

Spurtle



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BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free

**April
2012**

No 205

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VISIONARY IDEAS FOR WALK

On 21 March, around 50 locals, Council officials, councillors and blue-sky thinkers met at Lorne Primary School to discuss 'A Vision for Leith Walk'.

On completion of the next 6 months' roadworks, City of Edinburgh Council has £3m to spend on restoring and improving the thoroughfare – described as one of the three most important roads in Edinburgh – from Constitution Street south to Picardy Place. CEC wants physical improvements which will also encourage social and community improvements for the 40,000 people who live on or around Leith Walk.

Hopefully the first of many productive meetings rather than mere talking shops (protestors voiced impatience at the slow process), it was nevertheless intended to share priorities and explore ideas at this initial stage. Below are some of the main aspirations which emerged:

- Improvement of current 'lunar' road surface. But reduction of traffic speed.
- A safe route for cyclists – colourfully envisaged by one twebb as 'a great big feck-off, grade separated, Dutch cycle path'.
- Leith Walk should not just be a traffic route; however plans must be able to accommodate trams eventually.
- Appropriate attention, space and resources to be accorded the 7,000 pedestrians who use the Walk daily.
- More trees and sculpture (in addition to restoring that removed during tramworks).
- Extension of free wi-fi the length of the Walk, not just from city centre to Pilrig Street.
- Development of Shrubhill site, but without inclusion of another supermarket.
- Importance (and commercial potential) of recognising Leith Walk as a multi-cultural asset for the city as a whole.



Broughton's Got Talent on 16 March was won by Broughton Primary's P7 Sheetal Tripathy (pictured above with trophy).

She survived a technical glitch, nerve-jangling delay and strong competition from schoolmates to win over the judges with wonderfully self-assured and graceful dancing. Congratulations to all who took part.

COUNCIL SEEKS POWER TO PROTECT SMALL SHOPS

'Local' supermarkets' irresistible spread across Scotland's high streets is being resisted.

Green Lothians MSP and Morningside councillor Alison Johnstone's motion to City of Edinburgh Council was accepted last month, and a formal request will now be forwarded to the Scottish Government calling for revision of the law concerning Use Class Order. The aim is to allow

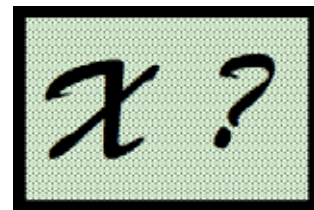


local authorities to distinguish between national chains and local independents when considering planning applications.

In *Breaking news* (15.8.11), Johnstone argued that local councils should have a duty to help small shops survive through statutory safeguards and an independent watchdog. Potentially, her latest proposal could offer the first effective means for councils to protect local retail diversity against supermarket monoculture.

However, such a change would not be without difficulty. As Leigh Sparks, Stirling University's Professor of Retail Studies, pointed out in the *Evening News* on 20 March, the planning system is based on land use, not occupancy use, the aim being to avoid 'planners having to choose between different retailers and so be accused of bias'.

HUSTINGS DATES



Spurtle will host two hustings this year in the run-up to the 3 May City of Edinburgh Council election.

The decision to increase the number of events comes in response to boundary changes which have seen Broughton more divided than before between Leith Walk and City Centre wards.

The events will take place at Broughton St Mary's Parish Church, Bellevue Crescent, from 7.00–9.15pm on:

- Thursday 19 April – Leith Walk (Ward 12)
- Wednesday 25 April – City Centre (Ward 11).

As on previous occasions, the meetings will be independently chaired. Candidates from all the main parties have now been contacted, but any persons standing for smaller parties or as independents will also be welcome. They are requested to let us know of their intention to attend as soon as possible. Entry is free, although voluntary contributions to help us meet costs will be pounced upon thankfully.

Briefly

Mr D.R. Watt kindly informs us that the former occupants of **Forth House**, Harveys Ltd, wholesale stationers, are in fact very much extant and trade from Edgefield Industrial Estate, Loanhead (see Issue 204).

Recent amendments to the **Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Action Plan** include a determination to demarcate the WHS more clearly by liaising with the city's forthcoming **Signage Strategy** and using smart-phone applications. Built-heritage enthusiasts have welcomed the change.

L'Escargot Bleu proprietor and local eminence *gastronomique* **Frédéric Berk Miller** was once again involved in a mouth-watering Franco-Scottish exchange last month. Over 4 days – in partnership with the Institut français and the Lycée hôtelier in Dinard (Brittany), Berk Miller exposed 11 budding French chefs to the delights of **Scottish ingredients**, showed how they were used in select **Edinburgh restaurants**, and then helped them to cook a 4-course meal for 300 at The Hub. A budget-fish recipe show followed on 1 April.

