

Spurtle



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February
2013

No 215

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BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free

BROUGHTON SPLUTTERS AS DRIVERS FUME

Long tail-backs across Broughton blighted life for residents, drivers and pedestrians alike last month as traffic struggled to cope with road works and tram-related diversions.

The closure of Broughton Road for yet more gas main work resulted in temporary lights at the junction with Rodney Street and Canonmills. Once again, vehicles backed up towards Mansfield Place, and pedestrians were again ignored as their puffin crossings by Tesco and Logie Green Road were switched off.

Major congestion followed the switching-off of new temporary lights at the corner of Broughton and Albany Streets. These had been blamed for snarl-ups on Picardy Place at peak hours, but once they were turned off, huge tail-backs resulted along Albany Street and Abercrombie Place instead.

New Town and Broughton Community Council Chair Ian Mowat had foreseen the problem, and wrote to Council officials in advance warning that signs diverting traffic must be clear and well positioned. In the event they were neither. The one on Queen Street failed to direct drivers east along Princes Street for Waverley Bridge. The one on Leith Street directing traffic west along Princes Street was positioned beyond the point at which most drivers chose a lane.

Transport Convener Leslie Hinds backed his concerns, and promised improvements.



Adding to the fun, the northbound lane at the top of Broughton Street was closed for two weeks during construction of a new drainage system.

On a more positive note, Mowat welcomed Council promises to repair potholes on Albany Street and return Heriot Row and Howe Street to normal.

GROUND-FLOOR FEARS ARE ... GROUNDLESS

Rumours are circulating in Bellevue about the new building taking shape at the corner of Hopetoun Street and McDonald Road.

New Age Developers' (NAD) six-floor scheme is due for completion in April, with Savills already marketing 1-3-bedroom flats and penthouses 'on the edge of Edinburgh's Historic New Town' (prices ranging from £150K-250K).

What worries some locals is an unsourced suggestion that a 743 sq. ft area at ground level (2A Hopetoun Street) will become a Sainsbury's Local.

Spurtle investigated the story and can find no substance to it. No attempt has been made to change the 2007 planning consent here (Ref. 07/03996/FUL) for 'office space', and agents Knight Frank are now actively seeking a buyer for it. In any case, Sainsbury Local stores usually measure between 2,000 and 6,000 sq. ft.



Oddly though, Savills are marketing 11 apartments, whereas the original planning consent was for only 8. This is because in 2009, a change of use was granted, allowing first-floor office space consented in the original application to be used instead for 3 new flats.

This latter application used a different address to the original: not '2 Hopetoun



HMV went into administration last month. Fortunately, Elm Row's wonderful music phenomenon continues to thrive. Vinyl Villains – set up in December 1983 by Adam Waters (above) – will celebrate its 30th birthday later this year. See: Breaking news (23.1.13).

LOCAL LAW WILL STAND UP FOR PARENTS

Lindsay Law, Chair of Broughton Primary School's Parent Council, has become the Parents' Representative on the City of Edinburgh Council's Education, Children and Families Committee.

She is the first person to take this role, following election by fellow members of the Consultative Committee with Parents on 15 January. She joins teaching and religious Reps who have been part of the committee for years. She will serve from next month until May 2017.

'It's been a source of frustration among Parent Councils that parents' views about our children's education haven't been listened to by CEC,' she told *Spurtle*. 'Now I am on the Committee, I'll endeavour to change that by providing parents with a voice.'

'Of course, there will be instances where different parents have different opinions, and so through the Parent Council Neighbourhood Groups I'll make sure I am well informed about local issues across primary, secondary, and special schools.'

There is a danger – especially at a time of budget cuts – that any 'lay' representative may simply become a lightning conductor for public dissatisfaction, receiving and safely earthing the charge at one remove from the Administration itself. However, Law seems determined to be a representative and persuasive influence, and we wish her well.

Street' but 'Site 20 metres northeast of 4 Hopetoun Street'. It also had a different reference: Ref. 09/00123/FUL. These new details were also used last year, when NAD successfully sought consent for 'non-material variation to planning permission 07/03966/FUL – alterations to balustrades, doors and windows'.

By such innocent means are the blameless intentions of developers sometimes missed or misunderstood by members of the general public.

Briefly



Police are concerned for the safety of **Sanjay Dhital**, a 23-year-old Nepalese student at Telford College. He disappeared from his Elm Row flat on 26 Dec and has not been heard of since. He is described as '5' 6" tall, slim built with unkempt black hair and a stubbly complexion'. He may now have some facial hair or a beard. Contact: Tel. 0131 311 3131 or, anonymously, Crimestoppers at Tel. 0800 555 111. STOP PRESS: On 28 Jan, a body recovered from St Margaret's Loch was later identified as that of Mr Dhital.

