

24 August 2007

**Award winning children's illustrator
to visit Western Isles' primary schools**

Ross Collins, one of Britain's most creative illustrators and authors, is to visit 13 primary schools across the Western Isles from 18 - 21 September to encourage children to get excited about reading, writing and, of course, illustrating.

The whirlwind tour – his first to the Western Isles – gets off to a flying start on the Isle of Lewis where he will be visiting Sandwick, Breascleite, Knock and Uig primary schools on Tuesday 18th. The interactive sessions will feature book readings, and pupils will learn how Ross creates the illustrations that bring stories to life.

The following day looks set to be just as busy when Ross will head for Harris to visit Sir Edward Scott, Leverhulme Memorial, Clisamol, Shelibost and Scalpay schools.

Balivanich primary on Benbecula and Daliburgh primary on South Uist are scheduled for 20 September. On the 21st Ross will be making a stop on North Uist to make sure that the pupils of Paible Primary don't miss out before concluding the tour back on South Uist at Iochdar primary on the Friday afternoon.

Pupils are bound to be enthralled by Collins' visit. The Glasgow-based illustrator has a celebrated career in the world of children's literature and has won awards worldwide for his achievements.

Much loved books include 'Alvie Eats Soup' which he wrote and illustrated, and for which he subsequently won an Oppenheim Award in America. Another - 'The Elephantom' - has been nominated for the 2007 Kate Greenaway Medal, a prestigious award for outstanding illustration for children and young people.

The tour has been arranged by Scottish Book Trust, Scotland's national agency for readers and writers, as part of the Scottish Friendly 'Words on Wheels' touring programme, which aims to provide access to book related activities and promote a love of reading across Scotland, particularly in rural and remote areas.

Jasmine Fassl of the Scottish Book Trust, said: "This is a rare opportunity for the children to meet and learn from one of Scotland's most exciting creative talents".

Calum Bennie, marketing manager at Scottish Friendly added: "This programme is a stimulating environment in which children can find out how fun reading and writing can be. We are immensely proud of what Ross Collins' tour will bring to the young pupils of the Western Isles' primary schools".

Tour Schedule

Tuesday 18 September

AM

Sandwick Primary

Isle of Lewis

Visiting school:

Knock Primary

Isle of Lewis

PM

Breasclete Primary

Breasclete

Visiting school:

Uig Primary

Isle of Lewis

Wednesday 19 September

AM

Sir Edward Scott Primary

Tarbert, Harris

Visiting schools:

Clisamol Primary

Amhuinnsuidh, Harris

Scalpay Primary

Isle of Scalpay, Harris

PM

Leverhulme Memorial Primary

Leverburgh, Harris

Visiting school:

Shelibost Primary

Shelibost, Harris

Thursday 20 September

AM

Balivanich Primary

Benbecula

PM

Daliburgh Primary

South Uist

Friday 21 September

AM

Paible Primary

Bayhead, North Uist

PM

Iochdar Primary

South Uist

Notes to Editors:

- Ross Collins credits his childhood love of illustrated books as the inspiration for his career.

- The Scottish Friendly ‘Words on Wheels’ Touring Programme, organised by Scottish Book Trust, has been running since 1998. It tours throughout Scotland’s urban, rural and remote communities
- The Scottish Book Trust is funded by a range of businesses and organisations including Scottish Arts Council, Scottish Friendly Assurance, Arts & Business, Scottish Executive, Standard Life and The Royal Mail.
- It aims to support literacy initiatives and provide access to book related opportunities for all. SBT’s projects and events programmes include Live Literature Scotland, Words on Wheels Touring Programme and BRAW Books, Reading and Writing. To find out more about our organisation visit www.scottishbooktrust.com
- Scottish Friendly is one of the UK’s leading friendly societies, providing Child Trust Fund accounts, tax-free savings plans, ISAs, investment plans and term assurance to savers throughout the UK. For more information please visit www.scottishfriendly.co.uk

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