

Spurtle



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No 212

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BROUGHTON'S INDEPENDENT STIRRER Free

LOCALS CHALLENGE SHRUBHILL 'BOMBSITE'

Leith Central Community Council (LCCC) has waded into the issue of disturbance on and around the Shrubhill Place gap-site.

As reported in Issues 211 and 212, neighbours' lives have been blighted by the passage of heavy goods vehicles (some allegedly over the 40-ton limit) and the noisy and dusty crushing of Chinese granite aggregate for use in tramworks.

Despite locals' repeated requests for help, local politicians have so far made little progress in getting to the bottom of the problem.

Now LCCC has alerted Council officials to a possible breach of Planning rules (Ref. 442450), arguing that local residents were not consulted and raising additional concerns about pedestrian safety on Dryden Bridge and site security out of working hours. They expect to receive a response by early November.

Mrs Melrose, who has lived in Dryden Street for 47 years, says she has never experienced anything like it. 'This used to be a quiet little cul-de-sac, but in recent days there have been 4 huge lorries on the bridge, the length of the terrace and the height of the fire station. The area resembles a bombsite.'

Liz Ballantyne, another local resident and the person who first raised this problem with *Spurtle*, has welcomed the LCCC move, hailing it as a 'possible breakthrough'. She is, however, critical of the length of time it has taken some city councillors to respond. Some locals suspect that, given Edinburgh's anxiety to press ahead with the tram scheme as quickly as possible, a blind eye may have been turned to activity on the site.



NEW TOWN SEX ATTACKS

Police seek help from the public as they investigate possible links between two recent sexually motivated attacks on women in the New Town.

The first took place on Saturday 29 September when a 29-year-old woman was grabbed from behind on Cumberland Street at around 12.45am.

Her attacker fled back along Dundas Street when she screamed. He is described as being in his late 20s-early 30s, around 5ft 8ins, with a tanned complexion and medium build. He had medium-length dark hair shorter at the sides and back and bushier/thicker on top, and wore a light coloured jumper.

The second incident occurred on Sunday 16 October, when a 23-year-old woman returning home from Frederick Street at around 2.40am was grabbed from behind and forced to the ground on St Vincent Street. She struggled and screamed, and her attacker fled towards Stockbridge.

He is described as white, 25-30 years old, 5ft 8ins-5ft 10ins tall with a skinny build. He wore jeans and a navy-coloured hooded top with the hood up.

Police have deployed search teams and high-visibility patrols in the area since, asking those they meet about what they may have seen at the time of the attacks. 'The response from those we spoke to was positive and we will now go through the statements and questionnaires we completed and progress the enquiry from there,' said Detective Sergeant Lyndsey Thomson. 'Our reassurance patrols were undoubtedly a comfort to those who live in and frequent the Stockbridge area and these will continue for as long as is required.'

Anyone with information should contact Lothian and Borders Police on 311 3131, or the charity Crimestoppers in confidence and complete anonymity on 0800 555 111.



NEW STUDIO HUB NOW FULL

Welcome additions to Broughton's arts and crafts scene are the Beaverhall Art Studios on Beaverhall Road, which opened at the start of 2012.

Occupying the Egyptian-themed former Duncan's chocolate factory [<http://bit.ly/WIOg4T>] and offices at 27 Beaverhall Rd, the recently renovated two-floor work and exhibition space is now fully occupied, and home to around 30 painters, ceramicists, photographers, sculptors, textile designers and small charitable organisations.

The initiative is the brainchild of Edinburgh Commercial Property's Scott Mitchell, who we understand is also behind the huge Edinburgh Art's Complex in St Margaret's House on London Road.

An Open Day is scheduled for the middle of the month (see *Moreover ...*). Further events will likely follow.

For more information, see [<http://on.fb.me/P2nNvQ>] or contact: Louise Ross, Tel. 0778 6220 396; [louise.k.ross@gmail.com].



Briefly



This odd individual appeared on **E. Broughton Place** last month and was snapped by reader **Sandy Buchanan**. An online call for clues about his origin brought no answers. Is he another victim of **doorstop ornament trafficking**? Let us know.

