

Spurtle



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Tel: 558 8574

spurtle@hotmail.co.uk

BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free

CITY-CENTRE BY-ELECTION



Councillor David Beckett (SNP, Ward 11 – City Centre) has stepped down in order to study in the United States. This will trigger a by-election, probably in August, in what is a marginal ward.

If a Lib-Dem or SNP candidate were to fail to be elected, the current coalition could no longer push through

decisions using Lord Provost George Grubb's casting vote. Interesting times would follow.

At the last Council election in 2007, on a 50% turnout, just 278 votes separated the top five parties. All parties were at least 360 1st-preference votes short of the electoral quota.

At the time of writing, independent candidate John Carson is standing on an anti-tram platform. The Green Party regard it as their 'most winnable by-election ward in Scotland', and were first among the main parties to name a candidate: Melanie Main.

Beckett told the *Spurtle*: I'm doing a Masters in Education Policy and Management at Harvard, though I'm hoping to do a PhD after that.

'My parting impressions are that I'm going to miss working for those in the City Centre ward and across the city as the Children & Families Vice-Convener. It's been a very eventful 4 years and it's been great to have been able to work with so many dedicated people, both Council workers and local residents.

'With my last full Council meeting on 30 June – when the fate of the trams could be decided – I think my career here is ending with a bang.'

HUGE EXAGGERATION OBSCURES FACTS

A fierce but brief fire, caused by a faulty fusebox, broke out in the Bakehouse Company café on Broughton Street around 8.30pm on 17 June.

The café was closed at the time, but the adjacent Khushi's Punjabi restaurant was evacuated. It closed afterwards owing to smoke damage (*Breaking news*, 18.6.11). Smoke also affected rented flats above.

No-one was hurt. Around 40 firefighters and 6 engines attended at one time or another.

Contrary to hysterical (in both senses of the word) reportage (a term used loosely) in the *Edinburgh Evening News* ('HUGE FIRE



GUTS NEW TOWN RESTAURANTS'), this was not an incident of Towering Inferno proportions. No properties were 'destroyed'.

Bakehouse staff – who afterwards thanked the Fire Brigade and well-wishers – described the fire as 'small' and said damage was 'not as bad as it could have been'. They confidently expect to reopen 'within a few weeks'.

Khushi's staff, reported in the *Evening News* as fearing they could not reopen in time for the Festival, told the *Spurtle* they would resume trading in the last week of June. Draw your own conclusions.

WARD BOUNDARIES STAY

Following a review, on 23 June the Local Government Boundaries Commission recommended to Scottish Ministers that City of Edinburgh Council's ward boundaries need not be altered in advance of next year's council election. CEC has welcomed the proposal.

Broughton will thus remain a fanciful space like Oz or Brigadoon, with neighbours who share the same shops, schools and amenities politically divided between City Centre, Leith Walk and Inverleith wards.

Whether this disadvantages Broughton residents, or potentially renders them disproportionately influential, is a matter for debate.

The public was apparently consulted on this matter, although *Spurtle* has yet to meet anyone whose views were sought or offered. Another review is scheduled for 2015. See: [<http://bit.ly/jmfTZG>].

A MODEST PROPOSAL

With trams to Leith 'cancelled' (*Briefly*, p.2.), Pilrig activist Harald Tobermann has called on councillors to make good the damage done locally.

He demands a scheme which includes: renovation of pavements, kerbs and pedestrian crossings on Leith Walk; reinstatement of damaged/removed street furniture; removal of cables strung from posts; replacement of temporary barriers and traffic measures; repair of bus/cycle priority lanes; replanting of trees; overhauls of bus stops, and waste collection; an extended shopfront renovation programme.

He suggests this could partly be funded by utility companies which had their plant renewed at a huge discount whilst – through poor or non-existent site drawings – contributing to the mess and muddle. See *Letters* online.

Briefly

STOP PRESS: At the meeting on 30 June, councillors voted in favour of trying to continue the tramline as far as **St Andrew Square**. Transport Convener Gordon Mackenzie says that between now and August, CEC will approach the Scottish Government to find **alternative funding arrangements** in order to bridge a current shortfall. If funding cannot be found by the agreed **'drop-dead date'** of 1 September, the contractors will go to court.

Leith Walk's **Councillor Louise Lang** has numerous strings to her multiple bows, now including social media. She plans using Twitter to spread news of planning, HMO and street-trader licences. See: @**cllrloiselang**.