Bienvenu! Two of only 10 guesthouse establishments recommended by the **Michelin Main Cities of Europe Guide 2012** are in Pilrig St's constellation of B&Bs. They are **Millers64** and **Ardmor House**, at Nos 64 and 74 Pilrig St respectively. Remarkably, there are 6 Edinburgh stars. The remaining 4 outwith Edinburgh are in Glasgow, Florence, Dublin, and Antwerp.

Bellevue resident **Felicity Neyme** is bringing up her young son to be bilingual. Spotting a gap in the market, she is starting a small business this month using song in **French classes for babies, toddlers and parents** at the Calton Centre. Details at: [www.minifrench.co.uk].

Sacré tartane! The next meeting of the Broughton History Society is on Mon. 23 Apr. in Drummond CHS at 7.30pm. Charles McKean will speak on **'Scotland as a French Colony in the 16th Century'**.

Edinburgh tenement dweller? Half-frozen? Thaw out with **great advice** from Emily Dodd at: [http://t.co./8KxwaJo].

The Albany St **Ballantrae Hotel's** application to build a 3-storey, 14-bedroom extension at 11–13 York Lane has been refused (Ref. 11/03872/FUL), much to the relief of neighbours. See *Breaking news* (13.3.12).

Sadly, no-one identified Issue 204's **photo puzzle**: the splendid top hat outside Cecile Paul's **Threadbare** emporium on Broughton St. In fact there is a *pair* still in situ which would be the envy of Mr Astaire himself. *Spurtle* hopes they will remain there in perpetuity as a symbol of the **joie de vivre** which Cecile brought to Broughton.

Council slips on waste collection timetable

Council officials are about a month behind schedule in their bid to roll out wheelie bins and gull-proof bags (GPBs) across the New Town before the start of the gull-breeding season this Spring.

Following the successful pilot scheme last year (Issue 200), officials began undertaking a detailed audit of local waste collection, but analysis of the results and proposals on where exactly to site further containers have been delayed, partly by recent uncertainty over who would end up running refuse services in the capital. As yet there is no master plan, and relevant local groups have yet to be consulted.

Speaking to the New Town and Broughton Community Council (NTBCC) last month, Neighbourhood Partnership Manager Mike Penny drew attention to three problems with GPBs in the pilot area: (1) Non-use by some transient residents (particularly on Great King Street); (2) Permanent attachment of GPBs to railings instead of weekly presentation; (3) Failure to use black bags within GPBs.

Recycling levels in Edinburgh now stand at 34 per cent. Officials believe 'mixed stream' recycling (i.e. putting

all recyclable materials in one container at source) would improve this figure. However, a civil action under way in Wales – in which some waste contractors are opposing 'co-mingling' – means no such solution can yet be applied.

Penny told India Street residents that more than one waste collection method might be considered on a single street, 'but only if it makes operational sense'.

Paolozzi Prize launched

An inspirational annual award honouring the art of Sir Edouardo Paolozzi has been launched.

The Paolozzi Prize for Art is open to 5th and 6th-year pupils from across the city. Teachers from every secondary school will nominate pupils' art work in 3 categories – talent and creativity, overcoming barriers, and new directions. The overall winner will receive £500 with £250 for each of the category winners.

The brainchild of Lib-Dem Councillor Paul Edie, the prize has been warmly welcomed by Paolozzi's sister Yolanda Tartaglia who lives in Sighthill, and by arts impresario Richard Demarco who is likely to be one of the panel of judges from the professional art community.

Common sense ... and / or the likely lack of it

At a seminar run by the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils last month, a 'fairly heated debate' took place on Householder Permitted Development Rights (see Issue 204). Some voiced fears about 'main-door flats in unlisted tenements, not in conservation areas – e.g. Bellevue Road – being "customised" (artificial cladding, shutters, canopies etc.) ...'. This could make the whole building potentially unlistable in future.

'Surely people would have more common sense,' came the reply – met, says John Knight, 'by derisive laughter'.

Under the new legislation, such work would be granted a Certificate of Lawfulness if it were within the '1-metre bubble', and no mechanism exists to comment upon let alone object to such an application.

Another significant change in the arrangements arises from the setting aside of all Article 4 Directions. These include the City of Edinburgh's former policy to control paint colours within the UNESCO World Heritage Site. Thus, it appears that whilst the Council may continue to clamp down on supposedly 'garish' commercial properties,



it will be powerless to prevent lamentable lapses of domestic taste in the New Town.

Local flame carrier to feel the burn

S o m e t i m e
S p u r t l e
c o n t r i b u t o r
Scott Richards has been chosen to run with the torch on a section of the Olympic Flame Relay this summer, following nomination by friends and colleagues.



