

First visit to Wales for Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour

Storyteller Mara Menzies to tour 11 schools



Mara Menzies, Kenyan/Scottish storyteller, writer and creative director of Toto Tales, will visit 11 primary schools as part of the Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour. From 24 – 28 May, Mara will visit around 1500 pupils from 14 schools including Trallwn Primary School, Portfield School and Castle Park Primary School.

The Children's Book Tour is supported by Scottish Friendly and organised by Scottish Book Trust, the national charity transforming lives through reading and writing. Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tours visit both primary and secondary schools, and have enthralled more than 100,000 children with visits from over 100 individual authors since they began in 1998.

For the first Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour in Wales, Scottish Book Trust has partnered with Book Trust Cymru to encourage schools to apply. As a result, almost 200 Welsh primary schools signed up for the tour.

Having spent the first 13 years of her life in Kenya, before moving to Scotland, Mara's storytelling draws on her rich dual heritage. She is the author of two children's books bringing African folklore to life; *Koko the Crocodile*, illustrated by Camilla Adams and *Starbird*, illustrated by Rachel Lemon.

Mara has recently been awarded Made in Scotland funding for *Blood and Gold*, her latest project exploring the legacy of colonialism and slavery, which will have its world premiere at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in August 2019.

During the Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour, Mara will work with both lower and upper primary school classes, and introduce storytelling to the pupils, explaining how stories are shared by heritage and that they exist all around us. There will be a chance for pupils to create their own stories during the interactive session.

Marc Lambert, CEO of Scottish Book Trust, said:

“We’re thrilled to be taking the Scottish Friendly Children’s Book Tour to Wales for the first time, and hosting Mara Menzies to share her stories. Mara’s storytelling is perfect for our first visit to Wales, a country rich with folklore and heritage.

“Mara’s events are sure to be engaging and thought-provoking for pupils, as well as inspiring the children to create their own stories and explore their own heritage.”

Mara Menzies said:

"It is such an incredible privilege to be able to share these extraordinary stories with the children of Wales. Storytelling is an interactive art form that requires the children get involved, and because it is fun, they do so whole heartedly. I really can't wait!"

Helen Wales, Head of BookTrust Cymru said:

"Sharing books and stories and experiencing the fun they can bring is so valuable for children’s imagination, creativity, wellbeing and education. The response to this project from schools in Wales has been overwhelming and shows how important it for children to have opportunities to meet authors and storytellers and to bring books and stories to life.

Children are looking forward to welcoming Mara and hearing her stories – as well as sharing some of their own from Wales."

Touring Dates

Monday 24 June

09:15AM – Trallwn Primary School, Swansea

13:00PM – Croeserw Primary School, Port Talbot

Schools also attending: Cymer Afan, Pen Afan and Glyncoirwg

Tuesday 25 June

10AM – Tenby Church in Wales VC Primary, Pembrokeshire

13:30PM – Portfield School, Portfield

Wednesday 26 June

09:30AM – Waunfawr Primary School, Crosskeys, Caerphilly

13:15PM – Hendre Infants School, Caerphilly

Thursday 27 June

09:15AM – Moorland Primary School, Cardiff



13:00PM – Ysgol Cwn Brombil, Port Talbot

Friday 28 June

09:30AM – Maindee Primary School, Newport

Schools also attending: Eveswell Primary

13:30PM – Castle Park Primary School, Monmouthshire

Notes to Editors

For all press queries, please contact Media Officer, Daisy Bartlett:

daisy.bartlett@scottishbooktrust.com or call 0131 524 0160.

About Scottish Friendly

Scottish Friendly, one of the UK's largest mutual life offices. At Scottish Friendly we believe saving and investing should be for everyone, which is why we offer a range of affordable investment and savings products to help individuals and their families achieve their financial goals.

Scottish Friendly has sponsored the programme for the past 20 years, touring some of the finest children's authors and illustrators including former Children's Laureate Chris Riddell,

Malorie Blackman, Michael Rosen, Jacqueline Wilson, Melvin Burgess, Steve Cole, Michael Morpurgo and Sophie McKenzie.

Scottish Book Trust

Scottish Book Trust is a national charity changing lives through reading and writing. We inspire and support the people of Scotland to read and write for pleasure through programmes and outreach work that include:

- Gifting books to every child in Scotland to ensure families of all backgrounds can share the joy of books at home.
- Working with teachers to inspire children to develop a love of reading, creating innovative classroom activities, book awards and author events.
- Supporting Scotland's diverse writing community with our training, awards and writing opportunities.
- Funding a range of author events for the public to enjoy and promoting Scottish writing to people worldwide.

In addition to the funding we receive from the Scottish Government and Creative Scotland, we need the constant support of trusts and foundations, corporate sponsors and individual donors.



www.scottishbooktrust.com
www.facebook.com/scottishbktrust

@scottishbktrust

