

Coffee of the week

Coffee has become a very important part of our daily lives. The coffee industry in the UK has become a significant money-spinner – £730 million was spent on drinking coffee in the UK last year.

According to an industry source, coffee is the most popular worldwide drink, and although the USA drinks about one third of all the coffee exported in the world, Scandinavians drink more coffee per head than anywhere else. 400 billion cups are drunk worldwide each year.

Today The Reporter is in Starbucks, Hanover Street, Edinburgh

The good thing about Starbucks is that it is always the same. The problem with Starbucks is that it is always the same.

But this morning there is a bunch of Spanish schoolchildren in one corner (too many of them even for three tables....) a happy, squealy baby in another and then they are belting out the latest CD which you can buy, just to add to the atmosphere. So don't come here for a quiet coffee experience. The mix is always eclectic – business people, kids, mummies and children.

The coffee of choice this morning is a grande Americano in a takeaway cup – although I am sitting in.



Today was a little different from normal in that there was a maintenance man here. I show you this photo as it was alarming – not only was he on a working platform without another employee in attendance but he was simply cleaning the air conditioning fan onto the floor – or in one case on top of a child's high chair....without cleaning any of the debris up.



Good points

1. Good coffee whether you opt for the Americano or the Latte – and they will do it for you in exactly the way you choose. So you can ask for the Grande skinny latte, to go, wet and extra hot! Also good for the teadrinkers among you – they offer a good selection of teas.
2. Array of seats available from comfortable squishy ones to tables with wooden chairs for working at.
3. The familiar layout is good. You know there is internet. (Except this morning when the BT Openzone is simply not playing ball. The internet is free if you have a Starbucks prepay card. Which is another way of making it very convenient to go there. You know what to order before you get there – and the quality is consistently good.



Bad points

1. Noisy environment not exactly conducive to work or rest...relatively cheap so it does entice teenagers and parents with children. So if you have become child-phobic in your old age then you should avoid! Also a little hot – so whatever the maintenance man did he did not help!
2. The food in Starbucks has never been great. The choice is universal worldwide. Muffins, granola bars which are pretty tasteless. Sandwiches which are simply expensive. No soup. The mugs in Starbucks are just too thick and clumsy. They are probably very robust for the purposes of the dishwasher. But in the Reporter's view they need to change them. Too heavy. Too thick.
3. Staff. Everything depends on the staff. They are reasonably well trained in Starbucks but occasionally you get the odd rogue employee who is downright rude or slow... And they are

often to be heard having that important conversation that all employees now feel is essential. The post-date rundown of what happened and who said what to whom.... The conversation which involves all their friends by name. The other conversation which centres round the staff night out and when the next one will be. None of which includes you and none of which gets you served any quicker.



Adelaide Sosseh

Adelaide Sosseh, Co-Chair of the largest anti-poverty campaign in the world will be the keynote speaker at this year's Big Tent Festival.



Adelaide a renowned campaigner from The Gambia, who co-chairs the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) will be at the launch of Big Tent on Friday 23rd July and will address festival go-ers at a joint presentation with Malcolm Fleming, Oxfam Scotland's Campaigns Manager.

The Big Tent's theme is Moving with Africa and their discussion will focus on the need for global solidarity and climate justice, focusing on the impact on the world's poorest people.

Climate justice is the key link between the environmental movement in this country and aid and poverty in the global south. There is an inherent injustice in the fact that the North caused climate change, but people who have had none of the benefits of industrialisation are suffering the impact.

It is five years since the G8 Summit in Gleneagles, the catalyst for the creation of the Big Tent as Scotland's leading green festival. Oxfam Scotland's recent ' Auchterarder Audit' looked at the progress made since the G8 in 2005 and Big Tent will provide a further forum to ask which promises were delivered – and which weren't.

In 2005, leaders at the G8 responded to growing public pressure to fight poverty and pledged to increase overseas aid by \$50 billion by 2010, with \$25 billion of this going to Africa. But five years on, they are \$20 billion short.

Mike Small, Festival Programme Director said: "We are delighted to welcome Adelaide to Scotland and make these connections between ecology and international aid and solidarity. The globalised world exploits people and planet and GCAP's work represents a future for environmental justice and a world based on equity not exploitation."

Adelaide Sosseh, Co-Chair of GCAP commented: "I am so looking forward to speaking at Big Tent. My work in Gambia is about giving people a voice, to empower them to have a say in the issues that affect them. Big Tent puts this philosophy into action here in Scotland.

The people of Scotland have a reputation for having a keen sense of justice... and enjoying a good party. I hope that Big Tent will offer both."

Malcolm Fleming, Oxfam Scotland Campaigns Manager, concluded: "We're really proud to be a partner in Big Tent, as it's unique among festivals in giving people a chance not only to have a good time, but to engage in world issues and make a difference. At Oxfam Scotland, we know that it is the world's poorest people who are suffering the effects of climate change right now. That's not fair. Big Tent began after the G8 summit at Gleneagles. Five years later, Oxfam Scotland is here, harnessing people power to hold leaders to account and make a fairer world."

Big Tent's Head Zone Partners for 2010 include IACD, Oxfam

Scotland, WWF Scotland and Take One Action.

The Big Tent

It's summertime, the weather is fabulous (?) the schools are on holiday and Scotland's leading green festival is almost upon us.

Opening night is less than a week away and this year's event, is set to be the best ever with King Creosote headlining the Black Isle Brewery Main Stage whilst the Lomond Ceilidh Band will have everyone dancing over at the Wee Shindig ceilidh.

Big Tent has been extended to three days and will retain all of the innovation, creativity, enthusiasm and gusto that have seen the Big Tent grow and grow over the past five years.

A brilliant music line-up features Rosanne Cash, King Creosote, FOUND of Fife's Fence Collective, Brazil! Brazil!, Session A9, Tunng, Das Contrás, The Chair and a host of other great music acts from around the globe.

Big Tent is also recognised for its thought-provoking and inspiring green messages and family fun. There will be lots of children's entertainment, alternative therapies, arts and crafts and great local and organic food and drink.

Travelling to Big Tent couldn't be easier, Stagecoach are running free buses from the nearby stations and various other drop-off points and kids can travel with parents for free on Scotrail trains.

For those coming by car, please follow the AA signs to the festival. Do not go through the village of Falkland – it isn't the way to the car park. Have £5 ready (or £4.50 if you buy in advance) for your festival parking (that's for the whole weekend).

The cycle park at Big Tent is located close to the festival

site and there will be facilities available to secure your bike. Also Sustrans have created a bike route from Ladybank Falkland and Bikeworks will be running a bike clinic so if your bike has any moans, groans or squeaks, bring it along and get the bike docs to check it out.

If you can't manage by public transport and are bringing your car, then think about sharing your journey. SEStran has sponsored a special Big Tent Tripshare website which allows people to club together as travelling 'buddies'.

