

Thursday in Edinburgh – What's On Today



The Secret Herb Garden Festive Evening: wine, cheese, chocolate and charcuterie in a beautiful setting at the foot of the Pentland Hills. 4-8pm, [The Secret Herb Garden](#), 32a Old Pentland Road, EH10 7EA (for more information re location see the [Secret Herb Garden's website](#) or call 07525 069773).

Pilton Equalities Project Presents: Cinderella – Panto Time! 6-8pm, [Granton Baptist Church](#), Crewe Road Gardens. Tickets 4 (children £1), refreshments provided. Please book in advance to assist in planning of catering: phone Trish on 0131 315 4466.

Bookbug: songs and rhymes for young children and their adults. 10.30-11am, [Fountainbridge Library](#), 137 Dundee Street.



Rosie Nimmo, copyright Marc
Marnie

The Rosie Nimmo Duo: Rosie Nimmo (vocals, rhythm, guitar and harmonica) and Stuart Allardyce (guitar) present a programme of swinging tunes to mark the Christmas season. 6-6.30pm, Main Gallery, [Scottish National Gallery](#), The Mound. Free and unticketed.

Under Fives Christmas Storytime: 10.30-11am, [Morningside Library](#), 184 Morningside Road. Free.

Growing Underground: Forest's Very Open Stage. Sign up for a 15 min+ slot in the cafe, or contact the team via [Facebook](#).

Free tea, coffee or corkage up to £1.50 for performers. 7.30pm, [Forest Cafe](#), 141 Lauriston Place. Free entry: BYOB – corkage 70p for beer, £1.50 for wine.

LGBT Learning Disability Project Festive Party. The Project provides a range of opportunities for building confidence and friendship among LGBT people who also identify as having a learning disability/difficulty. 2-4pm, [Lifecare Centre](#), Cheyne Street. For more information call 0131 652 3281 or email george@lgbthealth.org.uk: please bring a carer or supporter if you need help to participate.



Christmas Cracker 2014! Readings and discussions with **Angela Jackson, Michael Malone, Lucy Lawrie, Graeme MacRae Burnet, Daniel Gray** and **Alan McCredie**: there will also be festive cheer, mince pies and tipples in abundance! 6pm, [Waterstones West End](#), Princes Street. Free tickets are available from the store: for more information call 0131 226 2666.



Whale Arts Christmas Celebration! Special Christmas Show by resident drama group **Whales Without A Cause**, handmade crafts for sale from **Stitch 'N Time**, **South West Sounds** groups premier their 2014 songs, **smART Craft** exhibition, mince pies and mulled wine (or BYOB). 6pm till late, [Whale Arts](#), 30 Westburn Grove. For further information please call 0131 458 3267.



CinemaAttic Fundraising Event: #Mutant Christmas. A screening of ***Accion Mutante*** (18) – a cult film from 1993 by award-winning Spanish director **Alex de la Iglesia** – and **Party Xmas Bash with special DJs**. Film: 7.30 for 8pm, Red Lecture Theatre, [Summerhall](#), 1 Summerhall (NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE FROM ONE SHOWN ON POSTER); party: 11pm-3am, [Wee Red Bar](#), Lauriston Place. Film £6 + booking fee via [eventbrite](#), party £5 payable

on the door – party ticket price includes a raffle for a box of **El Olivo** Spanish products, **Calduero Wines** and **Goya23**. CinemaAttic is a community interest group aiming to offer the best independent cinema from the Iberian peninsula and Latin America.

Music Among The Trees: Drew Crichton. Talented pianist Drew entertains visitors to the **Edinburgh Christmas Tree Festival**. 12 noon-1pm, Sanctuary, [St Andrew's and St George's West Church](#), 13 George Street. Free: all welcome.

Candles and Quietness: the church will be open for quiet reflection and prayer. 5.15pm (come and go as you please), [St John's Episcopal Church](#), Princes Street.

Hotel (15): the **Nordic Film Festival** concludes with this 'brutally honest and at times absurdly humorous exploration of the human psyche'. In Swedish with English subtitles. 6.30pm, [Filmhouse](#), Lothian Road. Book [online](#) or call the box office on 0131 228 2688. The Nordic Film Festival is presented by day for night.



Five things you need to know today Edinburgh!



Closure of Duncan Place Resource Centre

Today at Edinburgh's Christmas

North Edinburgh Grows

Day of Action against NHS in TTIP in Edinburgh

Our biggest competition of the year....Enter now!

It will simply take too much money to fix the roof and the wet and dry rot discovered earlier this year at Duncan Place Resource Centre in Leith and it is to be closed and demolished immediately. This was discussed last week at the council's Education committee meeting when councillors were told that the building would cost more than any other owned by the council to put in order. A decision was made as to its fate and that will now be ratified by the Governance, Risk and Best Value [committee](#) which meets this morning.

The cost of demolition will not mean any increase in the council's capital spending as they will use money set aside for providing a lift in the building for that.

This decision was made despite concerns and depositions from the management committee of the centre and the Parent Council of Leith Primary School. The implications on the Primary School are that a temporary Portakabin will have to be installed there to allow nursery places to be provided, but further work will have to be done on finding long term solutions on providing nursery, gym and community accommodation. One option suggested was to stop up St Andrew Place and allow that street to be used by the school as a PE area and for outdoor play.

The building was erected in the 1920s as a technical block and was used in the past by Leith Academy. The building was converted to use as a community centre about 30 years ago.

Briefs is the new show at the Spiegeltent in St Andrew Square

which begins tonight.

This is not for the coy among you. Edinburgh's Christmas describe it as : "An all male, sharp shooting cabaret of burlesque with balls, high flying circus bandits and savage gender offenders! Described as an Aussie Cirque du Soleil meets Ru Paul's Drag Race, get ready for a madcap safari through extravagant birdbath boylesque, too-close-for-comfort yo-yo tricks, valiant aerial acrobatics, irreverent interludes, ferocious fanfares and show-stopping drag artistes."

Booking details [here](#).

The area that used to be West Pilton Farm is now used for North Edinburgh Grows, an award winning project.

There are four separate allotments there where people grow vegetables in raised beds.



If you are reading this article on paper and would like to visit the website then scan the QR code on the left with a smartphone or tablet and you will be taken straight there.

There is to be a demo today at the UK office of the European Parliament. Why?

The group who are organising the protest there say: "The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership will mean the irreversible privatisation of public services including the NHS. Demand that our NHS is protected from this deal. Tory MEP Ian Duncan should stand up for the NHS against this corporate power grab. We need to make sure he does."

If you feel like supporting them then they aim to be outside the office about 12.30/12.45.

If you don't think you know enough about TTIP then there is some information [here](#)..[here](#) and [here](#)...

To celebrate the festive season, **Marks & Spencer** is giving Edinburgh Reporter readers the chance to win their ultimate New Year's Eve party outfit. Two winners will receive a £250 gift card to spend in store.

Enter [here](#)!

Rangers v Hibs game rescheduled to Friday 13th February



Hibernian have confirmed that the SPFL Championship match vs Rangers at Ibrox has been moved to Friday 13th February, 7.45pm kick-off. The match will be live on BT Sport.

Meanwhile the club has announced the ticket office and clubstore opening times for the festive period.

The main office will be closed at 1pm on Christmas Eve and Hogmanay with the main office shut on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and on 1 and 2 January.

Saturday 20th December (Away v Raith Rovers) 10am-3pm

Sunday 21st December Closed

Monday 22nd December 10am-5pm

Tuesday 23rd December 10am-5pm

Wednesday 24th December 10am-1pm

Thursday 25th December Closed

Friday 26th December Closed

Saturday 27th December (Home v Rangers) 10am-Kick Off

Sunday 28th December Closed

Monday 29th December 10am-5pm

Tuesday 30th December 10am-5pm

Wednesday 31st December 10am-1pm

Thursday 1st January Closed

Friday 2nd January Closed

Saturday 3rd January (Away v Hearts) 10am-1pm

Sunday 4th January Closed

Normal hours resume from Monday 5th January

Concern for missing Edinburgh

woman



Police are appealing for information to help trace an elderly woman who has gone missing from her supported accommodation in Edinburgh.

Winifred Hogg, who is 75 years old, has health problems and sometimes uses a motorised wheelchair to get around. She does not rely on her wheelchair, however, and so maybe walking.

Winifred has not been seen since 10.30am when she appeared to be heading towards Morrison's supermarket in Granton.