Broughton History Society will meet next at 7pm in Drummond CHS on 18 Feb when **Fay Young** will talk about 'Immigration and Broughton'.

Wiff Waff womance – a free, alternative Valentine's Night – will run from 6pm–10pm at Dalmeny St's Out of the Blue on Thurs 14 Feb. 'Ping pong shenanigans, eclectic music and beer – come with or without a partner – you may even meet your match.'

An **81-year-old woman** was injured after being **hit by a car** whilst crossing Broughton Rd **opposite the play park** at around 5pm on 8 Jan. Police have appealed for witnesses.

At **Drummond Community High School** – where Scots, English, Welsh, Punjabi, Mandarin, Arabic, Polish, Spanish, Hindi, Urdu, French and Italian are all spoken, often simultaneously – a **Celebration of Languages and Cultures** will be held from 11am–2pm on Sat 23 Feb.

A **free event on conserving and repairing property** will be held at the ESPC, 85 George St, 5.30–7.30pm on 28 Feb. Presentations by Hypostyle Architects, Edinburgh World Heritage, National Federation of Roofing Contractors, Stone Federation, Historic Scotland and Scottish Government. Help desks and light refreshments afterwards. RSVP: [conservation@hypostyle.co.uk].

A man was **robbed at knife point** at around 7.30am on 11 Jan. He was walking near the Warriston entrance to **St Mark's Park** when 2 men approached, one on a red Vespa. They stole his mobile before he fled. Police seek witnesses. See *Breaking news* (11.1.13).

The *Sputtle's* **annual general meeting** will take place at 7pm on 19 February in Broughton St Mary's Parish Church. All are welcome.

Broughton St Mary's seeks new minister

Since Rev. Joanne Hood left Broughton St Mary's in May 2012 to become minister in Hamilton, *writes Session Clerk Ian Buckingham*, services at 'BSM' have been led by a variety of visiting preachers.

In the meantime, news of the vacancy has been advertised and applications have been received. A 'Nominating Committee' will nominate a suitable applicant, and the whole congregation will then have a chance to hear the nominee conduct worship, and vote on whether he or she should be appointed.

The committee is currently engaged in its search and hopes to nominate a successful applicant soon.

For reasons of confidentiality, the names of current applicants cannot be disclosed.



Food hygiene fails to impress

The manager of Saigon Saigon on St Andrew Square was fined £1,500 at Edinburgh Sheriff Court last month after pleading guilty to a food hygiene offence.

Environmental Health Officers had earlier found 'Dermestes beetles throughout the premises, raw meat stored next to ready-to-eat food, and raw meat left lying outwith temperature control next to cleaning products on a dirty floor with Dermestes beetles crawling nearby'. The restaurant was immediately shut for 3 days after the visit.

Photographic evidence, which we have decided not to publish, showed live Dermestes beetles and maggot casings next to a 500g bag of defrosted duck tongues.

Now who says 'The world's gone health and safety mad'?



On a wall, dimly ... Dinnae!

Just visible in the bottom quarter of a blind window at the Crescent end of Scotland Street Lane East is this painted phrase: 'STICK NO BILLS'.

The injunction is not particularly against *adhering* one thing to another. Its verb has another meaning defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as 'to place obtrusively, inappropriately, or irregularly'. The US equivalent – POST NO BILLS – carries no such value-judgement. The verb in



that sense originally meant simply 'to affix a paper to a post'.

We have no idea who ordered the Broughton notice or how old it may be, but the same words and similar lettering appear on a wall of the Old College.

Conserving Pilrig moves closer

Moves continue to protect parts of Pilrig within a new Pilrig Conservation Area.

The City of Edinburgh Council's Planning Committee are responding to local fears voiced by Leith Central Community Council that without such action, recent easing of planning laws will result in unrestricted development spoiling Pilrig's Victorian tenements, Colonies and terraces.

A Committee vote in favour on 28 February would be followed by further public consultation. Find out more at Issues 189, 192, 205; *Extras* (1.3.11); *Breaking news* (6.2.12; 2.4.12); and [<http://bit.ly/WK7X8Z>].

Grass to stay greener

Some locals resent the private garden in Drummond Place, feeling it should either be open to the public or accessible to other nearby residents in addition to the current 350 keyholders.

Bill Giles – writing in the Drummond Civic Association's (DCA) annual newsletter – disagrees. He acknowledges that a just-about-tolerable level of irresponsible or inconsiderate behaviour already exists here. But he claims admitting more people would result in further loss of amenity for those living nearby, and greater maintenance/management costs for the garden proprietors 'inescapably' obliged to pay them.

Revised DCA policy is now to restrict keys to those living no further away than flats reached by the common stair on either side of each street leading out of Drummond Place.