Councillor Brian Goodall, Strategic Chair of Housing & Communities Committee at Fife Council said; "The Big Tent is Scotland's environmental festival and Fife Council's investment recognises its importance as a key event in this special year of culture. Celebrating Fife 2010 continues successfully into the second half of the year highlighting Fife's unique cultural and historic identity. There is something here for everyone and we hope that visitors will take away vibrant images and strong memories of the Kingdom"

Big Tent is open from 6pm – 11pm on Friday, 10.30am – 11pm on Saturday and 10.30am – 9pm on Sunday.

Big Green Discounts are available on tickets until 21st July.

For full travel information and to secure your Big Green Discount, please visit www.bigtentfestival.co.uk

Weekend news

A round-up of what the papers and some websites are saying....

[The Scotsman](#) has the dismal news that Bank of Scotland will sponsor the Festival Fireworks this year for the last year....they have spent £4m on the Catherine wheels and rockets over the years. But how much have they recouped in advertising? Anyway it now seems to be changed days and they

can no longer justify the spend.

The Deputy First Minister got married yesterday. Nicola Sturgeon married Paul Murrell the Chief Executive of the SNP. [The Scotsman](#) has a photo, although [The Herald](#) has a slightly better array of snaps.

Interesting interview with Edinburgh chef Tom Kitchin in [The Herald](#)

A plea for the importance of life sciences to be recognised in [The Herald](#) and an explanation of what the Edinburgh Bio Quarter will bring to Scotland from Dr Mike Capaldi.

The possibility of GM crops being foisted on Scotland by the EU is debated and exposed by Rob Edwards in [The Sunday Herald](#).

Crown Estates

Net income of The Crown Estate fell by 7% last year to £210.7 million according to their financial results announced yesterday.

The Crown Estate earned a net income surplus (profit) of £210.7 million in the year ending 31 March 2010. This is paid to the Treasury and helps reduce the fiscal deficit. Primarily because of the exceptionally low level of interest rates which we earned on our capital reserves (see footnote), this represents a fall of 7 per cent compared to the previous year.

Sir Stuart Hampson, Chairman of The Crown Estate, said, "As we anticipated, 2009/10 was an extremely challenging year. It has been a period when we have drawn on all the expertise and experience of our people to record a set of results which stand up well in the context of the economic downturn. Our

urban, rural, marine and Windsor estates all recorded pleasing financial results."

Roger Bright, Chief Executive of The Crown Estate, added, "Despite the worst recession that most of us have experienced, thanks to the diversity and quality of our portfolio and the efforts of our staff we have delivered a good set of financial results.

"Looking ahead, our overall strategy is to concentrate on our core holdings and our areas of expertise. The Marine Estate will play an increasing part in this as it continues to facilitate the development of offshore renewable energy.

"Our results should be read in the context of our obligation not to chase short term income returns, and our statutory restrictions on borrowing, which increases our exposure to low interest rates."

On the marine estate, progress in the renewable energy sector dominated, as they took significant strides towards enabling developers to realise the huge potential of the energy-rich coastal waters around the UK.

Revenue fell by 6.2 per cent to £46.6 million, reflecting conditions in the wider economy and a fall in demand for dredged aggregates from the construction industry. Total property value increased to £443.7 million, up 8.4 per cent on the previous year.

The coastal estate, which includes marinas, ports, harbours and other coastal activity, contributed £13.6 million to our turnover, an increase of 6.2 per cent.

The key highlight of the year on the marine estate was the Round 3 offshore wind programme which culminated towards the end of the financial year in the announcement of the successful bidders for each of the nine wind zones around the UK coastline. Coming on top of Rounds 1 and 2 and a Scottish Territorial Waters round, all of which are still in

development, Round 3 aims to deliver a quarter of the UK's total electricity needs by 2020. The UK is already a world leader in generating electricity from offshore wind, and over 1GW of electricity is in production from leasing Rounds 1 and 2.

In March 2010, they passed another milestone with the announcement of the successful bidders for the world's first commercial wave and tidal leasing round, for 10 sites in Scotland's Pentland Firth and Orkney waters.

The rural estate achieved what they called a 'pleasing performance' during the year, with capital value rising by 5.7 per cent to £971.7 million. Revenue was £25.1 million, down by 6 per cent on the previous year.

The Crown Estate invested over £9.2 million in new works and improvements on the estate. In Scotland alone, the task of restoring and repairing property damaged by the harsh winter conditions will require over £1 million of investment.

The Annual Report can be accessed [here](#).

Rubbish, Rubbish, Rubbish!

Rubbish looms large again on Edinburgh streets – according to....The Herald (Page 5 of the News section of the print edition) and [here](#) online which has the scandalous story that there will be big black wheelie bins on Heriot Row soon.... and show photos from a street which is definitely not Heriot Row to illustrate it. There will be special corrals set up at the end of the street to allow the residents to walk along the street with their rubbish, according to the paper. This story has one glaring omission from it. The residents of Edinburgh's

New Town are very fortunate in that the city council has arranged daily (that is every single day 7 days a week) rubbish collections. Oh actually one other omission – has the council actually decided to do this – if so where is the evidence?

[The Broughton Spurtle](#) has now entered the fray decrying the piece in The Herald and in The Edinburgh Evening News by pointing out that they had both perhaps lifted their information from a piece by The Spurtle!

Well in search of the answers we have spoken to LibDem Councillor for the City Centre Charles Dundas and this is what he told us:- “No-one can ignore the massive change in funding which we face on the Council, so radical changes in how we provide services are called for if we are to avoid cutting what we do back to the bare minimum. This whole thing is triggered by the need to continue delivering top quality services, but with less money to do it.

“However, the most important thing to stress is that this is only an exploration of alternatives – which we felt it necessary to make, so as to enable an informed decision in the future – the Council is in no way committed to any of the Alternative Models; such as shared services with other Councils, Charitable Trusts (like Glasgow’s Arts and Culture one), LLPs, or Joint Ventures like the Council’s existing partnership with BT for internal IT provision.

“The current status of the investigation is that initial expressions of interest have been sought and a shortlist of companies drawn up for further negotiations on what they can offer. I can assure you that no big steps like this will be taken without considerable discussion from all councillors across the Council Chamber.”

We are currently researching the other evidence and will bring you the full story as soon as we can.

In the meantime we leave you with a great cartoon from [Frank Boyle....](#)

Carers need to get involved

Care users and their families in Edinburgh are being given the chance to join a unique group set up to drive up care standards across the country.

✖ The Care Commission is recruiting new members to join the next quarterly forum of its Involving People Group (IPG), which will discuss how care services and standards can be improved across Scotland.

The group holds four meetings every year, and runs additional events and meetings throughout the country for members to have their say about the care services they use and the standard of care they receive.

The IPG is part of the Care Commission's wider Involving People Plan, which aims to gather the views and opinions of all care users and their families in order to drive up the standards at all care services in Scotland.

Karen Anderson, communications and involvement manager for the Care Commission, said: "It's so important for the Care Commission to involve people who use care services and carers in the work they do.