She is described as 5ft 2in tall, with short grey hair, glasses, and wearing a blue skirt, pop socks, flat black shoes and is believed to be wearing a blue coat. She may appear confused.

Inspector Alan Carson said: "We are urgently seeking to trace Winifred given her health issues. Anybody who recognises the description of Winifred or believes they may have seen her is asked to contact police immediately."

Those with information can contact Police Scotland on 101

Former Royal High building to become high class hotel



A 19th century building used mainly as a school, but which was earmarked as the new parliament building for a devolved

Scotland may be brought into use as a luxury hotel. The building has been empty since 1968 but is owned by the council and used for storage of ballot boxes.

Proposals to transform the old Royal High School on Edinburgh's Calton Hill into a world-class hotel were announced today by the project developers. The former boys' school, designed by Thomas Hamilton, opened in 1829 but has remained empty since 1968 when the Royal High School moved to Barnton.

Over the years, numerous uses have been suggested for what is one of Edinburgh's most distinctive landmarks, from a potential site for the new Scottish Parliament to a photography or military museum. The City of Edinburgh Council, which own the A listed building, granted Duddingston House Properties (DHP) a conditional ground lease for 125 years after the company won an open competition in 2010.

Designed by award-winning architect Gareth Hoskins, the new hotel when completed, will provide the capital with a distinctive hotel of international standing with Thomas Hamilton's restored building as its centrepiece. Three of the world's top hotel operators, none of whom currently have a presence in Scotland, have been shortlisted as front-runners to manage the new hotel.

The economic impact of this new type of hotel offering would be significant not just for Edinburgh but for the whole of Scotland. When operational the hotel is likely to create 640 local jobs and contribute on average £27 million annually to Edinburgh's GDP. On a Scotland-wide basis the hotel could support an additional 100 jobs, across different sectors including tourism, retail and leisure, and contribute an estimated £32m in GDP to Scotland's economy annually.*

A spokesperson from the City of Edinburgh Council's Economic Development Department said: "The Old Royal High school

building has not had a continuous use since the school moved 46 years ago. We look forward to the pre-application process in January 2015 for this important *Edinburgh 12*** project by the developers who won the council's competition. Edinburgh is demonstrating its ability to attract significant inward investment across a series of important projects which are crucial to the positioning of the city in Europe and to the creation of new job opportunities."

✖ The plan to turn the old Royal High School into a hotel of international standing is a fully-funded proposal with in excess of £55m committed by a group of institutional investors led by DHP's Bruce Hare and David Orr of the Urbanist Group. Orr, a hotelier, who was instrumental in bringing Harvey Nichols to Edinburgh, believes that the proposal for the new hotel has the potential to do for tourism what the department store did for retailing in the city.

"What we are proposing to do is to add something truly special to the Edinburgh hotel market by bringing one of the best hotel operators in the world to the city. This will not in any way diminish current hotel provision; indeed it will add another tier at the top which can only benefit all of the city's operators. By increasing the breadth of hotel offering, Scotland's capital will be in a position to attract new visitors from the top end of the market as well as improve its ability to compete with other European cities for international diplomatic events and important global conferences. But importantly, one of Edinburgh's architectural jewels in the crown will be sensitively restored and the public will have access to Hamilton's superb building for the first time."

Gordon Dewar, chief executive of Edinburgh Airport, has urged the city's business community to give the widest possible support to the project. "Edinburgh's success in world tourism requires that it keeps ahead of its competition and responds

to the needs and demands of the tourist market. A world-class hotel will enable Edinburgh to market itself around the globe as a great place to live, work and study as well as attract further inward investment opportunities to the city. This will also help sell Edinburgh to the airlines at a time when we are competing with many other European Airports to attract their investment into the capital both as a market and a destination.”

The developers are due to submit a Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) to the council in January 2015 followed by three days of public consultations at the old Royal High School in February 2015.

Dylan McGeouch to resume full squad training



Hbs' on-loan midfielder Dylan McGeouch is about to resume full squad training after rehabilitation work at Celtic and has managed to do some light training.

The 21-year-old who is on a season-long loan from Celtic has been sidelined since October after undergoing surgery on his ankle.

Speaking to Hibs TV, McGeouch said: “I’ve just started jogging again this week. Hopefully I can pick it up this week and I’ll be back training again as soon as possible.

“We just need to see what the physios say and just take it

from there."But hopefully I'm good to go now and I can get back as soon as possible – I've just got to see how my ankle feels.

"The surgeon has given me the go-ahead to start running, so I hopefully I can step it up again and take it from there."

McGeouch spent part of his youth career with Rangers and says he would love to be back in time to face his old club at Easter Road on Saturday 27 December.

He added: "Of course it would be great to be back for that – it's a big game for the club and everybody involved.

"So hopefully I can get back for that, but I'm not promising anything.

"I've had a wee niggle in my ankle for a while. I saw a specialist in Glasgow about it and he thought it was best that I had the surgery just to clean it up before it got any worse."

Hibs' players visit 'Sick Kids'



Several Hibs' players visited the Royal Hospital for Sick Children (RHSC) in Edinburgh yesterday, with a selection of Christmas presents to bring some festive cheer to some of the city's sickest kids.

Captain Liam Craig was joined by 11 of his team-mates; Scott Allan, Callum Booth, Farid El Alagui, Paul Heffernan, Liam

Fontaine, David Gray, Scott Robertson, Jake Sinclair and Lewis Stevenson as he presented the hospital with a cheque for £1000.

Maureen Harrison, chief executive of the Sick Kids Friends Foundation, said: "We're extremely grateful to the players and staff from Hibernian Football Club for taking some time out of their busy schedules to spread some Christmas cheer at the RHSC.

"It's particularly difficult for children who are unwell at this time of year so it's a pleasure to see their faces light up when they are surprised by a team of magical visitors armed with such special presents."

Hibs also donated some signed balls and a signed shirt for the Sick Kids Friends Foundation to auction off in order to raise further funds.

Flybe urges you to take the plane route this Christmas



Flybe, Europe's largest regional airline, is encouraging people to consider flying over the festive period as major works planned for motorways and rail services look set to cause travel chaos during the upcoming weeks around Christmas and New Year.

Train companies have already warned passengers about major works that will severely impact the West Coast mainline route between Scotland and London, and Virgin Trains is urging

people not to travel until 29th December due to planned closures on its network.

First Great Western is also asking passengers to check journeys before they travel. Meanwhile, motorists face lengthy delays on the M1 and M4 as road works are expected throughout the festive period.

With just a week until Christmas Eve, Flybe's 'Purple Wednesday' flash sale returns today featuring popular routes including those from Birmingham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, London City Airport, Manchester and Southampton with one way tickets available from just £15 including taxes and charges, when booked before midnight.

Paul Simmons, Flybe's Chief Commercial Officer, said: "People wanting to visit friends and family for Christmas and New Year will face difficulties with road and rail travel this year, which is why we are highlighting the convenience of air travel this festive period.

"Sitting in long queues on the motorway while trying to keep the children entertained, is not an ideal way to start the holidays. Travelling by rail doesn't seem too appealing either, as operators confirm major engineering works, which will mean normal journeys will take much longer than originally scheduled. In some cases, lengthy bus replacement services will be in operation.

"We pride ourselves on providing the best and fastest regional connectivity and, at this time of year especially, our extensive network of routes and convenient connections, is a real option – plus, with all the planned rail and road disruption, flying is certainly the faster way to travel."

Flybe's London City services offers passengers the ease of travelling from the heart of London with daily flights to six UK and Ireland destinations, including daily flights to Edinburgh, Exeter, Inverness, Belfast, Aberdeen and Dublin.

Mr Simmons added: “The train from Exeter to London can take more than two hours even on a good day, whereas we fly straight into the heart of the capital in around an hour.

“Likewise, passengers travelling between London and Inverness can expect to be on the train for over eight hours or in the car for over ten, before arriving at their destination. With Flybe, we take you there in just under two hours.”

For more information on flights included in Flybe’s ‘Purple Wednesday’ flash sale, visit www.flybe.com.

The Nutcracker, Festival Theatre

✖ *The Nutcracker* is the lightest, most accessible of all Tchaikovsky’s ballets. It’s a Christmas delight, telling the story of a young girl named Clara who is gifted a nutcracker by the mysterious Drosselmeyer. The nutcracker comes to life as the Nutcracker Prince and helps Clara defeat the evil Rat King; the pair then travel to the magical land of sweets and see all manner of beautiful things. None of this is particularly serious but using the choreography of **Peter Darrell**, Scottish Ballet presents us with a curiously serious interpretation of this quintessential show.



