

Wednesday 21 July 2010

News from here and there about here!

Justice Minister Kenny McAskill is under fire again for the decision to release Al Megrahi on compassionate grounds. The Prime Minister David Cameron has called the decision “very bad”, effectively defusing the situation he was facing in Washington by simply agreeing with the US government – agreeing to release further documents but not giving way to the US government’s demand for an inquiry. We wrote about the Lockerbie bomber here. [The Daily Record](#) tells the story that David Cameron thought the bomber should have died in jail.

First Minister, Alex Salmond, speaking on Newsnight, said that he did not regret the decision. He admitted that there was a profound disagreement between the UK government and the SNP led Scottish Government. He conducted a very robust and eloquent defence of the Scottish Government’s decision.

He continued :-“As to the medical evidence – the report upon which McAskill made his decision has already been published. Mr Megrahi has terminal cancer and will die.”

“We followed due process to the letter. Other prisoners have been released on compassionate grounds and exceeded the time they were estimated to survive.”

“Nobody doubts Dr Andrew Fraser’s integrity. (the doctor who issued the report about Megrahi’s health)

“Megrahi’s progressive health is reported on monthly. It is sent to East Renfrewshire Council and the Scottish Government.

We published every single piece of information last year except for two – correspondence with the UK and the US government. So the Scottish government only need the agreement of the UK and US governments to allow the documents to be

released.”

Newsnight Scotland led with this story too, expanding on it with some historic footage from 11 months ago when Megrahi went home to Libya to a hero's welcome.

Magnus Linklater, Editor of The Times in Scotland, speaking on Newsnight Scotland stated that people would be puzzled that the Scottish Government were opposed to Prisoner Transfer Agreement but were keen to release Megrahi on compassionate grounds which did not seem in any way logical. Linklater also thinks the Scottish Government may have underestimated the effect of the prisoner's release, and that an important part of Scottish justice was missed by the Lockerbie bomber dropping his appeal against conviction which might have brought out the truth of the affair.

Sir Kenneth Calman has been appointed the Chairman of the National Trust for Scotland, and is apparently going to give it a good “redd out” according to [The Telegraph](#).

Calman, best known for the commission bearing his name which focussed on devolution and Holyrood's tax raising powers, must know that the NTS is a bit of a poisoned chalice. The organisation has already had to impose self-inflicted cuts such as selling its important HQ building in Charlotte Square and [shutting the visitor centre at Ben Lawers](#) amongst other important assets, owing to its dire financial position. You can find out which properties are open in Edinburgh and the Lothians by clicking [here](#). The results of the Strategic Review under the Rt Hon George Reid will be published at the end of July following his lengthy consultation and “robust and independent” review of the charity.

Network Rail do not want The Forth Bridge awarded world heritage status, saying that it would impose additional burdens on them, according to [BBC online](#).

BA cabin crew have rejected the latest pay offer so all you

travellers should all be ready for more strikes before Christmas according to [BBC online](#). Given that the train is now a very downmarket, dirty and slow option for travel to London this is rather depressing for Scottish business people who have to travel to London on a regular basis.

By way of Greener Leith a rather odd report to [FixMyStreet](#) about a peculiar noise in the street.....

Edinburgh Rat Run in pictures on [BBC online](#).

Forth Energy boss says the first planning application is to be lodged next month for the first of four biomass plants to be built in Edinburgh, Dundee, Rosyth and Grangemouth. This story is in [The Scotsman](#).

[Edinburgh Spotlight](#) tells us about a new shop opening on Candlemaker Row and review [Gorgie City Farm](#).

Start up Cafe list all the meet-ups on [this page](#) on their website.

And for some light relief – although we do not in any way endorse the cruelty of this stunt..... Ladies and Gentlemen we bring you the [Flying Donkey](#)