



Local school needs a new playground

by Phyllis Stephen

The Royal Mile Primary School is the only school left in the Old Town. It is a Category B listed building and a great example of what a Victorian built school looks like. The problem is the playground which is empty of anything to play on, and is made up of patchy asphalt.

Now the parents council hope to raise around £60,000 which would allow them to change the outside area for years to come.

The dream is that the current pupils and those yet to attend school might have a purpose built play area, and it is planned that the scheme will be built in phases, as and when the donations permit.

Dan Hertzfeldt and his partner Michelle Goring have a seven year-old daughter, Winona, who has been at The Royal Mile Primary School since nursery.



He is one of the parents behind the Go Fund Me page set up to raise the necessary funds for the proposed play area, and he explained the thinking behind it to The Edinburgh Reporter: "None of us came up with this idea really. Plans for improvements in the playground have been talked about off and on for years,

but we on the parent council just put our heads together to see what we could do to help the school out. We then decided that the best way forward was to set up a crowdfunder. It is really a renewed effort to try and get a better playground for the school.

"Royal Mile Primary School is probably the smallest in the city with a roll of less than 130 pupils including the nursery department, and this playground would be installed behind the school.

"The school has limited resources on its own. Even the parents on their own have limited resources, so

Happy friends

by Phyllis Stephen

The proposed Social Bite village will be built beside Granton Castle Walled Garden.

The future of the garden has been secured by the owner EDI Group (an arms length company owned by the council) who announced support for the Friends group who have campaigned to save it:

"Following this review, and in conjunction with a proposal put to us by the Friends of Granton Castle Walled Garden (FOGCWG), the EDI Board is now minded to retain the walled garden for the purpose of a community market garden. The Board recognised the close links the FOGCWG's revised proposals had to our own aspirations for the area and it is hoped that by continuing to work closely with the FOGCWG, a sustainable and long-term business plan can be established - allowing the walled garden to play a positive role in the future of Granton and the surrounding area."

The Friends Group said: "We look forward to meeting Josh Littlejohn of Social Bite soon to begin working together on common aims for the walled garden's restoration and use. Friends Group members are excited by the opportunities to involve more local people and all the supportive organisations who have helped over the last two years with encouragement and advice."

crowdfunding seemed the way to reach another revenue stream."

The parents council hope that you might be able to find even the smallest of donations to help them raise around £60,000 to build a playground with proper play equipment.

They have set up a GoFundMe page which you can access at <http://bit.ly/2fX3vXU>

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Decorative elements include snowflakes and Christmas ornaments with text: Dinner Date, Shopping, Party, visit Family.

News in brief

Our newspaper aims to give you a flavour of Edinburgh whether you are visiting or if you live here all year round. Pick it up free and pass it on! If you need more copies then please contact us on 07791 406 498 to arrange a delivery

Police in Edinburgh made a further appeal for the 21 year-old French student Antoine Maury who has been missing since 24 October 2016.

Antoine was last seen around 10.30pm that night when he suddenly left his friends at Edinburgh College's Milton Road Campus.

Despite a sighting of someone later that evening near Duddingston Village in Holyrood Park who may have been Antoine, there have been few clues to his whereabouts.



A search by the Police Scotland Marine Unit in Duddingston Loch was conducted and over 100 volunteers joined a search around Holyrood at the end of October.

He is a white man of medium build and bright green eyes. He is around 6 feet tall with short brown hair, a beard and fair complexion. He has a tattoo of a bleeding hand on his forearm.

Chief Inspector Kevin McLean, Area Commander for North East Edinburgh, said: "Our search for Antoine is ongoing and we are still activity looking to trace him.

"I would like to pay tribute to Antoine's family and the dignity and bravery they have shown throughout this time. I would also like to thank the public and media for their



assistance throughout this investigation, their support has been crucial."

by Nigel Duncan

Plans to build a village in Edinburgh for homeless people have been confirmed by a Scottish social enterprise group.

Social Bite want to build ten purpose-built houses in the Granton area, and the move is in partnership with EDI Group and City of Edinburgh Council.

The project aims to produce an innovative, low cost, supervised, safe living environment for up to 20 homeless people for around 12 months each.

Work is expected to begin early next year and the first residents will move in by the summer.

Social Bite will work with the council and other homelessness charities to identify suitable residents.

The individuals will live in a managed environment where they can learn new skills and get their life back on track, however the site will not be open to anyone with serious addiction problems.

Residents will be people who are currently living in mostly unsupported temporary accommodation, shelters, and B&Bs. After 12 months the group will help transition the residents into permanent accommodation and provide employment in the company's broader business and partners supporting their journey back into society.

Bruce Mickel, of housebuilders MacTaggart and Mickel, will providing expertise on the technical aspects of the development.

SP Energy Networks staff are volunteering for the design and installation of the electrical network.

The units will be transportable should City of Edinburgh Council and EDI wish to develop the land on the Granton site. According to the council it currently costs an average of £47 per night to put someone up in a homelessness B&B adding up to £17,155 per person per year.

By housing 20 homeless people, the Social Bite Village will save the council almost £200,000 a year. Josh Littlejohn one of the co-founders of Social Bite said: "I'm not for a minute saying that Social Bite alone will eradicate homelessness or anywhere close to that. But we can create a blueprint. Working alongside other homelessness charities, we can help end the vicious cycle of homelessness for the individuals that we work with."

Construction costs for each house is expected to be around £30,000. Councillor Gavin Barrie, chair, EDI Group, said: "EDI actively explores temporary worthwhile uses for our land prior to development. The proposals put forward by Social Bite will have a meaningful and positive impact on those using the Social Bite Village."

by Nigel Duncan

CUSTOM House has been an iconic landmark in Leith since it was built in the 19th century.

At one time it was a bustling, buzzing building where taxes and levies were collected as goods from across the world passed through the port. Ships docked outside.

For the last 30 years, it has been blacked out and used as a store room for the National Museum of Scotland.

Now, under a new initiative, the imposing, stone-built structure, built in 1812 by Robert Reid, said to be the oldest purpose-built Custom House in Britain, is becoming a bustling centre for creative industries serving the local community.

Scottish Historic Buildings Trust (SHBT) is now calling for proposals on how other space inside the building can be used for short-term community projects. These can be one-off events to programmes lasting up to two weeks. To support this long-term vision, and to continue this historic building's revival, SHBT bosses want local community groups to submit proposals and the deadline is January 31, 2017 at 5pm.

The plans can be to engage the local population, deliver a community benefit, promote the economic revival of the area, support local services, enhance the understanding of the building and area and even to build evidence for the sustainable future of Custom House.

An SHBT official told The Edinburgh Reporter that they will pick four projects that can be programmed during 2017. The projects will have the use of space with no hire costs and with support from the SHBT team. An official added: "In planning your project you should consider the timing, materials needed, how to promote it, what volunteers you will need, what benefits this will bring to your group and the wider community." "You may wish to use the space for an art exhibition showcasing community skills, an exhibition to tell the story of Leith and Custom House, a series of talks or discussions or a network event."

A NEW housing development in

Balerno has been approved that will provide a wide range of homes to meet soaring market demand to the west of Edinburgh and help ease the housing shortfall.

Local councillors supported a recommendation to approve the CALA Homes development that will mean 206 new homes will be built on the site, located off Lanark Road West and adjacent to Old Newmills Road.

The NHSScotland 'Be Healthwise' campaign is fronted by Dr Owl and advises people that stocking up on over the counter medicines, checking any repeat prescriptions and ordering only what is needed to cover the holidays can help to avoid or deal with the most common winter ailments. It's also a good idea to know GP surgery and local pharmacy opening hours over the festive break.

Caledonian Sleeper guests are set to sample Scotland's finest fare with the introduction of a new on board menu.

Showcasing the country's rich natural larder, the seasonal menu offers a selection of freshly prepared meals and snacks created using ingredients from sustainable sources, all of which can be enjoyed in the comfort of the overnight service's Lounge Car.

Boasting popular dishes such as smoked salmon from the Summer Isles and hunter's chicken casserole, as well as sweet treat snacks such as Cobbs of Loch Ness millionaire shortbread, the new menu takes guests on a culinary tour of Scotland. To find out more about the Caledonian Sleeper or to make a reservation, visit sleeper.scot



The former police box opposite St Mary's Cathedral and John Lewis reopened in late November in its latest reincarnation as a food kiosk. Giuliano Liano, from Rome, who has lived in Edinburgh since 2013, will serve soup, coffee, rolls, burgers and pasta from his red-painted mini-kitchen, appropriately named 'Little Italy'. "Why did I come to Edinburgh? Because it's a very nice city. Am I worried about Brexit? No, not at all." Photo and words by Robin Gaudie

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Edinburgh Festival of Cycling 2017 will take place from 8 - 18 June 2017. More information as it unfolds on their website. Anyone who wants to exhibit or present at the festival should contact Kim Harding

Edinburgh Airport and Aegean Airlines, Greece's largest carrier and a Star Alliance member announced a new route from Edinburgh to Athens for summer 2017.

Operating on Tuesdays and Fridays between June 20th and September 19th 2017, the Edinburgh-Athens service provides passengers with a direct link between the Greek and Scottish Capital cities.

The flights will operate using Airbus A320 aircraft, offering a dual class configuration and full onboard service, which includes complimentary food and drink.

Queensferry Crossing now stretches from Fife to south shores as 105 of 110 deck units lifted leaves 52 metres, just over the length of an Olympic swimming pool, to complete the new bridge deck.

Engineers working on the Queensferry Crossing have lifted the re-



maining piece of deck between the north and centre tower deck spans. This means the deck on the new bridge now stretches from Fife right across to the end of the south fan.

The closure of the north and centre deck fans is the third of four principal closures required to complete the structure.

The City Art Centre stages A Sketch of the Universe: Art, Science and the Influence of D'Arcy Thompson, a major new exhibition of modern and contemporary art inspired by the pioneering Edinburgh-born biologist D'Arcy Thompson (1860 - 1948).

The exhibition - which features over 90 artworks and museum objects on loan from the D'Arcy Thompson Zoology Museum at the University of Dundee

A Sketch of the Universe: Art, Science and the Influence of D'Arcy Thompson

is on until 19 February 2017 at the City Art Centre, Free Admission

Edinburgh recognised one of its well-loved sons earlier in the year with The 2015 Edinburgh Award.

Sir Tom Farmer was selected to receive the Edinburgh Award from a shortlist of nominations cast by the Edinburgh public.

The Lord Provost said: "He is Edinburgh through and through. Born in Leith in 1940, he is a successful entrepreneur and keen philanthropist. He was educated at St Mary's RC Primary School and Holy Cross Academy.

"He began his career at 15 at a local tyre firm before famously founding one of Europe's largest and best known automotive repair



businesses, Kwik Fit.

"His interests include property development and interests in new business start ups. He is the current major shareholder of Hibernian Football Club (this got a big cheer!) and is Chancellor of Queen Margaret University.

"In 1997 Pope John Paul II bestowed upon him the Knight Commander, the Star of the St Gregory the Great, the highest honour the Roman Catholic church can give to a layman.

"In 2003 Sir Tom commissioned artist Tim Chalk to create the city's nativity scene which is used each year. This marvellous piece can be seen each year at the Nativity Carol concert is one of my favourite events in Edinburgh.

"In 2005 he was the first Scot to be given the Andrew Carnegie Medal for philanthropy. He is involved with The Duke of Edinburgh Award and started the Farmer Foundation.

"I think you should get this award for this reason. Every single time I have met you I have been impressed with the way you talk about Edin-

burgh. You make visitors jealous that they don't live here and you make us who live here proud of our city. That's why I think you deserve the Edinburgh Award."

Professor Norman Drummond paid tribute to Sir Tom's remarkable achievements, and particularly mentioned his gift of a large screen in Pilrig Park last year so that over 1000 Leith residents could watch the service and ceremony in Rosebank being conducted in the presence of HRH The Princess Royal in her capacity as Colonel in Chief of the Royal Scots.

Sir Tom Farmer said : "it is the result of the tremendous support and encouragement that I have received all my life from so many people. It started with my mother and father, the best mother and father that any boy could have.

"All of these people were there to cheer me and when I failed, they were there to encourage me to get up and try again.

"I am optimistic about the future. What fuels my optimism is people in government, local government and charities. Let's work together to make a difference. I feel that the future will be the result of the efforts we make to shape it. Nowhere is there a greater opportunity than here in this city."

An Edinburgh pub has been voted as the best bar none when it comes to pampering pooches.

The Earl of Marchmont on Marchmont Crescent has been crowned Scotland's best dog-friendly public house in the DogBuddy Dog-friendly Pub Awards 2016.

More than 7000 dog-loving customers visited the DogBuddy.com website to vote for their favourite local and it was The Earl of Marchmont - run by manager Duncan Stewart-Jones and Jon Eastwood in partnership with national pub operator Punch - which came out victorious in Scotland.

Edinburgh College of Art graduate Michelle Maxwell was joined by some of the young people from Pilton Youth & Children's Project to celebrate the completion of a 'Wizard of Oz' themed environmental art project which has transformed an unused green space in the heart of the Edinburgh neighbourhood.

TH Real Estate announced two major pre-let deals with Next and Everyman Cinemas at Edinburgh St James, representing a significant milestone for the 1.7 million sq ft scheme, which is one of the largest retail-led regeneration projects currently underway in the UK.

High street fashion brand, Next, which sells clothing, footwear and home products, has signed to take a

50,000 sq ft Scottish flagship store at Edinburgh St James. The popular British retailer will be one of 85 new shops over four floors at the scheme, which will comprise 850,000 sq ft of retail space in total, anchored by John Lewis.

Edinburgh St James will help move Edinburgh further up the UK retail rankings, from 13th to eighth, with Next's store adding significant calibre to the city's existing retail offer.

Editor Phyllis Stephen



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30 year old Alexander Lind, an Edinburgh-based carpenter and joiner with Truebuild Trade Services Ltd has been named joint winner of the Adult Apprentice of the Year award by the Scottish Building Apprenticeship and Training Council (SBATC) at a special ceremony held in the Scottish Parliament.

Ladies Business and Inspirational Lunches
Liaison Lunches
At the Royal Scots Club this autumn
Book now

Lunch with Lesley Riddoch



The Royal Scots Club has set up a series of lunches for ladies who want more than just a three course meal.

Their Liaison Lunches for 2016/17 feature good company and interesting speakers. On 19 January 2017 Lesley Riddoch will speak to the lunchtime crowd about the Scottish political landscape.

A former assistant editor of The Scotsman she is best known on radio and TV these days. Whatever your political persuasion this will be a most interesting lunch and one you would be wise not to miss!

The lunches take place at the Royal Scots Club on Abercromby Place on selected Thursdays at 12.30 and will finish by 2.00pm. The cost is £20 per person which includes a welcome drink and lunch.

To book your place call Ayesha on 0131 556 4270 or email events@royalscotsclub.com

The Royal Scots Club, with some 2,000 members, has an open membership policy for men and women. Annual fees and membership application forms are available from the Club secretary or on the website www.royalscotsclub.com

Secret Edinburgh

by Kerry Teakle

Overflowing with the hustle and bustle of tourists, many will be surprised to discover that Edinburgh is also peppered with hidden gems that even the locals don't always know about.

Did you know for example that Edinburgh has one of the most impressive collections of historic swim-

ming pools and many are still in use today?

