

Five things you need to know today



Last chance to become a Board Member with Bield

Nelson Mandela International Day

BIG ANNOUNCEMENT AT 9.00am today

'McIlvanney and Massie in Conversation'

Yoga Mix

Bield, Scotland's leading social care and housing provider, is looking to recruit new voluntary Board Members who share their passion in helping older people to live fulfilled and independent lives.

The Edinburgh-based organisation believes the opportunity provides the chance for individuals to gain important learning and development skills, as well as knowing they are making a real difference to the lives of Scotland's older people.

[Read more here](#)

Nelson Mandela's birthday was 18 July and is now designated Nelson Mandela International Day. People are asked across the world to offer 67 minutes of voluntary service to their own community to help change the world.

You could help by donating books for children in South Africa.

Today ACTSA Scotland (Action for Southern Africa) is asking

people to use their 67 minutes to sort out and bring us children's books to be sent to school libraries in Nelson Mandela's home Province of Eastern Cape, with which Scotland has a particular link.

What are needed are children's books of all kinds, in English, to encourage reading for fun. This helps to develop fluency in reading English which is vital for all parts of the children's education. (Their mother tongue is mainly Xhosa, but education is mostly in English). Story books or factual books, for all ages from pre-school to teenagers, are welcome – Books that will amuse, absorb, inform and catch the imagination of young readers.

They must be in good condition, please – no loose or taped up pages, or badly damaged covers, and factual books should not be too out of date.

On and around 18th July a number of collection points in towns and cities across Scotland will again be open to receive donations of books, including public libraries in Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Renfrewshire, some trade union premises, and the office of Cathy Jamieson, MP at 32 Grange St., Kilmarnock KA1 2DD. Offers of premises for further collection points are welcome. Check the website or contact ACTSA Scotland at the addresses below to ask about these locations, or to make other arrangements for your books to be delivered or collected.

Enquiries to ACTSA Scotland, 52, St. Enoch Square, Glasgow G1 4AA

E john.nelson@actsascotland.org.uk Website
<http://mandeladayscotland.org/>

There will be a BIG ANNOUNCEMENT here at 9.00am.

It will have connections to wellies, bananas and big laughs.....

Of course if you are visiting after 9.00am Friday 18 July you will know all about it!

Did you know that you can sign up to our daily email which will bring you all the news in your inbox at 7am each morning?

That would help you keep up to date! [Sign up on the right hand side of this page here.](#)

Writers Allan Massie and William McIlvanney to discuss their differing perspectives on independence at a special event marking 50 days until referendum day.

Two new pamphlets by leading Scottish writers inspired by the 2014 independence referendum are published today (18th July 2014), two months to the day until Scottish voters go to the polls to determine Scotland's future. The publications are the latest in an ongoing programme of Saltire Series Pamphlets, commissioned by non-political independent charity the Saltire Society.

One pamphlet, entitled 'Nevertheless', makes the case for a No vote in the September poll and is the handiwork of prominent journalist and writer Allan Massie. The other pamphlet, 'Dreaming Scotland', authored by the novelist and poet William McIlvanney sets out his own reasons for voting Yes.

The two writers will be in conversation with one another at a special event to be hosted at the Central Hall in Edinburgh at 7.30pm on Wednesday the 30th July and chaired by Robyn Marsack of the Scottish Poetry Library, marking exactly 50 days until the historic vote takes place.

Massie has written almost 30 books, including 20 novels and won the Saltire Society Scottish Book of the Year award for his 1989 novel *A Question of Loyalties* about Vichy France.

Arguing the case for Scotland to remain part of the United Kingdom, Allan Massie's Pamphlet concludes:

"It is, for me, a matter of self-confidence. If you feel the lack of that, you will vote for independence. If you feel confident of Scotland's ability to remain Scottish and prosper in the Union, you will agree that we are indeed Better Together and vote "no". The Unionist says, I am Scottish. Nevertheless I am also British, and value the Union with England, "our sister and ally", as [Sir Walter] Scott called her."

William McIlvanney is also a past winner of the Saltire Society Scottish Book of the Year award for his 1996 novel *The Kiln* and has been previously described by none other than Allan Massie as 'the finest Scottish novelist of our time'.

Setting out his reasons for voting in favour of independence, McIlvanney writes:

"Politically, Scotland's like a living entity which has been cryogenically frozen and stored within the UK for over 300 years. Isn't it time to come out of history's deep-freeze and explore for ourselves who we really are? Whatever that reality turns out to be, let's confront it. It's time to grow up and take full responsibility for ourselves. A yes vote would do that."

Saltire Society Executive Director Jim Tough said:

"Much of the political debate around the referendum has rightly been focused on practical questions and the economic case for and against. We wanted to provide an opportunity for some more philosophical thought to be given to the question. Hence we asked two of Scotland's contemporary writers, each bringing an alternate perspective, to contribute these thoughtfully argued pieces. We wanted personal reflections rather than polemics. I think they dig that bit more deeply into what motivates people to vote one way or the other at a

more instinctive level. Both pamphlets also offer some fascinating insights into the way history has shaped the Scotland we live in today – and who we are as modern Scots.”

Tickets for the ‘McIlvanney and Massie in Conversation’ event as well as both limited edition Pamphlets (‘Nevertheless’ by Allan Massie and ‘Dreaming Scotland’ by William McIlvanney) can be purchased from the Saltire Society offices or through the Saltire Society website: www.saltiresociety.org.uk.

The newest kids on the block in yoga terms in Edinburgh are John and Amanda who are stirring things up at Yoga Mix. Here they are below in fairly advanced yoga positions. We don't think their beginners class starts with this!

Have a look at their website here or give them a call on 07587476016 to book a class at either Ronde Bicycle Outfitters in Stockbridge or The Granary in Leith.



Our photo today was taken from Camera Obscura and World of Illusions – thank you for the use of your roof terrace!