The next meeting of the **Broughton History Society** will be in Drummond CHS on Mon 19 Nov at 7pm. Catch of the day Simon Fairnie will address **'Fisherwomen'** and anyone else who attends. Non-members £2.

The new **Gaelic primary school** in Bonnington (Issue 211) will be called **Bun-sgoil Taobh na Páirce** (Parkside PS): the quai-ch-half-full alternative to **Bun-sgoil Taobh na Casan** (Roadside PS).

Leith Central Community Council hopes Parkside's arrival leads to Leith becoming a **Gaelic hub**. Gaelic playgroups in the Kirkgate Centre are already popular, and LCCC envisages further **musical collaborations**.

Since opening on Broughton St in July, **Kathy's Knits** have had 100+ requests for expert instruction. 1-day and 3-week courses are now offered. See [www.kathysknits.co.uk].

44-year-old **Steve Nicolson** died in a blaze at a 3rd/4th-floor flat in **Powderhall Rigg** on 26 Sept (*Breaking news*, 26.9.12). The fire's cause was not suspicious.

In the run-up to Christmas and Hogmanay, buses will **both enter and leave the bus station by Little King St**. Other traffic will be banned. On Fri 13 Jan, traffic will resume entering by Little King Street and leaving by York Place.

A reader with a **Highland retreat** writes anent Issue 211's **Broughton Laboratories**. 'Coincidentally, I recently found one of those **green bottles** in the ground near our cottage,' he says, 'and had a strange feeling the words **"Not to be taken"** were directed at me – which I ignored. I now use it to serve **extra spicy sauce**.' Further proof, *Spurtle* feels, of the folk wisdom in that old Midlothian rhyme: **'Brown sauce south of the Forth makes your chips more toothsome. / Peri peri north of Queensferry has effects which quite frankly are more often than not a tad gruesome.'**

Young linguists gauffre it

On 10 October, two parties of pupils studying an SQA Languages course at Drummond CHS travelled to experience the culinary delights of Germany and France, writes *Susan Towers*.

Mr Nelson and his group took a bus to Falko in Bruntsfield where they had a chance to eat cakes like *Schwarzwaelderkirchtorte* or *Zwetschgenkuchen* and washed it all down with *heisse Schoko*, *Kaffee oder Tee*. *Lecker!*

Mrs Towers took her class and the Head Mrs Norma Prentice to Café Marlayne on Antigua Street. The pupils had their fill of *crêpes* and *gauffres*. They even tried *moules frites*. *Délicieux!*

Motorcyclist seeks witnesses

A motorcyclist involved in an accident eight months ago is posting signs on lampposts in Broughton in a last-ditch effort 'to get justice'.

At 8.30am on 21 March this year, Paul Spence was driving down Broughton Street and checked that the Mansfield Place roundabout was clear before moving onto it. Suddenly a dark blue BMW pulled out in front of him from London Street, causing him to brake hard and crash.

Spence managed to avoid the car, but was still seriously injured and his bike was a right-off. Unfortunately, police did not breathalise the drivers or take witness names on the spot, and because of this Spence has been unable to establish the other driver's responsibility. He has been left sore, disgruntled and thousands of pounds out of pocket.

If you were one of the people who witnessed the accident or came to his aid immediately afterwards, he asks that you Tel. 0771 3141 103 or email him at [pauljamespence@gmail.com].

Book your fruit & veg

Affordable groceries will go on sale at McDonald Road Library between now and Christmas.

Every other Friday, the Edinburgh Community Food charity will run a stall from 10am–noon. It's a chance to stock up on inexpensive fresh fruit and vegetables, to get answers to any healthy-eating questions you may have, and to find out about volunteering opportunities in the community.

The stalls will run on 9 and 23 November, and 7 and 21 December at McDonald Road, and at Ferry Road's Leith Library on the alternate Fridays.

In parallel project, the Leith Food Folk have launched a scheme delivering food to vulnerable older people. To find out more about delivering or receiving food, Tel.467 7326 or email: [epattinson@edinburghcommunityfood.org.uk].



Baxter's Place – latest



In *Breaking news* (4.9.12) we highlighted developers' plans to tweak the existing planning consent for 1–3, 5 Baxter's Place (Ref. 08/03635/FUL).