'While this must disappoint many who would be glad to have access to the garden ...' concludes Giles, 'they may care to reflect that if access were unrestricted it would be a very different garden and one to which they would perhaps not wish to have a key'. This is a masterly reworking of Groucho Marx's observation, in effect telling them: 'You wouldn't want to join a club which would have you as a member.'

Such arguments have never cut much ice with the have-nots of history.

Fettes Row brush with nature

Fettes Row residents have been surprised lately by the behaviour of a large dog fox. Reader Simon James describes it as 'completely cocky and oblivious to the humans walking up and down'. He suggests auditing the creatures' numbers in Broughton.

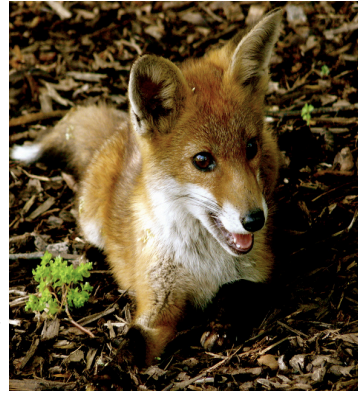


Photo by Loz Flowers: Creative Commons.

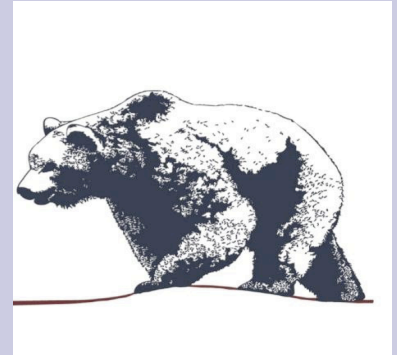
The unambiguously titled website [www.thefoxwebsite.org] estimates that there have been a steady 33,000 urban foxes across Britain for the last 30 years or so. They have been colonising our cities since the 1930s, particularly those with large areas of low-density, (typically, semi-detached) housing with medium to large-sized gardens.

Such environments provide 'all the diverse array of food, cover during the day time and den sites (hedges, scrub, compost heap, sheds) that the foxes need'. Urban foxes are omnivorous scavengers, but studies in Bristol have shown they are less likely to raid bins than to be deliberately fed by humans. Nor are they particularly dangerous to pets: maximum predation was 1 pet per fox every 5 years. Foxes are less of a danger to cats than cars. In an area of NW Bristol with 1,224 pet cats, 8 (mostly kittens) were killed by foxes in a year.

Breeding pairs produce 4-5 cubs each spring, which makes controlling their numbers very difficult without culling around 70 per cent per year over a wide area for many years. Such measures are probably impractical nowadays, particularly given widespread public affection for the species.

Mr James is not concerned by the behaviour of the Fettes Row fox. He considers it a lot less bother than carousing students.

Briefly



A new café has opened at 9/9A Brandon Terrace. The **Blue Bear** promises locally sourced, quality breakfast, brunch, afternoon tea, and antepasti. A drinks licence and **table tennis** should follow soon. The venture is owned by Stockbridge-based Spoonerise Ltd, famed for their tasty Acorn and Becks.

Are you a member of the **LGBT community with a stammer**? Would you like to meet other people who stammer: to socialise, share experiences, get information and explore speech techniques in a safe and friendly atmosphere? If so, tell **Frank Geoghann-Quinn** (email: fggedinburgh@gmail.com) who is assessing demand in collaboration with Howe St's **LGBT Centre for Health and Well Being**. Privacy will be respected.

Stone crushing may have ceased, but the vacant **Shrub Place** site is still being used for storage. Lorries continue to disturb locals (Issue 213). **Leith Central Community Council** has again alerted officials.

Edinburgh state schools break on Fri 8 Feb. Edinburgh parents' patience breaks shortly afterwards. Primaries return on Mon 18 Feb, secondaries on Tues 19 Feb. Normality, never.

Plans are afoot to substantially rebuild and convert the **unlovely and unlisted** Elliot House on Hillside Crescent into 100+ postgraduate studio flats. More when we have it.

Broughton Primary School received its first HMI inspection in 12 years last month. Staff were delighted to welcome them back after such a long interlude.

Spurtle reader, transport observer and amateur neologist **Pav Verity** has sent us another useful new word with definition: **trampage** *n* a very big rampage, but moving very very very very slowly.

Two men, **one armed with a gun and one with an axe**, raided a George St jewellers on the evening of Tues 16 Jan. They made off with £1m loot on a motorbike which was found abandoned in **Northumberland St Lane North** soon after. A pair from Greater Manchester were later charged in connection with the incident, and appeared in court on 25 Jan.

Shared gardens reap dividends

Edinburgh Garden Partners (EGP) is a local charity working across Edinburgh.

For many years it has helped those who have gardens they cannot maintain; the most common reasons being poor physical/mental health, too little time or knowledge. EGP matches them safely to volunteer gardeners.

