

BIRTHDAY OF HAILE SELASSIE I

23rd July



This is one of the holiest days of the Rastafarian year. It is celebrated with Nyahbingi drumming, hymns and prayers.

Rastafarianism originated in the Caribbean, based on the ideas of Marcus Garvey, who preached that the only way for black people to escape their poverty and oppression was to return to Africa. When Haile Selassie ("Ras Tafari", The Lion of Judah) was crowned emperor of Ethiopia in 1930, this was seen as a fulfilment of prophecy and Rastafarians acknowledged him as the Messiah, the incarnation of God ("Jah").

Rastafarians do not have churches but meetings are held regularly for prayer, discussion and celebration; and at intervals there is a very large meeting, called a "Nyahbingi". Many Rastafarians don't cut their hair but wear it in long dreadlocks, often covered in woollen hats in the Rastafarian colours of red, green and gold. There are special ways of speaking: for example, using "I and I" for "we", to stress unity.

There are probably about a million actual Rastafarians, but millions more people throughout the world would find what's written above familiar, through contact with the religion's most famous follower - Bob Marley. Bob died in 1981. But his songs can still give a bit of a lift to campaigners who feel they're struggling against the odds.

PARENT POWER

The meeting held in Drummond Community High School on 15th June was very fruitful in investigating many areas of parental involvement. The comments made by parents created a wide ranging debate on many subjects including homework, parents' evenings and how parents in other European countries seem to have much more involvement in their children's education.

The speaker, Brian Boyd from Quality in Education at Strathclyde University, said that the tradition in Scotland has been to leave the school to get on with the job of education, with very little involvement by parents.

Take for example parents' evenings at high school, which are only once a year, with perhaps only five to ten minutes per teacher. That might only give the parent half an hour with that teacher over the six years that their child is at school. Is that really enough?

There were comments made that over the years parents have seen less money spent on their schools and wonder what powers they really have when it comes to education. There was a strong feeling at the meeting that if school boards could have more dialogue and get together more, they would have a stronger voice than just working on their own.

The School Board at Drummond hopes that the debate on parent power will continue. Also that other schools will open up the debate further by whatever ways they think will work to get over the message that schools cannot take any more cuts in their budgets.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

We welcome details of forthcoming local events. Copy deadline for our August issue is Friday 23rd July.

Monday 3rd July Community Council meets at Broughton St. Mary's Church Centre, 7.30pm.

Thursday 6th July SPURTLE meeting at 59 Broughton Street, 2nd floor lefthand door, 8pm.

Every Wednesday Councillor Margaret McGregor's surgery at Drummond Community High School 6 to 7pm

Every Last Friday of the Month Critical Mass bicycle demo 5pm at the foot of the Mound. Phone 447 6783 or 447 5170 for details.

Even Cowgirls Get The Blues

C&A Video

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Your local friendly video store

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Pulp Fiction Killing Zoe

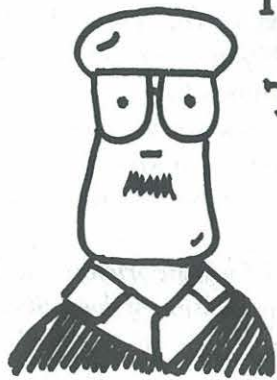
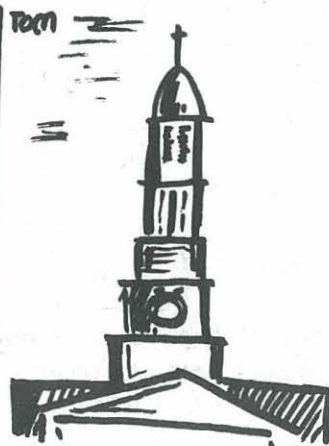
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JIMMY, DO YOU REALISE THAT SAINT MARYS HAS DORIC, IONIC & CORINTHIAN COLUMNS



IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME.