It's a recognition of his work as Scout Leader for Broughton St Mary's Scouts (who meet on East London Street), as Chair for the last 10 years of his local residents association, and as a fundraiser for St Mary's RC Primary School.

The former front-row rugby forward will flit – gazelle-like – along a section of the Edinburgh-Berwick-upon-Tweed route on 14 June. A seasoned athlete, he has completed 10Ks before and raised £500+ for charity in the last two Great Scottish Runs.

Scott is a keen photographer, hillwalker, camper, and member of CAMRA who hails originally from Penicuik but now calls Broughton home. He is, remarks wife Nancy, occasionally spotted in the Cask and Barrel.

He describes himself as 'just an ordinary bloke, doing ordinary stuff, and one of tens of thousands throughout the UK doing the same'.

Mrs Charles Dickens: the Broughton connection

Mrs Charles Dickens (1815–79) was born Catherine Hogarth at 8 Hart Street, the eldest child of George Hogarth WS. The family (eventually including 10 children), moved to 2 Nelson Street in 1820, then again to 19 Albany Street in 1828 where they remained until heading south in 1831. They were comfortable and cultured, the sisters educated at home by their parents in the 3Rs, geography, and music, and in dance by a French master.



In London, Catherine's father established himself as a musicologist, and as editor of the *Evening Chronicle* effectively became Dickens's employer. Through him, Charles and Catherine met. They married in 1836 (the year Dickens's first novel was serialised).

Catherine's sisters Mary and Georgina were highly significant members of the Bloomsbury ménage, Georgina remaining as housekeeper, adviser and friend from 1842 until Dickens's death in 1870. Mary died prematurely and was immortalised as Nell in *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

Catherine's marriage started happily. She accompanied Dickens to America in 1842, and had a minor role in his *Every Man in his Humour* in 1845. But Dickens grew disenchanted with her, finding Catherine 'an incompetent mother', blaming her for their 10 children and financial worries. He was hardly blameless. In 1857, he began a lifelong liaison with actress Ellen Ternan, which Catherine discovered on accidentally intercepting his gift to her of a bracelet.

In 1858, Catherine and Charles formally separated. She received a house and the company of her eldest son, but only restricted access to her other children. Catherine never fully recovered. On her deathbed, she instructed her letters to be given '... to the British Museum, that the world may know he loved me once'. She is interred in Highgate Cemetery with a baby daughter who had died in 1851. *JRM* [See *Breaking news* (1.4.12) for a fuller, illustrated version of this article.]

Briefly



Kevin Low's extraordinary, intriguing, computer-generated portraits will feature at the Union Gallery on Broughton Street from 5 April–1 May. Pictured above is 'The Aviatrix'. Also exhibiting in *Worlds Apart* will be Stewart Bremner, whose powerful abstracts have attracted much attention at the gallery in the past.

Admire the new **newels, handrails, risers, steps and blockings** leading from Cornwallis Place to King George V Park.

Newington-based **Earthy Foods** have taken a 3-year lease on the row of shops at **1, 2, 3-6 Canonmills Bridge** and will run a restaurant cum organic/Fair Trade shop. Real Foods' **Ben Raffles** commented: 'We believe this is a positive development that will add to the fantastic range of independent businesses in the Broughton area. At a time when Tesco, Greggs and Sainsbury are all encroaching on our area's independence, and we are having to fight a legal battle just to retain our shop signs, it is refreshing to have another independent shop appear'. **Limited building work** on housing is expected to begin this year in the yard to the rear. See *Breaking news* (7.3.12).

Various combinations of **regret, anguish, consternation and disgust** marked the Council's badly handled, floodwork-related tree-chop at Canonmills Bridge last month. (*Breaking news*, 18–21.3.12).

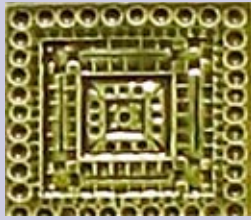
Farewell, Axolotl on Dundas St, whose last exhibition closes on Sat. 7 Apr. 'Journey' features new works by **Robert Springham**, Paul Muzni, 'strangely twisted' Gregor Laird, Asta Petkunaite, 'fabulous fabulous' Joyce Gunn Cairns, and Angus Reid's poetic Pentland installation. **A new venture is promised.**

'**St Mary's Market**' has resumed at the very top of Broughton St (outside the cathedral), selling fresh bread, meat, sweets and gifts on Sats, 9am–2pm, until 28 Jul. A **Festival Market** will run, 11am–7pm in Aug., including live music, dance and theatre.