"The Involving People Group is vital for people across Scotland to voice what they think about care in our country – whether it's praise for a service or suggestions for improvement, the views come from those who know best.

"Our development days are held four times a year and they are

really beneficial to everyone involved. I would encourage anyone who would like to express their views to join the group and help us improve care across the country.”

The IPG is comprised of people who use care services and their families, as well as informal carers who voice opinions and give advice on policies and procedures to help influence the scrutiny of care services.

The Care Commission is committed to using the feedback from the IPG in its regulatory work, in order to target failing services and improve standards for care users and their families.

The list of group successes over the past four months range from offering advice to the Care Commission regarding inspection reports and grading, to representing the IPG at the Royal Garden Party at Holyrood Palace.

Jacquie Roberts OBE, Chief Executive of the Care Commission, said: “People want to know they can have a say in the care they receive and have a voice which will be heard to help bring about improvement. They also want to know who can help when things are going wrong.

“There is absolutely no doubt that better quality care will come from better involving the people who receive it.”

Anyone who uses care services – or has a relative who does – can get involved with IPG. To find out more call 0845 603 0890
begin_of_the_skype_highlighting 0845 603 0890
end_of_the_skype_highlighting or visit www.carecommission.com

No port in Portobello

The Local Government Scotland Act 1973 gave councils powers to pass bye-laws about drinking outside.

Lothian and Borders Police and their partner agencies have announced that a byelaw prohibiting the antisocial consumption of alcohol will be enforced on Portobello beach this summer. Officers from Portobello's Safer Neighbourhood Team and representatives from The City of Edinburgh Council have been working closely together to identify and tackle drink related antisocial behaviour through Operation Drifter. The implementation of the byelaw, as part of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, gives police the power to stop the public consuming alcohol within an enforcement area and arrest anyone who refuses. Chief Inspector Tony Beveridge said: " During a recent bank holiday weekend we estimated that several thousand people had made their way to Portobello Beach and it was apparent to our officers that some were drinking very heavily. "During that weekend we dealt with many complaints of antisocial and threatening behaviour most of which were drink-related. "Whilst we are delighted to welcome people to Edinburgh who wish to enjoy themselves, it is important that they respect the rights of others to do the same. "We are keen to assure the public that those who obey the law while enjoying an alcoholic drink will not be targeted. However the implementation of the byelaw should send a clear message that criminal behaviour linked to alcohol will not be tolerated." Jim Hunter, East Neighbourhood Manager said: "The ongoing improvements we are making in Portobello are to give residents and visitors a clean, welcoming and attractive place and we support efforts to ensure a minority of people do not spoil it for others."

Plea for next of kin

Lothian and Borders Police are renewing an appeal for help in tracing the relatives of a man who died in Edinburgh at the end of June.

John Stevenson was found dead at his home in Gracemount Drive on Wednesday 30th June. There are no suspicious circumstances, and a report has been sent to the Procurator Fiscal. The 77-year-old lived alone in Gracemount Drive for the past year and a half. Mr Stevenson was born in Glasgow in 1933, to William Stevenson and Janey McGregor Stevenson. His parents married in 1929 in Partick, Glasgow.

A police spokesperson said: 'We are asking anyone who might know, or know of, Mr Stevenson and his family, to contact us as soon as possible.'

No Knives Better Lives

Fife Police had their launch of this initiative last week....So now The No Knives Better Lives campaign has been launched in Edinburgh.

Lothian and Borders Police and the City of Edinburgh Council are taking part in the Scottish Government drive to make young people aware of the dangers of using and carrying knives. The campaign, which is being rolled out across the country, will run in the north of the city and will involve a number of youth projects throughout the summer. Recent analysis suggests

the number of incidents involving knives in the north of Edinburgh make up almost a third of knife crimes across the whole of the city. The study also shows in nearly half of all incidents, the victim knew the offender, and that drugs and alcohol are major contributory factors in knife crime. At the Edinburgh launch at a five-a-side football event at Montgomery Park , Justice Secretary Kenny MacAskill, said: "We are working in partnership with the council, police, schools and young people in Edinburgh to create very local No Knives Better Lives campaign that is tailored to the community and supporting the good work they are already doing. "Far too many lives are lost and people injured through mindless acts of violence – often because of the knife culture that blights some communities. That is why we are working to change the culture around violence in Scotland." Superintendent David Carradice said: "Tackling knife crime is a priority for the Force. The recent reduction in violent crime, particularly involving a knife or other weapons, is testament to our ongoing proactive engagement with communities. "Using a knife, or even carrying one, is extremely dangerous, and has serious consequences for everyone involved – it is essential youngsters understand this. "The most effective way of delivering this message is through education, and events like No Knives Better Lives will undoubtedly prove useful for engaging with the younger members of our community. Councillor Paul Edie, Community Safety Leader for the City of Edinburgh Council, said: "This is an important project for the city as it sends out a simple, yet hard-hitting message, that this type of crime is not acceptable within our society. "It is also important to reassure the wider community that the partnership is doing everything it can to educate young people, so that knife crime can be reduced and that these crimes can become a problem of the past. "I am sure this new and exciting initiative will teach young people, that carrying a knife can have a devastating affect on their future." Gavin Crosby, Youth Work Strategy Manager for the City of Edinburgh Council, said: "Over the summer, young people have the

opportunity to be involved in fun activities, provided by the Council and partner agencies. "The No Knives Better Lives resources enable youth workers to talk about the serious dangers that come from carrying a knife, even if you don't intend to use it or were carrying it for somebody else."

Friday 16th July 2010

News about Edinburgh.....

Barclays takeover of Standard Life Bank is to lead to the loss of 254 jobs in Edinburgh.

[The BBC](#) has what will undoubtedly be the first part of this story.

[The Scotsman](#) has the story that airport managers were against the £1 levy proposed by Edinburgh Airport, fearing it would damage their reputation.

The paper also reports that [The City of Edinburgh Council](#) spends more than any other council in Scotland on official cars, laying out approximately £37,000 to ferry the provost around...

And Dr Bill Bell from the University of Edinburgh wonders if print will survive the digital age according to the [BBC](#).

Thursday 15th July

Edinburgh is still a bit wet. Rod Stewart is in a city centre hotel drying out still – the best tweet of the night last night was that he rearranged one of his all time favourites....'Do you think I'm Soggy?'

Poor Rod has another night on the wet stage in front of him this evening. Simply Red must be standing in the wings hoping that the weather will clear, but according to the 5 day forecast there may still be a lot of wet, wet, wet to come over the next few days.

[The Scotsman](#) reports that Gordon Dewar the embattled head of Edinburgh airport has answered the challenges to the proposed £1 charge for kiss 'n fly flights. Dewar has written an open letter to business leaders.

Incidentally there will be a place for free drop-offs – at the long stay car park. So then your beloved has to get on the short bus ride to the terminal building. The Scottish Ministers meanwhile say that this is a matter for the airport and they want everyone to get on public transport. Pity then that there are still some areas where people cannot take public transport to the airport. People in West Lothian for example some of whom live within 15 minutes of the airport by car simply do not have the public transport alternative.

