

## McDONALD ROAD MEETING

As reported in past issues of the Spurtle, the McDonald Road Annandale area is designated for massive redevelopment and it was certain aspects of the redevelopment that the audience had come to criticise, at a public meeting called by the local Amenity Society on 20th September.



High on the agenda were queries concerning plans to uproot all the much loved trees in McDonald Road when road reconstruction begins next January. The residents wanted to know why at least some of the healthier trees couldn't remain.

Replying, Bob Watson who is employed by EDC as an independent consultant said that most of the trees, even the ones that seemed healthy, were suffering from the effects of prolonged rough treatment from car drivers, and had a life-span of not more than six years.

But this failed to convince the audience, who suggested that the real reason for the mass uprooting was to clear the trees for easy development. As someone said: "Saving the trees is obviously not the priority of the council as it is with us. If it were, they would find ways of incorporating at least some of them into the new design."

Mrs. Duff of 75 McDonald Road has formed strong bonds with the two cherry trees that grow outside her property. She said after the meeting:

"People do, that's what these bureaucrats forget. I've watched these trees come into leaf and blossom over the 27 years I've lived here; they're like family. They'll be uprooted over my dead body!"

Although George Reiss, who chaired the meeting, courteously thanked the Council representatives for their attendance, the general feeling among the audience was that despite Edinburgh City councillors declaring their intent to involve local people in decision-making (see Margaret McGregor, Spurtle No.15), when it comes down to it, the views of ordinary people continue to be disregarded.

McDonald Area Amenity Society will continue the fight for the trees. Contact George Reiss during the day (556 6212) or Bob Stewart in the evening (557 1267).

## CEARCALL COMHRAIDH

Bidh an Cearcall Comhraidh a' cruinneachadh thathact, gach seachdainn anns an 'SNP Club Rooms', Sraid Naomh Anndra (Taobh a Tuath). Airson vair gu leth a thide bidh sinn a' comhradh agus eisdeachd ri sgeulachdan. Ghabh sinn aran cuideachd aig deireadh an oidhche. Chi sinn sibh ann, gach Diardaoin at 7.30.

The Gaelic conversation circle meets every Thursday in the 'SNP Club Rooms', North St Andrew Street at 7.30pm. A native speaker helps learners to converse and swap news and usually to end the night with a Gaelic song. All learners and speakers welcome.

I. Adhamh



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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

We welcome details of forthcoming local events. Copy deadline for our November issue is Friday 20th October.

**Thursday 5th October** Vigil for women's rights, outside St Mary's Cathedral, 5.30pm (and every first Thursday in the month).

**Thursday 12th October** SPURTLE meeting at 59 Broughton Street, 2nd floor left-hand door, 8pm.

**Until 10th October** Edinburgh Sitters' Art Exhibition at the Undercroft, St Andrew's and St George's, George Street, noon to 2pm, Monday to Friday

**Wednesday 1st November** Bellevue and Claremont Residents Association, open meeting. Guest Speaker George McLean Hazel, Director of Transportation. Drummond Community High, 7pm.

**Every Tuesday in October** Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh open meeting in the Gay Centre basement 58 Broughton Street, 6.30pm.

**Every Thursday** Gaelic Conversation Circle, SNP Club Rooms, North St Andrew Street, 7.30pm.

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# BROUGHTON SPURTLE

Broughton • Gayfield

NEWS VIEWS  
ACTION

Bellevue • Canonmills

FREE Issue number 20

October 1995

## RESIDENTS FIGHT FOR TREES

"I've watched these trees come into leaf and blossom over the 27 years I've lived here; they're like family. They'll be uprooted over my dead body!"

Emotions ran high on the evening of 20th September as angry residents from the McDonald Road area gathered at the Library to question representatives from the EDC Recreation Department and LRC Department of Transportation, about development plans which they say threaten the future of their community.

We have a report of the meeting on page 4.

## TEENAGERS IN BROUGHTON

"When it comes to provision for teenagers, the Broughton area's a bit of a no man's land." That's the opinion of a youth development officer employed by Lothian Region.

Last month we asked half a dozen local teenagers what they thought of facilities in Broughton, and got their suggestions on how things could be improved. Now we've taken their ideas to some of the providers, asking them what's currently on offer and what the prospects are for the future. See inside.



## THE SPURTLE IS FOR YOU!

We're glad that more and more local people are seeing their concerns reflected in the Spurtle.