BROUGHTON SPURTLE

Broughton • Gayfield

NEWS VIEWS ACTION

Bellevue • Canonmills

FREE Issue number 17

July 1995

ACCESS RESTORED ON CALTON HILL

Following our story about the fence and locked gate denying access to a bit of Calton Hill, Spurtle has now been promised that the gate will never again be locked during the daytime.

Giving us this guarantee, District Councillor Douglas Kerr said that if anyone was denied access he'd want to know about it. If for some reason you want access early in the mornings or late in the day, when the gate may still be locked, apply to Mr McKay of the Parks Department for a key (529 7911).

Questions remain to be answered, however:

- What's the exact legal position on access to this common land?
- Why is this particular part of the Hill fenced in at all?

Meanwhile, if you're looking for a quiet picnic spot near home, it's there on Calton Hill. Just open the gate and walk in!



Bob Marley, Rastaman, see back page



HUNDREDS SIGN "SLOW DOWN" PETITION

On Friday the 9th of June the newly formed Broughton Traffic Action Group set up a table half way down Broughton Street with "Slow Down in Broughton/Scotland" posters attached to it. The object was to collect signatures for a petition calling for traffic calming measures in Broughton Street.

588 people signed (not 100, as printed in otherwise very welcome coverage in the Herald and Post!), and many put forward suggestions as to what could/should be done. These included: sleeping policemen, a pedestrian crossing between Forth Street and Broughton Place, a one-way system with traffic going uphill, widening of pavements, "Slow" signs painted on the roadway. Many people stopped also to express and discuss their views, and to deplore the ubiquitous danger, noise, smell, etc. caused by cars, and the way they tend to be driven.

There were adverse reactions too, such as "You're killing the city centres with its traffic calming" and "Crawling traffic increases pollution". Two parking wardens refused to sign, expressing a desire for "more cars, the more the better."

The BTAG has no enshrined policy. It has scarcely started to exist. Two meetings have taken place. But amongst its aims are to put people before cars, to change attitudes especially of those who drive cars and appear unaware of or, worse, indifferent to the many types of destruction that follow in their wake. It wants to change our streets into places where people can live and communicate, rather than into mini-motorways.

Anyone interested in getting involved can phone Peter Galinsky on 557 8010 (afternoons), or Jane Coville on 556 1851 (evenings).

Primary pupils show the way - page 3

A CAUTIONARY TALE FOR TREE LOVERS

The back of my flat at 59 Broughton Street looks out on a row of magnificent poplars. They are beautiful. Each morning when I wake up I lie for a while looking out at them listening to the rustle of their leaves and watching the magpies circling around.

But when I awoke on the morning of June 20th to the sound of a chainsaw I knew something was horribly wrong. It was - men were climbing up and lopping off great branches from the trees. They had been instructed to take 20 feet from the tops of three of them. These are healthy trees in all their mature glory, that have coexisted happily for over a hundred years with the surrounding tenements and which constitute no threat or danger of any kind. They weren't about to drop branches on anyone's head; nor were they undermining the safety of the buildings.

On contacting the Planning Department of the District Council to enquire how this dreadful thing could happen in the middle of a conservation area, I was told that a newly arrived resident in Hart Street objected to the trees on the grounds that they obscured the light and caused a nuisance through falling leaves. As the trees were in "His" garden he had every right to chop them down if he so desired.

He had made his application to the Planning Department, who have the power to decide if the trees are eligible for a preservation order. An official from Landscaping, who wishes to remain anonymous, told me that as the

trees were not "a public amenity" the Planning Department did not consider them eligible. This, to put it mildly, seemed bizarre in the face of EDC's Urban Nature Conservation Strategy that has been set out in a publication devised and written by the Planning Department themselves. The Strategy is committed to "preserving quiet corners of the city where wild birds can nest in safety with trees in abundance."

To cut a very long story short. The vehemence of my objections together with a deluge of angry telephone calls from outraged neighbours moved the Planning Department to advise the contractor to desist from lopping off 20 feet and to prune and thin instead. This he did, saying that he wasn't happy with his original instructions anyway. He was a kind decent man who I was sorry had to be pulled into the unpleasantness.

