lost butchers, baker, fishmongers and greengrocers since 1986'.

CEC's own correlation of supermarkets with competitors' decline is eye-catching. Since it knows this:

1. Why has it not done more to inhibit the recent spread of supermarkets to Picardy Place and McDonald Rd?
2. Will it now try to halt a supermarket moving into premises at Shrub Place when redevelopment begins?

Watch out for more online in *Breaking news* soon.

CRASH, BANG, WALLOP! TESCO DELIVER

Logie Green residents watched in horror last month as a Tesco delivery lorry backed into a wall, sending masonry crashing down an embankment towards their homes. One had to snatch her terrified grandson to safety.



A 55ft stretch of a 6ft-high brick wall collapsed towards four gardens, and for a moment neighbours below feared the lorry would follow. It stopped just short, but not before a lamppost had been bent, trees and bushes flattened, and a garden shed damaged.

The accident happened at 12.30pm on 11 July in the loading area behind the Broughton Road supermarket. Eyewitnesses report a Tesco employee 'guiding' the vehicle from where the driver could not see her.

'This has been an accident waiting to happen for years,' one local told *Spurtle*. 'The juggernauts are just too big for the narrow space they have to manoeuvre in. The drivers hate coming here, and often knock lumps off the wall near the Logie Green entrance.'

'The noise and vibration from these huge trucks is horrendous. They're only supposed to operate between 8am and 8pm, but often they turn up outwith those hours.'

Debris was removed next day, and within a week temporary fencing had replaced temporary crash barriers. It has since emerged that: (1) the original wall had no foundation; (2) the embankment is now subsiding. Substantial engineering works are required.

Residents want local politicians and health-and-safety experts to make Tesco use smaller delivery lorries, or to move the delivery-bay to Broughton Road.

Despite repeated polite requests from *Spurtle*, not a single Tesco spokesperson in Scotland was available for comment.



Photo: www.edinphoto.org.uk

SO LONG, SUMMER HUMMER

Whisky Kiss, the Broughton-based folk, DJ, mash-up band – can you tell we're out of our depth? – played at T in the Park in July. Determined to arrive in style, even if they sank up to the axles in mud, they hired Scotland's longest limo – a 16-seat stretch-Hummer – for the occasion. Appropriately enough, the car came from Clyde Valley Car Hire (the Clyde Valley being the only place in Scotland long enough to permanently park the beast).

For more details, follow last month's 6 'Snog in the Park' blogs by the band's bassist Iain MacPhail online at *Breaking news*.

EDINBURGH WARD 11 COUNCIL BY-ELECTION

Spurtle will host a hustings on Tues. 9 August for the pivotal City Centre (Ward 11) by-election. The event will be held at 7.15pm in Broughton St Mary's Parish Church on 9 August, in advance of the by-election itself on 18 August. Other local media have been invited to attend, and live 'blog-casts' will follow.

At the time of writing, known candidates were: Iain McGill (Conservative); Melanie Main (Green); John Carson (Indep.); Karen Doran (Labour); Alasdair Rankin (SNP).

As reported last month, the election result is likely to be tight. Further contributory factors may be: difficulty in getting Press coverage during the Festival; rearrangement of polling stations (due to the Festival); absence of many residents on holiday (particularly students).

Briefly



The **French Fancies** patisserie has now opened at the Broughton St end of London St. Check out their strawberry, raspberry and pastis jam. And in a 'double yummy', **Coco Chocolate** has opened at 71 Broughton St. See *Breaking news* (15.7.11; 18.7.11). Above is a detail from the latter's charming mural by artist **Lindsay Grime** whose work has also featured recently in **Concrete Wardrobe** over the road [<http://lindsaygrime.blogspot.com/>].

More than 130 signatures were added to a **petition** calling on Royal Mail not to replace a **known and trusted permanent postman in Claremont/Bellevue** with a procession of temporary ones. Outgoing Dave Messer is described by one local as an 'excellent postie for years and ... heroic in delivering mail throughout the winter snows'. The petition – displayed in **A&A Stores on Melgund Terrace** throughout much of July – was due to be presented at the end of the month, We will report Royal Mail's response as and when.