It's clean, it's fresh at **Margiotta's** on Northumberland St following a recent **timely revamp** of signage, shelving and stock. A new shop under different ownership opened at 8 Howe St on 16 Mar.

East London St mural links continents and generations

In Issue 203 we told how ceramic designs spotted on BBC1's *Antiques Roadshow*



linked *Spurtle* to Karen Lovatt – daughter of Ken Clark who assembled the ceramic mural on East London Street's Waverley Exchange.

'It is wonderful seeing the mural actually in place,' writes Lovatt in response to the photo in Issue 196 we sent her. 'My father designed some tiles, but he mainly put tiles designed at Malkin's into the patterns; hence he would have actually designed the mural rather than all the tiles within it. As far as I know, the Turinese collection [used extensively by Clark in designing fireplaces] was actually designed by a Mr King, who I remember meeting as a child ...

'We moved to Australia in 1969 where my father mainly designed spiral staircases. One of the tiles in your photograph [pictured] covered a cinema in Melbourne.

'My father continued painting as a hobby and had some exhibitions of his work. He died in 1992 and my mother and I returned to England in 1993.'

Lovatt is now combing her father's archive for further Edinburgh connections.

Gallery to star on Calton Hill

Collective – the Cockburn Street gallery committed since 1984 to 'the production, research, presentation and distribution of contemporary art and culture' is moving.

With Council approval recently in place, it will shift premises early next year to the largely redundant, Playfair-designed Royal Observatory on Calton Hill.

This historic setting – a shift from Collective's current 'white-cube space' – will present challenges for an organisation focused on 'new work and practices'. However, staff enjoyed exhibiting their plans there two years ago and are confident of success and increased footfall.

The gallery's Communication Manager Jill Brown told us: 'Calton Hill's twin history of stargazing and intellectual endeavour make it an inspiring location for Collective. It will provide a space for reflection on the past, present and most importantly the future, through new work, cultural exchange and international dialogue.'

Less formally, a cultural observer commented: 'Collective had thousands of people through the door over the summer in 2010. Of course, it helps that – apart from Nelson's Monument and the view – there isn't a lot else to do up there.' Well, not during the day.



Moreover ...



It is, we trust, a sign of *friendly rivalry* in Broughton's simmering culinary culture. Khushi's on Broughton St (Issue 194) have recently posted this notice to distinguish themselves from an **unconnected and longer-standing** restaurant of the same name recently relocated to **Antigua St** [<http://bit.ly/zhHAGG>]. Having never tasted the chairs in either establishment, *Spurtle* feels **unable to comment further**.

Despite widespread **local enthusiasm** for the idea of **reopening a station at Abbeyhill**, it appears Network Rail cannot find a way to do so without using the main line. This would make arrangements highly problematic. However, an **alternative plan** is now under consideration: creation of a **new platform at Holyrood**.

The **Christian Aid Book Sale** at St Andrew's and St George's West Church, George St, takes place on **12, 14-18 May**. Last year's sale realised a record £114K which benefited many of the world's bereft, especially in the Horn of Africa. This year's event highlights the **bicentenary of Charles Dickens's birth**. Donations of Dickens material or indeed any books in good condition, as well as printed ephemera and stamps/postcards, will be gratefully received. Contact: Tel. 556 2168 / 07714 186754,

Spurtle has received requests for **more Stockbridge news**. Are you a local there willing to research and/or write such items for us?

'Long-tailed tits – lovely wee birds,' writes **Pav Verity** in response to the front-page piece in Issue 204. 'But is a group of them a sign of Spring? I'd reckon it is more of a sign when the group breaks up into pairs.'

A glimpse of sunshine – Hope ...



springs eternal in Scottish breasts

Malcolm Chisholm MSP
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Royston Wardieburn Community
Centre, Pilton Drive North: 12 noon.

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Every Tue: 5pm – Constituency Office
1st Fri: 1pm Stockbridge Library
2nd Fri: 1pm Murrayfield Parish Church
3rd Fri, 1pm Tynecastle High School
4th Fri 1pm Peace & Justice Centre
NB. No Surgeries on Public Holidays.
Email: marco.biagi.msp@scottish.parliament.uk


Alison Johnstone
MSP for Lothian Region



On the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month during term time I hold a surgery for Lothian residents at the Scottish Parliament between 11am and 1pm.

Please call to book a surgery appointment or to arrange another time and venue that is convenient for you.

Contact me on 0131 348 6421
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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

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New Town/Broughton Community Council

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

Next meeting:
Monday 9 April
at 7.30pm

Broughton St Mary's Parish
Church, Bellevue Crescent
(Drummond Room)

secretary@ntbcc.org.uk