

Spurtle



Find us at: www.broughtonspurtle.org.uk

BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free

**May
2012**

No 206

Tel: 556 4848

spurtle@hotmail.co.uk

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE?

In advance of official announcements, *Spurtle* is informed that work on the new St James Quarter may start sooner than expected. Demolition of New St Andrew's House could begin in 2013.

A source who has spoken to the developer Henderson Global Investors (HGI) also suggests that John Lewis, whilst retaining its distinctive 'prow' elevation onto Picardy Place, hopes to expand uphill into a new 5-storey building where the Thistle Hotel is now. A new Waitrose supermarket is rumoured.

Meanwhile, the reluctantly displaced Thistle Hotel may reopen at the centre of Picardy Place in an Auld Reekie replay of Custer's Last Stand.

Other choice titbits include claims that attracting prospective prestige retail tenants has gone well, and that HGI have been 'overwhelmed' by approaches for a 5-star hotel element of the proposal. Indeed, so much good news was there at this point that we began to smell a rat.

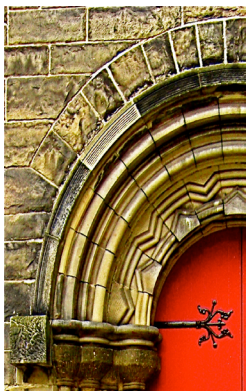
Spurtle approached Martin Perry, HGI's Director of Retail Property Development for comment. He did not respond. We urge great caution in the smoke-and-mirrors world of property-development public relations.

LONG-DISTANCE WALKIES



Last month Alisdair Baird (top-left) and his trusty 8-year-old poodlador Tula walked the Water of Leith Walkway from Balerno to Leith each day for 8 consecutive days – a combined distance of 100 miles. They were fundraising for the Water of Leith Conservation Trust, and publicising the problem of dog mess in Edinburgh's green spaces.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS IN DANGER, SAY CRITICS



Tax changes by the Westminster Government could endanger Edinburgh's architectural heritage, say critics.

Alterations to listed buildings are currently VAT exempt, allowing owners to mitigate the expense of exacting standards and expensive materials. But new proposals mean the rate could rise to 20% unless officials decide otherwise after a consultation period ending on 4 May.

Mark Lazarowicz, MP for Edinburgh North and Leith, has objected. 'Alterations to buildings such as historic churches ... can be essential to enable them to continue as living buildings and to open them out to wider community use,' he says. 'A massive hike in VAT could stifle projects like this.' City Centre's Councillor Mowat has also opposed the proposal, and urged the Council to do likewise (*Breaking news*, 26.4.12).

Adam Wilkinson, Director of the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust told *Spurtle* he is concerned. 'We face the double whammy of VAT being charged on aspects of our projects, and those who so generously give their financial support being discouraged by the proposed changes to tax relief on donation.'

'I don't think that the Treasury really thought this one through very carefully from any point of view other than the short-term impact on their spreadsheets. It's really the precise opposite of what the rest of the world does.'

RISK NOT CASH DETERMINED SUPERVISION

Alarming reports appeared in local media last month that the so-called 'Da Vinci Rapist' Robert Greens had been released from prison and now resides 'at the edge of the New Town' without sufficient supervision.

Some suggested that this is the result of a budget-based decision, and that local young women are thereby in imminent danger.

Detective Superintendent Alan Crawford – Chair of the Edinburgh and Lothian Level 3 Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements which deal with high-risk cases – has clarified the situation.

'These decisions are made on a multi-agency basis. The safety of the community is always at the heart of these joint decisions. All decisions relating to reduction in supervision are made jointly by police, the NHS and council officials. These decisions are based on an assessment of risk ...

'No-one takes these decisions lightly and a number of factors are taken into account when monitoring people in this situation. Finance is not one of the issues taken into account.'

Spurtle has no wish to provoke tabloid-style hate mobs, so will not repeat rumours about Greens's whereabouts.