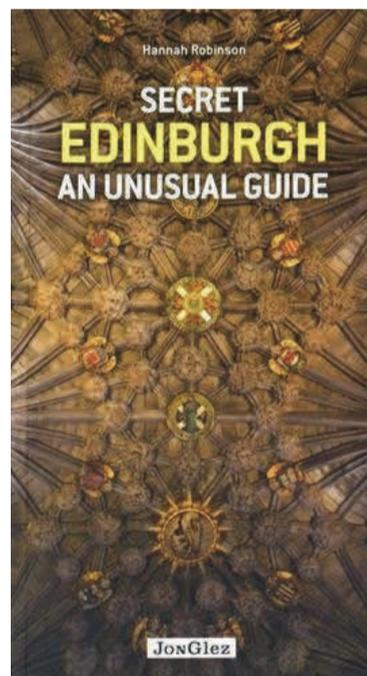
Edinburgh has one of the most impressive collections of historic swimming pools some of which are run by www.edinburghleisure.co.uk

Many of the UK's heritage baths are in a 'sad' state. There are 116 listed baths buildings, of which only 52 are operational or in the process of being refurbished. Yet in Edinburgh, there are six fully-functional historic Victorian pools, with five of them being run by Edinburgh Leisure, who also has the A-listed Royal Commonwealth Pool. The sixth is a private club - Drumsheugh Baths.

Edinburgh Leisure's pools can be found at Dalry, Glenogle in Stockbridge, Leith, Portobello Swim Centre and Warrender, home to the Warrender Baths Club, which is said to be the oldest, most famous and successful swimming club in Scotland, with the likes of Olympic Gold medalist David Wilkie having trained there.

Swimming clubs and bath houses were established from the 1850s following the 1846 Act to Encourage the Establishment of Public Baths and Wash Houses.

Many of the city's Victorian swim-



ming pools were part of a much wider scheme to build public baths to promote cleanliness and hygiene among the working classes, who did not have routine access at the time to sanitation.

The act encouraged local authorities to open up baths in areas of dense population and British cities led the way in building the first public baths since Roman times.

Whilst Edinburgh Leisure has kept the character of the 'baths', a considerable amount of money has been spent on them over the years, modernising them to meet the demands of the modern fitness customer, whilst keeping their charm, including the natural light, original architecture and quirky changing areas.

Each of the pools has their own

unique charm and history. Leith Victoria Swim Centre for example has two 'hot baths', located just off reception, which can be used by members of the public for a small fee of £1.75. Perfect for those living in the nearby modern flats, which may only have showers due to space saving or even the old tenement flats that may still not have a bath.

Portobello, or 'Porty' is also home to Edinburgh's only publicly available authentic Turkish Bath and aerotone, the forerunner to the modern Jacuzzi. With a choice of three hot rooms, a steam room, relaxation area and cold plunge pool, the Turkish Baths are the ultimate relaxation therapy. Like Leith, they also have two 'hot baths' available for hire.

The aerotone, one of only two in Scotland, can be rented by the hour. It was recently featured in a new book 'Secret Edinburgh - An Unusual Guide' by Hannah Robinson.

A fascinating book, far from the tourist traps and the crowded landmarks, you may have thought Edinburgh had no more to reveal, but the city still keeps many treasures hidden away in the most unexpected of places. It's an indispensable guide for those who thought they knew Edinburgh well, or who would like to explore the curiosities of this most secretive of cities.

Discover hidden gardens and clandestine art that even the neighbours overlook, visit the strangest of museums, get water-boarded in a prototype Jacuzzi and traumatised by Rabelaisian rafters, decrypt mysterious Masonic markings, step inside an Icelandic lava grotto, travel to the Wild West of Morningside, learn the secrets of Mrs Coade's stone, sniff out the dogs more dazzling than Greyfriars Bobbie, or track down traces of Edinburgh's Great Exhibition.

'Secret Edinburgh - An Unusual Guide' by Hannah Robinson - ISBN: 978-2-36195-148-1 - Price: £12.99

The Second Blast of the Trumpet

Words and photo by Roddy Martine.

To countermand the groundswell of misinformation that has dogged John Knox's reputation since the Disruption of 1843, when the Kirk was rent asunder by the formation of the Free Kirk, Marie Gilroy Macpherson has in the first and second volumes of her brilliantly researched trilogy, turned to the women in Knox's life: his godmother Elizabeth Hepburn, Prioress of St Mary's Abbey in Haddington; his



Marie Macpherson, author of *The Second Blast of the Trumpet* (c) Roddy Martine

high minded mother-in-law, and his first wife Marjory Bowes.

Following the widespread acclaim which greeted her first book *The First Blast of the Trumpet*, published in 2012, Marie is most appropriately launching *The Second Blast of the Trumpet* on Tuesday 29th November at St Mary's Parish Church in Haddington, where the young Knox began his turbulent career as an alter boy.

St. Mary's Music School choristers

St Mary's Music School Choristers

St Mary's Music school has a proud record and deep roots in the city it calls home. With a list of alumni that includes pianist Steven Osborne, conductor Garry Walker, composers Helen Grime and David Horne, soprano Susan Hamilton and well-known comedian, television presenter and classical singer Alexander Armstrong, the Edinburgh based school has made a rich mark on the music world in Scotland and beyond.

The school is Scotland's only independent specialist music school, opened in 1880 to provide the choristers at the newly built St Mary's Cathedral with an academic educa-

tion. It was originally located beside the Cathedral in Palmerston Place and began taking in instrumentalists in 1972. By 1995 it had outgrown its existing buildings and moved to its current home at Coates Hall in Grosvenor Crescent.

The school is a non-denominational, co-educational centre of music and academic excellence for the whole country. It attracts day and boarding pupils from across Scotland and beyond who are aiming to hone their musical gifts. Entry to the school is by audition and assessment, based on musical ability and potential, and regardless of personal financial circumstances.

The school has a wide range young instrumentalists, composers and singers, including a number of pupils who perform on traditional instruments such as bagpipes, accordion and clarsach. The school currently educates 80 pupils, with the choristers (all day pupils from P5-S2) making up the majority of the school's younger pupils.

The chorister programme is unique in Scotland and is highly regarded for its focus on developing high levels of musicianship and performance from an early age. In accordance with the ethos of the music school and as Scotland's only member of the Choir Schools' Association, the programme fosters important life qualities of dedication, discipline, and teamwork and provides strong foundations not just in music but in the lives of the choristers more generally.

Former St Mary's Music School pupil Alexander Armstrong described the experience of chorister-ship as the "single greatest leg-up a



child can be given in life", due to the skills nurtured as part of the chorister programme. Ken Taylor, Headteacher at St Mary's Music School, agrees, highlighting the focus on developing high levels of musicianship and performance at an early age.

Dr Taylor said: "While the education and experience of being a chorister is hard work, it is also full of opportunities. Not only do musically gifted children benefit from a total submersion in music, but also from the

daily opportunities arising from this unique form of education."

"St Mary's Music School is extremely proud of our rich heritage and unrivalled track record in educating some of the most talented young musicians in the country."

The choristers combine their school day with daily rehearsals and services, learning music from the fifteenth to the twenty-first century and learning to play two instru-

ments in addition to their singing. They participate in concerts and performances in the Cathedral and across the city, country and abroad, singing in some of the world's greatest concert venues. There are frequent television and radio broadcasts as well as the production of acclaimed CD recordings, the most recent in conjunction with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and featuring music by Stravinsky.

Closer to home, the small group of young people form close and lasting friendships throughout their years of study and performance. Whether rehearsing Christmas carols or playing football or preparing for a concert with a professional orchestra, the close-knit choristers experience real educational benefits through this shared experience.

Applications to join the chorister programme are open to girls and boys aged 7 - 9 who love to sing, and successful choristers will undertake a year's probationary training three times a week before entering the school, usually at the primary 5 stage. All choristers are provided with a bursary either through the Cathedral or the Scottish Govern-

ment for their tuition at the Music School.

Information on concerts given by St Mary's Music School can be found <http://www.st-marys-music-school-co.uk/>. The school also has an informative Facebook page which can be accessed at <https://www.facebook.com/stmarysmusicschool/> and a busy Twitter account at https://twitter.com/stmarys_music.

The choristers sing with the Choir of St Mary's Cathedral and details of Services and Choral Evensong can be found on the Cathedral's website <http://www.cathedral.net/>. More information on the chorister programme and application process can be accessed from Duncan Ferguson, Organist and Master of the Music, who is always happy to meet with prospective parents and pupils in advance of an audition to offer advice.

A celebrity line up will provide entertainment, silent and live auctions along with a restaurant tree raffle.

Funds will be raised for the Lord Provost's Charity, the OneCity Trust which is the social inclusion charity.

To reserve a table, seat, or donate raffle prizes or to discuss sponsorship opportunities, please contact lord.provost@edinburgh.gov.uk or t 0131 469 3856

Competitions

Win tickets for Musselburgh Racecourse on New Years Day!

Bring in the New Year with an exciting day of top quality jump racing featuring one of the most historic athletic events in the world, The New Year Sprint.

Featuring the Hogmaneigh Hurdle - this promises to be an exciting day of jump racing. Then continue your celebrations at this traditional highlight with a seasonal flavour - warm up with mulled cider and a haggis roll!

Win lunch for two at Forage & Chatter!

Answer a simple question to win a beautifully prepared three course lunch for two at the newest West End restaurant.

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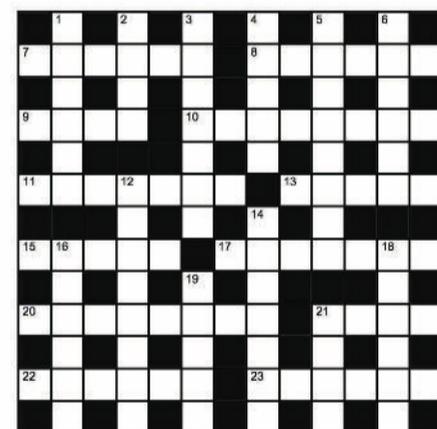
OneCity Trust Burns Supper

The Rt Hon Donald Wilson, the Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh will host a Burn's Supper at Prestonfield House Hotel on 26 January 2017, and you are invited!

Tables of 10 are £1,000 which includes a champagne reception and three course dinner with wine.



Edinburgh Reporter Crossword No. 1.



Across

- 7 Favourite bar of (15) Across (6)
- 8 "Jam Tarts" football team (6)
- 9 Every little girl's dream present (4)
- 10 Drive through the Meadows ? (8)
- 11 Scott's Waverley Novels found here ? (7)
- 13 Electronic methods of copying (5)
- 15 Edinburgh dective whose favourite bar was (7)Across (5)
- 17 I pep bag up for musical instrument (7)
- 20 One who chats on line ? (1,7)
- 21 Bartholomews made these in Edinburgh (4)
- 22 Tailors superior to Fifty-Shilling Tailors. (6)
- 23 Close to a tavern off Cockburn Street (6)

Down

- 1 Could be drunk in (7)across (6)
- 2 Edinburgh's very religious corner ! (4)
- 3 Pioneer Edinburgh photographer (7)
- 4 Contentious fuel of the future (5)
- 5 Not diva's cup but similar for tennis! (5,3)
- 6 Lets on it's missing (6)
- 12 Edinburgh enjoys their visits (8)
- 14 Roman Emperor famous for building a wall ! (7)
- 16 Very popular social event (3,3)
- 18 Samuel, one of the Scottish Colourists (6)
- 19 Destiny of this historical item ? (5)
- 21 Came by a staff of authority (4)

The Edinburgh Reporter Advent Calendar 2016

These are our gift suggestions for the stocking fillers you need to find this Christmas.

1. From planning recipes for Christmas day and festive parties to thinking up the perfect gift idea, the buzz of Christmas planning can sometimes be a little overwhelming. But this December, the Edinburgh New Town Cookery School (ENTCS) has a feast of festive foodie courses to help keep that buzz at a pleasant simmer. From 'Christmas Baking' to 'Easy Entertaining' and 'Children's Baking', these courses are designed to inspire festive flavours, add some Christmas sparkle to a party, or simply distract the kids while Christmas shopping gets completed.

Full details of the Christmas courses, and a flavour of the 2017 programme, are available on the Edinburgh New Town Cookery School website - <http://www.entcs.co.uk/calendar>



2. The Edinburgh Sketcher has a range of gift ideas for you including Christmas cards sent straight to your door. From cushions to limited edition mounted prints and tea towels to dry your dishes there is something here to remind you of Edinburgh!

3. For Hibs' fans: Join the 11,000 season ticket holders at Easter Road for every home match with a half season ticket - on sale now!

The half season ticket covers all nine home league matches in 2017, plus a bonus tenth match against Raith Rovers on Saturday 24 December.

4. If a Christmas engagement is on your list then Serap Couture on William Street will be your number one stop after Christmas!

Serap makes beautiful dresses for brides and bridal party from her Edinburgh atelier. She will dress you from top to toe in couture wonderfulness that is nothing like any of your friends or other guests are wearing. She told The Edinburgh Reporter: "The difference between an off the peg number and something which is 'couture' is that it is made to measure. You feel that outfit belongs to you! All of our beautiful



outfits are made with quality designer fabrics which the customer chooses."

Serap Couture 51 William St t 07582601818

5. Buy a ticket to Musselburgh Racecourse for a spectacular day out only six miles from the city centre. The fun and excitement of the jumps season started on 2 November but there are race meetings all year with raceday packages from an entrance ticket to a full blown hospitality package with lunch and champagne. <http://bit.ly/2gKLDQR>

6. Buy tickets for the Hogmanay Ceilidh which is on at The Queen's Hall on 31 December from 9.00pm. Stay in the warm and dry where you will find food, music and dancing to see the New Year in in style. Or treat someone to tickets for one of their 2017 concerts like Barbara Dickson, Madeleine Peyroux or the Fun Lovin' Criminals.

7. It is never too late to quit smoking. Whatever age the smoker is, if they make the decision to stop, their health will benefit. However, the sooner a person quits; the faster the body can recover and the risk of developing serious health conditions will decrease. Email mike.smith@mgs-hypnotherapy-services.co.uk to buy them as a gift. T 07521 353 787

8. Why not treat your loved one to a Hearts Christmas jumper?! The jumper was a bestseller at Tynecastle last year and is now available in both adult and children sizes. Price £35 for adult; £25 for children - available online via the Hearts website or at the Hearts shop at Tynecastle.

Hearts Christmas team will be pleased to take your calls on 0131 200 7271 or 0131 200 7282. This line will operate 10am - 5pm Monday - Friday.

Or, if you get fed up with the Christmas offerings on the television on the big day and have had enough of Granny Isabel moaning about the cost of Christmas and how it was different in her younger days, why not lose yourself in a good book? The Edinburgh Reporter's Mike Smith's Hearts Greatest Games is a must-read for every Jambo.

From the thousands of matches ever played by Heart of Midlothian,

stretching from the club's Victorian foundation to the Vladimir Romanov era, here are 50 of Hearts' most glorious, epochal and thrilling games of all! Expertly presented in evocative historical context, and described incident-by-incident in atmospheric detail, *Hearts Greatest Games* offers a terrace ticket back in time, taking in everything from the



club's first national honour, the Scottish Cup win of 1891, to the historic Edinburgh derby Scottish cup win of 2012.

9. Treat somebody to a meal at Forage and Chatter. This is one of the new restaurants in Edinburgh which has just opened a few weeks ago, making a home for itself in one of the best cities in the world.

Cameron McNeil will welcome you with open arms to his new restaurant where the menu features something foraged in each course. That could be seaweed or wild mushrooms. Just ask as all of the staff know the menu inside out and will definitely be able to guide you in your choices. They will know where everything came from.

The Christmas menu is offered as private dining or for larger groups who may wish to take over the whole restaurant.

Forage and Chatter 1a Alva Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4PH t: 0131 225 4599

e: enquiries@forageandchatter.co.uk

10. You know those gifts. A novelty tie that's never worn, the alarm clock that hops around, that third rice cooker you've never needed.

