

DRUMMOND IN THE 21ST CENTURY

A real start has been made by the Council's commitment to a £5000 feasibility study for the Drummond Community High School.

With a roll currently around 380 but likely to increase in future years, and some 500 day and evening places taken up by adults, the concept of a "centre for life-long learning" is particularly apt. Ultimately, community facilities would be provided by a roofed extension around the Bellevue Place entrance and replacement of the existing dining hall there.

Head Teacher Frank McGrail stresses that despite Council cutbacks, he is "very hopeful" that initial funding having been put into Drummond already, the first phase of upgrading - in the school's six science labs - will follow. This would extend later to creation of computing and technology suites, all networked together, at first within the school and, eventually, with other resources out of school.

In addition, after some doubt about the state of the astroturf area in the playground, agreement has been reached on upgrading and ongoing maintenance. Welcome news for both school PE and neighbourhood users.

Frank McGrail is also closely involved with proposals for the development of Hopetoun Village, due shortly to be on the City Council's agenda. Right on the school's doorstep, with the likelihood of an increase in both the school's roll and the need for community facilities, he foresees Drummond as "a focal point for learning for all."

Let's hope the **Spurtle** millennium edition will be able to look back and report this is where it all started!

BROUGHTON **SPURTLE**

Contributors to this issue:

Gavin MacGregor, John Dickie, Tim Puntis, Jean Bell, Richard Love, Cloudberry Maclean, George Reiss and Alan McIntosh

BROUGHTON **SPURTLE** is now on the World Wide Web on <http://www.tpuntis.demon.co.uk>

BROUGHTON SPIEL Not So Daft

April almost automatically suggests one word, now mainly associated with the first of the month but well within recent times used more generally.

To describe someone as "a right gowk" really needs no explanation - you'd be a right gowk if you didn't know it meant plain daft. But which one of us can't remember the humiliation of the cries of "huntie-gowk, huntiegowk" after falling for some really daft April Fool.

Elsewhere, the gowk is still the cuckoo, a gowk storm being a brief flurry associated with the arrival of the cuckoo in spring or, sometimes, a storm in a teacup. Strange how gowk/cuckoo is equated with daftness. Any creature which can have its offspring in someone else's nest and cared for in the community without any further bother seems to have thought things through rather well.

In some parts, 2nd April is Tailie Day, when children fix paper tails to the backs of victims with less than polite messages. Could be the cuckoo's in there with a message tied to its feathered neighbour's tail saying "April Fool".

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 2nd April Easter Party for 5 to 10-year-olds at McDonald Road Library, 2.30-3.30pm. Tickets, free, from the Library.

Monday 7th April Community Council meeting at Drummond Community High, 7.30pm. Agenda includes speaker on proposed shopping mall under Princes Street.

Monday 14th April Broughton History Society meets at Drummond Community High, 7.15 (tea/coffee) for 7.30pm. "Development of Edinburgh's Second New Town", by Dr. Connie Byrom.

Wednesday 16th April East End Churches Together "Election Questions Time", 7.30pm at St Mary's Church, Bellevue Crescent. All welcome.

Thursday 17th April **Spurtle** HUSTINGS, Café Graffiti, Mansfield Pl. Church 7.30pm. What would the candidates do for Broughton if returned to Westminster? Come and ask them!

Tuesday 22nd April Charter 88's Democracy Day, 7.30pm in Stockbridge Community Centre. Question constituency candidates on constitutional issues. (contact Tom Schuller, 557 9366)

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BROUGHTON Spurtle

Free No 36

April 1997

OUR MISTAKE

Thursday, 27th February: your March **Spurtle** was rolling off the printing press. On the same day bits of the road surface in East Claremont Street collapsed, and part of the street was closed to traffic. It remains closed, causing hassle for residents, and for small businesses - specially Mohammed at the local corner shop, who's losing custom.

