

Official opening at Holyrood 1 July 2011



A fundraiser for veterans, a volunteer at a soup kitchen and a hospice visitor have been named by Holyrood's Presiding Officer and Deputy Presiding Officers as the local heroes who will join them at the opening of the Fourth Session of the Scottish Parliament.

Nominated by MSPs in recognition of their important personal contribution to the lives of people in Scotland, a total of 98 heroes have been nominated so far and will take part in a 'Riding' along Edinburgh's Royal Mile on Friday 1 July.

The heroes will take their place in the Riding alongside more than 1,000 other Scots, schoolchildren, parliamentarians, religious leaders and other guests from public life.

This will follow an address by Her Majesty The Queen to the newly-elected Members of the Scottish Parliament in Holyrood's main chamber.

Presiding Officer Tricia Marwick MSP said:- "The opening of Session Four of the Scottish Parliament is a chance for us to celebrate the efforts of genuine local heroes from across the country. I know these people have been truly inspirational to the MSPs who have nominated them and it gives me great satisfaction to extend this invitation and welcome to them."

The heroes nominated by the Presiding Officer and Deputy Presiding Officers are:

- Bob Nicolson who is an active fundraiser in the local community. He has raised funds and run a collection of items for troops in Afghanistan, including 'Help for Heroes' and

hospitals which care for injured military personnel and veterans. (Nominated by Presiding Officer Tricia Marwick MSP)

- Mary McGhie runs a nightly soup kitchen offering free meals to the homeless in her home town of Coatbridge. (Nominated by Deputy Presiding Officer Elaine Smith MSP)

- James Cameron who volunteers at his local Ayrshire Hospice and is President of the Alloway Rotary Club. (Nominated by Deputy Presiding Officer John Scott MSP)

The Riding will be themed to reflect the sentiments of the Parliament's Mace: Wisdom, Justice, Compassion and Integrity – representing the aspirations of the Scottish people for the Members of their Parliament.

For a full list of all the local heroes and their MSP, please go to the Parliament's website.

The Fourth Session of the Scottish Parliament will be marked on Friday 1 July. In the Chamber, Her Majesty The Queen will address newly elected Members of the Parliament and guests.

Following the departure of The Queen, the Riding will take place along Edinburgh's Royal Mile, marking the centuries-old Scots tradition. Local heroes will be in the Riding.

The Riding will then be followed by an open afternoon of free entertainment at Holyrood. Musical performances in the Parliament will be part of an eclectic roster of youth choirs and orchestras from across Scotland along with pipers, drummers and traditional Scottish musicians.

This includes: Crayons, from Fife; French Wives and The Imagineers, from Glasgow; Maydays, from Caithness; and White Heath, from Edinburgh.