



Thin Red Line Appeal

Press Release

17 July, 2018

£1M LOTTERY WIN FOR “MODERN AND EXCITING” NEW ARGYLLS MUSEUM

Plans to transform the much-loved Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum at Stirling Castle have been given a final go-ahead by The National Lottery, which has awarded the “modern and exciting” project funding of close to £1 million.

The award is the most significant boost to date for the Museum’s Thin Red Line Appeal, a fund-raising campaign under the patronage of HRH The Earl of Strathearn. The plan will improve the Museum’s ability to interpret and commemorate for modern visitors the history of one of Scotland’s great Highland regiments. Traditionally based at Stirling Castle, The Argylls have played a notable role in the history of Scotland and the United Kingdom since the Napoleonic Wars.

News of the Heritage Lottery Fund’s £973,000 award, which followed rigorous scrutiny of the Museum’s construction, exhibition and operating plans, gives Museum staff the green light to begin storing the Nationally Significant collection of militaria, art and artefacts in order for building work to start this autumn. The revamped Museum is set to re-open in summer of 2019, and visitor numbers are expected to exceed 250,000 per year when re-opened.

Lucy Casot, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, said: “This award marks a key change for The Argyll & Sutherland Museum. It will be transformed from a traditional military museum to one which engages visitors in a modern and exciting way as they learn about life as a soldier over the past 200 years.

“Thanks to players of the National Lottery, current cramped conditions will be replaced with bright, contemporary displays. Better access will allow many more people to visit ensuring a brighter future for The Argyll and Sutherland Museum and its important collections.”

News that the Museum project had received final National Lottery backing was hailed by the Museum’s partners who have responsibility for Stirling Castle, Historic Environment Scotland (HES).

HES and The Argylls have signed off a Partnership Agreement, fully integrating the Museum into this outstanding visitor attraction.

Thomas Knowles, Head of Grants at HES, said: "We're very pleased to be working in partnership with The Argylls Museum on their redevelopment project, and are delighted to welcome this funding from HLF.

"The links between Stirling Castle and The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders reach back through the centuries, and this exciting project will help tell this story and offer a new experience for visitors to the Castle."

The plans were also praised by the tourism authority VisitScotland. The agency already lists Stirling Castle as one of the most-visited sites in Scotland, with over 560,000 visitors a year.

Lord Thurso, VisitScotland Chairman, said: "It is exciting to see The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum at Stirling Castle receive this investment. The museum plays an important part in telling the military and the country's story to visitors from all over the world.

"Scotland's history and culture is one of the top reasons for visiting Scotland and Scotland's reputation as a quality destination relies on continued investment to ensure that current provision meets future demand. Tourism is the heartbeat of the Scottish economy, causing a ripple effect which touches every industry and community, creating employment and economic growth."

Colonel A K Miller, Project Director of the £4m Museum programme said: "After 6 years of developing our plans and much hard work by a small team, we are now in a position to deliver something very special in Stirling Castle.

"We are indebted to National Lottery players for their support, and I would like to acknowledge the roles played by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Environment Scotland in helping us reach this key milestone."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR TO ARRANGE INTERVIEWS CONTACT COLIN DONALD ON 07793 606901