They now aim to build more and smaller bedrooms for a Marriott Hotel, and to do away with the roof terrace originally proposed.

After a pre-application consultation on 20 September, the New Town and Broughton Community Council made 4 suggestions: (a) improve where the projecting shop at No. 5 meets the original ground floor facade at No. 4; (b) make sure rooftop plant does not spoil views from Calton Hill; (c) keep original railings and facsimile railing lamps; (d) show NTBCC the final consultation report.

NTBCC now understands No. 4 does not belong to the developers so may never be part of their plans.

Spurtle subscriptions, 2012–13

Former subscribers wondering where last month's *Spurtle* went are gently re-reminded that annual subscriptions (Oct–Sept) are now due.

Hand-delivered copies cost £12 p.a.; posted ones £18.20 p.a. Larger sums are also welcome. Cheques only, please, made payable to Spurtle, and sent to Spurtle, c/o Narcissus Flowers, 81 Broughton St, Edinburgh EH1 3RJ.

Remember to include a note of the name and address to which copies should be sent. To those who have already resubscribed: many thanks.

Glimpses of Broughton's Great War dead

In November 2011 we told you about Broughton History Society's project to mark the centenary of the First World War, writes *Jessie Denholm*. Then, the project was in its early stages. Now, a year later, we have identified nearly 650 war deaths relating to our area.

We have adopted a two-pronged approach to identifying them. Firstly, we have trawled through local newspapers for information about deaths of men with addresses in the Broughton area. Secondly, we have recorded the names on war memorials that are or originally were located in the area. Most of these memorials are those of local churches, but we also have those of Broughton High School and Gayfield Square Police Station. Then there is a lot of internet-based research to be done – census records and military records are consulted with the aim of producing a fuller picture of the man concerned.

To give a taste of the sort of information we have gathered, let us look at Robert Hall who lived at 6 Broughton Road. He was a linotype operator for the *Evening Dispatch* and in his spare time he was a member of the Bohemian Amateur Opera Company. He joined the Scots Guards, attained the rank of Lance Sergeant, and was killed in action on 15 September 1916. He is commemorated locally on the war memorial of St Philip's Episcopal Church. With that extra bit of information he is no longer just a name on a plaque.



Briefly



'Sorry, but that bird is a finely crafted **goldfinch**, not a **chaffinch**,' says Tim Smith responding to Issue 211 (p.2). 'I'm sure because I've just watched 4 on a feeder in our [Broughton] garden. The **red cheeks** and **finely pointed bill** are the giveaway – **also the yellow, white and black flashes along the wings when folded.**' He is right. That sound ... is the Editor's teeth grinding with gratitude.

St Mary's Market at the top of Broughton St is to extend trading hours. It will now open from **11am–5pm on Sats**, and from **11am–7pm on Sats and Suns** in December.

Fitness coach Tracy Griffen (Issue 211) will now offer seasonal promptings once a month. **TG TIPS (1): Invest in a heart rate monitor**, which will tell you how fast you need to move to have a **'fat-burning' effect**. Do it thrice weekly, for at least 30 minutes. **You can do any aerobic exercise you like as long as your heart rate is in the zone.** Easy.

This month's free community discussion at Howe St's **LGBT Centre for Health and Wellbeing** will be on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people **in the workplace** at 6.30–9.30pm on 29 Nov, and pre-booking is strongly advised: [jules@lgbthealth.org.uk] or Tel. 523 1104.

Annoyed at recent Council spin suggesting trams will run **'before the planned date'** of Dec 2013 (they were first scheduled for 2011), reader **Pav Verity** says we need new words to express the **extent of the mess**. He suggests 2: **'fumbles'** for poor or incompetent management; and **'shacking'** for gerrybuilding or constructing crudely. 'We could then describe the tram project as a "shacking fumbles".'

Edinburgh's **'Tram Team'** is to consider increasing how long pedestrians get at **Abercrombie Place's** new temporary crossing. The slow, the partially sighted, the indecisive and the fabulously important want to **transambulate** not **scuttle**. Officials don't want traffic to back up.