Those gifts you look at once, then store on a shelf until you move house again.



And sometimes when you're shopping, you end up buying these types of gifts for someone who deserves more. Because there's just no time to think about what everyone wants, and no time to go out and look at all the options.

But we're going to give you an idea that's a little different. It's memorable, it's educational, and there's no chance it'll get left on some shelf in the pantry.

It's a gift voucher for award-winning tours around the UK and Ireland with Rabbie's Trail Burners.

If your loved one likes whisky they can choose to go on a day tour out to distilleries. If they're crazy about coastlines they can go on a tour around the scenic Scottish Islands.

The vouchers range from £20 - £500 and are available to purchase online.

Give the gift of travel this year and find out more here:

https://www.rabbies.com/en/about-us/FAQs/gift_voucher

11. All the lovely independent traders in Stockbridge who are fea-



ured in our **Focus on Stockbridge** will be happy to help you with your Christmas shopping. Everything from children's clothes, preloved goods to books there!

12. The Wee Restaurant on Frederick Street is the second delicious offering from husband and wife team Craig and Vikki Wood - they opening their first in the picturesque village of North Queensferry in Fife 10 years ago. Chef Craig's ethos to serve simple good food and wine in a relaxed atmosphere is now delighting diners in the capital.

Craig won Catering Scotland's prestigious 'Chef of the Year' Award in 2015, and his talent shines through in menus of classic French dishes given a imaginative spin and beauti-

fully presented on the plate.

It's obvious that Craig cares passionately about the provenance of his ingredients as top-notch Scottish ingredients are listed throughout the festive menu. Ingredients like Peelham Farm saucisson, mussels from Shetland, wood pigeon from Perthshire and cheeses from Iain Mellis.

For the whole of December, The Wee Restaurant is serving a carefully-crafted Festive menu at lunch and dinner priced at £28.50 for two courses, or £36 for three.

In addition to the Festive Menu, a regularly-changing Menu du Jour is offered every lunchtime and all evening Tuesdays to Thursdays. It's great for the lighter appetite and is incredibly good value at £16 for two courses or £20 for three.

This is the perfect city centre restaurant for a festive get-together with



great food in stylish surroundings. Bookings are also being taken for Christmas Eve and Hogmanay.

And for those of you looking for a gift with a difference, they also sell gift vouchers on their website that can be redeemed in either restaurant. The perfect treat for the foodie in your life!

The Wee Restaurant 61 Frederick Street Edinburgh t: 0131 225 7983

www.theweerestaurant.co.uk

13. Go for lunch at The White House on Niddrie Mains Road, and take your friends with you. As you will see the menu is wide and varied, and the prices delicious!

The White House Kitchen 70 Niddrie Mains Road, EH16 4BG

t 0131 468 1934 to book

14. Send them a book! Alan Cumming has written another book about his extraordinary life. It is called *You Gotta Get Bigger Dreams* and it is on sale now from Blackwells with free delivery.

A magical concoction of the mischievous, tender, whimsical, and debauched real-life adventures, told in his own words and pictures. Alan Cumming is a genuine quadruple threat - an internationally acclaimed, award-winning star of stage, television, and film, as well as a New York Times best-selling author whose real-life vivacity, wit, and charm shine through every page of his

third book. In forty-five picture essays, he recounts his real-life adventures (and often, misadventures), illustrated by his own photographs.

15. For a 'thoughtful' gift for Christmas, try a membership of The Scotch Malt Whisky Society.

It is a gift that works for established whisky fans AND whisky novices as great way to explore the whisky world further. The Society is based in UK, with a private members bar in London, but has members and bars all over the world.

With 20+ different whiskies to choose from each month, the membership offers you access to blended whisky and single malt whisky.

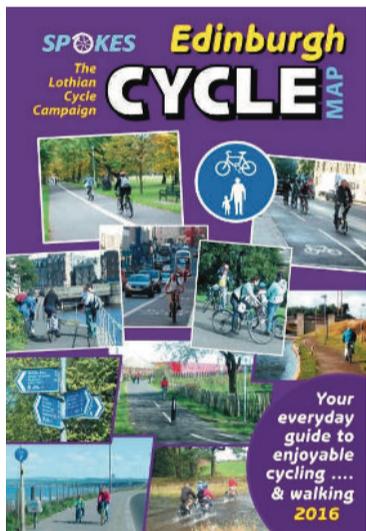
A gift membership costs £122 and includes a beautiful luxurious gift box containing 3 single cask, single malt whisky samples and a notebook.

<https://www.smws.com/society-membership>

16. Another book suggestion perhaps? This time on the theme of historical fiction and John Knox.

Roddy Martine wrote about the book for The Edinburgh Reporter :

"For going on five centuries the



Scottish psyche has been overshadowed by the spectre of John Knox, founder of the Church of Scotland. Firebrand of hell and damnation, religious zealot, and misogynist, hugely and deliberately misunderstood, it is time that this unlikely candidate for a romantic historical novel was given a makeover.

To countermand the groundswell of misinformation that has dogged Knox's reputation since the Disruption of 1843, when the Kirk was rent asunder by the formation of the Free Kirk, Marie Gilroy Macpherson has in the first and second volumes of her brilliantly researched trilogy, turned to the women in Knox's life: his godmother Elizabeth Hepburn, Prioress of St Mary's Abbey in Haddington; his high minded mother-in-law, and his first wife Marjory Bowes.

"What emerges is that Knox's admiration of the "Monstrous Regiment of Women" was, in truth, far from

being a dislike of women, but a targeted response to the three patriarchal rulers of his generation - Scotland's Queen Regent, Marie de Guise; Elizabeth I of England, and France's Queen Catherine de Medici. Aside from this, as Marie reveals, John Knox rather liked women.

"Brought up in Musselburgh on the site of the Battle of Pinkie, and in sight of Fa-side Castle, Marie says that all of her life she has been haunted by tales and legends of the past. Although she has travelled widely, teaching languages and literature, across Europe, from Madrid to Moscow, she has never lost her passion for the rich history and culture of her native Scotland."

The Second Blast of the Trumpet - the second book in the Knox Trilogy. Marie Macpherson. Knox Robinson (London and New York). £20.00. ISBN978-1-906483-21-5.

17. Newington Coffee shop My Front Room have an online shop for you to buy coffee for someone as a lovely unusual gift.

The shop now sells their most popular items such 250g bags of Brazilian Oberon single origin arabica coffee bean (their 'house' coffee), Shibui Tea bags and loose leaf, Dollop & Scoff jams and chutneys that they use on their scones and sandwiches, as well as a new addition to their range, Pacari Organic Dark Chocolate.

For the Christmas period (and hopefully beyond), My Front Room will be producing gift boxes/hampers of these items so that you can avail of the My Front Room experience at home!

Deliveries within the Edinburgh City Centre are also FREE! My Front Room 5 Salisbury Place EH9 1SL t 0131 667 7024

18. What could be more appropriate for the Mac and iPhone lover than a pre-paid card loaded up with cash which allows the recipient to buy Apps or music from the iTunes store

You can send the card by post or by email.



19. Climbing is a great way to exercise both body and mind, but you do need someone to show you the ropes.

Edinburgh Leisure's taster and starter courses at EICA: Ratho give you the chance to try climbing for the first time, and teach you all the basics of harnesses, knots, belaying, following a climbing route, and coming down again.

Their Santa Claus Start Up Climbing

Course for 2 people as part of a group session, plus a further 2 x 1hr personal coaching sessions costs £125 (£25 discount). Call EICA:Ratho to book - 0131 333 6333

20. What better gift for the cyclist or walker in your life than a map?

The SPOKES Edinburgh Cycle Map is an essential to help you find the roads and paths which criss cross the city and which are graded according to their suitability for cyclists. The latest map also includes proposed new routes.

There are also three Lothians maps which allow you to go a bit further afield and have information on places to visit.

21. Buy a homeless person a suspended coffee today with Social Bite.

What is a suspended coffee? You pay it forward and then a homeless person can redeem a cup of coffee at a Social Bite shop. And better than that you can buy them their Christmas dinner too.

Pay in advance for a coffee or any item of food from their menu and a local homeless person can come into their shop to claim it. Text BITE00 £5 to 70070, or donate online through their JustGiving page.

22. Support the NMS by gifting membership to your friends or family. Memberships start from £39 but offer free entry to exhibitions and days out across four museums.

The benefits go on as the membership also entitles you to a 10% discount in shops and 20% in the cafés! You also get the Explorer magazine delivered three times a year.

23. Give to a charity?

Edinburgh based charity Sick Kids Friends Foundation is calling out to communities around the country to 'Make Christmas Magical' for children in hospital over the festive period.

A donation of £5 per month (with Gift Aid) a total of £75, could provide a screening of a Christmas film with treats in the hospital so that children and their families don't miss out on spending time together. £30 could cover the cost of one memory box, ensuring that bereaved parents get the chance to save precious memories of their child, so poignant at Christmas. A donation of £200 or £13 per month (with Gift Aid) could provide Christmas story telling for children on the wards, transporting them to magical worlds and on magnificent adventures during the festive period.

If you would like more information on how to support the Sick Kids Friend Foundation Christmas appeal, visit the website here: <https://www.edinburghsickkids.org/donate>

24. Buy someone a pantomime ticket

- for next year!

The King's Theatre Edinburgh has announced *Cinderella* as the King's pantomime for 2017/18.

Cinderella opens on Saturday 2 December 2017 and runs until Sunday 21 January 2018, and will once again star Edinburgh panto legends Allan Stewart, Andy Gray and Grant Stott.

Packed with all of the traditional pantomime ingredients audiences expect, *Cinderella* features laugh out loud comedy, stunning scenery, beautiful costumes, boos and hisses!

With over 90,000 theatregoers attending pantomime at The King's Theatre Edinburgh every Xmas, it's never too early to book for next year's show!

Tickets on sale to Friends & Groups on Monday 6 February 2017, and on General Sale from Monday 13 February 2017. Tickets can be booked on 0131 529 6000 or online at www.edtheatres.com/cinderella

Edinburgh for Entrepreneurs!



Liz McAreavey, CEO of Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce and Jim Galloway of the City of Edinburgh Council with the award

Edinburgh beat off strong competition from Cambridge, Leeds, London and Manchester to win the title of 'British Entrepreneurial City of the Year'.

The Capital was judged in the Great British Entrepreneur Awards against four key criteria: quality of life that attracts smart, entrepreneurial people; access to capital and talent;

start-up ecosystems and entrepreneurial culture; and access to mentors and support networks.

This is more good news for the city following announcements earlier this month that Edinburgh ranked third in the Good Growth for Cities Report and the Readers of European Business Magazine voted Edinburgh as the best city to locate your tech business.

The Council also announced last week that Edinburgh is to host EURO CITIES in 2018, when they will welcome all Europe's major city leaders to the Capital.

Cllr Gavin Barrie, Economy Convener, said: "I'm delighted that Edinburgh has won yet another top business award, this time being recognised as a key centre for entrepreneurship."

"Edinburgh has one of Europe's most vibrant entrepreneurial support ecosystems ranging from Scotland's top performing Business Gateway region supporting start up businesses through to our world class universities promoting innovation and commercialisation. The city also has private sector incubation and accelerator initiatives such as Codebase, Creative Exchange and Entrepreneurial Spark."

"The strongest community of Angel Investors and venture capitalists per head of population in Europe is also located in Edinburgh, while Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce spearheads Scotland's most comprehensive mentor matching programme."

ART - The View from Here

The extraordinary richness of the photography collection at the National Galleries of Scotland will be showcased in a new exhibition at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery (SNPG) this autumn.

The View from Here brings together 70 key works which chart the history of landscape photography over the course of 175 years, from the earliest days of the medium to the present day.

Stunning images of the Egyptian pyramids, taken when photography was a relatively new art form, intensely beautiful photographs of the Outer Hebrides taken by the legendary American artist Paul Strand (1890-1976) and thought-provoking landscapes by British-American photographer Sze Tsung Leong (b. 1970), which address a growing uniformity in our globalised environment, will be among the highlights of this exhibition.

Many of the works on show have rarely been seen before, and there will also be a number of new acquisitions on display for the first time, including work by one of the foremost contemporary landscape photographers in the world, Thomas Joshua Cooper (b.1946), and Félix Thiollier (1842-1914), a French industrialist who gave up his business at the age of 37 to pursue photography, and whose work was influenced by the landscape painter Camille Corot.

The exhibition will begin with a rarely-seen daguerreotype of the Niagara Falls, taken in around 1855 by Platt D. Babbitt (d.1879), which records a group of tourists on the cliffs surrounding the famous North American spectacle. Many early landscape photographs such as this spoke to a growing audience of tourists-or armchair travellers-who were eager to see different sights and locations around the world. The early section of *The View from Here* will also include some remarkable views of the monuments of Ancient

Egypt captured by Francis Frith (1822-98), Victorian Britain's most prolific photographer working in the Middle East.

Scotland's landscape was also celebrated in the nineteenth century by photographers such as James Valentine (1815-79) and George Washington Wilson (1823-93), whose prints of Highland landscapes and Scottish towns and villages were sold all over the world. Evoking and illustrating many of the settings described in the novels of Sir Walter Scott, these images were universal in their appeal.

Another outstanding photographer whose work features in the exhibition, Fay Godwin (1931-2005) began working in portraiture before focusing on landscape. Like Strand, Godwin often collaborated with writers to explore the subject of the land more fully. The photographs of Scotland's rural routes were included in a book project on *The Whisky Roads of Scotland*, with Derek Cooper providing the accompanying text.

Patricia MacDonald (b.1945) has taken to the skies to capture the Scottish scenery, recognising that the shifts and environmental changes in the landscape were often best seen from above. Her aerial views of hills, glens, forests and rivers are colourful compositions in which the viewer is completely absorbed by the seemingly abstract scene below.

Many of the works in *The View from Here* explore the concept of landscape from a contemporary perspective that addresses the emergence of a single global landscape. Sze Tsung Leong's *Horizons* series, illustrates this tendency perfectly, linking up several distinct places around the world in one seemingly infinite horizon. Other practitioners question the use and alteration of the land by utilising technology to change the photographic image. Michael Reisch, who was born in 1964 in Germany, created an intriguing monumental

view of the Scottish Highlands in which he digitally removed all signs of the built roads to effectively restore the land to its original state.

From major names to lesser-known characters, views of far-off lands or scenes close to home, *The View from Here* will provide a visual celebration of the many landscape views represented in the collection of the National Galleries of Scotland.

Christopher Baker, Director, Scottish National Portrait Gallery said: "The photography collection of the National Galleries of Scotland is a wonderfully rich resource which is gradually growing with impressive acquisitions. The wealth of imagery it encompasses will be made accessible in an exciting way through the new series of thematic exhibitions of which 'The View from Here' is the first. They will combine iconic images with less well known works and Scottish and international practice, so inspiring a fresh appreciation of this extraordinary art form."

THE VIEW FROM HERE: LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE NATIONAL GALLERIES OF SCOTLAND

29 October 2016 to 30 April 2017
Scottish National Portrait Gallery 1
Queen Street, Edinburgh EH2 1JD
0131 624 6200 | Admission FREE
#ViewFromHere

Dads Rock



Dad's Rock is an Edinburgh charity run by Barry, David and Thomas. They are all dads themselves and organise free playgroups across the city for fathers and their children www.dadsrock.org.uk

They put together a bumper list of things to do in Edinburgh with children of various ages. The whole list is on our website.

