

Five things you need to know today



**Foodies Festival – Book Festival – Parliament Exhibition –
Edinburgh Reporter Radio – Time for a Super Hoyway?**

The Foodies Festival starts today at 10.00 in Inverleith Park for the next three days, and aims to bring the best of Scotland's food and drink to you. [Here is the website](#) for more details.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival starts tomorrow. Whether you're concerned about suffering from Olympic withdrawal symptoms, or have had enough sport to last you a lifetime, the Edinburgh International Book Festival, which starts this weekend, could have the solution. With over 800 authors, poets, journalists, politicians and commentators from 44 different countries, the Book Festival offers an event to suit every mood.

If you're looking for more sporting action, enjoy journalist Richard Moore talking about *The Dirtiest Race in History*, the notorious 1988 Olympic mens 100 metre final, or Chris Cleave discussing his novel, *Gold*, the story of two world-class athletes on the eve of the London Olympics, or biochemist Professor Chris Cooper exploring the moral, ethical and political issues of the science behind drugs in sport. Father and son TV Presenter Geoffrey and Ben Beattie join together to discuss the unique pleasures of running.

If sport isn't your thing, try 2012 Man Booker Prize nominees

Ned Beaman, with his book *The Teleportation Incident*, and Michael Frayn who brings *Skios*, his farcical and sharp new novel. Pat Barker launches *Toby's Room*, her long awaited sequel to *Life Class* and London MP David Lammy looks back to this time last year when his constituency was ablaze in the 2012 riots. Comedian Russell Kane reads from his first book, *The Humorist*, and Scottish actor John Gordon Sinclair launches his debut novel *Seventy Times Seven*.

The future of Scotland is a theme which runs through the Book Festival this year. Former PM Gordon Brown will speak for the first time in public on the subject on Monday 13 August, while his Chancellor Alistair Darling, who now heads up the Better Together Campaign, speaks on Friday 24 August. On Sunday 12 August former Scottish First Minister Henry McLeish is joined by SNP veteran Paul Henderson Scott to discuss their views.

The Book Festival also welcomes a number of major international authors who are bringing their work to the UK for the first time. Dutch actor Herman Koch launches his European bestselling novel *The Dinner*, while Sweden's Sven Lindqvist discusses his classic novel *The Myth of Wu Tao-tzu* which has never been out of print since it was first released in 1967 and is now published in English for the first time. The 2011 Man Asian Prize Winner Kyung Sook Shin flies in from South Korea to talk about her haunting tale of an elderly mother who loses her family while David Bellos looks at the challenges in translating everything from literary fiction to Asterix.

The 2012 Edinburgh World Writers' Conference, an ambitious programming partnership between the Book Festival and the British Council, is bringing 50 authors from around the world to discuss the importance of fiction in a modern society with the Book Festival audience in Charlotte Square Gardens. Egyptian author, Ahdaf Soueif, opens the event with a talk on whether literature should be political on Friday 17 August.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival runs from Saturday 11 August to Monday 27 August. Tickets are still available for events across the adult and children's programme, and full details of all events can be found at www.edbookfest.co.uk.

'Special Delivery' Opens at Scottish Parliament

The only two original letters with a direct link to William Wallace have gone on display at the Scottish Parliament in a new exhibition.

On public display are a 700-year-old letter about William Wallace from the French King Philip IV and the famous Lübeck Letter, issued by Wallace and Andrew Moray as Guardians of Scotland after the Battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297.

The exhibition, entitled 'Special Delivery: The William Wallace Letters', runs until Saturday 8 September as the letters' age and fragility mean they can only be shown for a short period of time.

Audio-visual screens and panels in the exhibition display help to tell the story of William Wallace and the struggle for power that took place across Europe in the early 1300s. They include work by seven Scottish school classes and two Dovecot Studios tapestries.

Speaking as the exhibition opened, the Presiding Officer Tricia Marwick MSP said:

"While centuries have passed since the letters were written, this time in history clearly continues to excite, inspire and inform people today. Placing these two items of history in a contemporary setting like Holyrood helps bring Scotland's history to life. Seeing them together in Scotland like this is rare, a once in a generation opportunity, and one I hope our thousands of visitors will enjoy."

Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop said:

“This exhibition is of tremendous importance and I am delighted that the people of Scotland will have the opportunity once more to discover the story of Scotland’s legendary hero.

“These two rare and fragile documents are some of the only few surviving artefacts with a direct link to William Wallace and are a fascinating fragment of our nation’s history.

“I am proud that the Wallace letter will now remain in Scotland on a longer term basis and It is particularly exciting that the exhibition coincides with the first ever International Culture Summit, giving Culture Ministers and delegates from around the world the opportunity to see the Wallace letters and gain an insight into Scotland’s rich culture and heritage.”

George MacKenzie, Keeper of the Records said:

“There are only two surviving documents with a direct link to Scottish hero William Wallace and neither is kept in Scotland. It’s hugely exciting to show them together in the Scottish Parliament and let people experience these unique, 700 year old objects.”

Oliver Morley, Keeper and Chief Executive of The National Archives in Kew, said:

“We are extremely pleased to have worked so closely with National Records of Scotland to enable another loan of this intriguing document, to be shown alongside the Lübeck letter in this exhibition, giving the public a further opportunity to view both of these documents relating to William Wallace together.”

Dr Jan Lokers, Director of Lübeck City Archives, said:

“The Hanse town of Lübeck is very glad and proud to lend the so-called ‘Lübeck letter’ to the Wallace exhibition at the Scottish Parliament for the enjoyment of the Scottish people. As one of only two surviving documents inspired directly by William Wallace, this letter is one of the greatest treasures in the collections of the Archives of Lübeck. It also reminds us of the long history of European economic relationships during the times of the ‘Hanse’.”

This unique exhibition has been developed by the National Records of Scotland in partnership with the Scottish Parliament, The National Archives, Kew, and Lübeck City Archives.

The exhibition in the Main Hall of the Scottish Parliament is open until Saturday 8 September. (Please note: the Parliament is closed to the public on Sunday 12 – Tuesday 14 August inclusive).

Special events are also taking place at the Parliament including two historical sessions in the Parliament’s annual Festival of Politics, a Glow (Scottish schools’ intranet education tool) session and education workshops for schools visiting the exhibition.

We are having an Edinburgh Reporter Radio round table on Sunday at noon at Hemma on Holyrood Road. Come and join us and tell us what you have seen, what you would recommend and what you are going to see. [Last week’s discussion is here.](#)

Folowing the success of our cyclists at the Olympics the cycling lobby is growing to improve the lot of cyclists using our city streets. [The Edinburgh Guide](#) sets out the case for a Super HoyWay, particularly starting with Leith Walk where there is already £5.5m set aside for improvements to the

streets and pavements.