Congratulations to CEC for the **exemplary work** carried out in E. Scotland St Lane. This leafy lane now has a perfect pavement and a newly tarred road, carried out **in the project time and on budget**. TIE please take note!

Broughton's malty talented canoodling music mashers, **Whisky Kiss**, are playing T in the Park on 10 July. Follow the blogs in *Breaking news*.

Bienvenu to **The French Fancies** at 42 London St (formerly Underneath the Arches, of happy memory). Expect 'mourir pour' patisseries, a tea room of distinction, and other Gallic *délices*.

On 13 June **ThriftChic Boutique** took up where Gifted left off at 111 Broughton St. The new shop buys and sells 'gently used / new, on-trend designer and high-street clothing'. Following the departure of Organic Pleasures, it also fills a keenly felt void in the local lingerie department.

Mather's on Broughton St have started regular pub quizzes on Monday nights, 8pm. Prizes on offer. Large numbers of thirsty polymaths, in teams, welcomed.

Tempers were tried on **Broughton Place** last month when trial sites for wheeliebins diverged from those earlier agreed between officialdom and residents. Locals complained loudly via the *Spurtle*, Council left-hands were urgently put in touch with right ones, and **Plan A was restored**. The pilot scheme is scheduled to continue until 29 Nov.

As exclusively predicted in Issue 195, **Coco Chocolate** has moved in at 71 Broughton St and will open on 16 July.

Need a dentist? Thanks to expansion, the **Bellevue Dental Practice** at 1 Bellevue Place is now accepting **new NHS patients**. Tel. 556 3342.

Home Start – the national charity offering advice, friendship and practical support to families – has officially opened a new branch on Leith Walk. They help those facing difficulties due to problems such as bereavement, poverty, isolation, multiple-births, lone parenting, illness or disability. Malcolm Chisholm, MSP opened the premises at 247 Leith Walk; or Tel. 553 7819.

Drummond community welcomes Kenyans

Jambo jambo! That was the (Kiswahili) greeting Drummond CHS gave their Kenyan friends when they arrived at Edinburgh Airport on 13 June, *writes project coordinator Annie Scanlon*.

Throughout their 9-day stay, the 4 students took part in a variety of classes over a range of year groups. In addition they presented lessons on Tribal Traditions and Culture, AIDS, Malaria, and how to recycle plastic bags into footballs.

All agreed that the best parts were the question-and-answer sessions and the socialising afterwards in and out of school hours.

Meanwhile, the 4 teaching staff were observing and taking part in lessons, and meeting with Drummond teachers in their own subject areas to exchange ideas and set up some exciting projects for the coming academic year.

As we waved them off, we were all exhausted but agreed that the trip had been a great success. The Kenyans are looking forward to our next visit to them, with 8 students from S5/6, in June 2012.

A longer version of this article appears online in *Breaking news*.



Council decision on Bonnington must wait

A report has gone before the Council recommending that the former Bonnington Primary School be turned into a dedicated Gaelic primary school. Local reaction has been mixed (*Breaking news*, 9.6.11).

The Scottish Government had offered to pay £1.4m towards the projected £1.6m cost of refurbishment. However, the recent effects of vandalism, roof damage and consequent water ingress have increased that refurbishment figure to an as yet undetermined sum (possibly more than £3.6m), and it is unclear whether Ministers will make good the difference. (See [<http://bit.ly/mQLYD>].)

For these reasons, the Council will not make a decision on Bonnington until September (as opposed to 30 June, as had been originally planned). Even if councillors were to give the go-ahead for Bonnington, the length of time necessary to complete repairs there would rule out opening in August 2012, so current arrangements will continue at Tollcross Primary School for the time being.

Recognition for hammer star



Kimberley Reed – Broughton and Scotland's rising field athletics star – has won further recognition and £250 from Commonwealth Games Scotland as an Athlete of the Month.

Judges cited her smashing of the Commonwealth Youth Games qualification standard for the hammer in April (by 4m), and her setting of a new U-17 record of 53.63m which may well see her qualify for this month's World Youth Championship (*Breaking news*, 13.6.11).

Kimberley, now aged 16, is currently ranked seventh in the world at U-18 level.

Helping hands just the ticket



Staff from thetrainline.com, the Canonmills-based online ticket-seller, painted the senior common room at Drummond CHS, and weeded beds and refreshed asphalt designs at Broughton PS on 24 June.

