

*Happy Diwali*



*From Heartstone*

# *Invitation*

## *Heartstone Diwali Online*

*Monday, November 16th, 2020*

*1.45-3pm*

*From Foulis Castle*

*Special guests: Native American tribes - Sioux and  
Assiniboine, Crow and Blackfeet*

*In partnership with the Edinburgh Women's Interfaith Group*

At a time when the world is trying to cope with the impact of Covid-19, we hope you will join us on November 16th at 1.45pm for what should be a special and uplifting event to connect with the Indian festival of Diwali. This will be online and suited for age group 9-12.

Even if you have not yet read 'The Heartstone Odyssey', the book at the centre of Heartstone's Story Circle programme, you will find this event is a new way to connect people and celebrate what we have in common, in this case focussed on the environment we all share.

We have been working for the past year with the support of the Port of Cromarty Firth, the Munro Association and the Northern Meeting Charity on a project which highlights the landscapes, animals and plants to be found in the area of the north shore of the Cromarty Firth. Now, we have been able to use this starting point for what will be a unique connection between Native America, Scotland and India as described below. Our aim is to highlight the bond the people of different cultures have had with the natural world which surrounds them over many centuries and the role the natural world has played in their lives.

This project is about demonstrating the need to protect and preserve our environment, not just for ourselves but also for future generations and is the start of a cultural 'journey' as we progress to the UN Climate Change Conference, COP26, taking place in Scotland at the end of next year. As such, this will be the first of several similar Heartstone events which will take shape over the course of 2021 building up to the conference in November.

On the 16<sup>th</sup>, we will be opening from the special location of Foulis Castle in the Scottish Highlands, the ancestral home of the Munros, with Clan Chief Hector Munro and his wife, musician, Alpha Munro. Sitakumari will follow, as the dancer/storyteller for Heartstone, with a storytelling piece about Chandra, the heroine of The Heartstone Odyssey, and her encounter with Cura, the badger. Cura in Gaelic means 'guardian' and in this story, Cura is a guardian of the natural world. He has an additional special role. Some of you will have seen the tracks made by badgers, which they use at night to help find their way in the darkness. In this story, Cura uses the tracks to help the lost spirits of those left behind from the Land Clearances in Scotland cross the river safely and continue their journey into the next world.

What will make this event particularly interesting is the connection we have made with Native American tribes - the Sioux and Assiniboine, the Crow, Northern Arapaho and Blackfeet – for whom the badger also has a special place and thus represented through their own stories. We are still working on getting all the connections in place in time but the plan is for representatives from each of these famous tribes to present a story featuring the badger in their respective cultures.

Within the event, we will have a magical twilight candle / lantern ceremony to be led by the women of Edinburgh's Interfaith Group in Craigmillar Woodland Park, symbolising 'light from the darkness' and fitting with the theme of Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, which starts on Saturday November 14th.

Our event will therefore bring together and make connections between the people of Scotland, India and Native America in a unique way, cutting across faiths, nationalities, cultures and backgrounds to see a common humanity.

We hope you will be able to join us. The event is 'by invitation only' and password protected. Please contact us if you would like the link for this event which will be broadcast via Zoom or Microsoft Teams. For those of you who cannot join us on the day, let us know if you would like to have access to the recording which will be made.

**For further information, please contact:  
Sitakumari - Heartstone Director, 07835 367716**



Heartstone is a non-profit organisation based in Dingwall since 2000 which produces story - fiction, photodocumentary, historically based story - which we present through exhibitions, events, publications and online. All our stories have an underlying message - to see past prejudice and recognise a common human experience. Our Story Circle project reaches children and young people targeting age group 9-12 ie. cutting across transition between primary and secondary, and uses the stories to generate discussion and debate in the process developing literacy as well as critical thinking. You will be able to find out more about us at our website at [www.heartstonechandra.com](http://www.heartstonechandra.com). We have no political or religious affiliation and are funded by national and local government, trusts and charities, including most recently Police Scotland and Awards for All. We are supported by the Scottish Government's Health & Wellbeing Unit (Schools), BEMIS, UN Women and several other Scottish, national UK and international agencies.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE AN INVITATION TO THIS EVENT, PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW AND RETURN TO:**  
[alice@heartstone.co.uk](mailto:alice@heartstone.co.uk)

**I would like to receive an invitation for the Heartstone event at 2pm on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> November.**

Name of school/group: .....

Name of Story Circle leader:.....

Authority:.....

Email address: .....

Tel No:.....

**I cannot attend the event on November 16<sup>th</sup> but would like a recording of the event.**

Name of school/group: .....

Name of Story Circle leader:.....

Authority:.....

Email address: .....

Tel No:.....