The owner receives help to keep the garden tidy and attractive, and the volunteer is allocated a place to grow vegetables and/or soft fruits. Both sides involved in the match often share the fresh food and good times together.

Currently, in this part of Edinburgh EGP has one partnership, but others are looking for both gardens to grow in and volunteers to help. If you'd like to volunteer your garden or your time, Tel. 220 5067 or email: [info@edinburghgardenpartners.org].



Broughton – putting the tail in retail



In Virginia Woolf's *Flush*, about Elizabeth Barrett Browning's beloved cocker spaniel, she refers to the aristocracy of dogs to which 'Sir Philip Sidney bears witness

... greyhounds, spaniels and hounds ... whereof the first seem the lords, the second the gentlemen, and the last the yeomen of dogs'.

Six Broughton establishments boast their own range of canine aristocrats. In alphabetical order, they are: Bertie, the miniature dachshund at Life Story; Dave, the occasional boxer at John Malcolm; Frisco, the French bulldog *chez* Coco; Josh, the brindle greyhound at Curiouser & Curiouser; Malta, the amalgamated pug/border terrier at Carolyn Baxter; and Thora, another dachshund at soon-to-open The White Rabbit.

Hail and salutations to them! *JRM*

Broughton Barony of Literature

Publication by Penguin of an erotic novel set in the New Town has predictably worked up the seamier end of the tabloid press into an unseemly froth. Not so the *Spurtle*.

Samantha Young's bestseller *On Dublin Street* features a bone-headed Scotsman and a tragically selfish-sounding American woman ('All she wants is the present'). It is based on the laughable premise that couples in this part of town get up to anything more exciting in the bedroom than discussing the best position for wheelie bins

Fifty Shades of Dreich would perhaps have been a more realistic title, distributed with a complimentary copy of Edinburgh World Heritage's 'Historic Home Guide to External Paintwork'.

Ms Young's follow-up onesie-ripper, *Down London Road*, will be unbosomed shortly.

Broughton is no stranger to works of a flushed and perspiring nature. Two years ago we covered Bellevue-raised Patricia Mackie's 'romp in the hay' *Not Only Horses* (see *Breaking news*, 1.12.10).

Moreover ...



A feuchter grimed Broughton on 17 Jan, but the glaister grew glushie next day and wis gaun by the gloam. Mair skiffins and wauffs came aifter, but niver a snawreath.

Local Willy Roe CBE is the new Chair of Edinburgh World Heritage's Board of Trustees. He aims to: provide strategic leadership; act as an ambassador and communicator; and ensure effective use of the Board's skills.

If Kavelle was a bride entering the aisle, then it took her an age to reach the altar. We first trumpeted the new wedding boutique's arrival at 4-5 Brandon Terrace last year (*Breaking news*, 23.1.12), but work took longer than expected and only in Dec were her doors at last flung open for business (by appointment only).

Outline proposals for 'residential and compatible uses' at the Shrub Place gap-site have been exhibited in McDonald Rd Library (Ref. 12/04360/PAN). Leith Central Community Council will monitor closely.

Scottish Chambers Orchestra Chorus, who have been rehearsing at Broughton St Mary's Church in Bellevue Crescent, are going to have their concert at Queen's Hall on Thursday 28 Feb. 7.30pm.

The Broughton St Mary's Scouts (who meet at St Mary's Primary School on East London Street) are off to Norway for summer camp in July this year. It's customary for Scottish Scouts to wear kilts, especially when travelling abroad, but this troop hasn't worn them for many years and now has an urgent need to find second-hand ones. Can Spurtle readers help? Please check your wardrobes, attics and outbuildings for unwanted kilts which might fit youngsters aged 10-15. Then contact Scott Richards (last seen in Issues 205 and 208) on Tel. 557 8879. Finally, can anyone suggest a really effective deterrent for the Nordic summer midge?

Spurtle Team: J. Dickie, MF, A. George, M. Hart, F. Harvey, G. Hosey, A. McIntosh, J. R. Maclean, D. Sterratt, E. Taylor-Smith. Post: Spurtle, c/o Narcissus Flowers, 87 Broughton St, Edinburgh EH1 3RJ.

Malcolm Chisholm MSP Edinburgh North and Leith



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

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Surgeries:
Every Monday 5pm: Constituency Office

2nd Monday of the month:
11am-12noon St Bride's Centre
1pm-2pm Stockbridge Library

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
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Broughton

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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

Next Meetings:

Monday 4 Feb.
Monday 4 Mar.

at 7.30pm

Broughton St Mary's Parish Church, Bellevue Crescent

secretary@ntbcc.org.uk

AM DECORATING

Your local painter & decorator **Alastair McAlpine**
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