ELECTION COVERAGE



Spurtle held two hustings last month in the run-up to the 3 May Council election. You can read summaries of who said what, and how the candidates fared, in *Breaking news* (20.4.12; 26.4.12). Timely reportage of the election results also appears online.

Briefly



What, wonder locals, is the point of this Council-instigated airstrip in St Mark's Park? We understand it is being prepared as a wildflower meadow.

The next meeting of the **Broughton History Society** will be at 7pm on Mon. 14 May. James Simpson will not digress from **'The Strange Migration of the Botanic Cottage'**. AGM and Members' Night is on Mon. 4 June.

Neighbours and the New Town and Broughton Community Council (NTBCC) have failed in their bid to stop the **new restaurant at 1 Royal Terrace Gardens** serving alcohol outside (*Breaking news*, 12.12.11; 20.12.11; 13.3.12). When it opens in June, *al fresco* tipping for up to 20 will be allowed until 10pm. If noise or loss of amenity results, locals are urged to **inform Licensing at once**.

New plans for **Foremost Properties (Scotland) LLP's McDonald Rd gap site** (*Breaking news*, 16.5.10) will be exhibited on **9 May at McDonald Rd Library** in a pre-application consultation. Note that both 130 McDonald Rd and 'site 35 metres to the southwest of 132 McDonald Rd' have been given as the address in the past.

Broughton, Leith Walk and St Mary's Primary Schools will be closed on 3 May when serving as polling stations in the **City of Edinburgh Council election**. All state schools will close on 7 May for the **May Day Holiday**, for the **Victoria Holiday** on 21 May and for an **Inservice Day** holiday on 22 May.

Planning permission and listed building consent are being sought to change a further part of the **'Monastery' on Hart St Lane** to domestic use (Ref. 12/008855/FUL). The ground-floor conversion would do away with the former **Corries' Pan Audio Studio** (those days are past now) where 'Flower of Scotland' was recorded in 1975 (Issue 164).

Controversially, the **Coop at 8 McDonald Rd** has been granted permission to extend its opening hours despite objections on grounds of noise from a neighbour, Cllr Brock and the Council's own **Services for Communities (Environmental Assessment)**. See *Breaking news* (5.4.12).

Moves are afoot to create a **Pilgrimage Conservation Area**. See *Breaking news* (2.4.12) or contact Leith Central Community Council.

No loss of Directions

In Issue 205 we reported concerns within the New Town and Broughton Community Council that Edinburgh's Article 4 Directions would be lost after the start of Householder Permitted Development Rights legislation.

The Council's Principal Planner, Nancy Jamieson, was later understood to have said that the rules – which control, for example, the colour of doors and railings in the New Town – would remain but in watered-down form as recommendations.

Spurtle sought a definitive clarification. Ms Jamieson declined to give us a written statement, but confirmed through a spokesperson that the Scottish Government has approved Article 4 Directions for all Edinburgh's Conservation Areas. They remain 'as binding as before'.

Much of the online Council guidance to which Ms Jamieson's spokesperson then helpfully referred us is less clear than octopus ink. But it seems that the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011 has removed *all* permitted development rights from householders in conservation areas. Development is possible, but planning permission must be sought first.

Given the all-embracing nature of this removal, the Council's former restrictions on Classes 1 (enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse), 3 (provision within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse of any building or enclosure) and 6 (installation, alteration or replacement of a satellite antenna) were superfluous and have been removed. This may have been the source of some confusion.

The best guidance we found was here: [<http://bit.ly/I2MFhF>].



Knock-on effects of Waverley cab ban

The banning of taxis from Waverley Station could affect Broughton when finally introduced.

Network Rail's current provision of 16 cab spaces is to be axed for security reasons (presumably the risk of passengers hearing wrongheaded moans on every topic under the sun), with the most likely alternative space for them being Waverley Bridge.

Somewhere would then need to be found for the buses which normally start and finish their tours there.

