

# Spurttle



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**No 287**

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**BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free**

## GOOD TIME TO BUY A HOT-AIR BALLOON

To meet an expected increase in demand from the new Edinburgh St James, Scottish Gas Network began 22 weeks' work in Bellevue at the end of July. Stand by for roadworks, temporary traffic lights, and parking suspensions. For further information and updates, visit [[bit.ly/1L4NZ2Z](http://bit.ly/1L4NZ2Z)] or Tel. 0800 912 1700.

Approximate times and places of where you won't easily be able to drive and when are shown below. We recommend you read it in combination with the disruptions reported in Issue 286 and the revised Council timetable for carriageway resurfacing published online on 5 July [[bit.ly/2Yf8ntJ](http://bit.ly/2Yf8ntJ)]. Basically, nobody's going anywhere anytime soon.

On a positive note, it should all be over by Hogmanay, after which we have the tramworks to look forward to.

**29 Jul–12 Aug:** Dundas St – temporary traffic lights

**29 Jul–9 Sep:** Great King St – closed

**9 Sep–7 Oct:** Bellevue Cres and E Scotland St – closed

**7 Oct–4 Nov:** Bellevue and Bellevue Cres – closed

**4 Nov–2 Dec:** Drummond Pl and Scotland St – closed

**2–30 Dec:** Scotland St and E Scotland St Lane – closed

## BINS, SINS, AND FERTILE WIN-WINS

Communal-bin collections of landfill waste were disrupted across Broughton and Warriston for several days in early July, leading to some disgusting pavements and frayed tempers among residents.

The cause was the breakdown of a specialist side-lifting bin lorry for which – remarkably – no replacement was available. Council staff later tidied overflows, and Cllr Lesley Macinnes, Environment Convener, apologised for any inconvenience.

Picardy Village residents are not convinced. They have suffered years of overflowing rubbish and associated fly-tipping. They blame poor management for insufficient recycling capacity, irregular collections, and inadequate remedial cleansing. Some locals are considering legal action. City-centre Cllrs Doran, Miller, and Miller are on the case. Claremont Court residents have been tearing their hair out trying to get a blocked chute and contaminated brown bins cleared. Scotland Street residents blame Drummond Place residents for overfilling communal bins rather than using their own gull-proof bags.

Meanwhile, in a parallel effort to improve waste services, CEC officials have deployed lamppost wraparounds advising motorists not to block collections by parking beside bins. Offending vehicles are issued with a mock ticket and warned they could face a £60 fine or tow-away for similar offences in future. Whether this will ever happen is another matter, but inconsiderately parked vehicles can be reported at [[parking@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:parking@edinburgh.gov.uk)] or Tel. 469 5400.

Finally, you have until 2pm on 7 August to register for a fortnightly brown-bin collection of garden waste, 9k tonnes of which was used last year to compost farms, gardens, and green spaces. The £25 fee will cover Oct. 2019–Oct. 2020. Residents with a mygov.scot account can register at [[bit.ly/2yLUbkj](http://bit.ly/2yLUbkj)]. Anyone can sign up and pay over the phone (Tel. 608 1100). No cheques. *For more on bins, see p.2.*



## HIGH AND MIGHTY



This industrious child with little regard for health and safety adorns the roof of the Crown Office building on Chambers Street. So why is he there and what is his Broughton connection? Find out on p.3.

## Slàinte mhòr in Spurtleshire



There's good news for local pub-goers, some of whom felt defizzed by news of apparent closures in July (Issue 286).

Clark's Bar has reopened under new management on Dundas Street. There are rumours that an associated restaurant (first mooted in 2010; [bit.ly/2LDh9Qe](http://bit.ly/2LDh9Qe)) may open next door, but so far we see no sign of it. Shown above is one of three depictions of the Victorian interior, shared with us by Simon Jennings [[bit.ly/2XX0ofX](http://bit.ly/2XX0ofX)].