We sent a note out with **Spurtles** going to our subscribing supporters, explaining what had happened. But not with all the other copies: with hindsight, a mistake. Lack of information left room for doubts and rumours to flourish. And the Residents Association held back too, waiting for a more detailed report from Council engineers.

When that came, a poster from the Association and letters through doors from the Council confirmed major structural faults. Soil has settled, leaving cavities under the setts. Putting things right will take up to twenty weeks. For the sake of safety this part of the street will have to stay closed meanwhile. But the Council plan to open the street section by section, as reconstruction progresses.

Sure enough, as we started on this edition another Council letter was going through letterboxes. Work will start on the south side of the street between Melgund Terrace and the Bellevue Crescent end almost immediately.

(see 'Street Saga' on page 3)

DRUMMOND IN THE 21ST CENTURY



Picture by Stafford Centre Photography Group.

Drummond Community High School has high expectations of their far-reaching proposals for the long-term development of the school. The fine detail of the plans is contained in a document entitled 'Drummond in the 21st Century' handed to City Councillors by the School Board.

(story on back page)

Our second
Debate
page 2

BRIEFLY

- Bellevue resident Dave Rushton is the man behind Channel 6. It's a new TV service specially for Edinburgh, designed to broadcast news and information in teletext form. A technical hitch over wavelengths, mixed up with Channel 5's re-tuning of sets, means the launch is delayed. But the project's still very much alive. Dave says he's heartened by all the support he's had from MPs and community organisations. If you want to add your support, or get more information, the address is Channel 6 Text TV, P O Box 606, EH7 4YH. (tel 478 6060, fax 557 8608)

- *East End Churches Together* have organised an "Election Question Time" for 16th April, and *Charter 88* a "Democracy Day" for 22nd April (see *DATES FOR YOUR DIARY* for details). *Democracy Day* organiser Tom Schuller says: "The issues go beyond devolution, though this is obviously central in Scotland. They concern a fairer voting system, more accountable government, a Bill of Rights, and better access for citizens to public information. This will be a genuine debate - and the more that come, the livelier!"

- McDonald Road Library are having an **Easter Party** for 5 to 10-year-olds, Wednesday 2nd April, 2.30 to 3.30pm. There will be games, prizes and refreshments. And it's free! But pick up tickets from the Library beforehand.

(more Briefly on page 3)



Richard Love lives in Bellevue Place. He'll be voting on 1st May.

Debate

From now until 1st May the political parties will be chasing our votes. But why vote at all? Spurtle presents two local views.

Cloudberry Maclean lives in East Claremont Street. She won't be voting on 1st May.



Since the mid-19th century pressure groups have fought to secure votes for men and women of all classes over the age of 18. Voting still allows me to exercise my democratic right to elect our next MP.

Even if my vote is for a candidate who loses, it helps show the strength of support for that person or party. This is also important if a case is to be made for proportional representation, for example.

I can vote for an individual who, though belonging to a party I wouldn't naturally support, has been a good constituency MP or active campaigner in opposition.

I can choose to vote for someone who may have a poor chance of election but strongly represents views which the other candidates do not hold: e.g. on devolution.

Although I'm not satisfied with the present electoral and constitutional systems, we should all cast our votes on a regular basis, so that the government is as representative as possible.

However, I am concerned that a significant minority has become disenfranchised because of political disasters like the poll tax. All politicians should take note of the potential effects of such legislation on the health of our, still imperfect, representative democracy.

Your forefathers and mothers fought for your right to vote. Use it.

I won't be voting at this General Election, because I believe we need to create new ways of organising our society. There are many inspirational examples of people living vibrantly and freely when they refuse to be ruled from above. I don't want to assume power over anyone or for them to take it from me.

Up until the 1947 Planning Acts, in Britain thousands of people took part in a self-build movement creating their own chalet/shanty homes. People living there enjoyed a rich communal life, although sometimes they could afford only cramped building plots. This working-class self-build trend was repressed by parliamentary socialists and bodies like the National Trust.