The orchestra, under the baton of Richard Honner, is excellent. If there’s one instrument to choose when playing Tchaikovsky, it’s the cello, and the section most certainly

delivers, never less so than in the *grand pas de deux* between **Sophie Martin's** Sugar Plum Fairy and **Erik Cavallari's** Nutcracker Prince.

Cavallari is a strong dancer but seems at times a little detached from the whole affair, even aloof. The Nutcracker is still a children's toy, a playmate as well as a prince, and here lies my main problem with this production: it's excellent classical ballet but it lacks chemistry or wit. Where is the profundity of Kirkland and Baryshnikov? Where is the humour of Matthew Bourne?

It would perhaps be inappropriate to suggest that a production which so heavily features child dancers should be sexy, but this production is safe bordering on bland. The humour is somewhat forced and the addition of the monkeys is funny for the first five minutes, but becomes uncomfortable as they jape and gawk from the wings during the more serious duets and trios – the audience becomes unsure of whether they are allowed to laugh and its attention is distracted.



The children of the cast are one of the strengths of this production. The discipline and talent, particularly of the children dancing in huge rat costumes, are fantastic. Credit here must go to the costume department who turn out dress after dress of astounding quality. **Lez Brotherston** has created a production of beauty and finesse. The staggered proscenium arch gives the sets a flexibility and depth that works very well.

The costume of the Rat King is stellar, as is the Rat King himself (**Victor Zarallo**), enthralling the audience for the brief time he appears on stage. **Thomas Edward's** turn as the English dancer is one of the most charismatic on stage, and **Constance Devernay** and **Laura Joffre** are wonderfully fizzy and light as the Chinese dancers.



This is a production that does not know what it wants to be. It's not pushing any boundaries but it's technically excellent and very pleasing to the eye. The strength and dedication of the dancers are unquestionable. I just wish The Nutcracker Prince would smile a bit more.

On a final note, if you do visit this production, be sure to purchase a copy of the outstanding souvenir programme.

The Nutcracker runs from Sat 13 December 2014 to Sat 3 January 2015 at the Festival Theatre before touring to Glasgow, Aberdeen, Inverness and Newcastle.

And the Edinburgh Award goes to ...Tom Gilzean



Edinburgh war veteran and charity worker Thomas Gilzean has been named as the eighth person to receive The Edinburgh Award.

The former Royal Engineer has been selected to receive the accolade from a shortlist of 25 nominations cast by the Edinburgh public. He will receive the title and an engraved Loving Cup at a ceremony within the Capital's City Chambers in early 2015.

Mr Gilzean, who was presented with the British Empire Medal by the Lord Provost in 2013, can regularly be found fundraising in his trademark tartan trousers along Edinburgh's Royal Mile. He has raised more than £100,000 for local causes, and continues to dedicate his time fundraising at the age of 94.



His handprints will be immortalised on a flagstone in the City Chambers quadrangle alongside those of previous recipients Ian Rankin, JK Rowling, George Kerr, Sir Chris Hoy, Professor Peter Higgs, Elizabeth Blackadder and Professor Richard Demarco.

Edinburgh's Lord Provost, Councillor Donald Wilson, said: "The Edinburgh Award enables the people of Edinburgh to pay a lasting tribute to someone who has made an outstanding contribution to the city. To date, the accolade has been given to people who have contributed to the arts, literature, sport and science – but local charitable work deserves to be held in just as high regard.

"Tom Gilzean is an inspiring man who devotes his life to raising fantastic amounts of money for charity, and we are extremely fortunate in this city to have people like him who so selflessly give up their time for the good of their community.

"It gives me great pleasure to announce Tom as the eighth person to be presented with the Edinburgh Award. Having received more nominations than any other individual, he is a local champion for the people of Edinburgh."

Further planning application for St James Quarter submitted



The development at St James Quarter proceeds apace. The only part of the newer building which is going to withstand the change is John Lewis, but the developer also has plans for the older buildings on James Craig Walk.



Martin Perry, Development Director for TIAA Henderson Real Estate, said: “Earlier this year, we appointed architectural firm Purcell to progress designs for 27-31 James Craig Walk and St Andrew’s Hall which form part of the Edinburgh St James development site. Both of these buildings are Grade B listed and Purcell has been working to safeguard their historical character, whilst ensuring they are suitably aligned with the overarching look and feel of the development.

“Subject to planning permission and listed building consent from The City of Edinburgh Council, St Andrew’s Hall will be redeveloped to include a three storey extension which will complement the existing building.

“It will provide office and restaurant space and include a base for support staff as well as a security centre. The planning application for 27-31 James Craig Walk sets out

proposals to achieve a sensitive restoration of the building, the creation of 20 new homes and plans for new commercial space that will help increase the overall vibrancy of the area. A separate application to bring forward some of the detail of the wider St James development will be submitted to the City of Edinburgh Council before Christmas.”

✖ The application has now been made and you can view it [here](#).

The student accommodation here is to be converted to residential apartments. From some of the drawings related to the application you can get a flavour of what the resulting development will look like. The photo above shows what is currently the pick up place for John Lewis, and which will presumably be included in the redevelopment of the area.

The development is possible because of an innovative funding agreement between the City of Edinburgh Council, Scottish Government and TIAA Henderson Real Estate (TH Real Estate) announced earlier this year.

The £61m required to improve local infrastructure and public space in the area for this major regeneration scheme will be facilitated by the council through a new funding model, announced by the Council and Scottish Government in April this year. This involves the council in funding the public realm elements of the development against future council tax or business rates increased as a result of the development itself.

Images courtesy of Purcell Architects

Wednesday in Edinburgh – What's On Today

Creative Electric: drama and creative workshops for ages 16+.

Creative Electric create contemporary performances based on real experiences; their work has been performed in Scotland and Sweden, in theatres, studios, art galleries, on trains, in fields, in city centre squares and on rooftops. 7-9pm, [The Bongo Club](#), 66 Cowgate. £5 per session, bursaries available. For more information and to book, contact creative_electric@hotmail.com.

Sonic Christmas Cards! A free Christmas craft event for ages 7+. 4-5pm, [Stockbridge Library](#), 11 Hamilton Place.



The Edinburgh Telephone Choir: traditional carol concert with the choir, this year featuring a brass ensemble who will join the organ in several carols and also perform a seasonal number of their own. 7.30pm, [Morningside Parish Church](#), Cluny Gardens/Braid Road. Retiring collection for the Wednesday Club for Disabled Men.



Red Road Revisited

Chris Leslie and Mitch Miller: Red Road Revisited. For over three years, photographer and filmmaker **Chris Leslie** and illustrator **Mitch Miller** documented life at **Glasgow's Red Road flats**, culminating in the 2012 exhibition **Red Road Underground**. Leslie's revealing photographs and slide shows and Miller's meticulously drawn 'dialectograms' shed light on the personal histories of the residents, employees and emigres

who lived in the shadow of the great tower blocks. In this special event these award-winning artists discuss the detail of their long collaboration, how they built a rapport with locals, gained access to hidden spaces (such as the derelict underground bar and bingo) and used their very different, but complementary, visual techniques to tell a complex and often surprising story of life amidst a modernist icon. 12.45-1.30pm, Hawthornden Lecture Theatre, [Scottish National Gallery](#), The Mound. Free and unticketed.

Health In Mind Over 65's Coffee Morning. 10.30am-12 noon, [Morningside Library](#), 184 Morningside Road. Free – just come along!



Rowan Coupland, Gavin Mee and Grant McNeil: one of The Forest's last gigs this year – folk, old gospel and jazz ballads. Arrive early or risk standing! 7pm, [Forest Cafe](#), 141 Lauriston Place. Free entry: BYOB – corkage 65p for beer, £1.50 for wine.

North Edinburgh Grows Christmas Tree Lights Switch On: North Edinburgh Arts Artist in Residence **Natalie Taylor** will be creating a Christmas tree sculpture on Monday and Tuesday – come along today and see the lights being switched on! Free mince pies and (non-alcoholic) mulled wine. 3.45pm, [North Edinburgh Arts](#), 15a Pennywell Court. For more information call 0131 315 2151.



