

Five things you need to know today



New Year's Honours – Edinburgh's Hogmanay – Corstorphine at Hogmanay – Fire caused by overheated wheat bag – Discounted tickets for White Christmas

Many notable Edinburgh people have been named in the honours just announced by the Cabinet Office of the UK Government.

Jennifer Cheyne who owns several hairdressing shops in the capital has been rewarded both for her hairdressing and charitable works with an OBE in the 2014 Honours List.

Here in Edinburgh we are familiar with the work of sculptor Antony Gormley who created the figures which for a time at least stood in the Water of Leith. He has been recognised in the 2014 New Year's Honours List with a knighthood. He also presented the use of the fourth plinth outside the National Gallery in London in Trafalgar Square for public art.

A knighthood has been announced for Professor Godfrey Palmer, Professor Emeritus, Heriot-Watt University; a world renowned food scientist and a life-long human rights activist, he was named among the 100 greatest black Britons.

Professor Adrian Bird Buchanan Professor of Genetics at the University of Edinburgh has also been knighted for services to science.

Dr Philip Rycroft who is from Dunbar has been honoured as Director General for the Deputy Prime Minister's office for services to the UK's devolved and coalition governments. Dr Rycroft was awarded the Companion of the Order of the Bath along with Dr Derek Feeley who was Director-General of Health

and Social Care at the Scottish Government before his recent move to the US.

CBEs have been given to Professor Alastair Fowler of Edinburgh University who has been recognised for his services to Literature and education, to Mrs Jayne Anne Gadhia CEO of Virgin Money and Professor Olivier Garden for services to Surgery at University of Edinburgh where he holds the Regius Chair of Clinical Surgery, also to Professor Harvey McGregor for services to law and education and to Professor Lesley Yellowlees who is the President of the Royal Society of Chemistry.

The honour of OBE has been bestowed upon Mrs Elaine Acaster who was Vice-Principal of Royal Veterinary College at the University of London, upon Owen Kelly the CEO of Scottish Financial Enterprise and on Edinburgh solicitor Keith Oliver who is chair of Cricket Scotland as well as a partner in HBJ Gateley Waring at Edinburgh's West End. An OBE has been awarded to Dr Graeme Purves who was latterly Chief Planner with the Scottish Government.

Dennis Dick has been awarded the honour of MBE for services to biodiversity, conservation and environmental sustainability in Scotland and a lifelong Girl Guide leader, Mrs Betty Findlater who lives in Linlithgow has been recognised for her services to the guiding movement in Scotland. Mrs Gladys Knight has been recognised for her services to literature and Dr Susan Loughlin for services to volcanology and Dr Heather McHaffie for services to the conservation of plants in Scotland. Flight Lieutenant James Douglas Scott is the Chairman of the Lothian and Borders Branch of the RAF Association and has been awarded the MBE for his voluntary service. Mrs Joan Slight is Services Manager for Historic Scotland and has been honoured for her work there and for voluntary service with the Girls' Brigade.

Mrs Anne Tait was the General Council Assessor for the University of Edinburgh and is recognised for her services to

education.

James Neilson works with the Seagull Trust Cruises and has been recognised as a Medallist of the Order of the British Empire.

And the same honour is bestowed upon Mrs Elizabeth Macdonald who works with the Medic 1 Trust and on Mrs Margaret Collinson for her voluntary work in Edinburgh, and Mrs Jeanette Barton for her services to Community Care while working with the Scottish Government.

We know that Edinburgh is the best place to be at New Year. Yesterday it was proved that some sporting megastars think it is too. Formula One Champion Mark Webber was clearly happy to be in the city, though it was a bit foggy on Arthur's Seat where he was enjoying an early morning run.

No Edinburgh isn't on fire... Fog!! Early run in the hills..#slippery #mud #rabbits pic.twitter.com/kqPYPkbD61

– Mark Webber (@AussieGrit) [December 30, 2013](#)

Later he joined with many others to take part in a torchlight procession to Calton Hill:-

Cracking night here in Edinburgh, 30,000 people cruising the streets... [#friendly](#) [#carrying](#)-flames pic.twitter.com/bTSgNWanCk

– Mark Webber (@AussieGrit) [December 30, 2013](#)

Edinburgh's Hogmanay, produced by Unique Events on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council, launched three days of celebrations for its 21st anniversary last night with a

spectacular Torchlight Procession through the centre of the historic city. A crowd estimated at an amazing 35,000 including a sell out 8,500 torch carriers, were led by 26 Up Helly Aa' Vikings from Shetland and 6 pipe bands with over 100 pipers to the bonfire and a spectacular Son et Lumière display on Calton Hill. The audience enjoyed an exclusive preview of the 2014 Homecoming Hogmanay fireworks and light displays of saltires in the sky which can be seen again at 20:14hrs tomorrow night in Edinburgh and also in Inverness and Stirling, and at 12.30am in Stonehaven to welcome 2014, Scotland's Big Year and the year of Homecoming Scotland.