The Phoenix on Broughton Street will re-emerge soon as The Broughton (the name it had formerly), as part of the not universally popular Star Pubs & Bars empire. Local drinkers welcome the return of a central social organ, even as their physical organs are spluttering for mercy. Local heraldic experts question whether the bar's proposed coat of arms, featuring three owls overt, will win the Lord Lyon's seal of approval [[bit.ly/2LIU9yH](http://bit.ly/2LIU9yH)].

Meanwhile, on Broughton Road, the Dunedin Bar/Powderhall Arms/Blind Beggar has been acquired by William Ross, director of the dog-and-community-craft-beer-and-cocktail-friendly Bar Brig on Leith Walk. We don't know what the new establishment's name will be, but the revamped exterior looks like a garden shed.

Smithie's on Eyre Place remains open, and a source close to the pump confidently expects it to be sold in due course as a going concern.

# Briefly



All manner of amazing fauna has emerged in **West Register St** lately, where refurbishment of the **Cowan Building's** exterior has revealed a wealth of previously grime-encrusted detail. Here, we see a **frilled dragon** (*Chlamydosaurus kingii*), more commonly found in tropical **New Guinea** than Edinburgh. For previous coverage of this long-forgotten '**Venetian-Bodleian-Gothic**' extravaganza, see [bit.ly/2Z8gEkp].

It's the **August Silly Season**, and what everyone's talking about, obviously, is local businesses named after **real or imaginary animals**. We can think of 25. What about you? Our list's at the foot of 'Moreover' (p.4).

The late-lamented Broughton Convenience Store at **121-23 Broughton Rd** will reopen as a hair salon cum make-up and bridal salon. Anyone who enjoyed **distinctive bacon baps** from the former corner shop may be interested to know that in Nov 2018 it was awarded a Food Hygiene Rating of **Improvement Required** by City of Edinburgh Council.

Trees controversially lopped in **E Princes St Gdns** during work to improve access at the **Scottish National Gallery** were replaced in June and July. Not the **optimum spring window**. At last view, they were suffering in July heats. **Will they survive?**

Locals thrilled recently to see 'roadworks' scheduled for threadbare **Cumberland St**. Parts of the carriageway here have worn through to the old setts below, and there are numerous other '**huge potholes and crevasses**'. Alas, they were left gaping when workers simply repainted parking lines, something that was last done no more than **two years ago**. Talk about pouring money into bottomless pits.

Team member **David Sterratt** has objected on Twitter to the wording of marketing material for a new showflat in the **Engine Yard**. 'I'll accept, grudgingly, that Leith is getting bigger,' he growled, 'but no way is **Shrubhill** "at the heart of Leith". It's outwith the old boundaries.'

The **New Town Fox** is not, as we reported in Issue 286, on Dublin St. It's undeniably at 2 Dundas St.

At around 9.10am on 23 July, a female cyclist sustained **serious injuries** in a collision with a white Ford Transit tipper van. The van was turning left onto **Union Street** from **Leith Walk**. The cyclist was treated by paramedics at the scene, then taken to hospital. Police have **appealed for witnesses**, and for relevant **dash-cam footage**.

## Mixed views on park rubbish

Council bins in parks across Edinburgh have been repositioned and reduced in number over recent months, and not everybody's happy about it.

*Spurtle* has been sounding opinion across Broughton, and there's widespread scepticism that the new arrangements will cope with increased use during the summer.

In King George V Park (where 14 bins were reduced to six, with a new 'euro bin' at the entrance) frustration has focused on repeated overflows near the infants' swings and slides, although there are horrors aplenty elsewhere.

Officials insist that changes were made in consultation with (and often at the request of) Friends groups. Friends of KGV and Scotland Yard Parks say the outcome of this consultation was never in any doubt, given a £140k budget cut for Parks, Greenspace & Cemeteries.

Officials go on to point out benefits:

- Fewer but larger bins have increased overall capacity, and improved operational efficiency.
- Sensor technology allows less frequent but more timely collections.
- New locations near entrances mean CEC vehicles avoid footpaths, ensuring public safety and preservation of grass.
- New housing units contain easier-to-move and more hygienic wheelie-bins.