There is also the story [about double-decking the dead in some cemeteries](#). The Reporter has some first hand experience of this and is already acquainted with the fact that there are some cemeteries in Scotland where this practice has already been in place for quite some time.... There is a shortage of land. So, is it not time we looked more seriously at alternatives? There are of course some religious objections to cremation or other newer ways of disposal, but that apart do we all have a right to occupy a space on the earth after our

demise? Or should we leave the earth unencumbered for its future inhabitants?

We have to admit that we rather missed this story the first time round. We had thought that the Pope's visit was being restricted to Bellahouston Park in Glasgow, but it seems according to [The Scotsman](#) that he is indeed going to parade along the streets of Edinburgh in his Popemobile. Well we hope he has good suspension to cope with all the potholes..... Pity he can't use the tram that is sitting there really isn't it?

Reform Scotland the Scottish think tank type organisation has started a really good round up of news in the newspapers on its website. You can access it [here!](#)

And we would commend to you [this lovely blog by Pauline](#) about her trip round the world with Shirley....the bicycle.... Pauline has just left Portobello only last week and is already in Guise, France. Well worth reading! And all in aid of Oxfam.

Where can I go swimming? Sailing? to Play Tennis?

Do you know where your nearest swimming pool is? Or the nearest tennis court? Well [Edinburgh Leisure](#) have a list on their site of all the venues which they manage....some of them may surprise you! Did you know that they manage the Port Edgar Marina?

As well as this there are some very good sports facilities in the hotels in the city.

The Reporter favours [The Sheraton OneSpa](#)....just for the

rooftop pool! But the gym is also very nice...if a little tiring...

Trotting horses

The Reporter has a bit of a passion for horses generally, and trotting horses in particular just because they are so strong and beautiful...

The UK's top harness racers head to Musselburgh this weekend (17 and 18 July) for the country's most important fixture which culminates in a Champion's Day on Sunday.



The East Lothian racecourse is working hand in hand with the harness racing authorities to build up this weekend fixture and has succeeded in securing television coverage by TurfTV which will feed live in to selected betting shops.

With heats taking place on Saturday, the jewel in the crown is Sunday's Champion's Day which features the finals of the Famous Musselburgh Pace Cup, the Hurricane Pace and the Red Mills International Free For All Pace.

A full card of 180 entries from Scotland, England, Ireland and Wales will compete for just under £40,000 prize money and has attracted high calibre contenders, including horses from top Dublin stud Meadowbranch.

Former Irish champion drivers Geoff Dunne and John Richardson will face strong competition from leading British driver William 'Rocker' Laider and Scottish champion John Gilvear.

Recognised as probably the hardest race to win under any code,

the Famous Musselburgh Pace it is the ultimate test in harness racing and only one horse in modern times has won it twice – the legendary Direct Dream. This year young pretenders Impartial and Stoneriggs Mystery will be taking on the Irish contingent of For A Few Dollars More and Earned Income for the title.

In the Free For All event every horse has the credentials to win but worth watching is Conner's Dragon, the 2008 Horse of The Year is just returned from Canada and cannot be ignored.

New British Champion Crown Manhattan will make a strong challenge while Ireland is represented by diminutive millionaire pacer Doonbeg who is really on form following a big win at Aberystwyth. Laneside Lexus was 2009 Horse of the Year and a past Famous Musselburgh Pace winner, but needs to reproduce her 2009 form to be in with a chance.

Ireland's Porterstown Jack is a tough campaigner and a course specialist but the most popular winner would be Welsh-bred Scoot Around. Owned and trained in the Yorkshire Dales he is a former multiple British Champion, the first horse to win over £50,000 in Britain and although 11 years old is running really well.

Irish raider Lyons Stephen looks a certainty in the Scottish Four Year Old Championship but the 'Midlands Maestro' Peter Addis has different ideas with Rhyds Destiny.

On Saturday the first of 10 heats gets underway at 12.30pm while Champion's Day on Sunday begins at 1.30pm with the final of the Hurricane Pace and concludes at 4.25pm with the Famous Musselburgh Pace.

Harness racing has been run at Musselburgh since 1893 under the auspices of the Musselburgh Fair Day Association. Association president Jim Kemp said: "This is the most important harness racing day in the UK calendar and we are trying to introduce the thrill of harness racing to a wider

audience. Musselburgh Racecourse has been very supportive and is working hard within the industry to promote this weekend.

“In terms of the quality of entries the weekend will certainly deliver as we have the finest drivers and horses from the UK and Ireland all heading to Musselburgh. This is without doubt the best field of horses ever assembled in Great Britain.”

Musselburgh Racecourse general manager, Bill Farnsworth, said: “As far as harness racing goes this is the cream of the crop we are welcoming to Musselburgh. Champion’s Day is a top quality six card race which in horseracing terms would be the equivalent of the Guineas, the Derby, the King George and St Ledger, all on the same card.”

Gates open on Saturday at 11am, first race is at 12.30pm while on Sunday gates open at noon with first race at 1.30pm. For more information visit www.musselburgh-racecourse.co.uk

Radio 4

The Reporter is a Radio 4 fan – also a fan of BBC Radio 6, Classic FM and certain programmes on Kingdom FM amongst others....

But this week Radio 4 has been excelling itself. Particularly Woman’s Hour where the Woman’s Hour Drama this week is Stan Barstow’s A Kind of Loving. It is just fab – so you can listen again for yourself on [BBC iPlayer](#)...

This Saturday at the Cinemas on Lothian Road

What can you go and see in Edinburgh this Saturday..... Here are our recommendations!

At The Cameo you can start off with Bluebeard at 13.30 or Breathless (the French version directed by Jean Luc Goddard). At 15.40 you can take in Heartbreaker or wait till 16.10 for White Material then Good Hair is on at 21.15 but the best of the bunch has to be Inception directed by Christopher Nolan at 13.40, 16.50 20.00 or 20.45 – so plenty options there! Stars Leonardo DiCaprio – and gets an amazing 86% on [Rotten Tomatoes](#).... And The [Guardian Film Blog](#) reviews it rather favourably....

Further down Lothian Road you could go to [The Odeon](#) to catch up with 3D Shrek Forever After at various times from 13.45 onwards. Again Inception from 13.45 onwards and Predators from 14.30 – and The Twilight Saga The Eclipse in case you have not seen it yet....

Our choice here is Predators with Laurence Fishburne although Rotten Tomatoes only gives it a rather measly 64%. It is a remake of an earlier Arnie epic called funnily enough Predator. The [Guardian film blog](#) review is a bit scathing...but we suppose Arnie was a bit busy to come back for the remake...

