

Belle's View



Hi fans

Well! Flaming June already, although it feels more like the monsoon season. It's hardly worth going to the hairdresser's when your coiffure has to spend all day tethered under a tasteful rainmate!

Taking refuge from the torrential downpours the other night, I fled into the **Lost Sock Diner** in **East London Street** with a group of delightful friends, where we indulged ourselves fully from the extensive and innovative menu. My dear friend **Estelle Murgatroyd** in particular was thrilled with her huge helping of bangers and mash, and our host **Steven Blaikie** informed us that he serves up 500 portions of this dish a week. What a lot of sausages! And did you know that New York cheesecake is cheesecake without the crunchy bit on the bottom? You live and learn.

I was having a slumbersome lie-in last Saturday morning, recovering from the excesses of one of my glittering parties, when I was awoken by a great cacophony of whistling and cheering. I looked out my window onto **Broughton Street** – it was filled with thousands of cheery fancily-dressed people on the **Pride March**. I must say, I do admire their style – anyone with enough gumption to strut around Broughton in only a g-string and a pair of angel wings deserves a bravery award! I espied our local Green MSP **Robin Harper** in the thick of it, arm-in-arm with the **Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence!**

Till next time darlings, just do it – I would!

Persephone Belle

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Walking tall on the Pride March
(Photo by Andrew Murphy)

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BROUGHTON Spurgle

No 61

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Broughton's big parade!



This year, it was Edinburgh's turn to host the annual **Pride March and Festival**, setting off from **East London Street** soon after midday on Saturday, 19th June. **Spurgle** got this report from an enthusiastic participant.

Undaunted by the slightly inclement weather, 10,000 people amassed from all over Scotland to take part, with all the participants in good spirits. Fancy dress was very much in evidence in every colour of the rainbow, with many of the local bars and clubs, such as CC Blooms of Greenside Place, being represented by floats. A marching beat was provided by a women's drumming group, and with the noise of the whistles that everyone had the effect

was deafening! The march was adorned with plenty of banners from various groups such as Stonewall Youth Project – one of their members did a video of the whole day which was shown on BBC2's Gaytime TV later in the week.

Locals clapped and cheered as the procession made its way up rainbow-flagged Broughton Street. Supporters on the march included two of our own MSPs, Malcolm Chisholm and Robin Harper; plus Scottish Socialist Party MSP and gay icon Tommy Sheridan, Lloyd Quinlan (SNP), and Donald Gorrie, Ian Smith and Keith Raffan of the Lib. Dems. They marched along Princes Street, up the Mound, and into

Broughton **Spurgle** is
free
and completely
independent

Photo: Eileen Dickie

the Meadows, where there was an all-day festival with bands and other entertainment. Despite the weather, everyone had a brilliant time, and we're all looking forward to next year's event in Glasgow!

"By being here this afternoon you have all made a difference – given confidence to some, challenged the preconceptions of others. Pat Robertson may call this Scotland at its darkest – I say it is Scotland at its broadest, brightest and best."

– Alex Salmond.

Councillor's progress on local issues

We asked Councillor Lazarowicz to report on any progress made on issues raised in our interviews with him, covered in last month's *Spurtle*.

East London Street

There's now a fenced pedestrian route next to the Bryant Homes development. On the other side of the street, both he and council officials have been in touch with Europcar, pressing them to keep the path clear. "I intend to keep pressing for action until the problem with Europcar is resolved."

At the other end of the street, the City Development Department has promised him to repaint the white zigzag lines at the bus stop – which will in turn allow traffic wardens to enforce restrictions. "This will both improve safety at the pedestrian crossing and make it easier for passengers to get on and off the No13 bus."

East Claremont Street

The Council official concerned advises him that it might now be possible to put double yellow lines at least at some of the speed humps. "This would improve the situation for pedestrians, and also for drivers who

would at least know what regulations applied." Yellow lines wouldn't necessarily be as long as the existing white ones.

Annandale Street Lane

How can we get the section at the McDonald Road end repaired, when it is privately owned? Councillor Lazarowicz has found out that there are only two owners involved, Kwik-Fit and the Council itself (the Library): so it may be easier to get them to contribute towards repairing the whole section. Failing that, the bit that forms part of the pedestrian way along McDonald Road should be repaired when the Road itself is repaired. "The timetable for this may become clearer within the next few months".

Blocked drains

"The East of Scotland Water Authority have investigated, but they say it's the City Council's responsibility! I've therefore asked the Council department concerned to investigate."

McDonald Road Library

No success on improving library hours yet, "although it is certainly an issue which I intend to devote some

effort to and I believe there may be some positive results next year". But he can confirm that there are plans to spend money on upgrading the Library, and there will be public consultation about this over the next few months.

20mph limits

The Scottish Office has just published new regulations and guidance about 20mph zones and limits: they're complex, and the City Council is still assessing their implications. On the positive side, councils will now sometimes be able to introduce zones without seeking Government approval, making things quicker and simpler; the downside seems to be that traffic calming measures will have to be in place first, meaning substantial money has to be found. "The new regulations are an advance, and I will be keen to see Edinburgh using them as flexibly as possible so as to bring about 20mph limits in as many residential areas and outside as many schools as possible. As there are some parts of the ward which already have traffic calming, it may be easier to introduce them here."