Around 50 singers from the **Scottish Chamber Orchestra's Chorus** have been rehearsing at Broughton St Mary's Church on Bellevue Crescent on Monday evenings for 2 months now in preparation for their upcoming concert at the **Queen's Hall** on 29 November.

Plus ça change ...

New (temporary) traffic lights started at the corner of Albany and Broughton Streets on 11 October.

During York Place's year-long closure, they will punctuate diverted traffic along Albany St, help northbound traffic down Broughton St, and pander to pedestrians who selfishly insist on crossing these roads despite the inconvenience it causes drivers.

Such contrivances are nothing new hereabouts. The UK's first permanent 'electric signal traffic control with coloured lights' began managing the congested junction at the top of Broughton St on 21 March 1928 (pictured below). Traffic was held up for 24 seconds then released for the same period with an 'intervening caution stop' of 3 seconds. Policemen were on hand to answer questions.

The authorities anticipated that, with the public's cooperation, the experiment would be 'a successful step towards a further improvement in the traffic control in the city,' noted the *Scotsman* (17.3.1928).

Eight months later the Corporation sought a Scottish Office Police Grant to pay for more lights around Edinburgh. It argued that signals and contingent changes would replace 13 constables, and save a further £13,000 p.a. The SO refused, but the Lord Provost's Committee still opted for new sets at 16 new spots including Leith Walk at McDonald Rd, Pilrig St at Bonnington Rd, and Regent Rd at Abbeymount.

The world's first traffic light had appeared in London in 1868, but the first automated system using adapted red, amber and green railway signals was arguably invented by Detroit policeman William L. Potts c.1920. Wolverhampton followed with a one-day trial in November 1927. *AM*



Photo courtesy of Lothian Buses PLC.

Consuming interest in History

Hayley Cross – a student of Economic and Social History at Glasgow University – is asking *Spurtle* readers to help with her PhD research into 'Class, Gender and Consumerism in Industrial Scotland, c.1939–1997'.

Her main theme is consumer experiences in Scotland over the 20th century, such as buying and using goods/services, attitudes towards fashion/taste, changes in shopping practices, experiences of credit, debt and poverty and the growth in consumer goods and spending. She is particularly interested in the memories of people born before 1960.

Involvement would entail a recorded, hour-long, informal interview in a place of your choice. You would not have to answer any questions you didn't want to, and you could stop the interview at any point. Interviewees' identities will be concealed in the final thesis.

Hayley already has two degrees in History, and is experienced in conducting research with members of the public. For this project, she hopes to interview about 40 people.

To get involved or to find out more, either Tel. 0758 0837 058 or email [h.cross.1@research.gla.ac.uk].

Moreover ...



Do you recognise this face? Yes, it belongs to **Andrea Obzerova** who, until recently, worked for 2 years under a hat behind the till at Crombie's. Now, with husband **Brano**, she's set up Broughton-based **AB Weddings**, specialising in wedding and location portrait photography. For the new website and a prize competition, see: [<http://on.fb.me/Pc0OQ0>].

The **puffin crossing** on Broughton Rd between N. Pilrig Heights and Redbraes **has finally been turned on** (Issue 194). Now and again it blushes.

The new **Beaverhall Art Studios** (see article) will open to the public from 11am-6pm on **Sat. 16 and Sun 17 Nov. Peruse, potter, perchance purchase.**

Slapdash pavement repairs in the Edinburgh World Heritage Site drew complaints from residents recently. They pointed out ugly spillages of cement on setts in **India St, Gloucester Place, Doune Terrace and Royal Circus**, but were fobbed off by an official who said that, having personally visited the area, he was satisfied 'the work had been carried out to the high standards expected of all our contractors'. Locals - irritated at the gulf between CEC aspirations in documents like '**Edinburgh Standards for Streets**' and what actually happens on the ground - **kept badgering**. Eventually they got an apology and a promise (as yet unrealised) of a partial clean-up. See *Breaking news* (30.10.12).

Broughton, 84 years later ...



Who runs our streets?

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.

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

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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
Alison.Johnstone.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

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 Meeting:

Monday 5 Nov.

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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