

Budding young authors to bring 'Jacobite Jess' to life

Children from around Loch Ness are being invited to put their thinking caps on and let their imaginations run wild as part of a prestigious writing competition launched by Jacobite Cruises this week.

The aspiring JK Rowling's will write about 'Jacobite Jess', Nessie's cousin. Jess has lost her memory and needs local children to help her re-discover her past. The Primary Six & Seven pupils have been set the monster challenge of writing an imaginative short story which will bring her past to life.

Children will learn about Loch Ness, the Great Glen Way and the Loch Ness monster as they set about creating their masterpieces.

As part of the project special heritage packs will be distributed to schools and professional story teller Andrew MacKintosh is visiting pupils. The heritage packs will help around 600 Primary 6 & 7 pupils learn more about Destination Loch Ness (DLN) the organisation championing World Heritage Status for Loch Ness and the Great Glen. Jacobite Cruises, as part of the Destination Loch Ness Group aiming for World Heritage Status, is organising and funding the competition.

John Bellshaw from Jacobite commented: "This is a really exciting project that is educational and fun on all levels. Writing a short story of Jess' life is a brilliant way for pupils to learn more about their heritage, Loch Ness and the Great Glen. They can use their local knowledge and creative talents in this unique way to celebrate their local heritage.

He added: "The response we have had from schools around Loch Ness has been overwhelmingly positive. There is so much enthusiasm for this project. Andrew will be visiting schools later this month to engage in story telling sessions with the pupils and spur their imaginations on as they get ready to put pen to paper."

Entries will be judged by a children's author, the Inverness Courier, Andrew MacKintosh and a representative from Jacobite Cruises.

Three prizes are being donated by Jacobite Cruises. The first prize is a £200 donation, a class cruise trip on Loch Ness and the winning entry being displayed in Eastgate Shopping Centre. Runners up will also receive a free class cruise. All winners will receive a Jess beanie toy as a lasting memento!

Invites to take part in the competition were issued to schools in August, which received an overwhelming response. Winners will be announced in October. For further information please phone Rebecca Somers at Weber Shandwick on 01463 716719 or rsomers@webershandwick.com

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