From Barry's list his top pick is **Portobello beach**

I was visiting my mother in Newcastle with my 3 year old daughter, I suggested we go to the beach because it was such a nice sunny day. To my amazement she said 'What can you do there?'. What? Sandcastles, drawing massive cartoon char-

acters in the sand, throwing stones in the sea, splashing around in the sea, playing with balls/hoops/frisbee.....Along the prom it is brilliant for learning to ride a bike or scooter, balance walking along the sea wall, jumping onto the sand. The beach at Portobello has so much to do.....and there are two play parks too. Even when the weather is bad a beach is still a load of fun if you have your hat and coat.

David has a different top place to go....

My daughter loves Time Twisters as she can climb really high and see everyone below. She loves to shout for me and then hide. I've yet to attempt to even climb over the hurdles and hurtle through the jungle of hanging obstructions, but there again, it's not for adults!!

We usually go either first thing in the day or mid-afternoon (straight after school) when it's a wee bit quieter. On a great bus route and has free parking.

Thomas has an 8 year-old son and this is their top place to go : Colinton Dell.

I just know it as the Dell, and spent much time there myself when I was young. The entrance to the path/walkway is at Longstone, across the road from The Water of Leith visitor centre which is free and well worth a visit too!

The Dell path is mostly covered by trees and takes you along to Colinton village. I believe you can walk further, but we've not done that yet!

The path winds along the water of Leith, so you are always close to the water. We've seen tons of wildlife there and had many a sword fight! There's some cool little buildings to discover along the way, and at times the path opens up into a field or two. In Colinton there is also a fab play park, called Spylaw park too.

But all three declare the National Museum of Scotland on Chambers Street hits the spot. Thomas sums it up nicely: "What can be said about the Museum on Chambers Street that's not already been said?"

"It's another of my real favourites, I've spent so many hours here over my life and love how it's constantly changing and opening up new spaces. My son loves the room with the fish game, and discovery tree. This room is on the fifth floor, you could spend days in the Museum and still not see everything!

"It's great for running around and has now got some good lift access and nice big toilets."

So if you see a grown man running around the museum you know now who it is.....

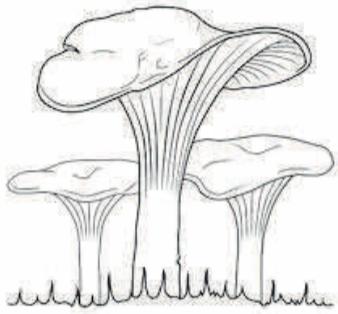


The team at People's Postcode Lottery had an early Christmas surprise when ambassador and TV Presenter, Jeff Brazier, came into the Edinburgh office recently. Jeff, who is usually knocking on winners' doors and presenting them with cheques, was on hand to find out more about player-supported charities and to have a go at selling tickets.



The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and Minister at Cramond Kirk in Edinburgh, Rt Rev Dr Russell Barr with Gais Masri, 19, who came to Scotland from Syria as a refugee, light a candle together at 5 pm, the time when people across the country lit beacons and candles on Sunday 20 November to let the people of Syria know they are not forgotten. Photo by Ali Bryden, University of Edinburgh Chaplaincy.

Forage & Chatter



FORAGE & CHATTER

by Phyllis Stephen

Looking for somewhere new to eat? Then head for the West End where it is all happening.

Forage and Chatter may be the new kid on the block in Alva Street - but owner and manager Cameron McNeil is very clear in what he is doing, and he has the experience to back it up.

He told The Edinburgh Reporter that his restaurant serves the best (very) locally sourced and foraged produce. All of the food comes from within the local area, and the concept involves brilliant local produce done well.

One sommelier, two front of house staff and three chefs all help to make this restaurant tick. Cameron explained: "The chefs have trained with Tom Kitchin and at Prestonfield Hotel and then they all worked together at The Balmoral, so they are a very strong unit under Head Chef Nick, and there is a lot of camaraderie among them. There's a good vibe in the kitchen when they're cooking!"

Meals include foraged items on every plate that go out from the kitchen. Everything is Scottish in this restaurant, and every member of staff can tell you exactly what is on your dish and where it came from.

The restaurant gets its plants such as rosemary and mint from the Secret Herb House Garden. Their main focus is on bringing the best of Scottish produce to your plate at affordable prices.

And we discovered that foraging is about so much more than just mushrooms! Cameron explained: "Whether you are foraging by the sea for seaweed or you're looking for one of the many different varieties of Scottish mushrooms, there are a lot of different items to pick. Even within the city centre there are local berries that can be used."

But the foraging is not conducted by McNeil himself. Instead it is the job of a professional forager who has a proper commercial license.

The menu offers lots of choice for

the occasional vegetarian (like me) or the committed meat eater.

McNeil told us what he likes to eat: "My favourite food is simple and well-cooked. I like a pork chop cooked to perfection or a filet of fish cooked really well. I don't really like too much butter or dairy. I just like clean, properly cooked food."

The restaurant has been open for a matter of weeks and already the reviews have been glowing. On Open Table his food is called 'excellent' and 'top quality', and the experience is described as 'wonderful'. This is exactly what McNeil wants to hear now that he has his own place, destined to be the first of many if the ambitious restaurateur has his way.

He worked previously at Lime Wood and with the Hotel du Vin entrepreneur Robin Hutson.

This restaurant is in the basement in Alva Street, the lighting has been worked on to improve daylighting, and it has a conservatory at the back, perfect for private gatherings.

The tweed-covered seating probably gives you the clue to McNeil's own roots, some of which lie in the Highlands, but the copper-topped bar at the front of the restaurant says that this bar is very much mapped as a destination for drinks and cocktails.

Perfect for lunch, drinks and dinner this is a good space for a party or large groups with its conservatory.

Lunches are currently on offer at £14.95 for two courses and £17.95 for a three course meal with a Christmas due in December.

Forage and Chatter 1a Alva Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4PH T 0131 225 4599

e: enquiries@forageandchatter.co.uk

Letter to the Editor

23 November 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

STEAM SOLUTION

My recent experience of the Borders Railway shows that the only trains which seem consistently to run timeously are the specials drawn by steam locomotives some of which are more than 75 years old.

Perhaps the answer to Scotland's current Railway Crisis is to build many more to similar or even modernised designs. If Scottish engineering companies are no longer up to this, then India still has the capability and I'm sure that a large locomotive order to the Indian sub-continent would do much to repair the damage by Mrs May's recent visit.

John Eoin Douglas, Edinburgh

Obituary: Bill Purves

by Tim Maguire, Celebrant, Caledonian Humanist Association

Bill Purves was born in Edinburgh on 4 February 1934, the only child to William and Edith Purves who lived in Seaview Terrace in Joppa.

Bill's father was an actuary, but Bill was already more artistically and practically inclined. Despite that, after attending Melville College, which was then in Melville Street, Bill's father got him a job in insurance with Guardian Royal Exchange who were in the building on the corner of George Street that now houses the restaurant Amarone.

Bill hated the boring world of insurance and everything about it, so it's hardly surprising that he didn't do as well as his father had hoped, but

the one good thing about being there was that he could do his work quickly and spent the rest of his time at the Lane Sales or reading books.

He took the early lunch hour that nobody else wanted, so that having gulped down a bite to eat he would be round at the auctions, buying furniture, both to resell and to furnish the house. He had the gift of seeing the beauty in things that others missed, and he enjoyed restoring his finds himself.

Bill had two spells on George Street, broken up by a two-year spell in the Naval Intelligence Section, which is how he spent his National Service, listening in on Russian radio traffic at the height of the Cold War. He was posted to Cuxhaven near Hamburg, where he had to learn Russian, and of course German too, and even after his National Service had finished, he was recalled as a reservist every year for several years afterwards.

It was in 1955 that Bill met his first wife, Marion Pringle, and they married and bought a flat at number 1, Scotland Street four years later in 1959.

They had two daughters, Caroline and Catherine.

By this time, Bill's love of classic cars was already evident, as he and Marion had bought their first car, a 1934

architectural history, and as part of his course one year he travelled to the north of Italy in his beloved Belinda to study architecture.

With a delicious irony Bill's tutor was Anthony Blunt, who famously, or perhaps infamously, passed secrets to Moscow while working for MI5 during the Second World War. Bill did rather wonder why it was that Blunt took a sabbatical year while Bill was there, but that is yet another question about The Cambridge Spy Ring that will probably never be answered.

Bill loved the freedom of London: it was the swinging sixties after all. Both girls remember that he always loved bright clothes, and he wore beautiful jewel-coloured shirts with his velvet jacket. Sandra explained to me he had actually designed some of his own clothes and some of his ideas were made up for him on Carnaby Street, on the grooviest street in what was at the time the world's most fashionable city. And later, when the girls were 10 and 8, Bill took them to Carnaby Street to buy them hot pants, the height of fashion in 1970.

It was in 1968 that he met the woman who was to become the love of his life, at a party in Marylebone. Sandra Whitlam was an engineer, and they soon found themselves madly in love.

It was at around this time that Bill



Jowett, which his father named Belinda. Every summer the family packed Belinda to the gunnels and spent July and August camping at Largo, in Fife.

It was no ordinary tent. Bill designed the tent himself and commissioned Blacks of Greenock to manufacture it for his family. And in the summer of 1965, they remember waving together from the sand dunes at the flower-decked train that was the last on the East of Fife railway line to Elie and beyond, before the Beeching cuts.

Bill continued to work at Guardian Royal Exchange until the year he took advantage of the chance to attend the Courtauld Institute in London as a mature student, where he served a term as president of the Student's Union. Bill studied art and

started his lighting business on St Stephen Street, which in the early 1970s pretty much smelled of pot and patchouli oil - all except for Mr Purves's Lamp Emporium at number 59, which smelled strongly of paraffin.

Mr Purves's Lamp Emporium didn't keep regular hours. Bill did try to get people to sit in for him but that didn't really work. Bill still had to look after his father who by then was in a wheelchair, and that meant that sometimes Bill simply had to drop everything and run.

William (Bill) Purves Born Edinburgh 4 February 1934 and died Edinburgh 6 October 2016



Edinburgh-born war veteran Tom Gilzean (96) has been raising money on the streets of Edinburgh for The Sick Kids Friends Foundation for 33 years. He needed help to repair his wheelchair so he can continue his charity work and SKFF were able to help him.



24 Doors of Advent / 1-24 December 2016

The free event 24 Doors of Advent returns from 1 - 24 December, allowing you to peep behind usually closed doors throughout the city during advent! Working with Festival of Architecture and RIAS, 24 Doors of Advent opens many new doors for you to explore what's behind this year including Royal Lyceum Theatre, the Chapel of St Albert the Great & BT Murrayfield Stadium. The full programme announced soon.

Balloon Ride / 19 November 2016 - 7 January 2017

Watch the little ones' faces light up as they take to the skies in this super fun balloon ride! Venue: Santa Land, in East Princes Street Gardens, which features Santa's Grotto, a Christmas Tree Maze, the Santa Train, and family-friendly rides the Race-a-Rama, Carousel, Helter Skelter, Ice Wall, Reindeer Ride, Crazy Cars and a Rollercoaster. Tickets from £2.5 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Big Wheel / 19 November 2016 - 7 January 2017

Open from 10 a.m. each day in the heart of the city centre, the observational Big Wheel has thirty-six enclosed, weather-proof pods, each seating six people and showing unrivalled views of Edinburgh. As the pod door closes, you'll hear a short historical tour of the view and the City. One ride on the Big Wheel won't be enough! The Big Wheel is located in East Princes Street Gardens which also hosts the Star Flyer rides again this year, as well as hosting a carousel bar and the European Christmas market filled with bespoke goods. Tickets from £6 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Carousel / 19 November 2016 - 7 January 2017

The stunning merry-go-round returns to Santa Land. Suitable for all the family. Venue: Santa Land, in East Princes Street Gardens, which features Santa's Grotto, a Christmas Tree Maze, the Santa Train, and family-friendly rides the Race-a-Rama, Helter Skelter, Ice Wall, Reindeer Ride, Crazy Cars and a Rollercoaster. Tickets from £3.5 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Christmas Tree Maze / 19 November 2016 - 7 January 2017

Prepare to get lost in the magical Christmas Tree Maze! A joy for children and adults alike - can you make your way to the centre and back again? Inside you'll also discover the Elves' workshop, where Santa's little helpers will be waiting for you with a wee treat. Venue: Santa Land, in East Princes Street Gardens, which features Santa's Grotto, a Christmas Tree Maze, the Santa Train, and family-friendly rides the Race-a-Rama, Carousel, Helter Skelter, Ice Wall, Reindeer Ride, Crazy Cars and a Rollercoaster. Tickets from £3.5 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Crazy Cars / 19 November 2016 - 7 January 2017

New to Santa Land this year, even the little ones can climb into the drivers seat and beat the traffic by hopping onboard the Crazy Cars. Venue: Santa Land, in East Princes Street Gardens, which features Santa's Grotto, the Santa Train, and family-friendly rides the Race-a-Rama, Carousel, Helter Skelter, Ice Wall, Reindeer Ride and a Rollercoaster. Tickets from £2 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Double Carousel / 19 November 2016 - 7 January 2017

Head down to East Princes Street Gardens and ride our beautiful, double-tiered, musical carousel. Venue: East Princes Street Gardens hosts the Big Wheel and the Star Flyer

rides again this year, as well as hosting a carousel bar and a Christmas market filled with bespoke goods. Tickets from £4 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Helter Skelter / 19 November - 7 January 2017

Climb the tower for a view over Edinburgh's Christmas's sparkling lights, before sliding back to earth on this traditional helter skelter. Each ticket holder gets a single ride. Venue: Santa Land, in East Princes Street Gardens, which features Santa's Grotto, a Christmas Tree Maze, the Santa Train, and family-friendly rides the Race-a-Rama, Carousel, Ice Wall, Reindeer Ride, Crazy Cars and a Rollercoaster. Tickets from £2 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Ice Skating / 18 November - 7 January

Get your skates on and glide all the way round the Melville Monument on this circular ice rink in St Andrew Square. Tickets from £5 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Ice Wall / 19 November - 7 January

Feel like an arctic explorer when you scale Santa Land's climbing wall! Can you make it all way to the top? Venue: Santa Land, in East Princes Street Gardens, which features Santa's Grotto, a Christmas Tree Maze, the Santa Train, and family-friendly rides the Race-a-Rama, Carousel, Helter Skelter, Reindeer Ride, Crazy Cars and a Rollercoaster. Tickets from £5 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Race-o-Rama / 19 November - 7 January 2017

This 'Cars'-themed ride is an eye-catching attraction for all ages. There's something for everyone with ten colourful cars to choose from. Venue: Santa Land, in East Princes Street Gardens, which features Santa's Grotto, a Christmas Tree Maze, the Santa Train, and family-friendly rides on the Carousel, Ice Wall, Reindeer Ride, Crazy Cars and a Rollercoaster. Tickets from £3 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Reindeer Ride / 19 November - 7 January 2017

The kids will feel like Santa's little helpers when they take a ride on Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen - and Rudolph, of course! - on this festive merry-go-round. Venue: Santa Land, in East Princes Street Gardens,

which features Santa's Grotto, a Christmas Tree Maze, the Santa Train, and family-friendly rides on the Carousel, Ice Wall, Crazy Cars and a Rollercoaster. Tickets from £3 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Rollercoaster / 19 November - 7 January 2017

One for the young thrill-seekers, the family ride is a fantastic first-time rollercoaster. Venue: Santa Land, in East Princes Street Gardens, which features Santa's Grotto, a Christmas Tree Maze, the Santa Train, and family-friendly rides on the Carousel, Ice Wall, Reindeer Ride, Crazy Cars. Tickets from £4 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Santa Train / 19 November - 7 January 2017

Board the train at Santa's station

Train, and family-friendly rides on the Carousel, Ice Wall, Reindeer Ride, Crazy Cars and a Rollercoaster. Tickets from £8 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Star Flyer / 19 November - 7 January 2017

We dare you...! At nearly 60 metres high, the Star Flyer is truly awesome. Take your seat and view Edinburgh like you've never seen it before, with 360-degree views over the rooftops - or maybe with your eyes firmly shut! Tickets from £7.50 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

The Yeti / 19 November - 7 January 2017

The mighty mechanical arms of the Yeti send you flying up, down and round in this avalanche of fun for thrill-seekers. A new ride for Edin-



and then it's all aboard for an exciting ride around Santa Land. Look up to the Castle, the tree on the Mound, the Big Wheel, the huts and the Ice Rink on the Terrace, and wave to the crowds as Santa sounds the bell. Venue: Santa Land, in East Princes Street Gardens, which features Santa's Grotto, a Christmas Tree Maze and family-friendly rides on the Carousel, Ice Wall, Reindeer Ride, Crazy Cars and a Rollercoaster. Tickets from £4 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Santa's Grotto / 19 November - 24 December 2016

Christmas just wouldn't be Christmas without a visit to Santa... After a good break this year, a refreshed Santa is back to welcome you to his grotto. A chance for children to meet the man in red in person, and tell him their dearest wish. Come and hear a festive fairytale, sit on Father Christmas's knee, meet his helpers, and receive a wee gift. Venue: Santa Land, in East Princes Street Gardens, which features Christmas Tree Maze, the Santa

burgh's Christmas 2016! Tickets from £5 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.