The event experienced record pre-sales of torches this year, and 8,500 torches, the largest number ever, were all sold out before the start of the procession.



Photo by Grant Ritchie

Pete Irvine, Festival Director of Edinburgh's Hogmanay said:- "It's great to start the three days of Edinburgh's Hogmanay with such a fantastic crowd for the Torchlight Procession. What better way to launch the Year of Homecoming Scotland 2014. We like to think that Edinburgh's Hogmanay puts Scotland once again at the centre of the world map, and that the experiences that you will enjoy here are because you are in a beautiful city and in the best possible company – the famously friendly Scots. We look forward to welcoming 2014 by linking celebrations taking place across Scotland."

Celebrations continue today with the world famous Street Party, for which tickets are still available at the official box office, The Fringe Office, 180 High Street, Edinburgh which is open until 9.00pm. Tickets for the Concert in the Gardens, The Keilidh and The Candlelit Concert at St Giles' Cathedral are all sold out. The Loony Dook on Wednesday 1st January at South Queensferry is also sold out, but spectators are welcome, and Scot:Lands, which will be taking

place at venues across the Old Town from 12.00pm on Wednesday 1st, is free and unticketed.

Hogmanay 11.45pm Ringing of the Bells in Corstorphine.

“Join us on the village green opposite the Community Centre, Kirk Loan for a giant Auld Lang Syne to the sound of the pipes – everybody welcome.”

Firefighters were called to Priorwood Court in Melrose in the early hours of Sunday morning after a microwaveable wheat-filled bag started a fire in a bedroom.

A crew from Galashiels were mobilised by Operations Control Edinburgh and on arrival put the fire out with a CO2 extinguisher. The heat from the wheat bag had set fire to a small area of the electric blanket.

An elderly woman was given oxygen therapy at the scene by paramedics.

A spokesperson for The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service said:-
“Overheated wheat bags can smoulder for hours and then catch alight. These bags are popular especially among the elderly but can be dangerous if not used properly. We are urging users to always follow the manufacturer’s instructions carefully and to ensure a wheat bag is not heated in a microwave for too long, or at too high a temperature.”

When using a wheat bag please follow these simple safety rules:

- Always buy wheat bags with clear heating instructions as per the British Standard – and follow those instructions carefully.
- Don’t use wheat bags or heat packs as bed warmers – only use for direct application to the body.

- Never overheat a wheat bag and do not use if any signs of a smell of burning or charring.
- Ensure the microwave turntable turns freely with the bag on it and is not obstructed.
- Never leave the bag in a microwave unattended when heating.
- Never reheat the bag until it has completely cooled – which could be up to two hours.
- Leave the bag to cool on a non-combustible surface such as a kitchen sink.

We all know older people who are at risk from fire – it could be a grandmother, aunt, friend or neighbour. Join Scotland's Fight Against Fire. If you, or someone you know, is at risk from fire, contact us now."

Call 0800 0731 999, visit www.firescotland.gov.uk or talk to your local firefighters.

To celebrate the New Year, and the last few performances of the smash-hit **Irving Berlin musical [White Christmas](#)**, The Festival Theatre is offering you the chance to get your hands on £15 tickets to see this spectacular show before it ends this Saturday.

Starring **Graham Cole** (*The Bill*), **Steven Houghton** (*Coronation Street, London's Burning*) and **Wendi Peters** (*Coronation Street*), this all-singing all-dancing musical is brimming with hits like **Blue Skies**, **Happy Holidays**, **Sisters** and of course **White Christmas**.

SPECIAL OFFER:

£15 STALLS TICKETS for 2, 3 & 4 January 7.30pm performances. There are a limited number of £15 tickets available to the first lucky bookers (usual price up to £43).

To claim your special rate tickets visit or call the Box Office on 0131 529 6000 and quote "White Christmas NEW YEAR

OFFER”

or [book online](#) now with Promotional Code NEWYEAR