And then further down the street you come to [The Filmhouse](#). The wonderful Filmhouse which shows all the films you should ever see. On Saturday their films start at 13.00 with Sammy Going South, Wild Grass at 13.30, Le Concert at 15.25, Leaving at 16.00 or Trouble Every Day at the same time and finally The Wind Will Carry Us at 18.00. This time we have some difficulty in choosing...but we really want to see Le Concert (just because it's a comedy!) and Leaving – with Kirstin Scott Thomas who is

in another affair this time with the DIY man who comes to make her office in the house.

Le Concert gets 69% from Rotten Tomatoes and Leaving a wondrous 93%. Of course it has been out since 2009 but all the same....it is an amazing score and so Leaving it is!

This time [The Guardian film blog](#) would seem to suggest an approval of Kirstin Scott Thomas in this film.....we think!

And finally you should also know about the [Glyndebourne Festival tickets](#) which are going on sale now at The Cameo – some showings of opera on the big screen on 21st August 2010

What are you going to see? Did you like it? Why not tell us?

Wednesday 14th July 2010

Bastille Day today. In Edinburgh it is raining cats and dogs. So what is happening here in the capital today?

Of course the veteran rocker himself – Rod – is on at the Castle tonight – will be a bit wet unless this rain stops soon! Get your macs out with your leopardskin leggings!

Here's how he was looking at the 02 in Dublin a couple of months back.....pretty good show so if you're going you are sure to enjoy it! First class musicians – and yes mainly leggy and female!



The campaign to stop Edinburgh airport charging for kiss and fly drivers is, according to [The Scotsman](#), starting to take off. Lothians Conservative MSP Gavin Brown has set up a

petition against the move. But Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce are apparently in favour of the move.

Scientists working for Breakthrough Breast Cancer at their research unit at the Western General Hospital in Edinburgh have identified the role that a gene plays in the spread of cancer. The charity claims this to be exciting news in the search for a way of treating HER2 positive breast cancer which affects about 800 women in Scotland each year. The cancer is currently treated with Herceptin. We report the full story [here](#). You can also listen to a discussion by the research leader Dr Elad Katz on [Audioboo](#).

The Owl and Lion in the Grassmarket is looking for artists and crafts people to take up stalls in their craft tent during the Edinburgh Festival. You should expect help in setting up and stall costs and the general support of the cooperative. You can read more [here](#).

Interesting idea by The Guardian to have self service classified ads on its site. You can advertise your festival room or flat in Edinburgh by visiting the website [here](#).

You can see the list of planning applications made in Edinburgh this last week by clicking [here](#). One of these is to change the antenna at the Botanics. Are any of the others in your street? You may wish to object...or not!

[Greener Leith](#) report on the advances being made by PEDAL to get a wind turbine erected on Portobello promenade at Seafield.

[The Guardian](#) has confirmed its commitment to the Local Blog run until last week by beatblogger Tom Allan. Despite other worthies such as The New York Times giving up on its local news project, it seems that The Guardian is confident of the future of the blog – and they are about to announce the new incumbent shortly.

Tonight at the Royal Society of Edinburgh there is a talk about Climate Change..

Climate Change During the Last 10,000 Years: Reconstructions and Uncertainties

Professor Heinz Wanner, University of Bonn; Professor John Haslett, Trinity College, Dublin; Professor Gabriele Hegerl, Chair of Climate System Science, School of GeoSciences, University of Edinburgh



Climate has changed substantially since the last Ice Age. Heinz Wanner will present the changes that have been deduced, and how these changes can be inferred from natural archives of past climate change. This indirect evidence records climate changes and other influences, and hence estimates of past climate change are uncertain. John Haslett will explain how this uncertainty can be explored and quantified. Each speaker will talk for 20 minutes, followed by a panel discussion, including Gabriele Hegerl, and audience questions.

This event is organised by ICMS in association with the RSE and further supported by NCAS, SAGES and the Centre for earth System Dynamics, Edinburgh University

Open to all and free to attend – registration required

Breakthrough Breast Cancer

An important new treatment has been announced by scientists working in Edinburgh.

The team are the first to identify a gene's key role in causing the spread of HER2 positive breast cancer to other

parts of the body. The gene is called C35 and becomes overactive in this type of tumour.

What makes the discovery even more exciting is that there are drugs in development which could potentially kill cancer cells which rely on this gene. They do this by disabling a protein associated with the gene, which stops it from working. It is thought this type of drug would therefore be a new treatment for HER2 positive breast cancer and save the lives of women with this type of the disease. The research is published today online in the British Journal of Cancer.

HER2 positive breast cancer affects around 9,000 women in the UK each year and 800 women in Scotland – making up about 20% of all breast cancer cases. While it can be treated with the targeted treatment, Herceptin (trastuzumab), that drug does not work for all patients, and can stop working for others after time. This means new treatments are vitally needed to save lives of women with this type of the disease.

Research leader Dr Elad Katz, from the Breakthrough Breast Cancer Research Unit, said: “With all cancers, the key is working out how they form and spread. Identifying this gene’s key role in the spread of this type of breast cancer is a significant finding.

“We are at an early stage, but there is now a real possibility there could be a new treatment for women with HER2 positive breast cancer.”

Professor David Harrison, Director of the Breakthrough Breast Cancer Research Unit at the University of Edinburgh, said: “This is an important development because we now know one of the key triggers to the spread this type of cancer. It is exciting to know there is a drug out there which could potentially stop this process happening and save the lives of women with breast cancer.

“We now need to do more work in the lab to prove this concept before we can start patient trials.”

The BBC report the story [here](#).

Employment in Scotland

The Scottish Government is right to prioritise action to nurture Scotland's economy and protect recovery, Finance Secretary John Swinney said in response to employment figures published today.

New statistics show that claimant count levels in Scotland fell by 600 over the month to June – the fifth consecutive monthly fall in those claiming jobseekers allowance in Scotland. The claimant count rate for Scotland is 4.8 per cent. During the three months to May 2010, Scotland's unemployment rate was 8.1 per cent.

The Finance Secretary said that the figures demonstrated both the legacy of the previous UK Government's handling of the public finances and the dangers of the new coalition's cuts which are "too deep, too quick."

Ahead of a visit to Scottish and Southern Energy's new £5 million training centre in Perth, Mr Swinney said:

"Scotland is continuing to see fragile signs of recovery. Today's figures highlight a fifth consecutive monthly fall in the number of people claiming jobseekers allowance, and our unemployment rate remains below many other parts of the UK such as London, Wales, the North East of England, North West, and Yorkshire and the Humber.

"Both the Purchasing Managers Index survey for June and Scottish Engineering review for the second quarter of the year showed rises in the number of firms reporting increases in employment. And the Lloyds TSB Business Monitor Report highlighted a rise in the number of businesses that reported

an increase in exports during the second quarter.

“But today’s figures again demonstrate that recovery is in its early stages – which is why the UK Government is wrong to risk jobs and recovery through spending cuts that are too quick and too deep, and come on top of those already imposed on Scotland by the previous Westminster administration.

“These figures show the Scottish Government was right to defer further Westminster cuts to next year in order to support recovery and maintain employment now. The statistics also demonstrate the importance of the comprehensive action we are taking to support recovery, prioritise frontline services and creating and protecting jobs through the implementation of our Economic Recovery Plan, which is directly supporting up to 15,000 jobs.