The **Royal Botanic Garden** is justly proud of the John Hope Gateway, its architectural award-winning, sustainable and eco-friendly **biodiversity, education and information centre** on Arboretum Row. Now it seeks permission to replace fabric canopies at the front with a glass extension (Ref. 11/02142/FUL). The purpose: **to sell more stuff**.

An unprovoked, **serious assault** happened in Canonmills Service Station at 3.45am on 3 July. A man waiting in the shop queue was punched in the face by a stranger and suffered a **broken jaw**. Police have appealed for witnesses. Call: 311 3131.

Caledonian Heritable have applied for permission to alter shopfronts at **146 Dundas Street**. They plan to open a **restaurant and delicatessen** in now vacant property which was formerly an offsales shop. The proposed design closely resembles **Clark's Bar** next door, although whether there will be any business connection remains to be seen.

Fay Young of Claremont's blog has featured interesting threads recently [<http://www.fayyoung.org/>]. Ray Perman and Ross Armstrong consider **Leith Walk's** potential as Edinburgh's Ramblas. Young herself investigates a pilot perennial planting scheme on **Mansfield Place**: 'geraniums, sedums, salvias, spring and summer bulbs – all weaving their way through beautiful **waving grasses**'.

A pile-driver runs through it



Spurtle has been asking Laggan Construction's Stewart Mackay about flood defence works between Bonnington and Canonmills.

The first thing to know is that the raised, red roadways are only temporary. The original bank was removed and stored. A plastic blanket was then laid on which clean stone was compressed to form a platform for pile-drivers. The platforms are carefully designed not to add

to the risk of flooding, and will be removed before restoration of the banks.

New flood defence walls will vary in height from 1.7–2.1m in Bonnington, to 1.3m by St Mark's Bridge (where there will also be a raised walkway), and 1.8m near Canonmills. Beside Powderhall, the wall will be only 30cms high, but form a deep L underground to prevent water eroding the bank.

When original soil is eventually returned, invasive species will have been removed. A replanting programme developed with the Council and Water of Leith Conservation Trust will then reintroduce native plants and trees.

At present, c.60 people are working on Broughton's flood defences (protecting 480 homes), and work should finish around September 2012. The pipe currently discharging from portaloos on Warriston Rd feeds into a sewer, NOT the river.

A longer version of this article is in *Breaking news* (1.8.11), where details of Laggan's August guided walks will also appear in due course.

Beaverhall Road consultation

Plans to build on Beaverhall Rd were displayed at Broughton Primary School on 28 July as part of a pre-application notification process (Ref. 11/01888/PAN). Elgin-based Springfield Properties PLC propose 90 residential dwellings (60 per cent of which would be for 'affordable rent') and 150–300 square metres of commercial floor-space. See *Breaking news* (28.7.11).

Oblong art with five corners

As part of this year's Mental Health Art and Film Festival, the Gallery on the Corner seek 200 artists to explore mental-health themes in an open exhibition in October.

Each artist will work, in the medium of their choice, on a primed, postcard-sized piece of MDF. Postcards can be picked up from the gallery (34 Northumberland St) and completed works should be submitted by 6pm on 17 September. Exhibits will be sold for £25 each, with proceeds going to support the Gallery's work.

Seize the initiative (and bin it)

In mid-July around 13 Claremont Court residents from 10 flats used Keep Scotland Beautiful kits to tidy up their central courtyard and surrounding road and paths, *writes Marie Renwick*.

This land does not belong to the residents – it's actually Council-owned and should be maintained regularly by CEC, but that

seems to have fallen by the wayside. However, the locals all walk through these areas daily so it seemed sensible to take the initiative and do it themselves.

Altogether they collected 15 sacks of waste, leaves, plastics, cans, household packaging, a dead rat and bird, pegs, cigarette ends, etc. They celebrated afterwards with a BBQ, and luckily the rain held off for most of the afternoon.

It went really well, and hopefully even more residents will join in next time.



Stepping out again

Anent the Festival Steps art exhibition (Issue 196), we were charmed to hear from *Spurtle* reader Fiona Manson who worked at the draughty venue for 2 years running, helping to arrange and sell the paintings. 'It was a lot of fun but – boy! – did you have to be fit. Every morning we had to carry all the paintings from the Scotsman offices and arrange many hundreds of them on the Steps, and every evening we put them away again'. She and two others were stationed in a nearby hut where payment was made, and on the Steps themselves. This writer shares her memory of inclement weather when 'the wind fair hurtled down those steps', though there were golden days too. Although remembered as a 1960s phenomenon, Fiona recalls that the event ceased around 1976 'as too many of the paintings were walking'.