A spokesperson says the Council will constantly monitor and review the situation, but insists that 'The public response has been positive in every case.'

'Earlier concerns about people not being willing to walk a little further with litter or dog waste have proven unfounded. This was a major cause for concern prior to the changeover on Leith Links, which was our first trial area. To date, there is no evidence of increased littering and dog fouling activity there, and the larger units have been welcomed by all interested parties.'

*Spurtle* will monitor. We welcome your feedback.



## Will Practice make perfect?

The Hopetoun Practice on Huntingdon Place could soon be named 'Surgery of the Year' in the General Practice 2019 Awards, run by medical media and events agency Cogora.

One of only 86 practices to be nominated in the UK, success will depend on how many votes the practice receives by 16 August. The winner will be announced in November.

Patients can vote for free here [bit.ly/2NG7nyQ] or (at standard message rate) by texting CHOICE 75 to 60777. Votes by post to: Jessica Cornish, Cogora Ltd, 140 London Wall, London EC2Y 5DN, quoting code CHOICE 75.

## No smoke without fire

An intriguing cross between the goddess Flora and the screen siren Mae West, this sloe-eyed femme fatale was spotted in the pend at the end of Broughton Street Lane late last month. She is the work of the Mystery Mosaicist, whose previous streetscape contributions include flowers in Rodney Street Tunnel, a crow at Warriston Junction, and the supplementary *WHYME?* beside another artist's scowling-girl-in-a-bobble-hat halfway up Calton Hill. For links, pics, and other details, see [bit.ly/32MQyFF]. We very much enjoy the Mystery Mosaicist's tessellations – if you find further examples, kindly let us know.



## Collective sigh of satisfaction

The Collective gallery complex on Calton Hill has won two prestigious architectural awards: the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland Award 2019 and the Royal Institute of British Architects Award for Scotland 2019.

RIBA judges praised the shared vision of City of Edinburgh Council and Collective, singling out 'bold, contemporary interventions which successfully achieve a unifying functional coherence with the sensitively restored historic buildings on this site of national significance'. The startling Outlook restaurant (pictured) was described as 'vibrant'; not something anyone sitting on the cantilevered extension may wish to think about too carefully.

The project competition was originally won by Malcolm Fraser Architects in 2014. They advanced matters through the planning process, and took forward the detailed design before handing over to Collective Architecture in 2015. The complex opened amid some controversy, but mostly to acclaim, in November last year [bit.ly/30Vxl3c].



## Edna Miller (1931–2019)

Edna Miller (Glen, née Haggart), local legend and avid *Spurtle* reader, died peacefully at home in Bellevue Road on 1 July. She was 87 years old, and her life was celebrated in a packed ceremony at Warriston on 15 July.

Edna grew up in Colinton Mains and lived in Nelson Street, Inverleith Row, and London Street as she raised her family. She later moved to Bellevue Road.

Edna travelled widely, had many friends, and several careers and hobbies, especially gardening, yoga, and art. A graduate of Edinburgh College of Art, she continued to draw and paint throughout her life.

She is survived by children Callum, Andrew, and Rachael, and grandchildren Lois, Lachlan, and Callum. Edna brought people together, was much loved, and is greatly missed.—

*Ella Taylor-Smith [A longer appreciation appears on our website, 7.8.19.]*



## Briefly



*Spurtle's* image of topsy-turvy parking on **York Place** last month clearly struck a raw nerve. It was viewed by over 21k people on Twitter, and provoked over 4k reactions. **None of them positive.** Visiting tradespeople often complain of too few spaces nearby. Skilled contractors with heavy equipment moan that they can't get near the new **Edinburgh St James**. Pedestrians, tired of blocked footways and cracked paving, have only limited sympathy. Perhaps temporary delivery arrangements during **Leith Walk** tram construction will clarify once and for all whether commercial cargo bikes are really a viable alternative for the city in future.

As promised, Stewart Conn and John Knight's **Aspects of Edinburgh** (Issue 286) was reviewed at length online here: [bit.ly/2XZIHkw].