Blackwell's Edinburgh Presents Peter Ranscombe: *Hare, A Novel*. When **William Burke** was hanged for mass murder in 1829, his accomplice **William Hare** was set free after turning King's evidence and fled Edinburgh to escape the mob.. In *Hare: A Novel*, he is discovered years later working as labourer in Boston, a city terrified by a new series of murders – but

although Hare is arrested, the deaths continue and the police have to release Hare and work with him to find the killer. Set against the background of the American Civil War, *Hare: A Novel* is Peter Ranscombe's debut; the author is a freelance journalist who previously worked for *The Scotsman*, *Scotland on Sunday* and *The Field*. 6.30-8pm, [Blackwell's South Bridge](#). Free tickets are available from the shop's front desk, by calling 0131 622 8218 or emailing events.edinburgh@blackwell.co.uk.

Morningside Library Craft Group: 6.30-7.45pm, [Morningside Library](#), 184 Morningside Road. No need to book – just come along!

Boda Bar Christmas Quiz: a Christmas special fun-filled evening with a mixture of hilarious questions, true or false rounds and nail-biting games. Teams of 4 should book asap to get a table – contact Boda on 0131 553 5900 or email boda@bodabar.com. 8pm, [Boda Bar](#), 229 Leith Walk.



St Margaret's House Cinema Nights: *Searching for Sugar Man* (12A). Though he faded into obscurity in the US, an early 70s musician known as **Rodriguez** became a huge hit in South Africa and was widely believed to have died. Two obsessed fans set out to learn the man's true fate. A BAFTA and Academy award-winning Swedish-British documentary by **Malik Bendjelloul**. 'Powerful, uplifting and unforgettable' (Dazed and Confused). 7-10pm, [St Margaret's House](#), 151 London Road. Free.

Music Among The Trees: Brigitte Harris. The Director of Music at St Andrew's and St George's West entertains visitors to the **Edinburgh Christmas Tree Festival** with a varied programme on the fine Wells Kennedy organ. 12 noon-1pm, Sanctuary, [St Andrew's and St George's West Church](#), 13 George Street. Free: all welcome.

Music Among The Trees: Saxophone Quartet. Young players from

Napier Music School entertain visitors to the **Edinburgh Christmas Tree Festival**. 2-3pm, Sanctuary, [St Andrew's and St George's West Church](#), 13 George Street. Free: all welcome.

Paris of the North (15): the **Nordic Film Festival** continues with this 'subtly deadpan and bleakly comic tale' set against the hostile yet stunning mountainous landscape of Iceland's West Fjords. In Icelandic with English subtitles. 6.30pm, [Filmhouse](#), Lothian Road. Book [online](#) or call the box office on 0131 228 2688. The Nordic Film Festival is presented by day for night.



Five things you need to know today Edinburgh!



Cyrenians launch film today

Fair Trade for Christmas

House prices in Edinburgh and the Lothians

Submit your Story

Skate like an ice hockey star

A unique and innovative approach to supporting vulnerable young people who have been homeless is being showcased in an engaging short film to be premiered today

Devised and produced by the residents and volunteers at Edinburgh's two Cyrenians Communities, the film portrays what it is like to live, volunteer and work in the communities, and highlights why this approach works for both residents and volunteers.

And you can read more [here](#) (and you can watch the movie!)

International Development Minister Humza Yousaf today urged shoppers in Scotland to opt for a Christmas with a conscience this year.

Mr Yousaf officially opened the Ethical Christmas Fair at Edinburgh's Ocean Terminal, where he met Fairtrade stockists from across Scotland and producers of fairly traded and ethically sourced goods from Kenya and Bali.

Read more [here](#).

Latest figures released by ESPC, the leading property marketing company in East Central Scotland, show that activity in the property market in Edinburgh, the Lothians and Fife has continued to strengthen as 2014 draws to a close.

Between September and November the number of sales recorded by ESPC rose by 19% on an annual basis bringing sales to their highest level for the period since 2007. It is the market for upper-mid market that has seen the greatest rise in demand, with sales of homes in the £300,000-399,999 bracket rising by 33% annually. By contrast, sales of properties at under £100,000 rose by a modest 1% compared to the same period a year ago.

The supply of properties to the market has also improved, with new instructions through ESPC up by 13% year-on-year. Interestingly, in recent weeks there has been a particularly

noteable rise in the number of higher value homes coming onto the market following the announcement of the proposed bands for Land & Buildings Transaction Tax (LBTT) which will replace Stamp Duty from April 2015. During November itself the number of new instructions with an asking price of £325,000 rose by more than 92% annually.

David Marshall, Business Development Manager with ESPC, explained:

“Whilst most buyers will pay slightly less tax following the introduction of LBTT in April, those buying higher value homes will incur a higher tax bill. Under the proposed LBTT system anyone buying a home for more than £254,000 would pay more tax from April than is currently the case meaning buyers at the upper end of the market have an incentive to bring forward their purchase if they can.

“Many sellers are already looking to get their home on the market to take advantage of this expected rise in demand and we’d expect the first three months of 2015 to be a particularly busy period for the property market north of the border.

“Overall, 2014 has seen a substantial improvement in the local property market. Selling times have shortened significantly, with the median selling time down from ten weeks a year ago to seven weeks today and more sellers are seeing their properties achieve or exceed the Home Report valuation than at any stage since Home Reports were introduced in 2008.”

We need more news. All the time we need your news. So now is a good time to tell us what you are up to. If you are the leader of a pack of Brownies or the CEO of a major company based in Edinburgh if you have news then we have space for it. Use the Submit your Story feature [here](#).

Edinburgh Capitals players will be making an appearance at the 2:30- 4:30pm general skating session at Murrayfield Ice Rink on Friday 19 December. The players will be on the ice between 3pm and 4pm. This is your chance to skate with your favourite Capitals players, chat with them and pose for pictures.

Richard Hartmann said: "With the Christmas holidays starting the guys thought it would be a great chance for the players to share some time on the ice with the fans."

And remember we have a great competition over [here](#) to win tickets to see the Capitals play!

✖ If you are reading this article on paper and would like to visit the website then scan the QR code on the left with a smartphone or tablet and you will be taken straight there.

Buy Fair Trade this Christmas

✖ International Development Minister Humza Yousaf yesterday urged shoppers in Scotland to opt for a Christmas with a conscience this year.

Mr Yousaf officially opened the Ethical Christmas Fair at Edinburgh's Ocean Terminal, where he met Fairtrade stockists from across Scotland and producers of fairly traded and ethically sourced goods from Kenya and Bali.

With what's expected to be Scotland's busiest shopping weekend looming, Mr Yousaf took his opportunity to stock up on festive Fair Trade gifts, and encouraged Scots shoppers to spend some of their Christmas budget this year on fairly traded gifts,

decorations, food, cards, candles or stocking-fillers.

The Fair Trade movement ensures producers in developing countries are paid a fair price for their work, helping them and their families out of poverty and supporting them to participate in global markets without fear of exploitation. Scotland was declared one of the world's first Fair Trade nations in February 2013.

✖ Mr Yousaf said:

"A recent survey suggested the average Scot will spend almost £420 this year on Christmas gifts. Meanwhile in third world countries, some of the world's poorest, most vulnerable people are living in poverty and struggling to provide basic food and shelter for themselves and their families.

"So with what is expected to be this year's busiest shopping weekend just a couple of days away, I am asking the people of Scotland to consider spending even just a small portion of their gift budget on fairly traded items this year.

"It's plain to see at this Christmas market that there is now an extensive range of ethical and fairly traded goods with more than 4,500 certified Fairtrade products bearing the blue and green mark available. So why not fill a stocking with some Fair Trade chocolate, coffee, olive oil or wonderful handicrafts?

"Just by buying one of them, you can do your bit to address poverty and help to protect less fortunate families and communities around the world this Christmas."

Martin Rhodes, Director of the Scottish Fair Trade Forum, said:

"By buying Fair Trade gifts at Christmas, people here in Scotland are showing their commitment to a fair deal for farmers, workers and producers across the globe."



Cyrenians launch a new film today at The Scottish Storytelling Centre

A unique and innovative approach to supporting vulnerable young people who have been homeless is being showcased in an engaging short film to be premiered later today (but there is a sneaky wee trailer below.....)

Devised and produced by the residents and volunteers at Edinburgh's two Cyrenians Communities, the film portrays what it is like to live, volunteer and work in the communities, and highlights why this approach works for both residents and volunteers.

