

PHOTOCALL INVITATION / NEWS RELEASE

2 February 2007

Glasgow author to visit Aberdeenshire schools - Words on Wheels book tour kicks off on Tuesday -

Julie Bertagna, the award-winning Glasgow-based author, is to tour six Aberdeenshire secondary schools next week in a bid to encourage pupils to develop a love of reading.

She will be discussing her latest novel, *Zenith*, a cautionary ecological tale which follows the adventures of 16-year-old Mara in a world devastated by people's misuse of the planet.

The tour kicks off at Banff and Turriff academies on Tuesday 6th February, moving on to Fraserburgh and Ellon on 7th and finishing up at Banchory and Inverurie on the 8th.

The tour has been organised 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 literacy across Scotland, particularly in rural and remote areas.

After an early career as a teacher and freelance feature writer for Scottish newspapers, Julie Bertagna has quickly established a reputation as an author of powerful fiction for young people. Her previous novel, *Exodus*, was shortlisted for the Whitbread Children's Book the Year.

Jasmine Fassl of the Scottish Book Trust said: "This is a great opportunity for pupils to meet a writer who is at the top of her game, creating high quality fiction on a topic that is very much on everyone's minds – the environment.

"Hopefully, Julie's reading will inspire pupils to develop a love of literature and perhaps even follow her example by taking up career in writing."

Calum Bennie, marketing manager at Scottish Friendly, added: "This programme is a great way to encourage interest in reading and writing. We are proud of our role in bringing the Words on Wheels tour to Aberdeenshire."

Note to Editors:

You are invited to send a reporter/photographer to attend any of the events (schedule below). However, please let us know in advance so that we can make suitable arrangements with the school.

Julie Bertagna - Tour Details

Tues 6th Feb

9.10 – 10.05

Isobel Turner
Banff Academy
Bellevue Road
Banff Tel: 01261 812591

2.30pm-3.30pm

Lesley Slater & Linda Bain
Turriff Academy
Victoria Terrace
Turriff 01888 563216

Wed 7th Feb

10am-11.30am
Elaine Robertson/Elsa Wade
Fraserburgh Academy
Dennyduff Road
Fraserburgh 120 pupils

2pm-3pm

Jan Murdoch
Schoolhill
Ellon Academy
80 pupils

Thurs 8th Feb

11am-12.15pm
Patricia Davidson
Banchory Academy
Schoolhill
Banchory 01330 823357
60 pupils 2nd years

2pm-3pm

Jill Florence
Inverurie Academy
Jackson Street
Inverurie
01467 621655

- The Scottish Friendly 'Words on Wheels' Touring Programme, organised by Scottish Book Trust, has been running since 1998. It tours top authors throughout Scotland's urban, rural and remote communities.
- Scottish Book Trust provides free, independent, quality advice and information for readers and writers and aims to support literacy initiatives and provide access to book related opportunities for all in Scotland. Its projects, activities and events programmes include Live Literature Scotland, Words on Wheels Touring Programme and BRAW - Books, Reading and Writing. It 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. Visit www.scottishbooktrust.com for further details.
- Julie Bertagna has written the following novels: Exodus, Zenith Spark Gap. Soundtrack and The Opposite of Chocolate. Visit www.juliebertagna.com for more details.
- 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

Media Enquiries

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