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Issue No. 9 September 2003

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Welcome back!

Our summer hibernation has now come to an end - and now is the time to get involved in the activities we re planning over the next few months. So get your diaries out and make sure you get active!

McLaren to tell us where environmental justice goes from here. Prior to this is our annual general meeting, where we ll be reporting on the year s activities.

First up on 25th September, in the first of our autumnal public meetings, we ve got the new FoE Scotland chief executive Duncan

If you can t make the various events, there will still be the opportunity to get involved in our waste campaign. Get in touch and talk to us about how you could help out.

Standing room only at The Stand

report from our own Arts Editor on FoE Edinburgh's comedy night



Picture: Colin Hattersley
Comedy Crew: (L-R) Paul Graham, Susan Morrison, Ian McPherson, Stuart Murphy, Simon McKinney

It was standing room only at The Stand Comedy Club for this year's annual Comedy Benefit.

Over £1000 was raised and a good time was had by all – even the people at the front who were heckled for being Austrian, for having a "Captain Birdseye" moustache or looking like a witches' coven. Those at the front seemed pleased to be seated when they arrived but by the time cheeky Glaswegian compere, Susan Morrison, had finished with them they seemed almost to

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Time for Trams

... but could they be powered by renewables rather than nuclear & fossil fuels?

FoE Edinburgh sent in a strongly supportive response to this summer's 'Tramtime' consultation. We believe a tram network will make a substantial improvement to Edinburgh's public transport system and reduce car journeys, congestion and pollution. To accomplish this, the tram must be delivered as part of a road traffic reduction strategy that incorporates road user charging, and measures to reduce health-threatening

levels of air pollution.

However, Edinburgh should also strive to deliver a tram network which has a demonstrable commitment to environmental sustainability.

In line with Council policy to increase recycling rates, recycling facilities should be incorporated into all tram stops. Solar energy should be used (as with existing parking meters) to power the information systems and lighting at tram stop shelters.

More fundamentally, the electricity supply for the trams should be sourced from renewable sources. Whilst trams are friendly to their local environment, every effort should be made to protect the global environment by choosing a supply from a company provides renewable electricity.

Stuart Hay

See www.foe-edinburgh.org.uk for full details.



Picture: John Webster / CRAG

Montpellier: trams mix well with pedestrians.

Comedy night

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willing to give up their seats to those of us swaying with our pints at the back. They didn't, though probably because they had drunk as much we had and weren't capable.



Picture: Colin Hattersley

Raffle draw: (L-R) Susan Morrison, "girl with no pockets", Lang Banks playing the banjo

The more demure New Zealander Simon McKinney kicked off the string of mainly Celtic acts. He made observations such as how when you walk home drunk it can feel like you're on a hamster wheel, as the road just keeps coming up to meet you and seems to disappear behind you as you get faster and faster the nearer home you get (and I always thought it was the Australians who drank too much).

Ian McPherson told uncharacteristically sober Irish tales of his hometown and Paul Graham and Stuart Murphy wowed the audience with their energetic improvisation and wacky facial expressions.

Raymond Mearns wound the night up with some dry Glaswegian humour about trying

Co-ordinator's Comments

Hello everybody. I hope this newsletter finds you more relaxed and tanned than in July - hopefully managing to catch a little time to chill out this summer! After the mega-successful comedy fundraiser at 'The Stand', we have a healthy bank balance to help us tackle all sorts of environmental issues! With the festival madness now over for another year, Edinburgh can return to some kind of normality again, and FoEE can really get active!

The Waste Campaign Group have continued to meet throughout the summer, allowing members to report any activity and keep the group informed of any progress. Waste group activity is now stepping up a notch, and the group would like to encourage anyone who is interested to come along and join the campaign group and help keep the ball rolling.

There are a number of exciting campaign threads to follow up in the coming year, including FoEE's ongoing liaison with City of Edinburgh Council, the action on 'over-packaging' and the 'Recycling in Edinburgh's Bars and Restaurants' project. We are hoping to develop good relations with the Council, and become more involved in policy making with regard to environmental issues. It was suggested at a meeting between Cllr Bob Cairns and FoEE, that FoEE could, in the future, have

a representative present on a panel meeting to discuss local environmental issues. We also plan to draw attention to the problem of excess use of packaging by retailers, encourage licensed premises across the city to recycle, and perhaps put in place a positive reward scheme for those with best practice.