The trees have been saved for now, but until stricter controls are brought in they, and any others not considered a "public amenity" can be chopped down on anyone's whim.



MALAYSIAN RESTAURANT

39a Albany Street

Sunday 3 course vegetarian

Weds. Taste of Malaysia buffet

Lunch 12 noon - 2.30pm,

Monday to Saturday.

Dinner from 6 to 10.30pm

Open Sunday 6 to 10 pm

A WEEL-KENT FACE

Marilynne Pace



Where were you born?

Oldham, Greater Manchester. I came to Edinburgh in 1969, after meeting my future husband while on holiday in Ireland. He was from Abbeyhill!

How would you describe your job?

School crossing patrol guide.

What is your favourite restaurant/pub?

Loon Fung, Warriston Place.

What is your favourite holiday destination?

Jersey.

What makes you angry?

People's intolerance - colour prejudice.

What do you do to relax?

Listen to tapes.

What paper do you read?

Daily Record.

What is your favourite song?

Brahms' Lullaby.

What frightens you most?

Being outside during thunder and lightning.

If you could be granted a wish, what would it be?

To go to Zimbabwe. My uncle went there in the 1950's with the Army, and now he lives there with his family.

BROUGHTON PRIMARY'S PLAYGROUND PLANS

A MESSAGE FROM THE PUPILS

This year our pupil council have been working with teachers, parents, architects and artists trying to improve our school grounds.



Teachers and pupils with the children's ideas

First of all we did a survey, asking everybody "what was good" about the playground and also what needed to be improved. Then we came up with a set of recommendations for improvement. The teachers wanted areas that could be used as outdoor classrooms, for example places where we could learn about how things grow, a pond, and an archaeological site. The children wanted more seats, tables, play equipment, a shelter, grassy areas and more trees.

Already we have had some beautiful trees planted, and we discovered a cobbled lane underneath our tarmac.

We now have some very impressive plans and hope that they will be implemented over a period of years. Next year is our school centenary, and it would be great to mark this event by bringing some of our ideas to reality. Our Headteacher has applied for funding and already we have had a lot of publicity.

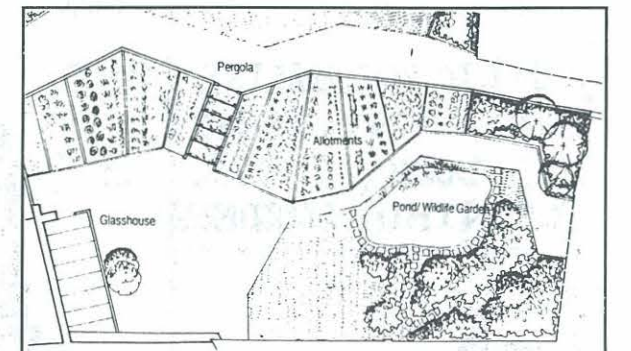
We would like to thank "The Spurtle" for the opportunity to tell you about our plans. If you would like to see the plans please pop into the school at anytime - they are on display.

Perhaps in a future issue you would like to hear about our plans to celebrate our Centenary in May 1996. Already many former pupils are telling us about their reminiscences and stories for our book.

We certainly would. Even the briefest of first visits to the School gave Spurtle a vivid impression of the enthusiasm bubbling away there!



Broughton Primary School



Just one corner of the detailed plan developed from the children's ideas by Elizabeth Dorrian, landscape architect, and Shaeron Averbuch artist, for LRC

THE 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.

Contributors to this issue: Tim Puntis, John Dickie, Tom Perman, Peter Galinsky, Jude Devereaux, Conchita Pinto, Charlie Miller, Dougal Perman and pupils of Broughton Primary School.

If you'd like to help write, produce or distribute the BROUGHTON SPURTLE please contact us as soon as possible! We publish about once a month.

BROUGHTON BOOKS in Broughton Place are our "postbox". You can put a letter addressed to us through their letter box at any time OR PHONE - 556 7928 or 556 0903