At the moment a tiny Western elite of white men holds dominance over the majority of the world's people. The Earth is raped and her people and creatures exploited in the name of profit. A democratic electoral system is just one dupe amongst many to manufacture consent for this minority rule.

It is not only trickery that prevents most people from feeling that they have any hope, or even right, of making the decisions that govern their lives, but brute force. We (nationally and internationally) live in a police state and when the power of the elite (multinationals, the state, big landowners) is challenged we meet with violence.

This is why voting is not enough to effect the radical change necessary: instead, we need to organise collectively and autonomously.

BROUGHTON SPURTLE HUSTINGS

Thursday, 17th April 7.30pm

Café Graffiti
Mansfield Place
Church

We've invited all the candidates for this constituency.

Gavin Brown
(Scottish Socialist Alliance)

Hilary Campbell
(Liberal Democrats)

Malcolm Chisholm
(Labour)

Anne Dana
(SNP)

Ewen Stewart
(Tories)

What would each do for Broughton if returned to Westminster?

Come and ask them!

STREET SAGA

It will take about six weeks to repair the south side of East Claremont Street between Melgund Terrace and the Bellevue Crescent end. Then this section will be opened to allow access for residents and traders - and so on with other sections.

Spurtle hasn't a history of being soft on the Council, but we can't fault them on this one so far. Staff directly involved in the East Claremont roadworks are ready to explain things, and open to constructive suggestions - for example, the temporary nose-in parking towards the West Annandale corner suggested by a local resident to relieve the dearth of spaces.

Alongside the serious stuff, there's been a rash of anonymous notices on lamp-posts and through doors. They urged local residents to PROTEST (to what purpose wasn't clear), and made the scary suggestion that the road should be "patched up" and re-opened (don't worry, it won't happen!).

Spurtle found out they did come from a genuine local resident, but one who'd bombarded the Council with objections ever since work on the hard-won traffic calming project began. The emergency closure was manna from heaven to him! In due course his efforts won a splash in the *Evening News*, but a letter from the Residents Association quickly put the record straight.

So plenty of hassle in this part of Broughton! But there's one consolation for local folk: the new central reservation is taking shape. It will be much wider than before, with a higher kerb and bollards to stop vehicles riding up onto it. So the new rowan trees and shrubs shouldn't get the battering the old trees got. There will be places for pedestrians to cross the reservation, wide enough for parents with prams. And in the roadway there will be raised platforms to slow the traffic.

Something to look forward to!

A WEEL KENT FACE

Billy Crockett was a resident all his life at 2, Canonmills. An all-round entertainer, he appeared "on the boards" all over the world with such shows as The White Heather Club, and the Black and White Minstrels. Friends and neighbours will be pleased to know that, now in his seventies, he is comfortably settled in Liberton Gardens Home for the Elderly.



He has his own room and possessions, and the walls are covered in stage memorabilia. Billy says its like a five star hotel, and his friends are welcome to pop in and see him. These have included Jimmy Logan, who gave a "wee show" for the residents! Billy has not the puff to play his bagpipes now, but is still full of banter. The Variety Club treated him and his friends to a weekend at Peebles Hydro recently.

Lang may ye're lum reek, Billy.

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BRIEFLY

Remember the Unemployed Workers Centre, at 103 Broughton Street until evicted by the Regional Council? Now called the Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh, at last they've got their own premises - at 17 Montgomery Street, just off Brunswick Road.



ACE aims to provide space for campaign groups, meetings and classes; advice and solidarity on poll tax and benefit harassment; computer access; mutual aid networks; and an info-shop offering a range of radical literature. Centre meetings on Mondays, 7pm. (tel 557 6242)

The masterplan for development of Hopetoun Village is now poised to be submitted to the City Council. If the Council agrees, a widespread public consultation process will follow - hopefully starting early summer. One appealing feature of the extensive plans is the possibility of the long-overdue recovery of Hopetoun Crescent from wasteland to parkland. This would be a real focus for newcomers and oldtimers alike. Watch this (open) space!

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