Two sites spring to mind: Waterloo Place (unlikely to be popular with locals on and around Calton Hill) and St Andrew Square (potentially further complicating traffic movements around the tramline here and on York Place).

Network Rail originally hoped to block cars and taxis from the station in July, but were persuaded to delay the move until the Council had agreed alternative arrangements. Watch this space.



'Study for Blossom' is Lauren Bremner's response to the Japanese-influenced flower studies of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. It appears this

month alongside stunning works by 3 other young artists in the 'Artlink Central Creative Leavers' exhibition at the Gallery on the Corner (34 Northumberland St). See Breaking news (25.4.12).

Popular minister moves on

The Rev. Joanne Hood, minister at Broughton St Mary's Parish Church, is to leave after eight-and-a-half years. She will deliver her last sermon here on 13 May before taking charge at St John's Church in Hamilton at the end of the month.

'The advert for St John's was very specific about what kind of person they wanted,' says Hood. 'I read it and thought: *That sounds like me.*

'I'll be sad to leave Broughton St Mary's, but it just felt right – the right challenge at the right time.'

During her time in Bellevue Crescent, Hood is credited with lowering the average age of the congregation by 30 years, largely by encouraging more young families with children to attend. She also strengthened church-community relations after the refurbishment and extension of the building in 2008–9. Broughton Primary School staff, pupils and parents know her as a familiar face in the school and active member of its parent council.

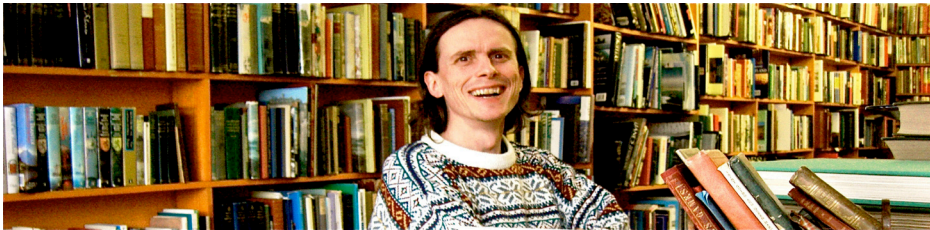
Hood's appointment here in 2003 raised a few eyebrows. Local folklore relates that the problem was not that she was young, relatively inexperienced, and female: rather, that she had arrived from Glasgow. Most now are extremely sorry to see her go



The Union Gallery this month will host a joint exhibition by friends Janet Melrose and Jenny Matthews. Right is a detail from Matthews's exquisite 'Blue Sky and Blue Feather'.



When second is best



E-books, iPods, mobile phones, laptops ... the list of electronic devices you can read on is growing faster than a dot com millionaire's fortune. So how are traditional second-hand bookshops surviving?

'There's a certain type of person who buys from a second-hand bookshop. Unfortunately, this isn't always the type of person who wants to spend money!' jokes Fergus Smith, manager of Second Edition on Howard Street. 'A lot of the time, they prefer to browse, rather than buy!'

Second Edition opened 34 years ago, and was such a success that Fergus's mother and entrepreneur Marianne Smith could send her children to private school. There have been plenty of good times since, but Fergus admits sales today are only a quarter of what they were 15 years ago under his late father William (Issue 173).

Most of the profits now come from Old Scottish Books, Second Edition's internet counterpart which sells worldwide. The shop pays for itself, and is a way of storing the 15,000–18,000 titles in stock, but this is not the only reason for its continuation: it's also a passion.

As I crouch on the floor, listening to Fergus talk excitedly about a colossal tome he's selling for a mere £1,750, I realise how important these places are to our society and to booklovers. It is their owners' enthusiasm and customers' love for them that keep them going.