A suggestion from Simon Challoner:

Are residents of East Claremont Street satisfied with their "speed bumps"? Given that this is a densely populated residential area with many vulnerable young children and elderly people, should we not as a community look at a more radical way of dealing with this problem?

One possible answer might be to block off the Street at the bottom end beside Broughton Primary School. This would ensure that children going to school could do so in relative safety. Motorists would no longer use this street as a cut through to the New Town. A similar project was undertaken to safeguard local residents in Stockbridge when the road was blocked at Dean Terrace.

Obviously this would have to be discussed more thoroughly, with careful thought being given to the residents in Broughton Road. What do you think? Write to **Spurtle** with your views.



Andrew Robertson of East London Street took this photo in 1992, trying to persuade the powers-that-be to do something about that blocked pedestrian way. He won a temporary improvement; but in the end Europcar proved more determined than Council or police. Seven years later, he hopes it will be a different story this time round.

Scottish Parliament

Too many in the mainstream media seem to be willing the new Parliament to fail. We're still willing it to work – while regularly re-sharpening our critical faculties!

The debate on MSPs' allowances was a case in point. To describe it in pigs-at-the-trough terms was nonsense: staff and office allowances are tools to help them do their job; and beyond the cash was a serious issue about equality of status. Many on the Labour benches still think that they alone must rule the roost out in the constituencies: our own Malcolm Chisholm was the only one to vote against a Labour amendment that would have drastically cut allowances for "list" MSPs (three others abstained). When it comes to speaking in Parliamentary debates, too many from all benches intersperse their contributions with yah-boo comments, which often obscure good points they have to make. In the debate on PFI

for example, many could have learnt a useful lesson from Mr Chisholm's approach – let's hope in time they will, old habits die hard!

By the time we're printed, the Parliament will have had its official opening and gone into recess until September. That doesn't mean MSPs have two months' holiday: committees will continue to meet, and MSPs should be out meeting their constituents. Malcolm Chisholm tells us his surgeries will continue as before, but: "That is clearly just a baseline and, in addition to attending local meetings, I shall be seeking other more pro-active ways of relating to the local community". We hope to bring you all our MSPs' plans in the not-too-distant future. Mean-

while, you can still write to them at Scottish Parliament, George IV Bridge, EH99 1SP.

And you can find out more about the Parliament on its website: www.scottish.parliament.uk

(Photograph by Eileen Dickie)



Malcolm Chisholm on the Gay Pride March



May saw the official opening of the Assay Office's new premises at 24 Broughton Street. In the picture, flanked by the Lord and Lady Provost, is Michael Laing, Deacon of the Incorporation of Goldsmiths of the City of Edinburgh (founded in 1687 under royal charter of James VII). Local silversmith Graham Crimmins of East London Street told us that everyone has to take their gold and silver creations to the Assay Office for testing and stamping to

certify the quality of metal used – in Edinburgh the hallmark is a castle. Then gold and silversmiths can add their own stamps. The premises now used for this purpose were built as the Albany Street Chapel in 1816 – and just a year later witnessed the horrific death of 11-year old John Fraser when he was sent up the chimney to clean it, got stuck and was pulled down by a rope tied to his ankle. (Photo: Andrew Murphy)

BRIEFLY

Towards the end of July, the Community Council will be carrying out a parking survey in Mansfield Place, East Claremont Street, Annandale Street, East London Street and the other streets bound by them. Every householder will get a **questionnaire through the door**, asking if they would like a Residents' Parking Zone; someone will be round a few days later to collect their answers. Don't miss your chance to have your say!

As reported last month, Redbraes residents are up in arms about their **neglected public park**. They've been collecting signatures for a petition, which should soon be ready to present to local councillor Mark Lazarowicz.

Recreation Department officials will shortly be presenting possible designs for a **new children's play area in St Mark's Park** to local parents; staff and pupils at Broughton Primary will join in the consultation after the summer holidays. If you want to keep in touch, phone Simon Challoner on 556 9226.

LRT's Shrubhill site is up for sale – offers to purchase were to be in by the end of June. The Community Council is asking interested developers to discuss their plans with them. They're under no obligation to do so: but similar discussion with Standard Life and Teague before development of Huntingdon Place proved fruitful.

Scotland Yard Summer Festival will take place on 21st August. If you want to book a stall, or you'd like to volunteer as an entertainer, phone Mike Worobec on 557 8199.

Survey work in Mansfield Place Church has revealed dry rot in the beams of the barrel vault of the nave, where the beams fit into the wallheads. But as **Trust Secretary Rosemary Mann** says: "The surprise is not that rot has been found, but that the extent of the rot is relatively limited." The wallheads were very wet over a long period of neglect; but emergency work carried out by the City Council in 1993 and by the Trust last year means that rainwater is no longer penetrating and the building is now drying out.