Winter Windows / 19 November - 7 January 2017

Come and see Edinburgh's Winter Windows! Designed by pupils from schools throughout Edinburgh, the windows form a magical pathway to Santa Land in East Princes Street Gardens.

Street of Light / 20 November - 24 December 2016

The stunning Street of Light is back for Edinburgh's Christmas 2016 in a new location on the west end of George Street. The Street of Light



© Lloyd Smith



© Fraser Cameron

opens on 20 November as part of Light Night, then runs from 21 November - 24 December, with two performances, commencing at 6pm and 8pm each night. With over 60,000 beautiful bulbs of light alongside synchronised music from local choirs and bands including the Edinburgh Festival Chorus, Royal Scottish National Orchestra Junior Chorus, the hottest contemporary fiddle music from the Highlands and Islands, Blazin' Fiddles, and Scotland's very own bhangra group Tigerstyle. Last year's spectacular was all about spectating but this year you will be singing and dancing!

Markets

The Scottish Market / 26 November - 24 December 2016

The Scottish Market in West George St is a winter showcase of some of the best craft, food and drink that Scotland has to offer. The treats available will include locally produced goods, for example Mimi's Bakery, St Andrew's Eden Mill, Strathearn Distillery, Blacks Cheese and Romanes & Paterson. Open Monday-Thursday from 12pm until 10pm, Friday-Saturday from 10am until 10pm.

European Christmas Market / 19 November 2016 - 7 January 2017

The European Christmas Market will once again return to East Princes St Gardens for a whole host of bespoke and traditional Christmas items from all over Europe, including Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, Austria and Belgium. Located in the

heart of the City of Edinburgh, it offers a unique shopping experience for every visitor with its fair of crafters, artists, gift shops and gastronomic surprises. Get into the Christmas spirit!

One-off events

Santa Run / 11am on 11 December 2016

Once more, Scotland's fundraising Santas will run, walk and stroll around West Princes Street Gardens, which is spread over a short 2.5km circuit raising money for *When You Wish Upon A Star*. The Edinburgh Santa Fun Run & Walk is a great way to enjoy time with family, friends and work colleagues to help us con-



tinue granting the very special wishes for children who are living with a life threatening illness throughout Scotland. For more information on how to enter and to book tickets visit www.edinburghschristmas.com / 0131 510 0395.

Christmas on Stage

Edinburgh's Christmas joins forces

with The Lyceum, Traverse Theatre and Usher Hall to bring you Christmas on Stage.

Five Guys Named Moe / 18 November - 7 January 2017

A hit musical by Clarke Peters featuring Louis Jordan's greatest hits! A major new production of the hit West End and Broadway musical comes to Edinburgh this Christmas. Five Guys Named Moe features the toe-tapping and irresistible hits of jazz legend Louis Jordan, including; Early In The Morning, Choo Choo Ch'Boogie and Saturday Night Fish

magic show at the same time. How hard could it possibly be? There's fun in store for everyone in this utterly splendid (and totally silly) Christmas magic show! Perfect for children age 5 to 12. Venue: Festival Square Theatre. Tickets from £13 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

by John Kennedy

Can you imagine six impossible



Fry, plus many more performed on stage by a live band. Newly single and broke, he finds solace in the Five Guys Named Moe (Big Moe, Four Eyed Moe, Eat Moe, Know Moe and Little Moe), who emerge to rouse him from his misfortunes with a whole lot of soul, music and infectious energy! Packed with an uplifting live soundtrack of soul, blues, gospel and early r'n'b, and led by our all-singing, all dancing Five Guys, this high-octane production of Five Guys Named Moe is the ultimate celebration to lift your soul.

Suitable for ages 12+. Venue: Festival Square Theatre. Tickets from £15.50 available at www.edinburghschristmas.com

Morgan & West: A (sort of) Christmas Carol Magic Show! / 1 December - 7 January 2017

The world's most distinguished duo of Time Travelling Magicians Morgan & West present Charles Dickens' timeless classic A Christmas Carol. The only problem is, they're baffled by the story. Well not just one problem, there are also only two of them to play all the parts. Oh, and Mr West is rather insistent on doing a

things before breakfast? Try these words -Donald/Trump/In/The/White/House.

Perhaps Anthony Neilson's ingenious take on Lewis Carroll's timeless psycho-charade of childhood fantastical philosophical conundrums might explain it.

The impossible becomes incredible. With Nick Powell's melodious curious and curiouseer circumlatory musical machinations adding atmospheric gaslit anthems to the Lyceum's glorious Victorian setting you would be mad as a hatter not to be there to share a smile with the Cheshire cat.

Remember what the dormouse said - 'Feed your head.' Otherwise, The Queen Of Hearts might chop it off!

Suitable for all ages from conception to cremation Alice's Adventures in Wonderland has been the best loved of all children's stories for over 150 years. This Christmas The Lyceum will bring Lewis Carroll's serendipitous classic to life with a magical new production in a magnificent Victorian wonderland.

Don't be late for this very important date!

Black Beauty

In a stable yard, with pitchforks and straw bales at the ready, Patrick and Hamish take the bit firmly between their teeth and tell the classic tale of Black Beauty. Saddle up, jump on and gallop headlong into a story where loneliness gives way to hope, and courage saves the day.

This Christmas, the Traverse and Red Bridge join Scotland's finest artists making work for young people, to bring life and invention to one of the best-selling books of all time.

Black Beauty Traverse Theatre 10 Cambridge Street, EH1 2ED. www.edinburghschristmas.com

EH Postcode discount

Edinburgh residents will receive a 20% discount on rides and attractions, and on Edinburgh's Christmas shows in the Festival Square Theatre.

The EH postcode discount requires residents to bring proof of address (e.g. bank statement, driving licence, bus pass, utility bill or Edinburgh Council-issued Young Scot card) when purchasing tickets or collecting tickets booked online.

20% discount!

Pre-theatre dining at One Square

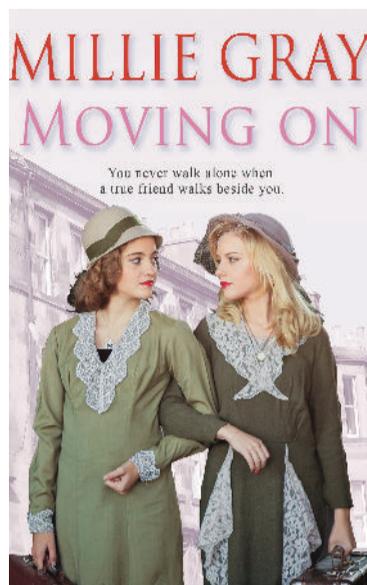
The new Festival Square Theatre is right outside the Sheraton Grand Hotel. The theatre will be buzzing with the Christmas shows. Now you can book a pre-theatre dining package at One Square Restaurant which includes free car parking!

This is a two course menu with prosecco, a ticket to Five Guys Named Moe. To book call 0131 510 0395 Prices from £54



© Duncan McGlynn

Chat with Millie Gray



by John Hislop

Acclaimed Leith author Millie Gray's eagerly awaited book, 'Moving On' was published in October and the inspirational 82-year-old 'Arts Champion for Older People in Scotland' has kindly taken time out from her busy schedule to chat to the Edinburgh Reporter about her upbringing which inspired her literary success.

Remarkably, Millie who recently earned a prestigious award in West Lothian for inspiring people with mental health problems to engage with the arts, only wrote her first book at the age of 75.

Local company Black and White Publishing quickly spotted her talent and since then, Millie has written one book each year, to the delight of her growing army of fans throughout the world.

Her first book, 'In a Class of Their Own' tells the story of one family's life in Leith through the dark and difficult years of the Second World War.

Based on her real-life wartime experiences the book recreates the atmosphere of the time with all the hardships and struggles as well as the fun and humour of everyday life.

'Moving On' continues to follow the Anderson family as they strive to wrestle with the ups and downs of life in peacetime Britain.

As local politician Johnny Anderson prepares for a life in politics promising to fight for a fairer society and to serve the constituents of the large new housing developments of the extensive Granton area, his daughter Kitty falls in love with a dashing young Canadian doctor.

When he betrays her she vows to devote the rest of her life to the service of others but as the years pass, a regular prison visit becomes the highlight of her life.

Millie told the Edinburgh Reporter: "I was born at 33 Admiralty Street

in Leith which was a slum and had actually been condemned in the 1920s but was only demolished in 1952 and my granny was still living there at that time.

"Forty people stayed in the tenement and shared the same toilet but we managed to get a corporation house in Restalrig and we thought we had arrived as we had a bathroom and lavatory to ourselves.

"I started to write books when I was 75 and have written roughly one per year since. My first book was called 'In a class of their own' however if anyone decides to read my books they should start with '18 Couper Street' which is a prequel and sets the scene.

"All my books have achieved great success in Scottish libraries. The age group of the people who read my books belong to a library culture and don't bother if a comma is in the wrong place.

"Last year, my books were taken out over 40,000 times, in fact there is always a waiting list but I am aware that others who have bought the books have sent them all around the world to relatives in the USA and Australia.

"They are all situated in Leith and are based on truth, incorporating real stories which are woven around fictional characters.

"Moving On' deals with the political upheaval in the aftermath of WWII including the introduction of the Welfare State and the National Health Service and how people moved on. Everyone thought that life would be easy but it doesn't work out like that."

At The Traverse

Canadian singer-songwriter, Amanda Rheume appears in the Traverse Theatre's latest Monday music programme.

She has a history of speaking out for good causes in songs that use gentle persuasion and catchy melodies rather than a loud hailer to get her message across.

Most recently, Rheume's song Red Dress has helped bring the problem of missing and murdered indigenous women in Canada greater public awareness.

Rheume appears at the Traverse on Monday, 23 January 2016. The weekly Music Mondays series begins on January 16 with Scottish folk

group Blueflint and includes appearances by Tennessean gothic and alt-country singer Amethyst Kiah (February 6), Scottish fiddle quartet Rant (February 27), Mississippi troubadour Bronwynne Brent (March 6), and Boys of the Lough founder, singer and whistle master Cathal McConnell and Friends (April 3).



Festive traditions

The Edinburgh Reporter posed some questions to a variety of people around town to find out what they do at Christmas time. Here are some of the answers (although you can read them in full online!)

Cllr Joanna Mowat likes the food at Christmas. The very slim Joanna told us she likes: "Turkey and all the trimmings - chestnut stuffing is a must (my mum's is the best in the world and gluten free), I make a gluten free Xmas pud to my granny's updated recipe - don't forget the carrot, and pickled onions with the cold turkey are mandatory - even leftovers have a rota at my mum and dads - turkey sandwiches, turkey fricassee and turkey soup are non negotiable along with all the extended family for cold ham, turkey and jacket potatoes on Boxing Day."

The Lothians MSP Miles Briggs told us this joke: *Who is Santa's favourite singer?*
Elf-is Presley!

Ben Macpherson MSP has his own family to go and see in the West of Scotland where he likes 'watching a good film together on an old projector, with mobile phones switched off!'

Cllr Melanie Main sounds like she is not in control in her house.... We asked her What is your recommendation for a Christmas box set binge?The teenager is box set controller in our house. Luckily she's a Doctor Who fan and the early series are something that all generations have fun watching together: memories of hiding behind the sofa from the daleks for us oldies, and incredulous comments and rolling of eyebrows from the younger ones. Green colleague Cllr Chas Booth says that there is always a stocking from 'San-

ta', with an apple in the toe and a satsuma in the heel. Even the adults in the house get a visit from 'Santa'. Often we have a walk before Christmas dinner, but not always.

Letter from Scotland

John Knox writes a weekly column for us on all matters concerning Scotland.

These are some recent snippets:

25 November 2016

This week the City Deal for Aberdeen was signed by UK and Scottish ministers. Again it's hoped that will create 3,000 new jobs and result in a new technology centre for the oil and gas industry, another digital hub and support for transport projects and agricultural innovation.

It's all part of a government strategy to use the cities to boost economic growth in their areas and to draw in private investment. It's what the Chancellor's new emphasis on "infrastructure" is all about. He's to spend £23bn on such projects over the next five years.

18 November 2016

I'd love to have a wood burning stove and sit by a log fire on a November night and forget about the madness of the world outside. And I'm not alone. Apparently a million people in Britain have wood burning stoves. The Stove Industry Alliance (yes, there is one) says, with a modern stove, you can cut your carbon emissions by 22 per cent, compared to a regular gas fire. But it's the heart-warming effect of logs a-burning that most interests me. Especially at this depressing time of the year.

Take this week, for instance. It started with a "supermoon" but very few of us in Scotland were able to see it because of dense cloud cover on Monday night. By Tuesday the weather had brightened up but it had also turned cold. Trains were being disrupted because of slippery lines and by Thursday there was commuter chaos across central Scotland when a train broke down in the bottle-neck at Waverley station. It even led to questions - and apologies - in parliament.

18 October 2016

Inflation is catching up on us - now up to one percent, the highest for two years. House prices are up 4.5 per cent. Scotland's increasing army

of self-employed - up 45 per cent to 300,000 workers in the last 8 years - are facing hard times with average earnings lower than 20 years ago. Most of these are the casualties of the Great Recession and the blood-letting policy of "austerity" rather than the new entrepreneurs the Tories are boasting about. The falling value of the pound and the gloomy predictions about Brexit are dark clouds gathering for the winter storms.

Perhaps we can cheer those winter evenings with a good book. Well, not according to a public vote organised by the BBC and the Scottish Book Trust. The top ten favourite books contain no fewer than seven what I could call "Scottish Noir" gloomy classics.

Ian Banks' "The Wasp Factory" is about a psychopathic teenager living on a remote Scottish island. "Lanark" by Alasdair Gray, is a strange and nutty account of the worst of 20th century West Scotland. "Trainspotting" by Irvine Welsh, is an equally depressing account of the drug addicts' world in East Scotland. "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone", is a horror story for children by J K Rowling. "Knots and Crosses" by Ian Rankin, is a detective story about the strangling of two young girls. "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" by Arthur Conan Doyle, is a series of murder and robbery mysteries in mist drenched Victorian England. "Confessions of a Justified Sinner" by James Hogg, is an 18th century tale about a silly weak man from the Borders murdering his more likable brother.