Planning consent is sought to turn the Victoria Hotel at **221 Ferry Rd** into a 19-bedroom (max. 30 occupants) HMO (Ref 19/02720/LBC). Some 52 objections have been raised, with a decision expected by 6 Aug. The structure, with its **distinctive green illumination** at night, was built in 1894. It was occupied by a glass merchant, who used the tower to spot ships entering the **Port of Leith**. More recently, it has often been used by locals following services at Warriston Crematorium.

**The Dunard Fund**, philanthropic backer of the forthcoming Dunard Centre concert venue on **St Andrew Sq**, aims to create a music library behind Category A-listed former bank premises at **Nos 35–36** beside Harvey Nicks (Ref. 19/02941/LBC).

In the **Friends of Inverleith Park** spring/summer newsletter, Convener Pam Barnes reports that part of the Council depot area may be transferred to **community use**, as originally mooted in 2012. Perhaps, she wonders, one of the Park's **six or more toilets** could be opened or reopened for public use.

**Historic Environment Scotland** seeks nominations for new blue plaques celebrating **connections between notable people and places**. Lesser known figures are welcome, not least those from **minority communities**. For online background and a nomination form, visit [bit.ly/1rWAFdD]. **The deadline is 30 Aug.** Perhaps Annandale St's Arthur Lloyd – 'last of the *Lions Comiques*' [bit.ly/2y2Sdsz] – will finally regain some local recognition.

**St Columba's Hospice** is moving its second-hand charity bookshop from **Goldenacre** to **Brandon Ter.**

## Bicentennial biographies

*Spurtle* first profiled local author Barclay Price and two of his Albany Street house-histories in 2017 (bit.ly/2BCJnnY and Issues 268–69).

Now, to celebrate 200 years since completion of the last Georgian house there, Price has brought out in print form *A Brief History of Albany Street*.

This slim but fascinating volume covers events, residents, and visitors from the early 1800s through to 1980. Various professions, exploits, and misadventures appear, but among this reader's favourites is Robert Ogilvie Crombie (1899–1975): scientist, actor, playwright, and significant early influence on the Findhorn Foundation.

In 1949, Crombie encountered a spirit faun in the Botanic, followed later, on the Mound, by the god Pan. Both etheric thought forms accompanied Crombie back to his home at No. 28, and later featured in his 'Meeting Fairies: My Remarkable Encounters with Nature Spirits. A True Story'. It was last published by Allen & Unwin Australia in 2011.

Price's book is available in the Magnum, or by sending a cheque direct to the author at 3B Albany Street, Edinburgh EH1 3PY. (ISBN 978-0-36-895858-8; 71pp; £12.00)—AM

### A brief history of Albany Street



Barclay Price

## Fresch, fulgent, flurist, fragrant flour ... and a fecht

From the Edinburgh Evening News, 7 August 1885:

At Edinburgh Burgh Court to-day—Baillie Anderson presiding—Angus Beaton, a middle-aged man, residing in Simpson's Court, Greenside Row, was charged with assaulting the wife of a neighbour. He denied it.

It appeared from the evidence that between twelve and one o'clock on Sunday morning last, the woman alleged to have been assaulted, along with some others, was in Beaton's house. A discussion arose as to the relative merits and demerits of Mary Queen of Scots, John Knox, and Queen Elizabeth.

Like others before them, the disputants were unable to settle the knotty historical point, and quarrelled. Beaton championed the cause of the unfortunate Mary, and was alleged to have put out of his house and afterwards assaulted a woman who spoke disparagingly of the Scottish Queen. The evidence was very conflicting, and Baillie Anderson found the charge of assault not proven.



## Edinburgh on high: the Broughton Boy

A regular reader of this column has asked about the putto with a mallet on the scrolled pediment of Edinburgh's Crown Office (p.1). Coincidentally, it has a direct connection to our area.

From 1853–89, 32 Broughton Street (pictured here) was a George Heriot's district school for 'deserving' boys. Built in 'strapworked Jacobean style' (Gifford et al., 1984), it was the creation of Alexander Black (1790–1858), who also designed the nearby Glasite Meeting House in Barony Street.

