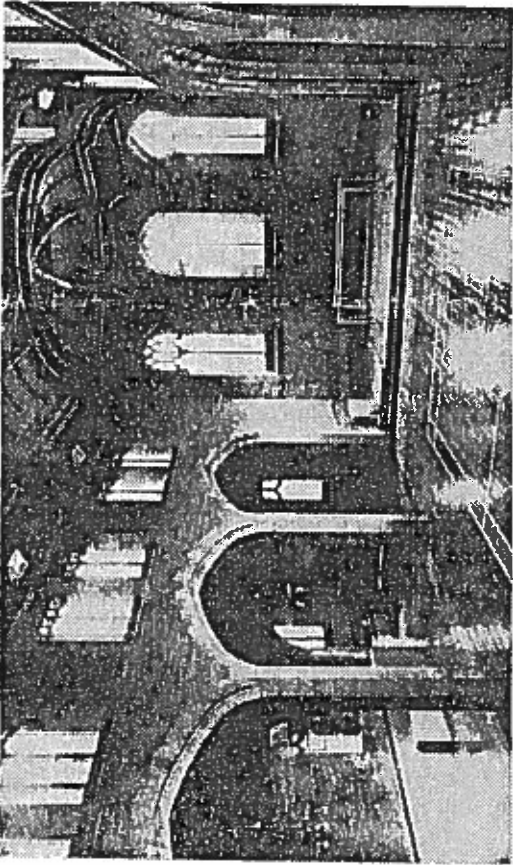


ALL CHANGE FOR FORMER CHURCH



Not quite what the original architects had in mind perhaps, but there's no doubt that the conversion of St Bride's into a sports hall has kept all the best features of the former church.

Transformation to new centre

By GEORGE STRATHIE

Transformed... that's the former St Bride's Church at Orwell Terrace, Edinburgh, which has become a new community centre serving the Gorgie-Dalry area.

Phase two of the conversion programme was to take only three months, but modifications to the heating system meant the centre was closed for almost seven months.

But the local authority are convinced users will think it has been worth the wait when they see the accommodation.

Bought by Lothian Regional Council in 1975 from the Church of Scotland for £22,000, St Bride's opened as a community centre in May 1977, following a £5000 Phase One conversion to the church hall, with toilet and kitchen facilities.

Now the second phase has been completed at a cost of £36,000, with the upgrading of the actual church to create a sports hall for badminton, basketball, volleyball and five-a-side football.

The centre also boasts a lounge with television and reading room, a meeting

WOULD YOU SKATEBOARD ON TOP OF BEN NEVIS?

It's amazing what some people will do to get their names in the record books! For instance, who would ever come up with an idea like skateboarding at the top of Ben Nevis?

The answer: Six members of the 87th Edinburgh (Granton Seaway) venture scout unit. And they are claiming a British record for the feat and hope to have it included in the Guinness Book of Records.

The idea came from James Hood (19), who wanted to combine a hike as part of his work for the Queen's Scout Award with some skateboarding.

James's father, Mr Hood, the group Scout leader, said: "The boys climbed to the top of Ben Nevis with sheets of hard-board which they laid into a 16-foot-long track."

"They had heard of records being set for alpine canoeing and the likes but as far as they knew no-one had ever skateboarded at such heights before."

EDUCATION BOOST FOR BORDERS Firm get seven days to start safety work

Earlston High School in Berwickshire may become one of the secondary education centres in the Borders, ranking with Galashiels Academy, Kelso High and Hawick High Schools.

A major expansion programme estimated at £1,197,332 to be recommended to the Borders Regional Council by the education committee.

Edinburgh District Council building control committee have ordered the owners of a listed building to begin work by the end of this week to make it safe.

The building at 24 Gayfield Square is listed as being of local historical or architectural interest and is protected by the Secretary of State. But building control officials told the committee that it was dangerous. A spokesman for the owners, Eightyfirm Developments Ltd., Edinburgh, said that the firm had previously been carrying out work to make the building safe, but they could not carry the work out as quickly as the order demanded.



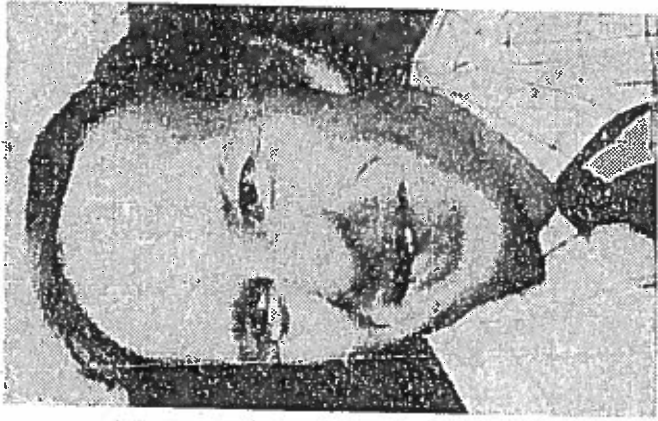
Bowled over by the transformation at their new centre are pensioner Mrs Robina McIntosh, and management committee secretary Mrs Pat Holland, who are trying out the carpet bow's equipment.

Will ALEC be a big hit?

ALEC is coming to Sighthill community centre - Adult Leisure Education Classes, that is. The full programme won't start until January, but the centre's warden, Phil Creed, is keen to see a handful of pilot classes under way as soon as possible.

Idea of the scheme is to bring together local people with a skill or talent which they are interested in passing on to others, and those who wish to acquire it.

At the outset, classes will be organised in four sessions each of one hour's duration, with a class fee of 60p.



Mr David Tinto, manager of the new centre.

Investing in bank of information...

Visist to other community centres in the Lothian Region are helping South Side residents to build up a bank of information which they will be able to draw from when they get a centre of their own.

As well as inspection tours at West Calder, Leith and Northfield and Wilslowbrae, the community centre steering group members have sent out a questionnaire to local groups seeking their views and ideas.

Sounding board

After the Open Week the initial programme will include junior and youth clubs, mothers' groups, football training, informal learning groups, keep fit, pensioners' activities and indoor sports sessions. But the programme is still wide open to other interested groups.

Manager Mr David Tinto said: "We intend to use the open week as a sounding board for the future programming of the centre. We are hoping that local residents will turn out in strength and give us their ideas, so that every effort can be made to try to incorporate them in our weekly scheme of things."

"It could well be that the suggestions and needs highlighted then and at the public meeting might lead to the setting up of a workshop to foster programme development."

"This centre is for local people in the Gorgie-Dalry Local Plan area and the onus will be on the local groups and interested individuals to take active part in the management of the building. To do this, we are contemplating the holding of quarterly public meetings and establishing regular communications with residents through centre news-sheets."



Badge for the new centre will be chosen from 125 designs entered in a contest by pupils of Dalry and Orwell primary school. A difficult choice.

BLACK BOTTLE

A Whisky worth asking for