Thank goodness for "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie," by Muriel Spark which came in at number five and John Buchan's "Thirty Nine Steps" which was fourth favourite. But even the winner "Sunset Song" by Lewis Grassic Gibon is not exactly a book to cheer you up, being as it is, about a young woman coming to terms with a farming community torn apart by the First World War.

We must indeed be a mentally sick nation to have a favourite reading list like the above.

17 September 2016

It's so good to hear from my wildlife friends that they've seen 30 or 40 dolphins in the Firth of Forth in recent days. They describe, with great excitement, how these large and friendly creatures followed their boat, leapt into the air and smiled at them as they swam past, just a few metres away.

The experts at the Scottish Seabird Centre at North Berwick confirm that an unusual number of dolphins have been sighted around the Bass Rock, Craighleith and the Isle of May in the last week or so and they put that down to shoals mackerel and herring staying inshore because of the warm weather we've been enjoying over the past month.

Focus on Stockbridge



Head for Stockbridge for all your presents this Christmas!

Bon Tot

This shop has some great designer gear for children aged up to 6 years.

Their modern, minimal gender neutral styles are made from ethically manufactured garments in the best quality fabrics. These designs are created by small independent manufacturers across the globe.

As well as clothes there are toys accessories and games to inspire creativity. A shop full of originality with items you will not find anywhere else in the capital.



Established by Kristina and Graham who want their customers to have a friendly and fun shopping experience.

Bon Tot 28 St Stephen Street Stockbridge Edinburgh EH3 5AL

Catalog

Catalog Ltd was launched in April



2012 by husband and wife team, Dixie and Ralf, to bring the very best of European Design to Edinburgh.

Catalog's collection features design classics alongside the very latest contemporary pieces. Furniture and Lighting from Italy, Spain and Germany appears alongside rugs from



France and Denmark and textiles from Scandinavia and the Isle of Bute. Their qualified team are on hand with friendly interior design advice.

Catalog Ltd 2-4 St Stephen Place EH3 5AJ. t 0131 225 2888 e : sales@cataloginteriors.com



Eden

Eden is an exclusively different European design fashion boutique which will make sure that you are wearing clothes which stand out from the crowd.

The shop has been in the area for 13 years, but owner Ruth only took over ten years ago. Ruth has a solid

background of fashion, having studied fashion design and manufacture.

Eden 18 North West Circus Place EH3 6SX

t 0131 225 5222

Golden Hare Books

Golden Hare Books is one of those



rare things - an independent book shop! It is happily at home now in St Stephen Street following a few years in the Grassmarket.

Every single part of what they do from the layout of their shop to each and every book they curate for sale, they are careful to choose with design at the forefront of their minds.

Every book is displayed beautifully with maximum display space facing outwards so that the reader is attracted to it! But beware, they move the books around to show them all off so you may never see the same book in the same place.

Golden Hare Books 68 St Stephen Street, Stockbridge, EH3 5AQ

t 0131 629 1396 e mail@goldenhare-books.com

Laurel Gallery

The Laurel Gallery is a contemporary art gallery in Stockbridge, Edinburgh displaying artwork from artists mainly based in Scotland. The gallery boasts an eclectic, exciting range of paintings, limited edition giclee prints, ceramics, sculptures, glass and jewellery.

The gallery also runs furniture paint effect and technique workshops using Chalk Paint™, a decorative paint by Annie Sloan, simple upholstery and lampshade classes.

This month the gallery has its Christmas exhibition - Give a Heart for Alzheimer's which includes wooden hearts painted by over 80 professional artists. This exhibition is in support of Alzheimer Scotland and minimum of 20% of the sales will go their funds. All available artwork is available on their website.

The Laurel Gallery 58 St Stephen Street EH3 5AL

t 0131 226 5022

e art@laurelgallery.co.uk

www.laurelgallery.co.uk

Lilies & Dreams

A cornucopia of delightful things that any fashionista would love in their stocking.

From fabulous handbags to spike heeled shoes to wear with your party dress get down to see JoJo Hernandez and put your fashion life on track.

Lilies & Dreams | 12 St Stephen



Street | Stockbridge | Edinburgh | EH3 5AL

www.liliesanddreams.com | info@liliesanddreams.com | 0131 629 0750

Skinny Pig

Skinny Pig Fashions is owned by Cate and her business partner, Susan who is living abroad at the moment.

This unusual name was really an accident and came from a misunderstanding of something the pair were talking about, but they decided they quite liked the sound of it. So that was the name that went above the door in June 2014!

Skinny Pig 29 St Stephen St, Stockbridge EH3 5AN t : 07588 859627 e : info@skinypig.net

Those were the Days

Visit **Those Were The Days** vintage fashion boutique to see their stunning hand picked collections of one-of-a-kind women's and men's vintage fashions, jewellery and accessories, sourced from around the world.

They are also vintage bridal wear specialists and there is a beautiful wedding dress showroom within the boutique.

Those Were The Days 26 St Stephen St EH3 5AL

t 0131 225 4400 www.thosewerethedaysvintage.com

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Five winter walks



by Manda Whitehead

At this time of year, the urge to get out of the house and go for a brisk, refreshing walk is often overwhelming. The only problem is that it's so cold - so you don't want to be out for too long!

Here are five of the best short walks to take in the city during the winter.

Stockbridge

The leisurely walk towards Stockbridge often seems too picture-perfect to be real - a mixture of colourful streets and alleys, gorgeous buildings and quaint cafes. If you're heading to Stockbridge from the city centre, the walk is likely to be quite hilly, but that is rather a given in Edinburgh. A good route to take to get to Stockbridge is by following the Water of Leith, which is another lovely walk; the greenery and the water only add to the picturesque occasion. If you can, try to take your stroll to Stockbridge on a Sunday, so you can visit the bustling weekly market. They have a lot of different stalls and plenty of stands selling food and drink from the local area.

Botanic Gardens

This could be incorporated in to your Stockbridge walk, or it could quite easily be a trip in its own right. The Royal Botanic Gardens are vast and varied, with different themes in different parts of the garden. The Glasshouses, which provide a more suitable climate for the Gardens' more tropical plants, are well worth the small fee to have a look around (and perhaps to warm up in!), while there's also a cafe, a restaurant and a gift-shop. The Botanics look lovely in every season, particularly winter, and you could easily lose track of time wandering through the many winding paths. If you have time while you're here, you could take a stroll through Inverleith Park as well, which is directly opposite the entrance to the Botanic Gardens.

Leith Links

Leith Links is the biggest open space in Leith, and is comprised largely of grass, Elm trees and dog-walkers.

It's a solid location for a brisk walk out in the open, especially if you're already in Leith or just want a quick escape from the city centre. There's a football pitch, a play area and a little hill or two where you can have a seat.

Holyrood Park

This is another good location in which to escape the hustle and bustle of the city centre, and can be reached easily by walking all the way down the High Street and past Holyrood Palace (a nice sight to have a peek at on your way). When you see the large, ancient volcano that is Arthur's Seat looming over you, you know you've arrived. Holyrood Park is a little bit hilly, but is large enough to roam around for as long as you please. It also houses a small loch, as well as one of the oldest pubs in Scotland - The Sheep Heid Inn (which is also home to a Skittle Alley). If you're feeling adventurous, you could of course climb Arthur's Seat while you're at Holyrood Park - but that might take you a little longer!

Calton Hill

Calton Hill is the perfect city centre walk. Located just off the east end of Princes Street, it takes less than ten minutes to wander up the hill. Once you reach the top, you'll be hit by some stunning views of Edinburgh. You can get a brilliant panoramic image of the city from up here, and you can take a look at some of the monuments atop the hill, as well as the national observatory. Try to get up here at sunset, to watch the sun disappear from over this beautiful city.



Edinburgh tops Christmas getaway list

Edinburgh is top of the list for Christmas holidays in the UK.

According to holidaylettings.co.uk the city is the most popular with Aviemore the only other Scottish destination in the top ten.

The holiday website is owned by TripAdvisor and it shows that some people want to get away to the coast even in the depths of winter, with Newquay in Cornwall one of the other popular destinations. We spent a lovely couple of days at the Headland Hotel in Newquay earlier in the year.

Saskia Welman, spokesperson for holidaylettings.co.uk, said that travellers are choosing a mix of big cities and smaller towns for their festive break.

"We're not surprised to see Edinburgh take the top spot on this list, because it offers so many exciting attractions dedicated to celebrating and spreading the holiday spirit," Saskia said.

"But it's interesting to see Aviemore appear alongside major hubs like London and destinations with crowd-pleasing Christmas festivals like York and Padstow."

Last Christmas

The office Christmas party is in full swing. Glitter abounds, cheap booze is being necked and someone's trying to crash the DJ booth. It's the high point of the year.

Tom would rather be anywhere else on earth.

Reeling from unexpected events in his personal life, Tom can't avoid returning home for Christmas - and all that he's left behind. The directionless old friends, his fragile mother, even the sticky pub carpet. Nothing seems to have changed, but everything has.

Forced to confront the demons he's been running from, it's time for Tom to face his family and his future head-on.

A hit at the Edinburgh Fringe festival, award-winning Welsh theatre company Dirty Protest bring you this funny, heartbreaking and uplifting play. Forget panto and that dreaded office Christmas party, this one-man show from Matthew Bulgo

will make you laugh, cry and leave the theatre wanting to call your loved ones.

Tickets from £14.50 on www.edinburghchristmas.com

Five places to go Christmas Shopping

The Cat's Miaou Leith Walk

This is a wonderful gem of a gift shop, where you'll always find a brilliant gift. Whether it's wonderfully soft Bamboo clothing, organic soap, or bright and cheery cushions, this place won't disappoint. A wide selection of wonderful, quirky cards for quite literally all occasions, and their selection of goods means you could spend hours in this cosy shop, browsing the scented candles, the ornaments, the jewellery. This is my go-to gift shop.

Caoba Raeburn Place, Stockbridge

Full of colour and positive vibes, Caoba will provide you with something to brighten up any Christmas present. This place stocks plenty of larger items, like pottery, crockery and tiles, as well as smaller bits and pieces like candles and cards. The Mexican theme adds a uniqueness to any purchase.

Paper Tiger, Lothian Road

Paper Tiger is a great place to source your stocking fillers. Stationary and cute bric-a-brac are what mainly fills the shelves, and the walls are lined with quirky cards. A good place to find gifts that are themed around the city of Edinburgh, as well as a wide variety of colourful and patterned sheets of wrapping paper to add to the gift-giving excitement!

Fruitmarket Gallery Shop Market Street

The Fruitmarket Gallery is of course worth a visit in its own right, but it's always good to nip in to the gift shop when you're in the area, regardless of whether or not you're visiting the gallery. Here you'll largely find books, fiction and non-fiction, covering various themes including art and travel. A good place to find a more substantial present - it's only a little space, but you could lose track of time browsing the shelves in here.

European Christmas Market East Princes Street Gardens

This is a given. It's hard to visit the Christmas Markets and not come away with a few satisfying purchases. These markets aren't a bad version of the more authentic German markets, and you're likely to find stalls selling all sorts of wooden ornaments, hats and scarves, and lanterns - as well as, of course, gingerbread and Glühwein!

Happy Christmas shopping!

Parent power

According to The Sunday Times Parent Power schools guide published this coming Sunday, Boroughmuir High School is in the top ten of state secondary schools in Scotland.

It comes in at fifth equal behind Jordanhill School in Glasgow which is ranked top. It is the only Edinburgh state school in the rankings but the separate table which ranks independent schools has several from Edinburgh.

The independent sector is topped by The Mary Erskine School in a rise from second place last year with George Heriot's and St Mary's Music School also featured on the basis of their Higher results.

Fettes College and Merchiston Castle School take the top two slots respectively in the independent secondary schools by A Level results.

The definitive guide contains 2,000 top state and independent schools, searchable by postcode, town, local authority and name of school.

As well as assessment of all academic results on a school-by-school basis, **Parent Power** enables parents to compare the performance of a given school with other schools in the same town, local authority or nationally. There are also live links to school websites and schools' most recent inspection reports.

Crossword Answers

Answers Across: [7] Oxford, [8] Hearts, [9] Pony, [10] Melville, [11] Station, [13] Scans, [15] Rebus, [17] Bagpipe, [20] A Twitter, [21] Maps, [22] Burton, [23] Anchor. **Answers Down:** [1] Export, [2] Holy, [3] Adamson, [4] Shale, [5] Davis Cup, [6] Stolen, [12] Tourists, [14] Hadrian, [16] Eat out, [18] Peplow, [19] Stone, [21] Mace.

A fab year for Lothian Buses

2016 will go down as one of the most eventful years of recent history. It's also been an incredible year for Lothian Buses.

Of course, there's a world of difference between what's been happening with public transport in Edinburgh and the political upheavals that have dominated the international news agenda.

Nonetheless, the events of our year matter hugely to the millions of customers who rely on us every week to get them safely, efficiently and reliably to work, home, hospital and more.

2016 started with us announcing that we were the first public transport provider in Scotland to partner with Google Maps. This means we're now able to bring customers up-to-date with accurate reporting of journey and bus departure times to all users online or through our app.

We also expanded our face-to-face offering with the launch of a new Travelshop catering to the west end of the city. Located on Clifton Terrace, near Haymarket, the shop has had a significant impact on increas-

ing access to ticketing services and travel information for our customers.

It's been an important year for our fleet of buses too. With a total investment of over £18.5 million into greener vehicles, we've introduced 60 diesel-electric hybrid buses to the city since 2014. They have removed nearly 2,500 tonnes of CO2 from our carbon footprint and also resulted in reductions of 99% in nitrous oxide gases and up to 80% in particulate emissions. Two-thirds of the 700-strong fleet is now at the 'Euro 5' standard or above, helping to make the city cleaner and quieter for all.

In August, we unveiled our brand new fleet of 30 open-top double deck vehicles for Edinburgh Bus Tours - one of the city's most popular visitor attractions. Each bus has been specially commissioned for us to meet our demanding accessibility and environmental standards.

As well as greener buses, we've prioritised reducing our carbon footprint across all of our operations, so it's been great for us to have our efforts recognised with two major ac-

colades - the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce Sustainable Development prize and the VIBES (Vision in Business for the Environment of Scotland) Transport Award.

At Lothian Buses we really do see ourselves as part of the Edinburgh and Lothians community. Earlier this year, our sister company, East Coast Buses, stepped in to help passengers in East Lothian who were facing a loss of services after the withdrawal of the existing operator. As part of this, we have successfully taken over locations in Musselburgh and North Berwick and managed to retain the majority of staff affected.

In addition to all of this, we've also found time to have some fun and help out good causes in our area. A particular highlight for me was our Doors Open day event, which saw 10,000 visitors to our Central Depot, supported for the first time ever with a vintage running day enjoyed by many more customers along the no 16 route.

We were lucky enough to work with Poppyscotland again through November. We helped raise awareness of the Poppy Appeal with the help of some of our amazing former service men who now work with Lothian Buses, and launched a specially-designed Poppy Bus to serve the city centre in the lead up to Remembrance Day.

Finally on this, 2016 saw the launch

of our new 'Charity of Choice' programme, which we opened up to charitable organisations throughout the area offering a two-year partnership to help raise funds and build on their existing local profile. Our new nominated charity will be announced in the very near future.

All in all there's been a great deal of activity over the past 12 months and as a company we feel we're definitely continuing in the right direction. That was underlined when we were recognised at this year's Scottish Transport Awards; one for coming first as Scotland's overall Public Transport Operator of The Year and another for Best Service on the Country Buses route 113 serving East Lothian and Edinburgh.