“Today I am in Perth to support Scottish and Southern Energy’s £5 million investment in skills development and training – which reflects the Scottish Government’s own priority in supporting jobs and skills, particularly in the energy sector, where there is massive potential for sustainable economic growth.

“The challenges of cuts imposed by Westminster underline the case for financial responsibility for Scotland, so that we can make our own decisions and use our own powers over taxation, spending and other key economic levers in order to grow the Scottish economy and support jobs.”

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) measure of unemployment is a survey based estimate of the number of people out of work who are actively seeking a job and are available to start work. It provides the most comprehensive measure for changes in the overall Scottish labour market and is reported on a rolling three-month basis, with the latest data available for the period March-May 2010.

The Scottish ILO unemployment rate of 8.1 per cent for the three month period March-May 2010 was the sixth lowest of the 12 UK nations and regions. The following UK regions and

nations had a higher unemployment rate than Scotland: North East (9.4 per cent); North West (8.3 per cent); Yorkshire and the Humber (9.1 per cent); West Midlands (8.6 per cent); London (9.3 per cent) and Wales (9.1 per cent).

Claimant count data is based on Jobseeker's Allowance records and is reported on a monthly basis, with the latest data available for June. While more timely and disaggregated than the ILO measure, it is less comprehensive as it excludes those in the labour force who are not entitled to claim benefit and those who choose not to claim benefit.

The claimant count rate of 4.8 per cent in Scotland for June 2010 was the sixth lowest of the 12 UK nations and regions. The following UK regions and nations had a higher claimant count rate than Scotland: North East (6.6 per cent); North West (5.1 per cent); Yorkshire and the Humber (5.4 per cent); West Midlands (5.8 per cent); Wales (5.0 per cent) and Northern Ireland (6.3 per cent).

Analysis by the International Monetary Fund shows that among the G7, the UK is providing the lowest level of discretionary fiscal stimulus in 2010 – equivalent to 0.2 per cent of GDP in 2010. Across the advanced G20 countries, the discretionary fiscal stimulus packages represent, on average, 2.0 per cent of GDP in 2010.


A comparison of fiscal stimulus packages was produced by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the May 2010 Fiscal Monitor publication.

National Library of Scotland

A selection of Scottish treasures from the National Library of Scotland's archives will form part of a new worldwide online catalogue of cultural merit.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have selected four pieces from the library to help launch the new UK version of its Memory of the World Register. The register is a global catalogue of heritage, focusing on artefacts of outstanding universal value, with a remit to preserve and promote them.

A film depicting the last days of human habitation on a remote island, a selection of maps from a 16th Century cartographer, the earliest surviving book printed in Scotland and documents highlighting the demise of Scotland's capitalist aspirations of empire, will form part of the register, the first part of which goes live today.

ng or disport of Chaucer (to whom it is incorrectly attributed) “] 

Martyn Wade, CEO of the National Library of Scotland, said: 'To have one artefact included in the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme would have been very exciting, to have four is beyond our greatest expectations and truly endorses the quality of our archives here in Edinburgh. I am confident that this endorsement from UNESCO will both strengthen our appeal here in Scotland and establish us internationally.'

One of the selected artefacts is a film, offering an insight into one of Scotland's most remote communities in the years immediately preceding its demise. The 17-minute 'St Kilda, Britain's Loneliest Isle 1923-1928' captures scenes of a community that was soon to disappear. The tiny Gaelic speaking population was forced to migrate in August 1930 bringing an end to 2,000 years of human habitation on the island.

UNESCO also selected more traditional artefacts with the

drawings of pioneer cartographer Timothy Pont and works from Scotland's first printers Walter Chepman and Andrew Myllar impressing.

Pont's maps include more than 9,500 named locations, incorporating drawings of castles and tower houses, and often naming the land owners offering a uniquely important insight into this time period. His maps form the first comprehensive survey of Scotland and were instrumental in the production of the first Atlas of Scotland.

The 11 pieces of printing in the 'Chepman and Myllar Prints', are all known only from these copies, including the earliest surviving dated book printed in Scotland: John Lydgate's 'The Complaint of the Black Knight', 4 April 1508.

Joining the St Kilda film, Pont's maps and the literary products of Chepman and Myllar is the archive of the Company of Scotland. The letters and documents it contains chart the history of the Company of Scotland's plan to establish trading a colony on the Isthmus of Darien in Central America in the 1690s, a bold attempt at establishing a Scottish empire.

Subscriptions came in from the aristocracy, tradespeople, farmers, professionals and the burghs, and totalled £400,000. Despite the financial strength of the venture it turned to failure and can be viewed as a component in Scotland's move toward the 1707 Union with England.

The UK Memory of the World register was established this year with the aim of highlighting some of the UK's lesser-known items of historical interest by awarding them with the globally-recognised 'Memory of the World' status.

'We were incredibly impressed by the diversity and richness of the first nominations to the register,' said David Dawson, Chair of the UK Memory of the World Committee. 'Given the UK's rich documentary history, I'm sure these winners are just the tip of the iceberg. We hope this will encourage more people to get involved with their local archives and museums.'

Edinburgh Innovation Lab

Festivals

Festivals Edinburgh, the strategic umbrella organisation that represents and works on behalf of Edinburgh's twelve major festivals, has been awarded £300,000 from Creative Scotland's National Lottery Fund to set up the Edinburgh Festivals Innovation Lab, a two year initiative to lead the digital development of Edinburgh's Festivals.

The Edinburgh Festivals Innovation Lab, believed to be the first of its kind in the UK, will enable Festivals to work with leading thinkers, technologists, artists, audiences and digital communities to develop and prototype ideas that improve and inspire the audience experience. It will tackle themes such as helping festival go-ers make the most of their experiences, new ways of distributing festival content and making the festivals greener.

Everything from special developer tech events and webtools that transparently "crowdsource" ideas from the public, to a brand-new "geek-in-residence" position working across the Edinburgh Festivals, will be developed. The Lab will also support improvements to core infrastructure, enable the digital distribution of content and support the exploration of digital programming.

The Edinburgh Festivals Innovation Lab will run alongside Creative Scotland's Amb:IT:ion Scotland programme, which currently supports Scottish arts organisations to build their digital capacity and enhance their effectiveness using new technologies. In line with the aims of Amb:IT:ion Scotland, the Innovation Lab will provide organisational capacity,

resources and access to expertise, to take advantage of opportunities in digital innovation, technology and culture in order to provide public benefit.

The Innovation Lab is a natural development for the Edinburgh Festivals, who in the past twelve months have supported, delivered or piloted a number of digital projects including: the Festivals' first iPhone application; the creation of the Festivals' first official online TV channel edinburghfestivals.tv; "Festbuzz"* and the crowd-sourcing via Twitter of the Fringe 2010 programme artwork.