Cyrenians has two residential Communities. The City Community in Leith and the Farm Community to the west of Edinburgh. Over the course of a year the Communities will provide support to around 29 individuals aged 16-30. Each Community has up to eight residents at any one time, who live there as a result of being homeless, usually following a family relationship breakdown, drug or alcohol issues or a mental health problem. Both Communities also have around six volunteers who live with the residents helping to provide a safe, stable environment and ultimately resulting in residents moving on into the wider community.

Dani Jones, aged 26, one of the residents who took part in the film describes the impact living in the Community has had on him: "Cyrenians is a chance to get back on your feet if you

are homeless or in need of help. It's given me a second chance, not only in life but in giving me the motivation to do well."

With funding from The Agnes Hunter Trust, the Cyrenians' residents worked with Media Education, volunteers and staff for six weeks to create the short powerful film which captures what it is like to live in a shared living environment and how this supports individuals to grow and develop, increasing their social and emotional skills.

The challenging and exciting project provided an industry-based training experience giving both residents and volunteers an opportunity to learn new skills, build confidence and self esteem. Of the six residents and nine volunteers who participated in the project, all agreed they felt a real sense of pride and achievement with the final film.

Cyrenians Community resident Annie, aged 26, described the filming making process as a positive experience and said: "Sometimes I find team work and communication difficult but through this project I think we worked very well together and showed what it is like to live in the Cyrenians communities."

Ewan Aitken, Chief Executive, Cyrenians, said: "We hope this film will be a in inspiration for those who feel they don't matter or that no-one cares. Cyrenians communities are places of change for everyone involved; whatever the reason they are there. There are no labels; there are only people together on a journey of transformation and hope. No-one is beyond change. Some may stumble but others are there for them. And everybody matters, everybody makes a difference."

Iain Shaw, Director, Media Education, who worked with residents on the project, said: "We have been delighted with the levels of engagement and the commitment to the project from all involved. This is reflected in the quality of the final film. I hope that residents and volunteers use their

involvement to seek out new opportunities and use the project as a basis for demonstrating their abilities in terms of creativity, teamwork and technical skills. We have found this project to be very worthwhile and look forward to working with Cyrenians again in the future.”

The premiere of the film at the Scottish Storytelling Centre today will allow residents’ friends and family to share the experience. The film will then be used to help prospective residents and volunteers gain a better understanding of life in the Communities and to help recruit future volunteers.

Best buys for preventing poor health

A new study released today by NHS Health Scotland identifies cost effective approaches to preventing poor health that are also likely to narrow health inequalities.

The study ‘Best preventative investments in Scotland – what the evidence and experts say’ sets out the principles and specific areas for action for policy makers to consider. These go beyond the health and social care sector and include actions on employment, incomes and the environment.

The study brings together a wide range of research results, and the views of panels of experts, and reinforces research issued last week by ScotPHO, ‘Informing investment to reduce health inequalities’. That research showed the extent to which

regulatory and tax measures that redistribute income are more effective at reducing health inequalities than interventions focused on individual health behaviours.

Neil Craig, Health Economics expert at NHS Health Scotland said: “In general, interventions which use taxation, regulation and legislation to reduce income inequalities and reduce exposure to unhealthy products such as tobacco are the best investments – cost-effective and most likely to reduce inequalities. This offers a potential ‘win-win’ scenario – the policy works, pressure on public services is relieved slightly, and we tackle health inequalities in a cost-effective way.”

The paper identified a range of programmes of work and policy priorities. These include:

- Ensuring adequate incomes that reduce income inequalities
- Reducing unemployment in vulnerable groups or areas
- Improving physical environments, such as traffic calming schemes
- Targeting vulnerable groups by investing in more intensive services and other forms of support for such groups, in the context of universal provision
- Early years programmes
- Using regulation or taxation, such as the introduction of minimum unit pricing, to reduce risky behaviours.

Neil Craig continued: “Investment in prevention within and beyond the health care system is a good buy. Although financial savings from prevention are sometimes hard to measure and hard to achieve, prevention has the potential to help reconcile the high demands on public services, squeezed resources and Scottish Government’s goal of reducing health inequalities and achieving a fairer healthier Scotland.”

o The full report ‘Best preventative investments in Scotland –

what the evidence and experts say' is available to download from NHS Health Scotland's website

<http://www.healthscotland.com/documents/24575.aspx>

Submitted by [Kerry Teakle](#)



Hearts Settle 'Football Debt'

Hearts today announced that it has now settled all outstanding administration debts owed to its former players – the 'football debt'.

Eighteen months ago Hearts entered administration and only exited this process earlier this year. The process of settling 'football debt' can take as long as two years but Hearts, now under the leadership of Ann Budge, has achieved this settlement within six months.

Under the club's previous owner, Vladimir Romanov, Hearts players endured several delays to payment of wages. When the club went into administration and some players – including John Sutton and Andrew Driver – were made redundant, some payments were deferred. Hearts have now fully paid all salaries due.

PFA Scotland chief executive Fraser Wishart welcomed the news. The former Hearts and Motherwell players said: "We're delighted to hear our members have received all the outstanding monies owed to them. Hearts have been great to

deal with and settled these debts very quickly. Ann Budge and her team have dealt with the matter in a courteous and professional manner which has led to these debts being settled in a short period of time.

App to beat the blues seeking test users in Edinburgh

The long, dark nights of December, January and February have long been associated with the 'winter blues' but depression is a year round issue in Scotland. Hundreds of thousands – perhaps millions – of people all over the country suffer from mental health issues of varying degrees of severity. More than 778,000 people, or around 15% of the total population, were prescribed antidepressants in Scotland between 2013 and 2014.

But many more suffer from low level issues – stress, anxiety, loneliness, poor self esteem – that gradually chip away at their emotional wellbeing over time. For these people, existing mental health treatments like drug or talking therapies may be too drastic an intervention and a softer approach may be helpful. That's where Ginsberg comes in.

Ginsberg is a new online tool and smartphone app developed by an Edinburgh-based team to help people better understand and improve their mental health. The project, a joint initiative between the Scottish Government, NHS 24 and New Media Scotland, is currently in an open beta phase and is seeking people from around Scotland to help test out the tool and provide feedback that will shape its future development. It is the first app of its type in the world and a genuinely innovative consumer-first approach to developing public health

software.

Ginsberg is for anyone who wants to become more self-aware and understand and improve their mental wellbeing. Users log how they are feeling every day, choosing 3 different aspects of their emotional health to concentrate on, and then enter information about their physical activity – how much and how well they sleep, how much alcohol they drink, how often they exercise and more. The tool looks for patterns in this emotional and physical data and provides users with insights about why they feel the way they do.

The Ginsberg team is based in the Scottish Government's Victoria Quay office in Leith. Although they work within the public sector, the team is structured, run and staffed like a start-up and its members have been recruited mainly from Edinburgh tech startups and digital agencies.

The lean startup methodology the team uses gives Ginsberg's developers the flexibility to iterate very quickly in response to user feedback and fix bugs and add new features in relatively short-time frames. This means that suggestions and feedback from actual users directly influences how Ginsberg evolves; it can change to meet the needs of its userbase.

Ginsberg is currently in public open beta, which means that anyone can sign up to test the tool through its website. Like other beta version products, it's not perfect and may be buggy from time to time but all feedback received during this period is invaluable and will be used to add new features that reflect the needs of the people of Scotland..

To sign up for Ginsberg and become a tester please visit <https://www.ginsberg.io/>

Submitted by [Jodi Mullen](#)



Stockbridge Restaurant is in the Top 100 in the UK



The Stockbridge Restaurant, situated on St Stephen Street, have told us that they have been listed in the OpenTable Top 100 Best Restaurants 2014 in the UK!

An excellent end to the year during which the family run restaurant celebrated their 10th year in business. Not only have they made it into the Top 100 but they are one of only three Scottish restaurants on the list.

The awards are based on approximately 340,000 reviews submitted in the last year by verified OpenTable diners at approximately 4,200 restaurants across the UK.

Owner Jane Walker said *"We are delighted that we have become a success on the Edinburgh restaurant scene over the past ten years and would like to thank our loyal customers. Being recognised on this OpenTable list has topped off a great year for the restaurant."*

To view the full list visit:
<http://www.opentable.co.uk/m/best-restaurants-in-united-kingdom/>

The Stockbridge Restaurant

54 St Stephen Street, Edinburgh, EH3 5AL

www.thestockbridgerestaurant.co.uk | 0131 226 6766

COMPETITION – Win your New Year's Eve outfit from M&S!