Another *Spurtle* correspondent, Peter Verity, was at Edinburgh Art College with John Bellany in those heady 1960s. He recently 'passed the John Bellany gallery in Barga, Tuscany, where there is also a Hamish Moore piping summer school at times, not to mention a red phone box' (*à la Pennan's Local Hero?*). This hare is still running. Readers with fecund memories are welcome to join it; might there be rare images of the place and time curled in a drawer somewhere? And might the happening be revived 40 years on? Why not, Baby Blue? *JRM*

Briefly

Puzzle: immigration, strange migration, railways, Frenchmen, Fisherrow, bad boys, cocky nits, kidnap, coercion and ransom: **what's the connection?** Answer at foot of column.

Mark Lazarowicz, MP attended a discussion hosted by Mansfield Place-based **Waverley Care** on 11 July about Scottish and international policy concerning HIV/AIDS. Lazarowicz praised Waverley Care's '**pioneering and wide-ranging**' work, how it ensures public awareness of the continuing challenge, and gains public support for the action and spending needed to respond to it. He wants Britain to continue to take a strong lead.

A 23-year-old woman was **critically injured** in a collision with an eastbound black taxi at **York Place** in the early hours of Sun. 3 July. Police seek witnesses.

The never-ending saga which is the **Cameron Guesthouse Group's** attempt to design a hotel at **38 York Place** has passed another milestone (Ref. 11/01750/FUL). Revised effluvial ventilation arrangements have been approved which will allow them to **cook food** on the premises.

Jobcentre Plus is consulting the public until 29 Aug. over a plan to close its office at 9 South St Andrew St. Functions would transfer to High Riggs and Leith. **Mark Lazarowicz, MP** fears inconvenience and possible loss of service, and seeks constituents' views. Contacts in *Extras* (1.8.11).

Invitations circulated recently to the **Central Edinburgh New Town Association's** annual **Queen St Garden Party** on 30 July. It contained the words: 'With the City of Edinburgh Council behaving in an **increasingly cavalier fashion**, now is probably as good a time as any for residents associations to form closer links and attachments'. Expect **pike-bearing regiments of judges** on Heriot Row soon.

Edinburgh World Heritage Trust will host a free '**energy efficiency and energy saving in flats**' workshop at 6.30pm on 15 Aug. at 5 Charlotte Sq. **Reserve a place** by phoning Tel. 220 7734 or by emailing ChiaraRonchini@ewht.org.uk.

August ... tired of Broughton? Why not visit **Broughton in Upper Tweedale?** The Borders village boasts great walking, a fine brewery, and the **John Buchan Centre**. Getting there could hardly be easier. From Mon.–Sat., McEwan's Coaches service No. 100 leaves **St Andrew Square** at 5.45pm. Change at **W. Linton**, catch the **No. 93** and arrive at 6.36pm. On Sun., a **direct service** taking 11 minutes longer leaves at 8.45pm. Or there's Stockbridge.

Puzzle solution: they're all speakers' topics in the new **Broughton History Society** syllabus unveiled at LINK [<http://bit.ly/qsyOc0>].

Price is right for Amphitrite

This splendid Green Goddess was up for auction on 23 July at Lyon & Turnbull in Broughton Place. Expected to make £2,000, a fierce telephone-bidding war resulted in it realising £5,000. The engine was built in 1955, and was originally designed for civil defence during the Cold War. However, vehicles like this are probably best remembered for being manned by queasy-looking soldiers during firefighter strikes of the 1970s and 1980s. The vehicle seats 6, can be driven on a car licence, and is tax and MOT exempt. Perfect for all those occasions when you need to squirt 300 gallons of water out of a 1,600ft-long hose from a 35ft-high ladder; shooing spiders out of the bath, for example, or waking teenage offspring from a safe distance. More photos in *Breaking news* (23.7.11).