Led by project managers Emily Direen and Dave Wilkins, the 21 willing bodies were taking part in 'National Give and Gain Day', a nationwide event to publicise the usefulness and benefits of volunteering. This is the fourth year in a row that staff from the company have participated.

Local exchange of views on listed building



The Waverley Telephone Exchange on East London Street is a structure which divides opinion.

Gillon and McDowell, in a study of *Edinburgh's Post-War Listed Buildings* (see *Extras*, 1.7.11), speak admiringly of its 'strong compartmentalised faces'. They see a 'fine, geometrically designed Modernist building'. Gifford, McWilliam and Walker – authors of the Edinburgh volume in the *Buildings of Scotland* series – disagree. They call it 'a big simple block with an officious vertically emphasized frontage'. Gillon and McDowell claim it 'demonstrates the forthright ideals of post-war planning and modern architecture'.

Gifford et al. describe it as 'fascist-looking'.

Designed by Robert Saddler in 1962 and erected in 1964 for the Ministry of Works, the building has since 2007 been one of 3 Edinburgh telephone exchanges listed. Saddler was also responsible for the modern interior of West Register House on Charlotte Square, and the Herbarium and Library in the Royal Botanic Garden.

What nearly all locals agree upon is affection for the exchange's decorative tile panel attached to protruding terrazzo concrete ribbing above the front door. It was made by Malkin-Johnson Tiles, with some of its 122 components (in 29 discrete designs) stemming from the earlier Malkin Tile Co. and the work of Kiwi designer and ceramicist Ken Clark, MBE (1922–). Clark was a craft potter in London at the time, but later moved to Lewes in Sussex where he remains active.



The East London Street panel – a local landmark we find suggestive of Broughton's colourful diversity

– was adopted as *Spurtle's* Twitter and Facebook icons in 2010 (@thespurtle). *AM*

Dungeons and lagoons



The excellent refurbishment of Edinburgh's chequered, B-listed Scotsman Steps, which connect North Bridge with Market Street, has been completed to just acclaim. The £250,000 development, a 3-way partnership between the City Council, Edinburgh World Heritage and the Fruitmarket Gallery, features the work of Turner Prize artist Martin Creed. Each step is a different coloured marble, as are the striking connecting floors. Whereas, in the past, descending the steps in haarish weather provoked images of dungeons at the bottom, now in a great rarity of sunlight one might have an image of gondolas and Venetian lagoons awaiting below ...

This writer has happy memories of the 1960s Festival Steps art exhibitions. Anyone could proffer their masterworks, including John Bellany, then an undergraduate at the Art College. *Spurtle* would welcome readers' anecdotes and memories of that joyous time, before it was all over, Baby Blue. *JRM*

Gallery round-up



J.G. Cairns, Oscar and Bosie

Union Gallery's new exhibition on Broughton Street will feature figurative paintings of the human head by four contemporary Scottish artists: Joyce Gunn Cairns, MBE; Norrie Harman; David Hosie; and Sophie McKay Knight. 'Head to Head' will run from 7 July to 1 Aug.

The run for Ewan Taylor's exhibition 'Psychedelic Collage' (reviewed in *Breaking news*, 8.6.11) has been extended. It will now continue at MacNaughtan's Bookshop & Gallery (Haddington Place) until 5 Aug.

'Carrion' at Axolotl Gallery on Dundas Street will feature 2 artists: Sarah Green's paintings, portraits and pictures of a vast personal collection of objects; Gregor Laird's illustrations of birds and Michael Jackson (THRILLER.I.P.). It continues until 1 August.

Spurtle salutes the Gallery on the Corner (34 Northumberland Street) on receiving the Young Scotland's Got Talent Award for its inspirational promotion of the artistic achievements of young individuals with autism and other challenges.

Briefly

The **Vino Wines** group, including its outlet in Broughton St, raised a superb £4,500 for Radio Forth's recent Sick Kids appeal.

The RAF's **Red Arrows** display team mounted thrilling / pet-bowel-evacuating exhibitions of **aeronautical acrobatics** over Broughton on 24 June to mark Armed Forces Day. *Spurtle* suspects the team was sponsored by **local roofers**. Some residents complained that, whilst the stunts may have been legal, they flew in the face of speed bumps and 20 mph zones.