Don't hesitate!

- If there's an issue you think we should be covering
  - or just a point you want to make yourself
  - or a bit of local information to pass on
- please contact us.

PHONE 556 7928 or 556 0903, or put it on paper and pop it in the letterbox at BROUGHTON BOOKS, Broughton Place.

## GOOD NEWS FOR JOHN

As we reported last month, John Gotip was a senior pupil at Drummond Community High in the late '80s, having come from Nigeria with his diplomat father. After nearly ten years in UK he was picked up by police and immigration officers in July because of a problem over his visa, and has been locked up in Saughton Prison ever since.

Over the last few weeks more and more people have joined the clamour for his release. The good news is that on 21st September John left Saughton, under bail conditions - he has to report to the police twice a week. Now he's no longer made to feel like a criminal; and he hopes he can restart his studies.

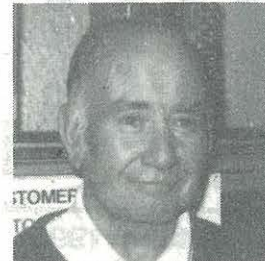
But there's still a question mark over his future in this country. If you want to be kept in touch with the campaign on his behalf, phone Eileen Dickie - 556 0903.

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Another weel-kent face - page 2

## A WEEL-KENT FACE



George Thomson,  
Bellevue Shoe Repair Service

*Where were you born?*

At home, Dickson Cottages, off Albert Street.

*How would you describe your job?*

I'm disappointed after 50 years as a shoe repairer, at the way the trade has declined from good leather shoes to plastic.

*What is your favourite restaurant/pub?*

Very seldom eat out. Bellevue Bar, London Street and Cask and Barrel, Broughton Street.

*What is your favourite holiday destination?*

Jersey.

*What makes you angry?*

Customers who ask advice – then try to tell you how to do the job.

*What do you do to relax?*

Bowls.

*What paper do you read?*

Evening News.

*What is your favourite song?*

You're Free to Go, by Jim Reeves.

*What frightens you most?*

How future generations will cope with so much unrest in the world.

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

Win the Lottery, and make my family financially secure.

# TEENAGERS

One of the teenagers we interviewed last month had a complaint about the astroturf at Drummond Community High. It's sometimes rented out to older people from outside our area, which means local young folk can't use it. Spurtle asked Drummond heidie Frank McGrail to explain the situation.

He told us that money from letting out the astroturf goes into Drummond's community fund, used to support community use of



the School's facilities. It's true that the astroturf was provided by the Safer Edinburgh Project, but now the School has to find the cash for its maintenance: lamps for the lighting, repainting, renewing

boards – and resurfacing sometime in the future. That's how some of the money from lets is spent.

Mr. McGrail emphasised Drummond's commitment to serving the community. They're trying to get a reasonable balance between raising revenue and providing free access to the astroturf for locals – including keeping the lights on for free if you get a group together to play.

*If you want to use the astroturf just ask a Jannie.*

**Rob Heasman is youth development officer for North Edinburgh, including Broughton. Spurtle asked him what he thought about provision for teenagers in our area.**

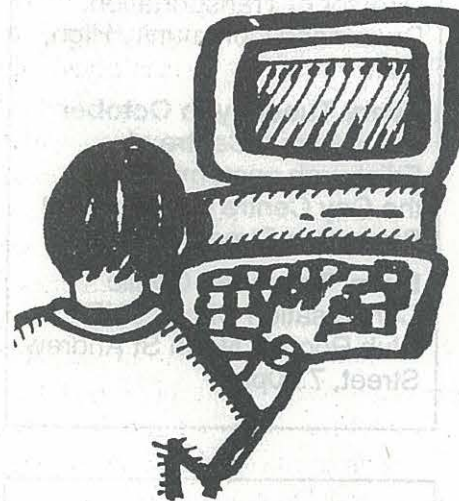
Rob is based at the community education office housed in Leith Academy, and feels Broughton's maybe a bit of a no man's land – there seems to be more provision for teenagers as you go farther down Leith Walk. Sometimes it can be a problem over suitable accommodation: older teenagers aren't so keen to go back to school for their leisure activities. He agrees that some kind of drop-in centre would be welcome in our area, but the right place for it might be different than for organised activities. When Spurtle asked him about the Friday Club at Drummond, he said it had run into the same sort of problems as he'd seen at other clubs. For the future, he

# IN BROUGHTON

sees it focusing more on an organised programme of activities, aimed at the first and second year age group.