Andrew Dixon, Chief Executive, Creative Scotland said:

"The Edinburgh Festivals already reach a live and TV audience in the millions. Creative Scotland's investment will enable the festivals to interact with a global audience and to engage with the public through online digital programming."

Faith Liddell, Director of Festivals Edinburgh said:

"Collaboration and innovation are at the heart of our plans to sustain and boost the ongoing success and development of Edinburgh's Festivals. Over the next two years, our world-renowned Festivals will be a stage and a showcase, a playground and a platform for a number of innovative pilot projects and initiatives. And through our developer events programme, crowdsourcing initiatives and geek-in-residence programme, the way we invite, select and deliver the projects will be an innovation in itself too. We are delighted that Creative Scotland has chosen to invest in our ambition, as we focus on digital technology and innovative practice to maintain our global competitive edge."

Scottish Ambulances to have defibrillators on board

The new Laerdal HeartStart MRX machines were chosen after an extensive procurement process, which included weeks of field trials with ambulance crews around the country. They include 12 lead ECG diagnostic and interpretive capabilities, which provide greater detail on patients' cardiac rhythm and diagnosis. This allows better quality information to be transmitted to specialist receiving cardiac centres while the ambulance is en route.

Pauline Howie, Chief Executive, Scottish Ambulance Service, said: "In most instances of heart attacks, ambulance staff are the first response. It is important that our paramedics and technicians have the most advanced technology available to help them deliver the highest standards of care to patients. The new defibrillators will be introduced into all of our 526 emergency ambulances by the end of the year and will make a significant contribution to saving lives in Scotland on a daily basis.

"Our staff were heavily involved in the process of choosing the preferred solution and the combination of portability, functionality and reliability were key factors in the final decision. Ambulance crews work closely with cardiologists at centres around the country and the increased diagnostic functionality of the new machines will enhance the quality of information available to specialists, improving the likelihood of a positive outcome for patients. "

Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon said: "Getting the best possible treatment, at the earliest possible opportunity, is vital when it comes to saving people's lives.

"That's why the Scottish Ambulance Service has fitted defibrillators in all their accident and emergency ambulances to ensure that when people need this potentially lifesaving treatment it is available – wherever they are.

“The rollout of the latest technology will help the ambulance service deliver an even better service to patients throughout Scotland.”

The SAS responds to over 33,000 cardiac related emergencies in Scotland every year and currently reaches more than 80% of them in under 8 minutes, against a standard of 75%.

Court news

The sad tale is of Edinburgh pensioner John Millar, 67, who held a pillow over his wife’s face for about five minutes in an attempt to end her suffering. His wife now lives in a nursing home. More details on the new look [BBC website](#).

The High Court recently heard an appeal against sentence by one of the eight men convicted in a trial which went on for some 10 weeks in Edinburgh last year. Ross Webber, a North Berwick bank worker was originally sentenced to 3 years 9 months on one of the charges against him. This has now been reduced to 2 years 8 months on appeal according to the written decision delivered by Lord Osborne and uploaded to the High Court website this week.

Part of the original conviction related to possessing and distributing child pornography.

A full report on the original guilty verdicts handed down to the eight men can be viewed on the [STV website](#).

Newspapers...possible demise of a local paper

A community newspaper which has been published for more than 30 years could face closure unless it secures new sources of funding.

The North Edinburgh News is given funding through the Fairer Scotland Fund but this will end next year – leaving the newspaper desperately searching for ways to keep it going.

The monthly free newspaper was set up by volunteers more than 30 years ago to serve the local community and highlight the positive achievements of the area.

But editor Mary Burnside, who has been involved with the NEN since 1989, said it needed funds of at least £45,000 to keep it going for another year.

She said: “It is looking quite grim. Being a newspaper, there’s not that many options open to us in terms of securing funding.

“I have been here 20 years and we are all really committed to the project so we don’t want to see it fail.

“It is very much local. It is an area where there’s quite a few problems and it is quite a strong campaigning community and, over the years, having its own newspaper has meant these campaigns have received quite a good profile.

“It has helped to change things for the better – I think having the newspaper there has definitely helped.

“We are doing ok for advertising but we don’t want to lose the ethos of what the paper is about by just becoming another freesheet with lots of ads.”

Staff and the voluntary board of directors will be stepping up their campaign to save the paper over the next few months.

The newspaper previously received council funding through the

Edinburgh Community Newspapers Trust but this stopped three years ago.

Staff who work for the NEN have already had a cut in their hours and salaries because of a reduction in funding.

The newspaper has an estimated readership of 35,000 – with 14,500 copies being printed each month and distributed to homes and buildings such as community centres and schools.

So what do you think? You can download the latest edition of NEN [here](#) and we think you will agree that online it looks great – so why bother with printing at all? Or would that mean abandoning some of the readers?

Royal Society of Edinburgh

Climate Change talk on Wednesday 14th July 2010

Climate Change During the Last 10,000 Years: Reconstructions and Uncertainties

Professor Heinz Wanner, University of Bonn; Professor John Haslett, Trinity College, Dublin; Professor Gabriele Hegerl, Chair of Climate System Science, School of GeoSciences, University of Edinburgh



Climate has changed substantially since the last Ice Age. Heinz Wanner will present the changes that have been deduced, and how these changes can be inferred from natural archives of past climate change. This indirect evidence records climate changes and other influences, and hence estimates of past climate change are uncertain. John Haslett will explain how this uncertainty can be explored and quantified. Each speaker

will talk for 20 minutes, followed by a panel discussion, including Gabriele Hegerl, and audience questions.

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Open to all and free to attend – registration required

The Open

The Champions Challenge was due to be played this afternoon (Wednesday) but inclement weather has meant its cancellation. Twenty five former Open Champions were due to tee off.

We hope that the actual golf competition itself which is due to start on Thursday morning will be able to go ahead. Tiger Woods is here along with Phil Mickelson and the Japanese Ishikawa. Justin Rose is hoping that he will win this time and Tom Watson who so very nearly lifted the Claret Jug last year but was pipped by Stewart Cink on the extra holes required when they both tied on 278. Watson was so gracious in defeat it would be lovely to see him actually win the competition this year.

Former winner Paul Lawrie is one of the first trio to tee off at 6.30am tomorrow morning....

You can follow the action on the [official website](#) from your desk. But The Reporter can recommend a visit to the Bolly tent – if only to see who you can see! St Andrews is a great course for spectators since some of the greens and fairways back on to each other so there are some vantage points where you will be able to watch a wide range of play.

You can also follow live coverage on the [BBC](#) – Just remember

to do some work in between....

Recipe of the week

Grilled Chicken with Mustard

Enough for 4

Takes about 40 minutes

Get the BBQ out. Make sure it is clean.

Put 4 teaspoons of mustard seeds in a frying pan and toast them till they crackle. Put them in a large bowl. Add 8oz of green beans either fresh or frozen, similar amount of thinly sliced green cabbage, 1 small thinly sliced onion and 1 tablespoon of fresh tarragon.