It's great to see the achievements of all of the dedicated team at Lothian Buses be celebrated, but the main appreciation goes to our customers for continuing to choose to travel with us.

Our efforts are entirely geared towards providing the best possible service, so on behalf of the whole team I'd like to wish all our customers a very happy Christmas and we look forward to travelling with you again in 2017.

Gaynor Marshall Marketing and Comms Director Lothian Buses

Craigmillar foodbank

by Derek Ramsay of The Chronicle
www.chronicleonline.net

A new foodbank has been opened in Bristo Memorial Church by a partnership with the Trussell Trust. The Trussell Trust say that this partnership with Freddi Wilson of Links Community and Rev Drausio Goncalves to open a foodbank in the church comes at a time when foodbank use has risen in Scotland by 6%.

The Edinburgh East foodbank will be the 52nd in the trust's network, and will be run through a partnership of the church, Edinburgh Food Project, representing the Trussell Trust, and the charity Links Community.

Rev Drausio Conclaves praised the volunteers who will staff it saying the foodbank is just one way that the Bristo congregation is seeking to support the Craigmillar community with food.

"There are also plans for a community food garden at Bristo grounds and now we are pleased to start a foodbank in partnership with the Trussell Trust and Links Community."



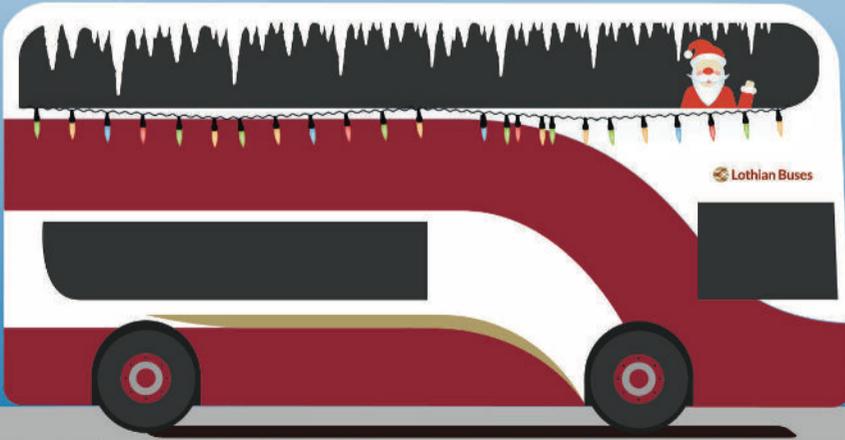
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<p style="font-weight: bold; color: #8b4513;">DAYticket</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; font-size: small;"> <div style="background-color: #8b4513; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">ADULT £4.00</div> <div style="background-color: #4a90e2; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">CHILD £2.00</div> </div> <p style="font-size: x-small; color: #8b4513;">Unlimited travel on our day buses and Edinburgh Trams (city fare zone only) for one day.</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; color: #8b4513;">SINGLEticket</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; font-size: small;"> <div style="background-color: #8b4513; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">ADULT £1.60</div> <div style="background-color: #4a90e2; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">CHILD 80p</div> </div> <p style="font-size: x-small; color: #8b4513;">Ideal for infrequent travellers.</p>
<p style="font-weight: bold; color: #8b4513;">NIGHTticket</p> <div style="background-color: #8b4513; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; display: inline-block;">£3.00</div> <p style="font-size: x-small; color: #8b4513;">Unlimited travel on our NightBus services, midnight to 0430hrs.</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; color: #8b4513;">DAY&NIGHTticket</p> <div style="background-color: #8b4513; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; display: inline-block;">£3.50</div> <p style="font-size: x-small; color: #8b4513;">Like a DAYticket but valid after 1800hrs on day bus and tram services and on NightBus services until 0430hrs.</p>

lothianbuses.co.uk

*Conditions & service restrictions apply. Visit lothianbuses.co.uk for full details.

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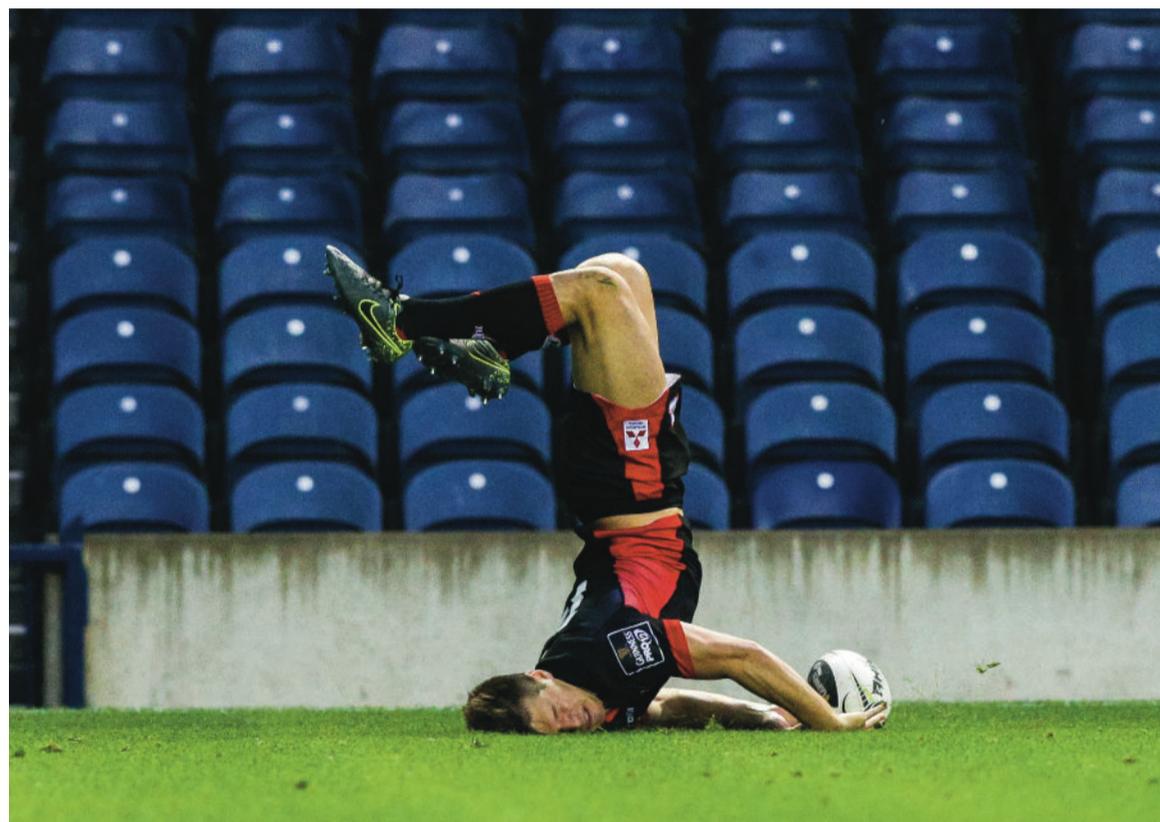
Edinburgh rugby fixtures

WORDS AND PHOTOS by John Preece

five coming from FP or former FP clubs and Currie, the latter being

claimer... As it was necessary to compile this article some time - end of October - before going to print, league positions, as quoted, may well differ to some degree. With the projected fixtures being post-publication, unless the weather intervenes, all should be good to go.

Where to start? Well, let's start at



Edinburgh Rugby v Leinster Rugby 16 Sept 2016, Edinburgh Rugby 20 Leinster Rugby 33

Edinburgh has always had a strong rugby presence in the Scottish Leagues, with the main thrust coming from the 'Public' school system. Currently, Edinburgh fields six teams in the top two divisions, with

the 'odd-one-out', entering the fray in the early 1970's as a 'conventional', stand-alone sports club.

First of all though, the usual dis-

the bottom, literally.

With just two wins to date, Stewarts-Melville Former Pupils' Rugby Football Club - to give them their full title - play at Inverleith and currently lie 11th from 12 in the BT National League, Div.1. Having lost a fair number of their first team at the end of the 2015-16 season, they have had to try to rebuild from a core of old(-ish) hands, but are having a trying time, tending to play well early on in their matches before falling away as the games progress. Their home fixtures over the Christmas period are -

17th Dec. - Home to Marr

14th Jan. - Home to Musselburgh

The other Edinburgh club in the BT NL1 is Edinburgh Academy Football Club, who play at - the under redevelopment - Raeburn Place. They 'fell' from the top division at the end



Edinburgh Rugby v Harlequin FC, 22 Oct 2016, Edinburgh 36 Harlequin 35



Boroughmuir in full flight © John Preece

of the 2014-15 season, having enjoyed many years at the top table of Scottish Club Rugby. Currently, they lie in first place having won 8 of their 9 matches to date. Their crop of home fixtures over the Festive season are -

17th Dec. - Home to Jed Forest

14th Jan. - Home to Glasgow High

21st Jan. - Home to Selkirk

This 2016-17 season, there are four Edinburgh clubs in the BT Premiership - Heriots, Watsonians, Currie and Boroughmuir.

Fourth from this group and, currently, ninth in the table, are Boroughmuir. Their home ground is Meggetland and the former FP side

had a year in the National Leagues, Div. 1 for the 2013-14 season, but bounced straight back with 16 wins from 18 matches. They have suffered a bit in the Premiership since returning, just managing to keep their heads above the drop zone last season.

3rd Dec. - Home to Watsonians

17th Dec. - Home to Hawick

Lying third in the 'Edinburgh table' in sixth, are the Premiership newcomers, Watsonians. They returned to the top division this season following a few years in the National Leagues, generally finishing in the top four or five, and just missed promotion a couple of times following late season loss of form. Watsonians can boast two former Scotland In-

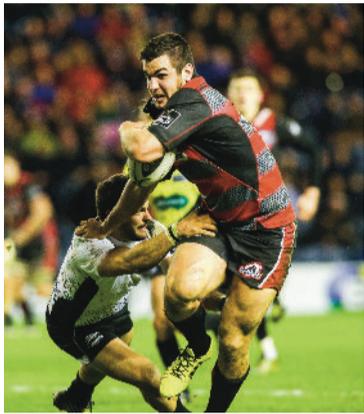


Stewarts-Melville RFC © John Preece



Currie RFC © John Preece

ternational players - Marcus di Rollo and Simon Taylor - in their coaching squad and play their rugby at George Watsons College ground at Myreside. They have managed to draw four their matches in the Edinburgh area.



Edinburgh Rugby v Zebre Rugby, BT Murrayfield, Edinburgh, 1/4/16. Guinness PRO12

3rd Dec. - Away to Boroughmuir

10th Dec. - Home to Glasgow Hawks

17th Dec. - Away to Currie

14th Jan. - Home to Gala

One place above 'Sonians are Currie. Playing their matches at Malley Park in Currie, they have flirted with relegation for a few seasons now and have tended to start slowly, before clawing themselves to the safety of mid-table. This season, however, they have had a stronger start and are currently fifth in the division.

3rd Dec. - Home to Melrose

17th Dec. - Home to Watsonians

14th Jan. - Away to Heriots

And, last of 'the four', are current - and 2014-15 - Champions, Heriots. They have enjoyed a fairly successful few seasons, consistently finishing at the top end of the table. Playing their matches at Heriots Schools' ground at Goldenacre, they have the privilege of playing on one of the best maintained pitches in the country. They are currently the best placed of the four Edinburgh Sides in the BT Premiership, lying in fourth.

10th Dec. - Home to Boroughmuir

14th Jan. - Home to Currie

Edinburgh's Professional side play in the Guinness PRO12 League and, this season, are also involved in the European Rugby Challenge Cup, the second tier of Professional Club Championships involving European sides. A slow start to the League season has left Edinburgh in the bottom half of the table, in 8th, with a top four place required to qualify for the end-of-season play-offs and a top seven for ER Champions Cup qualification. New, but interim, Head Coach, Duncan Hodge has made a decent start to his tenure with four wins from six matches - they tripped up over Zebre - with the most impressive being in a high-

ly entertaining match against Harlequins in the ERCC meaning they now top their group with a full complement of 10 points.

So, as we can see, it's a busy period for all our Senior Clubs and, weather dependant, there should be plenty to see and cheer pre-, post- and during the Festive Season.

Full list of fixtures at www.theedinburghreporter.co.uk/sport.

Vaulting for Success

by Kerry Teakle

Have you been inspired by the gymnastics at this year's Olympics? Get a slice of the action at Edinburgh Leisure's annual gymnastics display.

Girls' from Craiglockhart's Gymnastics Club will be performing once again at Edinburgh Leisure's 2016 Annual Display

Now in its 15th year, over 1,110 gymnasts, dancers and trampolinists from five gymnastics clubs and three trampoline clubs from across nine Edinburgh Leisure venues will be coming together to delight audiences with their annual display at Meadowbank Sports Centre on Saturday, 10 December 2016.

Gymnastics Development Officer Laura Nimmo said: "Gymnastics and trampolining are a great way to provide a healthy and active lifestyle. They have many benefits and help children to gain strength, stamina, balance, coordination, flexibility as well as self-confidence.

"This annual event gives the children with Edinburgh Leisure's coaching programme the opportunity to showcase what they have been working so hard on throughout the year. In addition, it allows them to see performances of all levels and inspires them to reach for the stars, or maybe even that gold, silver or bronze medal in the future."

As well as featuring over 15 performances from Edinburgh Leisure gymnastics and trampoline clubs, there will also be special guest appearances from clubs across the region, including City of Edinburgh GC, Meadowbank GC, Gracemount Ibex GC, Jack Kane GC, Kestrel GC, Enigma GC, West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre Gymnastics, East Kilbride GC and Edinburgh Spirals Trampoline Club.

Tickets are now on sale. Check Edinburgh Leisure's website for specific times.

More information on gymnastics'

classes at www.EdinburghLeisure.com and get inspired!



Edinburgh Leisure Golf Club

by Kerry Teakle

Have you heard about the Edinburgh Leisure Golf Club? Open to golfers of all standards, including complete beginners, membership runs from January to December 2017 and costs £30.

It's perfect for those who have always wanted to join a golf club but don't want to be tied to one course and it'll let you gain or maintain your handicap, without being limited to a single course.

Other benefits include flexibility and choice that no other golf club in the city can offer; non course specific competitions played monthly; and being fully affiliated to Scottish Golf, the governing body for golf in Scotland. Something to think about for the new year? If you're interested, you can pick up an application form at any of Edinburgh Leisure's six golf courses or for more information please contact Derek McLeod derekmcleod@edinburghleisure.co.uk

12 Days of Fitness

by Kerry Teakle

If you've been motivated to start exercising before the festivities so you can fit into that 'Little Black Dress', why not try Edinburgh Leisure's facilities as a member in December with their '12 days of fitness' promotion.

It allows you 12 consecutive days of membership, for only £12, unlimited access to all of Edinburgh Leisure's gyms, fitness classes and swimming pools during this time, as well as the climbing arena at EICA:Ratho. Passes are on sale throughout December.

The excitement of the jumps season at Musselburgh Racecourse got underway on 2 November. There will

Musselburgh Racecourse over the Festive Period

be a Christmas meeting on 14 December and the New Year's Day meeting to come.

This is a longer season than normal with 11 meetings from November to the end of March. With prize money just short of £750,000 and one new prize of £40,000 alone for The Edinburgh National the racing at Musselburgh gets a higher profile each year.

The Scottish Cheltenham Trials will become a weekend festival from 4-5 February 2017 which has delighted racecourse chief executive, Bill Farnsworth.

He told The Edinburgh Reporter : "We've steadily built up our Scottish Cheltenham Trials day in to what is now recognised across the sport as a genuine prep meeting for the Cheltenham Festival and it seemed the next step was to provide two days of quality jumps racing over a weekend.