On a slightly different note, September will see the City of Edinburgh Council voting on the issue of congestion charging. I sincerely hope that we will see the Council vote in favour of a congestion charging scheme, as pledged in the last election.

By the time the next newsletter goes out, FoEE will have held their AGM (Thursday 25th September, Friend Meeting House). Many important issues will be discussed, and the new committee will be elected. I hope to see all the familiar faces present, and some new ones too!

Until next time, Katriona x
Katriona Harding



Picture: Colin Howden

to get your teenage kids to leave home.

There weren't very many jokes about the environment except Susan Morrison's remarks about how many friends the Earth had, and that, if the summer's hot weather meant global warming had arrived - then great! Ahh well it was comedy and you shouldn't expect stand up to be politically correct.

Andrea Elderfield



Raymond Mearns

Picture: Colin Hattersley

Make Contact

If you'd like to get involved in the work of Friends of the Earth Edinburgh then please email us - info@foe-edinburgh.org.uk or see www.foe-edinburgh.org.uk. For those without access to the internet you can call Jolin Warren on 0131 466 8329.

We'd also be keen to hear any ideas or comments you have about the events and campaigns organised by the group.

Dates for Diaries

Sunday 21 September, 11.00am – 4.00pm:
Edinburgh Car Free Festival, George Street.

Thursday 25 September, 6.30pm:
FoEE Annual General Meeting,
Friends Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace.

... followed, at 8.00pm, by:
FoEE Public Meeting. Duncan McLaren, new Chief Executive of Friends of the Earth Scotland: "*The Future of Environmental Justice.*"

Saturday 27 September, 9.00am-5.00pm:
FoE Scotland conference "*A Roch Wind Blawin? - reflections and directions on the road to environmental justice,*" Leith Academy, Edinburgh. Cost £20+VAT; contact Sarah on 0131 554 9977 or sdemowbray@foe-scotland.org.uk for further details. Conference to be followed by a ceilidh at nearby location.

Thursday 23 October, 7.30pm:
FoEE Public Meeting, Friends Meeting House.
Topic to be confirmed.

Thursday 27 November, 7.30pm:
FoEE Public Meeting, Friends Meeting House.
Topic to be confirmed.

Thursday 18 December, 7.00pm - 1.00am:
FoE Scotland 25th Birthday Night. Three course meal, after-dinner speaker, ceilidh & disco to commemorate 25 years campaigning for Environmental Justice in Scotland. Call Jo Heron on 0131 554 9977 for more information.

Car Free Festival

September 16 – 22 is European Mobility Week, with Monday 22 September being Car Free Day. The main theme for this second year of the event is Accessibility – showing the benefits to all of making towns and cities more "car free" and promoting the development of sustainable transport alternatives.

In Edinburgh, the west end of George Street is going to be closed to traffic on Sunday 21 September, from 11.00am – 4.00pm with a wide range of family entertainment, information, music and street theatre.

FoE Scotland will be running family activities and a stall on the day and look forward to seeing any of you who are attending the event. There are plans for a static cycling competition with medal winning cyclist, Marco Librizzi, setting the pace. Supporters and members of the public can take up the challenge and see who can cycle the fastest or farthest in two minutes. We have a mountain bike and a folding bike for the lucky winners, kindly donated by Bicycle Works in Edinburgh.

As well as some activities for the family, FoE intends to gather support for the congestion charging plans the council intends to bring forward. As this is something FoE Edinburgh is supportive of we are looking for lots of volunteers for a couple of hours to help run the stall. If you can spare some time to help please contact Gillian Wilson at the FoE Scotland office on gwilson@foe-scotland.org.uk or 0131 554 9977.

To find out more about Car Free Day and what FoES is up to check out page 14 of the latest issue of the FoE Scotland magazine 'What on Earth.'



<http://www.22september.org>