Whisk 2 tablespoons of olive oil with same amount of balsamic vinegar and 2 teaspoons of Dijon mustard in a bowl. Mix in with the cabbage and beans to make a very green coleslaw.

Whisk an egg white and a good 2 tablespoons of mustard in a small bowl. Season the skin of 4 chicken breasts with salt and pepper. Brush them with the mustard and the mustard seeds.

Put the chicken on the BBQ skin side down. Grill for about 5 minutes each side or until cooked through....check with a skewer that it is!

Serve both together – preferably with some fat fries too unless you are on a diet....

The Balmoral – Great Gourmet Escape

The Balmoral – part of the Rocco Forte Collection – is making the most of this rich abundance of superb gastronomic delights on their world-famous doorstep by offering their guests the opportunity to forage for funghi, pick their own berries, dive for delicious scallops or catch the freshest fish in their very own Great Gourmet Escape.

As The Balmoral's number one restaurant's manager Gary Quinn explains: "Scotland's larder is world famous and we always strive to use the freshest and most local ingredients available to us. In recent times, our guests have shown more interest in where our ingredients are sourced so we decided to offer them opportunity to show them, and go one step further in a culinary experience that takes them from nature to their plate."

The award-winning concierge team at The Balmoral can arrange a variety of exclusive foodie trips for their guests, working with the hotel's acclaimed food suppliers for private trips or with elite foragers. Self-proclaimed 'Forage Rangers', Fiona Houston and Xa Milne offer guests the chance to forage in urban Edinburgh bespoke trips or pre-arranged tours throughout the year. Foragers can expect to pick a plethora of edible plants in the most unexpected places, including the picturesque Union Canal walkway.

Slightly further afield is Scotland's oldest family farm – the Carmichael Estate. Established in 1292, just outside Biggar, Lanarkshire, this family-run estate boasts some of the finest award-winning venison, beef and lamb in Scotland. Visitors to the farm can enjoy the 'Carmichael History Estate Walk', a tour of the farm with a little bit of a history lesson thrown in. Also available are delicious jams and chutneys, cheese and other seasonal produce to take away and enjoy at home.

Considering its location right in the heart of Scotland's capital city, it's easy to forget how close to the sea The Balmoral is. But just a couple of miles away, in the scenic Firth of Forth, you can find plentiful mackerel, cod, pollock and coalfish. Guests can take full or half day fishing tours of the Forth, from South Queensferry taking in the beautiful views, spotting Scotland's diverse wildlife and touring the islands including the historical Inchcolm island.

And then, of course, there is restaurant number one's acclaimed food suppliers. The Balmoral can organise farm visits to their beef and lamb supplier, as well as their wild salmon experts.

Once guests have seen for themselves what Scotland's extensive larder has to offer, they can then sample the fresh, seasonal and local delights at Michelin-starred number one restaurant. The multi-award winning Chef Craig Sandle is at the helm of a kitchen that prides itself on using the finest and freshest Scottish ingredients.

Craig says: "Edinburgh is home to good food and this city – and our nation – is bursting at its culinary seams with the finest fayre. It is a food lover's dream destination. It comes as no surprise that Edinburgh is the best place to eat in Scotland and number one is one of the best places to dine, as recognised in the Good Food Guide."

The Balmoral's Gourmet Experience offers a luxury overnight stay in a superior room with full Scottish breakfast, a bottle of Bollinger on arrival and an exclusive six course tasting menu including wines, at number one. Prices start at £515 per room, exclusive of private external culinary trips. Or, add on another day for as little as £190 and sample a few of the culinary delights available in Edinburgh.

To book, contact the Balmoral on 0131 556 2414 email reservations.balmoral@roccofortecollection.com

Holyrood Hunting

The Rangers Service based at Holyrood Park is inviting visitors to step back in time to find out about a selection of ancient sports and outdoor pursuits.



Interpretation Ranger Matt McCabe said: “We wanted to give visitors an opportunity to learn about some fascinating traditional outdoors activities which are less common today. “They’ll have an opportunity to try their hand at archery, a favoured sport of kings and commoners through the ages. Falconry was another great pastime of centuries past and we’ll have a variety of fascinating birds of prey here for people to get right up close to. And if the weather and ground conditions permit, there will also be artificial lure coursing with Whippets.

“Our free ‘Royal Pursuits’ event from 11am to 3pm on the 18th July is an opportunity for visitors to learn about the long heritage of these various activities and their links to the rich past of Holyrood Park, together with its importance as a royal hunting ground.

“We’ll also be highlighting the fact that the range of interesting and unusual ways to enjoy the environment around you is immense and there’s always scope for finding new outdoors activities to enjoy.”

The Rangers Team is also extending a welcome to visitors who would like to join them on an informative guided walk around the Park exploring its history, archaeology and natural wonders.

The Ranger Team hopes visitors will also join them on an exploratory walk around Holyrood Park. Every Monday until the end of August there’s a gentle stroll or ‘Amble Around

Arthur', whilst those who enjoy a more moderate walk can take part in the ever popular 'Arthur's Secrets' which takes place on Tuesdays until 28th September. Or if you're feeling energetic enough why not come along on the strenuous 'Arthur's Adventure' every Wednesday until 25th August. There's a free walk suitable for all abilities!

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As places are limited, booking is essential for both walks. Please call the Ranger Service on 0131 652 8150
begin_of_the_skype_highlighting 0131 652 8150
end_of_the_skype_highlighting to reserve your place or for further details.

Panto Season...the return of Andy Gray!

"For many years the King's fielded an invincible panto double act in the shape of Allan Stewart and Andy Gray and we are delighted that Andy, once again, is appearing in a Qdos pantomime here at The King's Theatre. We're thrilled that he is back with the old gang," says Michael Harrison, Managing Director of Qdos Pantomimes.

"More and more people attend the pantomime here at the King's Theatre and it has become one of Scotland's most successful Christmas show. In fact, more than 32,000 tickets have already been sold for Jack and the Beanstalk eight months ahead of its opening night!," Michael added.



Andy will play the role of King Crumble in this year's production and will undoubtedly bring gales of laughter and

tears of joy to Edinburgh audiences. Allan Stewart will be donning his frock to take on the mantle of Dame Trot and providing helpless laughter to young and old alike. Joining this hapless duo will be The King's regular baddie Grant Stott in the role of Fleshcreep.

Jack and the Beanstalk is staged by Qdos Entertainment, the world's largest pantomime producer, which will stage 22 productions throughout the UK this Christmas. Featuring magnificent scenery, beautiful costumes, an abundance of comedy and a larger than life beanstalk – plus one very mean giant at the top of it is brought wonderfully to life in Scotland's biggest pantomime. With ticket prices to suit all pockets you won't have to sell the family cow to enjoy spectacular pantomime at The King's Theatre.

Jack and the Beanstalk runs at the King's Theatre from Saturday 4 December 2010 to Sunday 23 January 2011. Tickets can be booked on 0131 529 6000 or www.kingstheatre.org.uk.