"With just shy of £250,000 in prize money over the two days, we will have 10 races which are ideal preps for either Cheltenham or the Grand National, and we know from experience that racing fans love coming to Musselburgh for a glimpse of potential festival runners."

From 1 January 2017 when there is a New Year's Day fixture ITV will broadcast the racing from Musselburgh Racecourse for the first time for 27 years. But don't stay home to watch if you live in Edinburgh - get on the bus and watch it from the stand or your own table in the hospitality suite.

The Bank Holiday Raceday takes place on 3 January 2-17. The first race is at 1.00pm and the last at 3.30pm

All the details of tickets for New Year's Day and all other race meet-

ings available from the course T 0131 665 2859.

Swim in your own lane

Edinburgh Leisure is piloting 'Lane Fit,' which is their new lane only swimming sessions. And the best way to book your session is by using their app!

At the 'Lane Fit' sessions, the pool is exclusively programmed for lane swimming offering slow, medium and fast lanes, making them suitable for all fitness levels and swimming abilities. To enhance the experience, each session will provide floats and pool buoys for swimmers to use and Edinburgh Leisure will be providing guidance on how to use lanes effectively, including lane etiquette.

Swimming is an excellent whole body workout and an all-round wonder sport, whatever your age or ability. It improves muscle, tone, strength and improves flexibility. Taking part regularly can reduce your risk of chronic diseases like heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and stroke. The support of the water makes it low impact on joints, and done regularly it will improve flexibility and strength.

Shelagh Jackson, Aquatics Manager at Edinburgh Leisure said: "Our customers have told us they'd like more opportunities for lane swimming, whatever their level of fitness and swimming ability. Lane Fit provides this and we're delighted to offer this pilot in so many of our venues across the city."

Edinburgh Leisure offers a swim membership for £33 per month, which gives unlimited swimming across all Edinburgh Leisure pools and access to all of our aquatic fitness classes. Joint, student and 65+ memberships are also available.



SPORTS NEWS



Lewis Stevenson - history at Hampden

by John Hislop

Over the years several top class players have worn Hibernian's famous green and white jersey.

Many who saw him play believed that Gordon Smith was the best footballer ever to play the beautiful game whilst Lawrie 'Last Minute' Reilly won the hearts of the Easter Road and Scotland faithful with his prolific goal-scoring ability.

In the 1960s, the great Joe Baker was idolised from the terracings and unbelievably became the first player from outside the football league to be capped by England, and he did this whilst still a teenager.

Scotland manager Tommy Docherty always insisted that Pat Stanton was a better defender than England captain Bobby Moore and younger fans can't believe that Hibs have ever had a better player than Franck Sauzee.

Peter Cormack, Davy Gibson, Bobby Johnstone, Eddie Turnbull, Willie Ormond, John Brownlie, George Best, Alex Cropley, Peter Marinello Russell Latapy and many more could arguably be added to that list however on the 21st May 2016, Lewis Stevenson achieved something that none of the others had been able to by becoming the only Hibernian player ever to win two major cup medals whilst still at the club.

Typically, after discovering this fact, the modest Fifer was quick to point out that many better players than him were much more deserving of

hero status by their contribution to the club.

It is also testament to his character that his immediate reaction when the final whistle blew at Hampden Park that day was to seek out his opponents and shake their hand before joining in the celebrations with his team-mates.

Hibs' longest serving player knows only too well the feeling of disappointment after losing at the national stadium and typically he wanted to show respect to the Rangers' players who had given their all in one of the finest Scottish Cup finals in living memory.

Lewis of course won his CIS League Cup medal as a teenager in the 5-1 win over Kilmarnock in 2007 and was named 'Man of the Match' award whilst playing in midfield.

Since then he has played well over 300 games for the club and made the left back position his own, but has suffered mixed fortunes at the national stadium.

Lewis recalled that never to be forgotten weekend in May: "I only discovered after the game that I'd become the first Hibs players to win two major cup medals. It's mad as there are many better players than me who have been at this club and not managed to get their hands on either of these cups and I am lucky enough to have picked up both. This season though my priority is to win the league and get promotion.

"I'd been to Hampden a few times

before and to be honest that was the least confident I had been, just because I'd tasted failure before but there is always a part of me that wants to make amends for what happened and the players had a real hunger that day.

"We missed out on promotion but it would have been a travesty if we had come away with nothing so the Scottish cup was the crowning glory for everything that went on that season.

"Although you always want to keep positive, the stuffing got knocked out of us a bit when Andy Halliday scored to make it 2-1 to Rangers. We'd played well up to then and it was a bit of a sucker punch. You just have to keep fighting and that's what we did that day.

"Two headers from Anthony Stokes and David Gray turned what could have been a bad day into the best day of my career.

"After the first one went in it was relief and I was thinking about getting it to extra time and consolidate and try and nick it from there.

"At 2-2 when we got the corner I stayed back on the half way line with Dylan (McGeouch) watching it from afar.

"When the ball hit the net, it was pure euphoria. I was the last one to get to the celebrations and by the time I got there everyone was jogging back to their position so it was an extra 100 meter run for me to get back.

"There was only a minute to go but it felt like an hour. When the ref gave the free kick on the half way line I thought it was for Rangers and I thought that they would pump it into the box but when I realised it was for us I was probably as delighted as I was when David (Gray) put the ball into the net.

"When the final whistle blew I shook a couple of Rangers' players' hands. I've been there before on the losing side and when the opposition team are running about daft it's a horrible feeling so I made sure I paid respect to them, then I went mad. To see the joy on everyone's face was fantastic.

"We had a party back at Easter Road but I was pretty calm that night as I wanted to soak up the atmosphere

and remember as much as I could because I can't remember too much of the celebrations after the League Cup win and I wanted to cherish this one.

"The following day I got the train back through from Fife and had stayed up from the night before. I met a few Hibs fans on London Road who wanted to share their experience of the day. Just to see what it meant to people was unbelievable.

"As I got to the top of Easter Road, a taxi stopped at the lights and a guy climbed out of the window as the doors were locked and he gave me a big cuddle. It was a great day and the fans were amazing, lining the route of the open topped bus.

"I just tried to sit back and take Sunday in. It doesn't come around very often. It's something that not many people will experience in their life, a parade like that but it is something I will remember forever. I've been through a lot of ups and downs during my time at the club, but I would have taken every down for the up we got winning the Scottish cup.

"It really does feel like a massive weight has been removed from our shoulders. Now we can look to this season and getting the club back into the top flight."



Hibs' Skol Cup triumph

25 years have passed since Hibernian, 'The Team That Wouldn't Die' overcame all odds to win the Skol League Cup after beating Dun-

fermline Athletic 2-0 at Hampden Park.

Trophies have always been a rarity in the capital over the years but this victory was even more remarkable considering that only a year before it looked likely that the club would no longer be in existence after a hostile takeover attempt from Hearts' chairman Wallace Mercer.

His plan was to sell Easter Road and Tynecastle with the new club playing at a purpose built stadium on the outskirts of the city and although Hibernian survived, thanks mainly to a campaign by supporters, performances on the pitch were still giving cause for concern, particularly when measured against their city rivals.

Things changed however in the summer of 1991. The board gave manager Alex Miller the funds to buy a player who would quickly achieve legendary status amongst the Easter Road faithful.

Keith Wright was a lifelong Hibs' fan who had been released by the club several years before. He eventually signed for Raith Rovers then Dundee where his partnership with Tommy Coyne brought him to the attention of bigger clubs.

He was linked with move to Aberdeen however when Hibernian expressed an interest, it was an easy decision for the striker and he put pen to paper for a reported £440,000 fee, a club record at the time.

It was money well spent as far as the Hibs' fans were concerned and they were quickly proved correct.

Goals against Stirling Albion, Kilmarnock then Ayr United secured a semi-final against Rangers who, under Walter Smith had won their last five domestic trophies.

Few outside Leith gave Hibernian any chance however a first half header from Keith was enough to ensure a trip to the national stadium.

The following night, Dunfermline beat Airdrie at Tynecastle following a highly disputed penalty kick and the stage was set for an east coast final.

Dunfermline had a strong squad

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SPORTS NEWS

with experienced players such as David Moyes, Billy Davies and Andy Rhodes however Hibernian went into the game as firm favourites.

Neither club created any clear cut chances in a hard fought first half but the second period belonged to Hibernian. Four minutes after the restart winger Michael Weir was brought down inside the area and all eyes turned to referee Brian McGinlay who had famously rejected a clear cut penalty to deny the club a Scottish Cup win against Rangers in 1979.

On this occasion however he had no hesitation in pointing to the spot. Centre half Tommy McIntyre calmly sent Rhodes the wrong way to the



delight of the Hibs' fans.

Hibs continued to dominate possession however with such a narrow lead everyone knew that one mistake could end the dreams then in the 86th minute, Mickey Weir won the ball in midfield and slid an inch perfect through ball into Keith's path.

40,377 supporters held their breath, the Hibernian striker coolly chipped the ball over the advancing Rhodes sparking wild celebrations amongst the Hibs' fans and ensuring that the trophy would be heading to Leith for only the second time in the club's

history.

The aftermath celebrations throughout the capital will never be forgotten by the Hibs' fans and to mark the anniversary, the players were invited to a Q&A at the Hibernian Supporters Club on Thursday 27th October then to the club's game against St Mirren two days later.

Keith recalled that historic cup run: "I had just joined the club and couldn't have asked for a better start.

"Our league form had been good and we had a lot of confidence but we went into the semi-final against Rangers as underdogs as they had some really good players such as Ally McCoist, Maurice Johnstone, Ian Durrant and Gary Stevens.

"Half way through the first half, Pat McGinlay sent a through ball and Mark McGraw clashed with Andy Goram at the edge of the box. The ball fell to Mickey Weir and the wee men sent a floating cross into the box. I expected to get cluttered but the Rangers' defenders both backed off which made it easy for me to split them.

"We defended really well and Budgie (John Burridge) made a couple of great saves.

"After beating Rangers we became big favourites to win the cup against Dunfermline. I remember coming out of the tunnel and seeing three quarters of the stadium full of Hibs' fans which gave us all a massive boost and made us determined not to let the supporters down.

"People say that we weren't at our best in the first half but Dunfermline were a decent team with plenty experienced players.

"We dominated the second half then when the wee man got the penalty Tam McIntyre was brilliant sending the keeper the wrong way.

"We were in control but at 1-0 anything can happen then near the end, Mickey sent the perfect through ball which left me one on one with Andy Rhodes.

"I normally didn't like too much time to think and as I was running toward goal I was thinking that if I score then there was no way back for Dunfermline. I managed to clip the ball over the keeper and it was a brilliant feeling seeing it go into the net.

"That was the highlight of my football career. I was only 26 at the time and I'll never forget the celebrations back in Edinburgh.

"The club had organised a function at the Dragonara Hotel, win or lose but first we travelled on an open topped bus from the Maybury to Easter Road. There were thousands on the streets and when we got to the stadium it was packed with cheering fans, five hours after the final whistle.

"We had a great night celebrating the victory but for me, my overriding emotion was one of relief, knowing that we hadn't let the Hibs' fans down."

In 2012 Keith was inducted into the Hibernian Football Club Hall of Fame in recognition of his service to the club. He now works as an SFA Development Coach with Midlothian Council.

Xmas Eve Massacre at Arbroath

Christmas Eve falls on a Saturday meaning there will be a full programme of fixtures in the SPFL.

Those who have criticised the SPFL for proceeding with a 'business as usual' policy say that Christmas Eve is a time for families getting together. In fairness, for football players it is very much business as usual - in fact, if anything, the Festive period is even busier than usual with fixtures scheduled between Christmas and New Year before the traditional New Year 'derby matches' take place around Scotland (not in Edinburgh, of course, given Hibernian remain in the Championship while Hearts are in the top flight...)

It used to be the norm for league fixtures in Scotland to be played on Christmas Day. I recall Hearts going down 3-2 at Celtic Park on Christmas Day 1971 for example.

This year, Hearts will travel to Dundee on the eve of Christmas Eve (it was originally planned for 24th December but the television broadcasting folk sabotaged Santa and have switched it to the 23rd...) and it rekindles memories of this ageing Jambo of the day before Christmas nearly 40 years ago when Hearts made the slightly longer journey to Arbroath.

1977 was a year Hearts and their supporters were glad to see the back of. Years of decline at the club finally took its toll when Hearts suffered relegation for the first time in their history at the end of season 1976/77.

It had been a season which had started promisingly with John Hagar's men memorably thrashing East German side Lokomotive Leipzig 5-1 at Tynecastle in the now defunct European Cup Winners' Cup (Hearts were in the competition as a result of reaching the Scottish Cup final in 1976 - although they lost to Rangers, the Gorgie team took their place in the Cup Winners' Cup due to Rangers being in the European Cup as Scottish champions)

Sadly, Hearts' fortunes took a turn for the worse in November when they contrived to throw away a 3-1 lead over Celtic at Tynecastle and lost 4-3. That was the turning point as confidence crumbled, players suffered a loss of form and the team plunged down the league. Although Hearts didn't quite finish bottom of the pile, they ended the season second from bottom - which meant automatic demotion.

Thus, for season 1977/78, Hearts fans could no longer look forward to games against Celtic, Rangers, Aberdeen and Hibernian and had to content themselves with trips to the likes of Alloa, Dumbarton and Montrose. So it was, the night before Christmas 1977, that Hearts fans headed back to the capital city after what proved to be a rare afternoon of pleasure during those dark days after seeing their side provide them with a Christmas cracker (sorry) at the unlikely setting of Arbroath.

Hearts had replaced John Hagar with Willie Ormond as their manager in the summer of '77 - a decision which, given Ormond's legendary status with Hibernian, didn't go down well with some Hearts supporters. Hearts had made a somewhat indifferent start to life in what was then called the First Division and as they headed to Angus on a wintry afternoon the day before

Christmas Day. The Jam Tarts weren't top of the league they were expected to stroll through.

However, this didn't stop several thousand Hearts fans heading to Ice Station Zebra, aka Gayfield Park, Arbroath hoping to see their favourites return with both points.

Given the scoreline at the end of the game, you may be surprised to learn Hearts struggled in the first half. A Willie Gibson goal was all that separated the sides at half-time - but what a different story it was in the second half.

Gibson scored twice more and cult hero Drew Busby also grabbed a hat-trick. With winger Malcolm Robertson also getting on the scoresheet, the game ended at 7-0 to Hearts. Gibson and Busby both earned a case of whisky for their efforts as a result of the league sponsors at the time awarding this to any player getting a hat-trick. Suffice to say, it was a very happy Christmas in the Gibson and Busby households...

It was at this game that I first heard the Maroon Army belt out the song 'White Christmas' although the lyrics were changed somewhat and the emphasis was put on the words 'IN THE SNOW'. It sounded good at the time...

One of the soundly thrashed Arbroath team that afternoon would bid his time to exact revenge on Hearts. And Albert Kidd would do just that, wearing the colours of Dundee on the final day of the league season eight and a half years later...

Hearts eventually stumbled over the finishing line at the end of season 1977/78 and ended in second place in the First Division, behind champions Morton. However, this was enough to gain promotion back to the Premier Division, as the top flight of Scottish football was called then.

On the night before Christmas 1977, some happy Hearts fans heading down the icy road from Angus to Edinburgh claimed to have seen Santa Claus preparing for his epic journey. Now they may have consumed too much alcohol that day but they were believed to have shouted to the big white-bearded figure 'Thanks, big man, but we've already got our present'

It was a 'sleighting' of a different sort at Gayfield Park on Christmas Eve 1977...



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