In June we welcomed @SamIam_Iamnot as a follower on Twitter. The American behind **Diaper Doctor**, his Apple Store application 'contains all the information you could ever want to know about your precious babies and his or her diapers. Perfect and great fun for all new parents who aren't exactly sure what their children's **slimy diaper** may mean'. Regardless of noisome details, *Spurtle* can interpret any slimy nappy for any new parent. It means: Life as you know it is over.

Alas, Drummond Civic Association's annual Garden Party in **Drummond Place Garden** on 18 June was visited by another cauld blast. It has been rescheduled for 13 Aug., 6–9pm, *Deo volente*.

Word reaches us of discontent around Broughton St Lane. Persistent **late-night noise** from a beer garden behind Picardy Place disturbs neighbours. Patience has worn beyond thin. **Wheels are in motion**.

Viewers may have watched the Edinburgh-drenched BBC detective series **Case Histories** recently. More or less Broughton locations filmed in January include the Eurocar premises on E. London St (Issue 191) and Carlton Terrace Mews.

Comic actor and punk mandolinist **Ade Edmondson** was shown how to make a bridie in **Crombie's** last month during filming of a documentary series. Celebrating British food and traditions, the 20-part **Ade in Britain** is scheduled for transmission on ITV1 in Nov. See *Breaking news* (9.6.11).

Plans for the development of **80–100 dwellings** and 150–300 square metres of commercial floorspace in **Beaverhall Rd** will go on public display at Broughton Primary School, 2–8pm on Thurs. **28 July** (*Breaking news*, 29.6.11).

Readers concerned or interested by **flood-defence developments** along the Water of Leith can now talk to a **named individual** at contractors Laggan Construction. **Stewart Mackay** is happy to answer questions on the following **Freefone** number: **0333 2020121**.

The **Out of the Blue** Drill Hall on Dalmeny St will be a family-friendly Fringe venue this summer. 'The target audience is very much Leithers and local Edinburgh communities,' a spokesman told us.

Moreover ...



It is not to everybody's taste, but we think much of the **street-art** around Broughton is very good. See the review of this Dundas St offering at *Breaking news* (4.6.11).

Mark Lazarowicz, MP says he was shocked to learn that Edinburgh appears to have more 16-year-old school leavers not entering **education, employment or training** (600+) than any other Scottish authority – including Glasgow with its much bigger population. He is pressing City of Edinburgh Council to find out why. For more 'Westminster and community news', see *Extras* (6.6.11).

Velocipedist, journalist and Greener Leith **Alistair Tibbett** has posted a disarmingly odd short film online. It records a tuneful journey along the **North Edinburgh cycletracks** leading to the Shore. He says it resulted from a litany of silly things, the first of which was thinking he should try to make any music at all, 'let alone with a children's Bontempi Keyboard which is out of tune with itself'. **Enjoy the ride** at: [<http://bit.ly/jQRRuk>].

The **26 Treasures** exhibition at the National Museum of Scotland will launch in Nov., but already 26 writers from across the country are fitting **62 words of all lengths to artefacts of all ages**. *Spartle* regular A.J. McIntosh will write about **Napier's Bones**: more at [26treasures.tumblr.com].

FiercePro Dance, the sports dance team which auditioned locally for new talent in May (*Breaking news*, 6.5.11), are now up and cheering professionally. One of the managers – Logie Green resident and former Broughton PS pupil Kayleigh Cameron – is keen to publicly thank **Narcissus Flowers**, who provided bouquets free of charge for the successful candidates.

The next meeting of the **New Town and Broughton Community Council** will be at 7.30pm on **Monday 1 August** in the Drummond Room at Broughton St Mary's Parish Church. On the agenda: Chair's report, planning, environment, transport, licensing etc. **All welcome**.

Chloe – 'a very friendly, fluffy white cat with a poor sense of direction' – took advantage of the warm, late nights to go wandering on 24 June. An anxious co-habitant posted flyers locally, seeking help and recording Chloe's habit of '**making herself at home**' in other people's flats. We are glad to report that she has now been safely retrieved.

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:
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Fax: 0131 557 5759

mark@marklazarowicz.org.uk
www.marklazarowicz.org.uk

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

Spartle 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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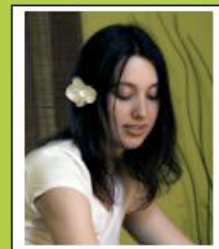
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