Vestiges of the arcade (for pupil access) can still be seen here, and the windows feature armorial references to the George Heriot's parent school. It remains a *douce* listed building, but its missing *pièce de resistance* is the very child who now obscurely occupies the Crown Office.

When the school closed in 1889, the Broughton Boy was transferred to Heriot Watt College in Chambers Street. This later became Heriot Watt University, and was finally supplanted by the current occupier, in which situ Gifford et al. sniffily describe our study as 'a hammering cherub'.

Clearly, the Broughton Boy rightly belongs at No. 32. Previously, we thought he might have toiled in the scalloped shell, but this is too small to have accommodated him. Instead, he must have stood at the very pinnacle of the building – perhaps as a lofty symbol of industry and fortitude to inspire the scholars below. Albeit, the building is lonely without him; so let him be restored! Edinburgh World Heritage, take note.—JRM (Thanks to S.C. for inspiring this article.)



# Moreover ...



The **Omni Centre** was one of several city-centre locations selected for a poster campaign last month by social enterprise **Invisible Cities**. IC trains people affected by homelessness to become walking-tour guides. The posters were **powerful reminders** of how homeless people are often treated as invisible by the rest of society. IC founder **Zakia Moulaoui** described the silent printed witnesses as an alternative way of giving their guides 'a voice and a platform' in a meaningful conversation around the issue of homelessness.

Planning consent has been granted to convert a former ground-floor shop and basement restaurant at **13B Dundas St** into 3 one-bedroom and 1 two-bedroom serviced apartments (Ref. 19/01824/FUL).

Permission has been granted to convert an inconvenient office on a sloping site at **157 Broughton Rd** into an inconvenient 4-bedroom flat (Ref. 19/02249/FUL). **Unusually, in our experience**, the new domicile will contain two small kitchens and a sprinkler system.

Last month, *Spurtle* published **two lengthy articles online** which will appeal to those who enjoy **problematic** infrastructural projects in Edinburgh. For the **Water of Leith Flood Prevention Scheme**, see [bit.ly/2Y2WeNe]. For **fixing the tramway** and securing its Phase 2 extension, see [bit.ly/2Ypn4i2].

**Fraser/Livingstone Architects'** design to refurbish and extend a former public convenience in **Canonmills** has been approved (Ref. 19/00430/FUL; bit.ly/2XvuKzv). Pizzas and pasta will replace pees and poo. The new restaurant, which sits a new **lightweight floating storey** above the brick ground floor, will not 'nestle' inconspicuously like the **old loos**. Rather, it is 'conceived as a contemporary marker that animates the surrounding street scene', and will apparently '**activate the corner**' in a way bustling foliage, birdlife, and buses have not.

**Animal businesses:** Bee's Fishmonger, Black Fox, Blue Bear Café, Bluebird Café, Bon Papillon, Brass Monkey, Coffee Angel, Cuckoo's Bakery, Doggie Style, Dragonfly, Educated Flea, Escargot Bleu, Gamefish, Golden Hare Books, Karen's Unicorn, Kilted Lobster, Little White Pig, Nested Fox, New Town Fox, Ox, Phoenix, Seafish, Unicorn Antiques, Wally Dug.

**Spurtle Team:** E. Dickie, J. Dickie, M. Forde, J. Hart, M. Hart, D. Hill, A. McIntosh, J. R. Maclean, S. Michael, M. Orr, L. Rogers, C. Roussot, T. Smith, D. Sterratt, E. Taylor-Smith, D. Young.

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[leithcentralcc.co.uk/meeting-dates](http://leithcentralcc.co.uk/meeting-dates)



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## Ben Macpherson MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for Edinburgh Northern and Leith Constituency



## Constituency Surgeries

(no appointment necessary)

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28-30 Ferry Road  
Edinburgh  
EH6 4AE

**Every Friday:**  
4-5pm at  
Royston/Wardieburn Community Centre  
Pilton Drive North  
Edinburgh  
EH5 1NF

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