Rob hopes there are local people in our area who will be interested in taking a closer look at what's needed for teenagers. He thinks it would be a mistake for the community education service to sit down, decide what to provide, and hope it turns out to be right. Much better if a local group made representations – based on firm knowledge of what teenagers really want.

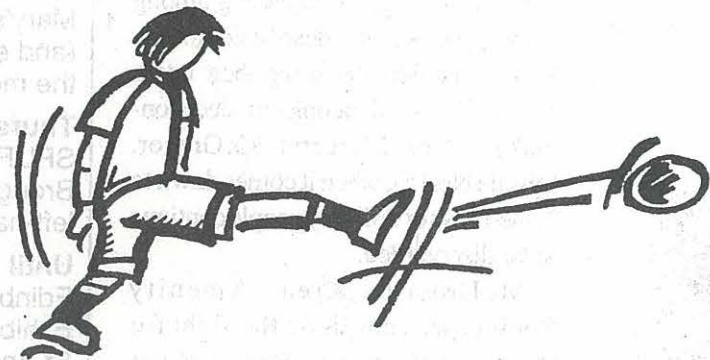
Meanwhile, he'd be grateful if anyone who is organising something for teenagers would let him know the details. (Rob Heasman, Community Education Office, Leith Academy – phone 554 1509)



**What's happening already? We talked to Stephen Fischbacher, youth worker for St. Paul's and St. George's Church.**

Stephen is based at "The Flat", the Church's community centre at 10 Broughton Street. He's been running a youth club there on Tuesday nights for two or three years now: many of the 20-30 members have been in the club since the beginning and are now in fifth or sixth year at school. There's a coffee bar, and activities include snooker, table tennis, quizzes and trips.

But did the club being run by a church not put off young folk, asked Spurtle? Stephen says it's not a problem: he's always been upfront about it, introducing himself and the youth leaders who work



with him by saying that they're all Christians but that there will be no bible-thumping – no hidden agenda. Alongside the Youth Club, there's football down at the Drummond astroturf – around 40 have taken part over the last 3 years, with 14 or 15 regular attenders. It's a younger group than the youth club now, mostly first and second year. Boys' teams compete in the Edinburgh Super Youth League, which was initiated by our local group. There are plans to revive a girls' team. Stephen told us three things he'd like to see happen in the future:

- More green space for local young folk – in Drummond playground, for example
- More adults coming forward to help run youth activities
- A drop-in centre for teenagers – a local version of the Edinburgh Youth Cafe, with teenagers involved in the planning of it right from the start.

Meanwhile, anyone interested in the football (Mondays 6-7pm) or the Youth Club (Tuesdays 7.30-9.30pm) should phone Stephen (556 6212)

**And there's the uniformed organisations.**

After Beavers and Rainbows, Cubs and Brownies for younger children, there are local Scouts and Guides for

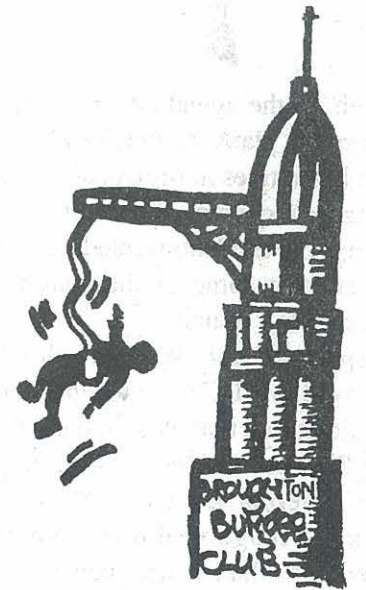
teenagers. They meet at several venues – at the Broughton St. Mary's Church Centre in East Broughton Place, down at the church hall in Bellevue Crescent and at St. Mary's Primary School in East London Street.

You can phone Rev. Alasdair Elders for details (556 7313)

He's also planning an after school club. But, like Stephen at The Flat, he points to a shortage of volunteer leaders as a brake on further developments.

*Spurtle plans to continue this discussion about Broughton for teenagers.*

*We'd like to see a clearer picture of what's needed emerging. Maybe a survey of some kind? And then a local group taking action? If you are interested please contact us.*



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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, Dougal Perman, John Adams, Jude Devereaux and Conchita Pinto.

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**