Look good and feel great

Win the ultimate New Year's Eve party

outfit with M&S

To celebrate the festive season, **Marks & Spencer** is giving Edinburgh Reporter readers the chance to win their ultimate New Year's Eve party outfit. Two winners will receive a £250 gift card to spend in store.

 This festive season, womenswear at M&S has a range of innovations designed to give you all you need to look good and feel great. Shoppers can choose from a myriad of gold and sequinned party dresses, teamed with one of a number of shapewear options to create a smooth silhouette such as, Magicwear™ lingerie and tights, or even Drop a Dress size dresses with innovative Secret Support™ technology built into the lining.

From warm toe hosiery with merino wool underfoot to keep feet toasty, to shoes with Insolia® technology to redistribute your

weight away from the balls of your feet, the M&S partywear solutions will help you last past midnight and beyond.



To be in with a chance of winning, simply complete the following form and submit it to **The Edinburgh Reporter**:

[COMPETITION NOW CLOSED]

Terms and Conditions

- 1. The winner will be selected at random after the closing date of 23 December 2014 at 5:00pm.**
- 2. Two winners will receive a £250 M&S gift card to spend at M&S.**
- 3. Prize not transferable, no whole/part cash alternatives, delivered within 28 days of competition closing date.**

Southern Tenant Folk Union coming to Edinburgh next month



The amazing folk/bluegrass 7 piece band Southern Tenant Folk Union are playing at the Scottish Storytelling Centre on Saturday 17 January (8pm £12) Tel. 0131 556 9579

January 2015 sees the release of the band's sixth album 'The Chuck Norris Project', their most ambitious album to date. Conceptually the tracks are all named after different movies

from the actor's career (though have nothing to do with the plots and contain no reference to car chases, explosions or karate chops) with each song taking the title as a starting point to discuss political ideas. Band leader Pat McGarvey came upon the idea in autumn 2012 during the last US presidential election when Mr Norris and his wife released a campaign video urging voters to come out for Mitt Romney saying that a vote for Obama would lead to "a thousand years of darkness", a statement he felt unhelpful to the debate. Musically eclectic the album remains an all-acoustic affair but takes in influences like 70's disco, folk and soundtrack music mixing elements of composers like John Carpenter, Gene Clark and Fabio Frizzi. The album also features guest vocals from cult Americana songwriter Mike Ferrio (from the bands Tandy & Good Luck Mountain).

With this idea McGarvey and the band began to write and demo material to see if it would work not only as a concept but also as something musically interesting. Subsequently most of the album was written during 2013 but delays to recording meant the sessions didn't take place until summer 2014. Featuring an expanded sound with orchestrated fiddle, clarinet and cello on top of the band's regular 5 string banjo, double bass, cajon, mandolin and acoustic guitars the songs each explore different subjects that expand upon the original movie title in unexpected ways. Also influential was the work of 70's soul composer/arrangers such as Isaac Hayes, J.J. Johnson and Barry White on songs like the epic Martial Law or the relentless folk disco of Walker, both tracks using those big soundtrack stylings to emphasise and reflect the emotion of the lyrical content.

The subjects of the songs are diverse but have subtle and common threads linking them outside of the framing device. A few songs touch on the gun laws in USA and their consequences, one being the continuing horror of school shootings (in Slaughter In San Francisco) written from the point of view of

a young girl trapped in time beneath her desk. Equality is another thread linking the songs with zero hour contracts and the need to organise labour the basis for the song Delta Force (referencing Aldous Huxley's Brave New World caste system) and the forces ranged against it in The Octagon. And even as the songs discuss issues of social conscience it's always done with beauty, space and clarity. Leading each piece of music are the compelling vocals from Rory Butler, a voice powerful and fragile, soulful and honest. He is accompanied by the thrilling dexterity of Adam Bulley on Mandolin and the innovative fiddle playing of Katherine Stewart who manages to effortlessly combine elements of her backgrounds in Scottish traditional music and classical training into a sometimes beautiful and often disturbing sound.

Other tracks on the album include a dissonant string based riff on a possibly future homosexual or female occupant of the White House where it's just business as usual (The President's Man) and appropriately for a band named for a union they present in Expendable Too a scenario where workers decide to reverse the norm and outsource their Managing Director's job.

Once again recording and mixing, on his fourth consecutive album with the band, is Lau sound engineer Tim Matthew. Tim's expertise in sound techniques has produced this most fully realised album where each song's tone reflects the subject matter. It contains atmosphere and subtlety but when a groove needs to be hard the full force of the big acoustic band sound is deployed. Album artwork comes again from Irish designer Jonathan McClean and this time he's devised a set of bold, eye catching and memorable images reminiscent of 70's action movie posters.

The band have once again taken another leap in sound, structure and tone as they marry social conscience and comment on the world around them with songs, melodies and performances that engage. This album has achieved what it set out to and now on release STFU invite all to listen for themselves,

although maybe it would be for the best if Chuck Norris never got to hear it.

An essay with more detailed information about the concept and thinking behind the album can be found on the STFU website

The Chuck Norris Electronic Project album, a synth based spin-off album by The Southern Tenant, will be released later in 2015

Two in court following capital robberies



Two men have been arrested and charged following two in robberies in Edinburgh last week.

The first robbery took place at Greggs, Boswall Parkway on 9th December and the second at Iceland, West Granton Road, the following day.


The 24 and 25 year old men will appear at Edinburgh Sheriff Court this afternoon.

A third man, aged 25 years, and currently in custody for an unconnected matter, has also been reported for the offences and will appear at a later date.

St Columba's Light a Light in Charlotte Square



Hundreds of people from Edinburgh and the Lothians braved the frosty temperatures last night to attend the St Columba's Hospice Light a Light tree lighting ceremony in Charlotte Square Gardens, Edinburgh.

A band from Balerno High School played as people filtered in to the gardens before the Chairman of St Columba's Board of Governors, Ian Adam, welcomed those in attendance. Hospice physiotherapist Yvonne Whitehouse then gave a touching speech about the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach to patient care. 

Yvonne said after the event: "I was absolutely thrilled to be asked to make the speech at Light a Light 2014. Every day the physiotherapists and occupational therapists work with patients who simply want to maintain their independence and ability to do the things they love. Hospice care is not all about elderly people, or those with cancer. It is for everyone with a life-limiting illness and it is important that people are aware of that."

The lighting of the Tree of Remembrance by Sir Tom Farmer and nine year-old Noah Crawford from Dunfermline was met with applause.

Sir Tom Farmer said: "I am delighted to once again be involved in the Light a Light Ceremony. St. Columba's Hospice provides a caring role in our community giving help to loved ones and their families during most difficult times.

"The gathering, by so many people at the St. Columba's tree (which is not just a Christmas tree but a Tree of Memories), where everyone comes together to share or have private thoughts of someone who has been special to them. It is also

an opportunity for us all to show our appreciation for all the good work carried by everyone at St. Columba's.

"Each light on the tree represents the memory of someone who is loved and missed and each is a symbol of a life remembered."

Singers included Jennifer Harper, Balerno High School Choir and special guests Edinburgh Police Choir, who moved through the crowd singing carols, encouraging people to join in.

St Columba's Hospice Chief Executive Jackie Husband said: "The 2014 Light a Light event was a huge success and I would like to thank everyone who dedicated a light on our Tree of Remembrance to a loved one, and to those who attended on the night. Every donation and every person who raises awareness of the Hospice helps to support the work we do and for that we are truly grateful."

Thanks to your support the Hospice has so far raised over £95,000 and staff are hopeful they can reach £100,000 by Christmas. These funds will go towards the treatment and support of patients and their relatives over the Christmas period and into 2015.

The Tree of Remembrance will remain lit until Monday 5th January 2015. If you were unable to attend the event, you can still dedicate a light on the tree in memory of a loved one.

Simply call 0131 551 1381 or e-mail fund@stcolumbushospice.org.uk.

Port Seton raising funds for the Renal Unit at RIE



Some of the council's Port Seton Resource Centre service-users are shown here proudly displaying the cheque the centre donated to the Royal Infirmary Edinburgh Renal Unit.