East London Street enigmas

We thank Jake King, who – responding to our item in Issue 196 – pointed out that the business recently featured in the BBC's *Case Histories* was in fact Enterprise Car Hire on Annandale St. However, he has submitted this old photograph of the former Gilroy's on E. London St, which appeared in an *Edinburgh Year Book 1955* advertisement. He thinks the parked fleet may be Triumphs. We think they're Ford Anglias. Gilroy's also specialised in Fiats, Simcas, Standards and Citroëns. Can any reader advise?



Game, set and match

This season, the men's 'A' team at Drummond Lawn Tennis Club have ascended to Division 2 of the East of Scotland league for only the second time in the long history of the club. This is a high achievement as there are 9 fiercely competitive divisions in this large league. The remarkable youngest member of the club, 14-year-old Alistair Stiven, contributed to his team's victory over the highly rated Braids team in a nail-biting final doubles match, with David Dowell. The club's annual tournament finals day takes place on Sat. 10 Sept. to which the public are warmly invited. New members of whatever ability are welcome to join the club in one of the city's very special green spaces, off E. Scotland St Lane. Tel. 558 1733.

Remarkable but unremarked: Ritson rediscovered

From 27 August to the end of September, Colours Gallery on Dundas Street will exhibit the works of the virtually unknown artist Claire Ritson.

Born in Glasgow, Ritson was a contemporary of the Scottish Colourists, whom she knew. Her amazing Colourist style from the 1920s and 1930s rivals theirs, and in many ways is more audacious. Her life was equally extraordinary, marked by two personal tragedies in the Second World War during which she worked as a code-breaker at Bletchley Park.

Spurtle will return to Ritson online shortly. In the meantime, a full 'Gallery round-up' for August is in *Breaking news* (1.8.11). *JRM*



Moreover ...



Much marketing these days is too clever for its own good. Not this example. **The Waverley Laundry Company Ltd** tell it like it is, trumpeting the recent reopening of a **Canonmills launderette** after a disastrous fire. The premises have been completely redecorated, and refitted with **brand new washing machines and dryers**. Confusingly, when we took this photo first thing on a July Sabbath morn, the launderette was closed.

Correspondent J. Milne of Bellevue rightly upbraids **CEC's Roads Dept** for streamlining the road and pavement of **E. Scotland St Lane** while ignoring the deplorable and dangerous pavement in **Bellevue Crescent**. *Spurtle* has highlighted this discrepancy several times. We understand that the latter is ranked around **109th in CEC's priority list**, and is unlikely to receive attention before 2013. Until then it will deteriorate further. The top 10 priorities hardly bear thinking about: the **Grand Canyon** comes to mind.

We offer a **fond adieu** and *bonne chance* to Will Bain, manager of **Villeneuve Wines** on Broughton St, who has graced the establishment for the past 5-and-a-half years.

A **handy list** of Spurtleshire Festival/Fringe venues appeared in *Breaking news* (27.7.11). Ali G's more nuanced **picks of the picks** appears in *Breaking news* (1.8.11).

Hopetoun Crescent Garden has kept its **Green Flag** despite concerns over al fresco drinking, littering, urination, intimidation, dog fouling and damage (Issue 194). How?

Wheelie bins arrive in New Town



just in time for summer

Malcolm Chisholm MSP

Edinburgh North and Leith



Constituency Office:
5 Croall Place, Leith Walk, EH7 4LT
Tel: 0131 558 8358
Fax: 0131 557 6781

Saturday surgeries:
Leith Library, Ferry Road: 9am.
Royston Wardieburn Community
Centre, Pilton Drive North: 11 am.

Email: Malcolm.Chisholm.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

New Town/Broughton Community Council

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

Next meeting:

Monday 1 August
at 7.30pm

Broughton St Mary's Parish
Church, Bellevue Crescent

secretary@ntbcc.org.uk

Mark Lazarowicz

MP for Edinburgh North and Leith



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Friday advice sessions:
4.00pm **Stockbridge Library**,
no appointment necessary;
5.00pm **5 Croall Place**;
other surgeries throughout the
constituency – phone for details

Spurtle Team: John Dickie, MF, Ali George, Elfreda Harrison, Maria Hart, George Hosey, Alan McIntosh, John Ross Maclean, Graeme Robertson, David Sterratt.
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