For bibliophiles, books are not just a succession of complicated signs but a physical experience. Being surrounded by thousands of dusty and unique works makes us happy. *Boroka Godley*

New clues in Broughton riddle

In its 2002 summer edition, the *Broughton History Society Newsletter* reproduced a label found on the fly leaf of a book recently bought from Broughton Books. The book was *Memoirs of Sir Walter Scott*. The label showed that it was presented to pupil Mary Ross of St James School, Broughton Street in 1884 – she had won '1st Prize, Music Class'; and it was signed by her teacher A.A. Weierter.

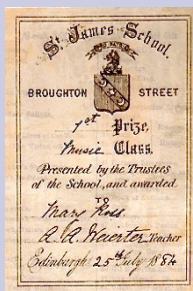
Newsletter editor Alice Lauder invited readers who knew anything about Mary Ross to contact her. There was no response – for nearly 10 years! Then this February she had a phone call from a Mr John Weierter of Kelso.

The item had been brought to his attention by a friend who noticed the name of the teacher having the same unusual surname as himself. Mr Weierter says the name is of Germanic origin, his great-grandfather having come from mid-Europe about 1850. Miss Annie Ameila Weierter was indeed a relative. She and her parents (possibly) lived in East London Street c.1884.

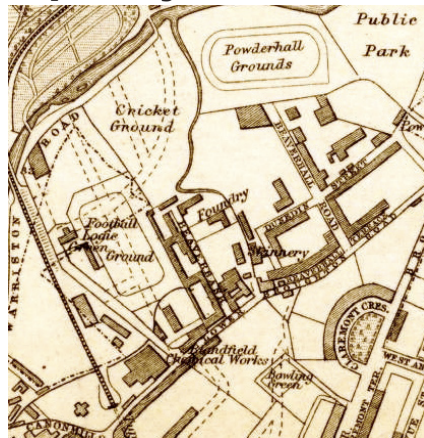
The teacher went on to marry a William Fraser, sculptor.

The Weierter family moved to Corstorphine at the time of Annie's father's retirement and they opened a grocer's shop there which, after lasting for a long time is now no longer in existence.

Any more information about Mary Ross or the Weierter family would be very welcome! *John Dickie*



Cup derby is not the first



Hibernian FC will meet Heart of Midlothian FC at Hampden on 19 May in the Final of the Scottish FA Cup.

The last time the sides met at this stage of the competition was on 14 May 1896, at Logie Green. Hearts won 3–1. Logie Green remained the home of St Bernard's FC and Leith Athletic until it was paved over to form a car park for Powderhall Stadium, some time before 1907.

The map above is a detail from Bartholomew's Plan of Edinburgh and Leith with Suburbs Constructed from Ordnance and Actual Surveys (1901–2).

Powerless traders

Recurrent power-cuts have stymied small businesses on Broughton Street since February this year. A Scottish Power spokeswoman told *Spurtle* that a cable-feeding problem in a local link box would be replaced on 26–7 April. A separate issue traced to the Broughton/Albany Sts junction, would require extra repairs at some unspecified date in future.

Briefly



Bike news: (1) Tesco on Broughton Rd has an **extra parking 'toast-rack'**, but positioned in such a way that it's hard to secure a bike to it (except sideways). Managers have been informed. (2) Work has begun as part of the Water of Leith flood prevention scheme to upgrade the **riverside path from St Mark's Park to Warriston Rd**. A more cycle-friendly ramp will replace the earlier stepped one. (3) Imprinted concrete not cobbles will feature in the **temporary York Place tramstop** (*Breaking news*, 24.3.12). A local cyclist objected.

A **Memorial Service** honouring Leith soldiers killed in the **Gretna Rail Disaster** (Issue 159) will take place at 10am on Sat. 19 May in **Rosebank Cemetery**, Pilrig St.

Leith Walk Lib Dem Cllr **Louise Lang** has been wrapping up unfinished business before stepping down. She says connection of **pedestrian-crossing signals** on Bonnington Rd near Redbraes is imminent, with Road Bond sanctions likely if developers delay longer (see Issue 194). We wish Ms Lang and her equally outgoing City Centre colleague Cllr **Charles Dundas** happy returns to normality.