Acting Centre Manager Bruce Smith said: "The reason we wanted to do this for the Renal Unit is because one of our service-users had spent several months in there and eventually, unfortunately, that's where she passed away.

"Service-users on the Members' Council wanted to have a party to commemorate the passing of this very popular person.

"We arranged a party in the Cockenzie & Port Seton Bowling Club in November to which all service-users, friends, family and staff were invited. Thanks to the generosity of the Bowling Club, Roots & Fruits and Eddie Raven, who all offered their services free, coupled with a successful raffle and a £100 contribution from "Me Time," a local relaxation class, we managed to reach a total of £620.00, in aid and recognition of the care provided by the Infirmary's Renal Unit.

"We'd really like to thank everyone who helped us with this."

New laws on marriage come

into effect today



The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 came into effect today and this means that any couple of the same sex can either convert their civil partnership to a marriage or they can give the requisite 15 days notice of intention to get married. The first ceremonies will take place on Hogmanay 2014.

We met two couples at Leith Registrars this morning, firstly Stacey and Georgie who have been together 11 years and who will be married on 31 December, and secondly Geoff and Tony who are now officially married.

[The Edinburgh Reporter NEWS Same sex marriage legal from today](#) from [Phyllis Stephen](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Stacey and Georgie will be married at Victoria Park Hotel in Edinburgh by humanist celebrant Fiona Thomas.

Stacey said : "Regardless of your gender you should be able to marry who you want to and for us it is really important. When we had our civil partnership we did that because we have children and it was important for each of us to have legal rights to the other's children. At that point it was the next best thing, but for us to be able to be a legally recognised married couple is a massive step."

Stacey has two teenage daughters and the couple also have a 9 year-old son. They wanted to simply fill in the forms to convert their relationship to a marriage but the children were adamant that there had to be a party. They are getting married in the evening with about 90 guests present. Stacey explained she will be wearing a dress and Georgie will be wearing her full kilt regalia.

Fiona Thomas is the celebrant who will conduct the ceremony by which Stacey and Georgie will become a married couple. She said : "It is a big step towards a fairer and equal society. So for us we are really proud to be involved today. We have had a chat together and have discussed their ceremony. All humanist ceremonies allow the couple to write their own vows and tell their own story. the ceremony will be unique to them. I will conduct the ceremony on the day and I look forward to what will I am sure will be a wonderful occasion. Our services have been offered free to those who responded to our recent call to be among the first."

Fiona also explained that this is a transformative step for the Humanist Society Scotland as they have now been granted permanent status as wedding celebrants under the new rules.



Geoff Pearson and Tony Cairns have been together for 39 years and this morning they converted their civil partnership to a marriage. They had a big party last time and decided only to do the paperwork this time. Geoff said: "It is quite good, because now we are quite dull. We used to be a gay couple that people talked of in hushed tones. Now we are just like everybody else, and on the same register as everyone else getting married this year!"

They were the first gay couple at Leith Registrars to get married this morning at 9.20am but we wonder if they were the first married couple in Edinburgh under the new legislation?

When The Scottish Government announced the dates in October, the then Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, Alex Neil, said:

"It is wonderful that same sex couples can now begin to make plans to have their marriage just as any other couple can.

"This historic legislation had overwhelming support across the

Scottish Parliament, demonstrating to the world how importantly Scotland views equality.

“That support means that, from 31 December, same sex couples who want to show their love and commitment to each other could get married in front of family and friends at a ceremony they choose together.

“This will be an important signal that our nation is absolutely committed to the same rights for all our citizens.

“It will be a proud and no doubt emotional day for many, and I, for one, can’t wait.”

The Equality Network, the Scottish lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) equality charity welcomed the announcement.

Tom French, Policy and Public Affairs Coordinator for the Equality Network, said:

“We are very pleased that after years of campaigning for equal marriage it is now just weeks away from becoming a reality. Today’s milestone announcement means that same-sex couples across Scotland will be able to set a date and start planning their weddings. With the first ceremonies set to take place on Hogmanay, Scotland can be proud that we will bring in the new year as a fairer and more equal country.

“The 31st December 2014 will be a date that is remembered for many years to come, and a profoundly emotional day for those couples who celebrate their commitment to each other, and for all LGBTI people who grew up in a country where being gay was still criminalised until 1981. Scotland is now a leader on LGBTI equality, with one of the most progressive equal marriage laws in the world. There is still more to do to ensure full equality in people’s day-to-day lives, but this year we have taken a huge leap forward towards creating the fair and equal Scotland we all want to see.”



COMPETITION – Win tickets for Edinburgh Capitals



Edinburgh Capitals play Dundee Stars on 23 December 2014 at home. Would you like to be there? Well now you can thanks to our competition!

We have two pairs of tickets available for the game which starts at 7.30pm. **Enter before 21 December 2014 at 5:00pm**

[COMPETITION NOW CLOSED]

The remaining home games for December are

Capitals v Belfast Giants Sunday 21st 5.45pm

Capitals v Dundee Stars Tuesday 23rd 7.30pm

Capitals v Hull Stingrays Sunday 28th 6pm

Capitals v Fife Flyers Wednesday 31st 4pm – Hogmanay Hockey

Tickets can be purchased on game nights for all Capitals games, or online at www.edinburghcapitals.ticketsource.co.uk

Tuesday in Edinburgh – What's On Today



Recitals for Wrigglers Christmas Concert: a free classical

concert for babies, toddlers and their parents and carers. 10.30am, [Drumbrae Library Hub](#), 81 Drumbrae Drive. Please ask a member of library staff to book your place(s), or call the library on 0131 529 5244.

eBook Surgery: get help with downloading free eBooks, emagazines and audiobooks. 2-3.30pm, [Central Library](#), George IV Bridge. No appointment necessary – just drop in.

North Edinburgh Grows Christmas Tree Lights Switch On: North Edinburgh Arts Artist in Residence **Natalie Taylor** will be creating a Christmas tree sculpture on Monday and Tuesday – come along on either or both days to add a piece to the tree, then come back on Friday to see the lights being switched on! 11am-1pm, [North Edinburgh Arts](#), 15a Pennywell Court. (Lights will be switched on at 3.45pm on Friday, when refreshments will also be served). For more information call 0131 315 2151.

Bookbug: rhymes and songs for very young children. 10.30-11am, [Corstorphine Library](#), 12 Kirk Loan. Free: also at 2.30pm on Saturday 20th December.

Music Among The Trees: Chapter House Ensemble. Shane Brogan on accordion and John Pfaff on piano entertain visitors to the **Edinburgh Christmas Tree Festival**. 12 noon-1pm, Sanctuary, [St Andrew's and St George's West Church](#), 13 George Street. Free: all welcome.

Christmas Bookbug Rhymetime! For children under 3 years. 10.30-11am and 11.30am-12 noon, [Morningside Library](#), 184 Morningside Road. There will be no Bookbug on 23rd or 30th December – back as usual on 6th January 2015.



Baby Cafe: this week *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* will be brought to life in a theatrical story! For babies and children aged 0-4 and their grown-ups. 11am, [Grantont Library](#), Wardieburn Terrace.

Music Among The Trees: Recorder Group. Talented local recorder players bring harmony and variety to entertain visitors to the **Edinburgh Christmas Tree Festival**. 2-3pm, Sanctuary, [St Andrew's and St George's West Church](#), 13 George Street. Free: all welcome.



SICSA Christmas Cyber Security Public Lecture 2014: the Christmas Cyber Security Lectures are a series of lectures across the country, primarily for High School students. With up to 5 talks from leading industry figures, Police Scotland and academics, the sessions provide a fun and varied introduction to the challenges we face as we move towards the internet of things and a light hearted approach to promoting **cyber security** and highlighting **opportunities in this field**. For the first time ever, in addition to two school sessions in the morning, Napier is hosting a public lecture in the afternoon. Speakers include **James Lyne** (Sophos) on ***The Future of Hacking***, **Edinburgh Napier** on ***Digital Shadows – the footprint of a real crime***, **Cybersecuritychallenge** on ***UK: DETONATE!*** and **Police Scotland**. This event will be of interest to all, so please come along with your colleagues and/or your children (over 14). 2.30-4.30pm, Riady Lecture Theatre, Edinburgh Napier University, [Craiglockhart Campus](#), Glenlockhart Road. Free tickets should be booked via [eventbrite](#).



