

Donations of audio books help Polish blind children learn English

Edinburgh author, Alexander McCall Smith, has made donations of his audio books to help blind and partially sighted Polish children who are learning English.

Bridget Stevens, lives in Edinburgh and works as an audio describer of live theatre, helping visually impaired members of the audience follow what is going on on the stage. She explained how the donations came about. She said: "A few years ago Edinburgh author, Alexander McCall Smith, happened to hear about voluntary work which I do with blind and partially sighted people. He invited me round to his house for a chat about how he might help.

"I came away with two large bags full of his books, including in large print and audio format, and similarly generous gifts have followed regularly ever since.

"One of the lucky recipients of his largesse is a young blind woman called Katarzyna Jakimczuk, known as Kasia. She currently lives in Edinburgh, but makes frequent visits back to her home in Poland. She recently took the audio books to a school in Krakow where blind children are learning English.

"Mr McCall Smith was delighted to hear this and, after his recent talk at the Edinburgh International Book Festival, he presented Kasia with a copy of his latest book. He has also

promised that more audio books for the blind schoolchildren will follow.”

Sir Alexander McCall Smith, the well known Edinburgh author of the Ma Ramotswe series, *The No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency*, among many other best sellers, said: “I am delighted to support this good cause. Audio books are very useful if you are learning a language and want to be entertained at the same time.”

Mr McCall Smith appeared at The Edinburgh International Book Festival to talk about his new series, *The Perfect Passion Company*.



Kasia with Alexander McCall Smith and Bridget Stevens