Forsyth's finial – Gilbert Bayes's 'gilded openwork sphere' boasting of the former Princes St outfitter's global reach – has gone (<http://bit.ly/HNhRkX>). In theory, today's **Topman's ball** is in a safe place pending restoration, but the date of its return is unclear. **Architecture buffs** are pressing City Planners to arrange a realistic timetable for reinstatement.

Some locals have reacted with **disappointment and suspicion** to Leith FM's recent transformation into Castle FM. They fear a shift of emphasis **from community to commercial radio**. See [<http://bit.ly/JU1tzq>].

In addition to Stockbridge's excellent Sunday market, a **Food Market** runs at the **Drill Hall on Dalmeny St** each month. The next is on Sat. 12 May, 11am–3pm. **Entry free**. Saturday markets at the top of **Broughton St** resumed on 28 April.

City Centre police will run local surgeries at **Bannatyne's Health Club** (43 Queen St) on the 2nd and 3rd Sats of the month, 2.30–4.30pm. Exercise your concerns.

Moreover ...



Kipling, the missing **Scotland St** cat who kept his head when all around were losing theirs, has come back. So too has Bear (above), whose owner's poster campaign briefly transformed **St Vincent St** into a scene from the French general election.

Joint agents Rettie and Savills are hawking **Shrubhill House** on Leith Walk, newly back on sale. Central to their marketing is a 2011 planning consent for a 5-storey development of 239 hotel bedrooms and **1,586m² retail** (Ref. 09/01872/FUL) and the unconsented scheme for 311 bedroom/**2,322m² retail**. 'The consented retail unit has attracted strong interest from national food retailers on account of its size, key location and strong frontage onto Leith Walk' – **just what locals didn't want** when asked for visionary ideas in March (Issue 205).

In Issue 204 **Kieran Glen** described Broughton Primary School's recent gardening efforts. Now **Mr Bremner**, a pupil there over 70 years ago, tells us of the school's **allotment in Pilrig Park** where they grew vegetables under teacher Mr Anderson.

Broughton was at the centre of a **diplomatic incident**, reports the *Herald* (15.4.12), when staff at the Conan Doyle bar on York Place allegedly refused to accept a Spanish identity card as proof of age. The **European Parliament** complained to Holyrood about 'infringement of rights of European citizens', and MSPs discussed the problem on 17 Apr. National identity cards are not currently valid proofs of age in Scotland.

Broughton Primary School has a new website. Check out the **bells and whistles** at: [www.broughton-pri.edin.sch.uk].

East Market Street welcomes



careful drivers

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:
Leith Library, Ferry Road: 10am.
Royston Wardieburn Community
Centre, Pilton Drive North: 12 noon.

Email: Malcolm.Chisholm.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

Marco Biagi MSP

Edinburgh Central



Constituency Office:
77 Buccleuch Street, EH8 9LS
0131 668 3642
Surgeries:

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
Alison.Johnstone.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

Broughton

Property Management

Thinking of Letting your Property?

See your local agent
We always need property to let

info@broughtonproperty.co.uk

0131-478-7222

61-63 Broughton Street
Edinburgh, EH1 3RJ.



Mark Lazarowicz MP for Edinburgh North and Leith



Constituency Office:
5 Croall Place, Leith Walk, EH7 4LT
Tel: 0131 557 0577
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

New Town/Broughton Community Council

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

AGM meeting:

Monday 14 May

at 7.15pm

followed by ordinary meeting

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

secretary@ntbcc.org.uk

Spurtle Team: John Dickie, MF, Ali George, Maria Hart, George Hosey, Alan McIntosh, John Ross Maclean, David Sterratt, Ella Taylor-Smith.

Post: Spurtle, c/o Narcissus Flowers, 87 Broughton St, Edinburgh EH1 3RJ.