Oasis Community Carol Service: all welcome – coffee, tea and mince pies served after the service. 12.45pm, [St Cuthbert's Parish Church](#), Lothian Road. Organised by Oasis, Business Matters and WPCS. There will be a retiring collection in aid of Fresh Start.



Retro Gaming Night: still trying to crack your top time of Super Mario Bros? A geeky night of retro and console games. 6-11.45pm, [The Counting House Bar](#), 36 West Nicolson Street. Free entry.

Edinburgh Royal Choral Union: Christmas with the Choral. The Choral performs *A Ceremony of Carols* by Benjamin Britten: conductor **Michael Bawtree**, organist **Morley Whitehead**. 7.30pm, [St Andrew's and St George's West Church](#), 13 George Street.

Festive Fitness: come and try zumba, belly dancing, hula-hooping and line dancing, followed by festive nibbles. Children welcome – for ages 2-99! 6.30-8.30pm, [North Merchiston Club](#), 48 Watson Crescent. Suggested donation £5, all proceeds to the Club. To book call 0131 622 1757 or email info@northmerchiston.co.uk.



Five things you need to know today Edinburgh!



First World War exhibition

Energy Minister calls for return of coal levies

Edinburgh Ceilidhs to end the year

Carol Singing

Sangstream at the Scottish Storytelling Centre

A project that seeks to reveal and record Scottish people's experiences during the First World War has received a major funding award.

The *Scotland's War* initiative has been awarded £75,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to help develop the project across the country

The fund will allow *Scotland's War* to paint a fuller picture of Scotland's contribution to the conflict. It will also support the creation of a national digital archive, which will be accessible to the public.

The initiative, organised by the University of Edinburgh, began in 2008. Its initial focus was on Edinburgh's involvement in the war. Now, with more than 20 Council partners throughout Scotland on board – as well as the National Library of Scotland and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission – the project will run events throughout the country to highlight the major role Scotland played in The Great War.

The project team and partners will research records and speak to members of the public who had relations in the war in a bid to uncover previously unknown, or overlooked, aspects of Scotland's wartime experience.

Project Director Yvonne McEwen, of the University of Edinburgh's School of History, Classics and Archaeology, said: "We are delighted to receive this support from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The award will help us to reveal the stories hidden across Scotland, which will enable us to preserve and share a richer heritage of *Scotland's War*.

"This year's centenary offers an appropriate time to bring together stories and personal documents before they are lost. We look forward to discovering more remarkable tales which

serve to remind us of the incredible contributions our relations made to the war effort.”

The HLF-funded project will focus on exploring Scotland’s War on the Home and Fighting Fronts.

Colin McLean, Head of HLF Scotland, said “The First World War changed the face of modern history touching the lives of everyone in this country and beyond which is why HLF is committed to helping people explore the continuing legacy of this conflict. Scotland’s War will investigate the impact the conflict had on the country through personal histories and connections. It will safeguard this precious heritage for future generations while helping people broaden their understanding of how the First World War shaped the modern world.”

Energy Minister Fergus Ewing has accused the UK Government of showing ‘disrespect’ to coal communities across Scotland, as they fail to answer calls for £15m coal levies to be returned to Scotland – over a year after the issue was first raised.

[Read more here](#)

On Tuesday we have the ceilidh club @ Summerhall where we have Heeliegoleerie providing the music. Tickets are £6 on the door or _____ in _____ advance from www.edinburghceilidhclub.com/tickets opening with everything kicking off at 8p

Then on Friday 19th Dec we have Ceilidh club @ The Assembly Roxy with Teannaich on Friday 18th Jan. Doors opening just before 7:30pm with dancing kicking off shortly after that. You can get your tickets online from www.edinburghceilidhs.com or in person from the box office at Summerhall (don’t be confused


by the Summerhall online box office system, this ceilidh does take place in The Assembly Roxy).

We are back in 2015 with lots more great ceilidhs, with our Tuesday night ceilidhs at Summerhall starting up on the 13th Jan and our next Friday ceilidh on the 16th Jan.

13th Jan – Summerhall 8pm – Pentlands ceilidh band

16th Jan – Assembly Roxy 7:30pm – Teannaich


20th Jan – Summerhall 8pm – The Big Shoogle

 Over 100 pupils from the Lorne Primary School were singing carols yesterday to entertain shoppers at Newkirkgate in Leith. More carol concerts are planned this week.

[Read more here](#)

Singing is uplifting and good for the soul – so on Friday or Saturday you could go to the Scottish Storytelling Centre and at least listen (if not surreptitiously join in with) the choir called Sangstream who will be singing seasonal songs.

[Booking details here](#)

 If you are reading this article on paper and would like to visit the website then scan the QR code on the left with a smartphone or tablet and you will be taken straight there.

Ewing calls for return of coal cash



Energy Minister Fergus Ewing has accused the UK Government of showing ‘disrespect’ to coal communities across Scotland, as they fail to answer calls for £15m coal levies to be returned to Scotland – over a year after the issue was first raised.

Mr Ewing has again challenged the UK Government to return the £15 million coal levies – raised from coal produced in Scotland – to be reinvested in restoring opencast sites here.

The calls comes after the Chancellor’s Autumn Statement failed to deliver measures to ensure at least some of the coal levies raised from coal produced in Scotland be made available to restore opencast sites in Scotland.

Speaking ahead of the final meeting of the Scottish Open Cast Mining Taskforce, Mr Ewing said:

“I have written on numerous occasions to my counterparts in the UK Government, on this issue since September 2013 and I have yet to receive a substantive reply. Even in the Autumn Statement there were no provisions for coal communities. The UK Government’s lack of engagement in this manner is a disrespect to the people of Scotland.

“These monies could go some way to assist in reducing the financial burden that our local authorities are feeling across Scotland due to the huge costs of restoration.

“The money collected by the UK Government over the years from coal mined in Scotland, now in the region of £15 million, should be put to good use to help with the restoration of opencast sites.

“We have a significant restoration legacy to deal with in Scotland and that money – paid into the central funds in London – has not been used for the industry or affected communities. It is now needed to help restore these sites.”

Wild about Scotland bus comes to Broomhouse

Pupils at Broomhouse Primary in Edinburgh were able to experience a series of interactive Scottish wildlife lessons on Monday thanks to a specially designed double-decker education bus currently touring Scotland.

The ‘Wild about Scotland’ bus* is visiting schools in Edinburgh as part of a wider campaign being brought to all of Scotland’s 32 local councils over the next 12 months. The programme has been developed by the Royal Zoological Society for Scotland (RZSS) and has been made possible through a partnership between Clydesdale Bank and the RZSS to support the charity in its conservation goals across Scotland.



P5 and P6 pupils from Broomhouse Primary got to get their hands dirty in a variety of interactive and fun lessons which focused on Scottish native species, their habitats and environments. Lessons were delivered by a dedicated education team from RZSS.

Chris West, CEO of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, said: “Conservation through education is one of the founding

principles behind the Society and remains one of our key goals to this day.

“We believe connecting young people in Edinburgh to the natural world is vital and the ‘Wild about Scotland’ outreach programme will further add to the curriculum based learning delivered each year by the Society. Importantly, now more than ever, preserving and learning about the huge variety of wildlife living in Scotland, and how children may help make a difference in the conservation of that wildlife, is of huge worth.”

Helen Page, Customer Experience and Marketing Director at Clydesdale Bank said:

“RZSS makes a vital contribution to the conservation of Scotland’s wildlife, both through direct preservation and its commitment to educating the public on endangered species, habitats and ecosystems. We’re proud to be joining forces with them to help deliver this educational programme to primary schools in Edinburgh.

“Our support will enable them to bring the ‘Wild about Scotland’ programme to young people not only in Edinburgh, but to communities across Scotland that may not otherwise have the opportunity to engage with expertise from RZSS on Scottish conservation.”

The customised double-decker has been transformed from a Stagecoach passenger bus into a fully functional and interactive mobile classroom with capacity to accommodate up to 26 children at once.

The corporate partnership with Clydesdale Bank is the biggest in RZSS’s history and includes significant support. As well as funding the overhaul of the bus, the partnership is helping support the delivery of the programme by the RZSS outreach education team as it travels across Scotland to as many schools as possible. Part of the package also includes a

donation to RZSS's conservation aims for endangered species.

For more information about Clydesdale Bank's partnership with RZSS and to find out if the bus will be visiting your local primary school, please visit:

<http://www.cbonline.co.uk/wildaboutscotland/>