

Five things you need to know today



Edinburgh has a new Makar – Fundraising for It's Good to Give – Craigmillar Festival 2014 – Ride of the Lions – Bees colonising Holyrood

The Scottish Capital's new poet, the Edinburgh Makar, was inaugurated yesterday afternoon at a special reception within the City Chambers.



Christine De Luca, who in May was announced as the fourth writer to be nominated for the prestigious post, follows in the footsteps of previous Edinburgh Makar Ron Butlin to become Edinburgh's version of the Poet Laureate.

A highly respected poet and author, Christine was born in Shetland but has lived in Edinburgh since the late 1960s. An inscription of her name has been added to the Edinburgh Makars' plaque in City Chambers, which also bears the names of the three writers who have held the office to date: Stewart Conn (Makar from 2002 to 2005), Valerie Gillies (Makar from 2005 to 2008) and Ron Butlin (Makar from 2008 to 2011, and reappointed from 2011 to 2014).

The Edinburgh Makar is a civic post instituted in 2002 by the City of Edinburgh Council. The writer is selected and nominated by representatives of the Scottish Poetry Library, Scottish PEN, The Saltire Society, Edinburgh City of Literature Trust and the Council.

The meaning of the Scots word Makar stresses the role of the

poet or author as a skilled and versatile worker in the craft of writing. Edinburgh has always been a literary city, and to celebrate the importance of writers in the Capital the Council continues to show its commitment to the promotion of writers and literary projects, which enhance Edinburgh's international reputation, including the post of the Edinburgh Makar.

Councillor Richard Lewis, Culture and Sport Convener, said: "Christine De Luca is an accomplished and prize-winning poet who writes in both English and Shetland dialect, which includes elements of old Scots and Norse.

"She is the latest addition to an illustrious group of writers who have filled this exciting role over the last decade, each benefiting the city with their talent, and I thank the fantastic Ron Butlin for the passion and spirit he brought to the role.

"Christine is an excellent choice, and I am sure she will inspire a great many people during her term as Edinburgh Makar."

[Christine De Luca](#) said: "I feel amazed and apprehensive, 'shaken and stirred'. All three previous Makars have shaped the role and graced it. I just hope I can rise to the challenge."

Ron Butlin said: "Being Edinburgh Makar for the last six years has been a great honour and a real pleasure. I am delighted that Christine de Luca will be my successor. A fine poet and lovely woman, she will be an excellent Makar!"

Emma Hay and Malcolm Comerford will be walking the seven hills of Edinburgh today. They expect it will take them about 4 or 5 hours to complete the 14 mile trek for the local charity It's Good 2 Give. You can read more and make a donation to the cancer charity by [clicking here.](#)



Roger Baird, a former Scotland and Lions player has been cycling from Twickenham by way of the Millennium Stadium and the Aviva Stadium in Dublin along with other former stars of these pitches in the Ride of the Lions.

The Ride of the Lions will arrive at Murrayfield today about 3.30 or so after a cycle of about 1000km . You can follow their progress on Twitter [here.](#)

The Edinburgh Reporter interviewed Roger a couple of weeks back

The Scottish Parliament became the first legislature in the UK to have beehives when two were installed earlier this year. The bees are now ready for their new homes.

Presiding Officer, the Rt Hon Tricia Marwick MSP said:-“The Scottish Parliament has welcomed many guests and visitors but there has been a special buzz around the bees.

“Since we announced we would become the first Parliament in the UK to have its own beehives, the enthusiasm and level of interest from Members, staff and visitors has been astonishing. We are looking forward to trying the first batch of honey which will hopefully be ready later this year.”

Paul Holmes, Chair of Kelvin Valley Honey said:-“Being the first of the UK’s four legislatures to welcome honey bees into its midst shows remarkable foresight and demonstrates in very real and practical ways the Scottish Parliament’s commitment to the nation’s environment.

“This is a wonderful opportunity for Scotland’s law makers to observe at first hand the work of these amazing insects and the vital contributions that they make to our everyday lives, the environment and Scotland’s economy.

“Having honey bees at its heart not only benefits the Parliament but, through increased levels of pollination, also benefits the wider Edinburgh environment, most especially the city’s green spaces, parks and gardens by as much as two and a half miles around it.”

Ironically, the variety of bee at the Parliament will be the Buckfast Bee which is known for its calm temperament and productivity.

Mr Holmes added:-“People may well think the association is quite funny but it is a great variety. The bees are calm, acclimatised to the Scottish climate and are prolific honey producers and will be a very welcome addition at Holyrood.”