

## **Press Release**

**Issued:** 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010

### **Title: Highlanders' Museum Receives Tremendous Funding Boost**

**Embargo:** None

**Synopsis:** Despite one of the worst recessions in living memory, one North charity has bucked the trend by having all of their requests for funding approved.

**Release:** The Highlanders' Museum has received over £120,000 to draw up exciting plans to upgrade all aspects of their museum. The money has been secured from a broad spectrum of Regional and National public agencies which have seen the potential of the Museum at Fort George. These include Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), the Heritage Lottery Fund, The Highland Council, and the Highland LEADER Programme.

The last time any significant physical work was done to the Museum was the early 1980s and as such it is now in need of refurbishment. This funding will be used to draw up detailed plans to upgrade the Museum to the very best 21<sup>st</sup> century standards.

The plans include the creation of a new Archive and Study Centre, new interactive exhibits, restoring the building which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument to its former glory, improved care for the collection, better disabled access equipment, and new display cases. The total costs for creating the exciting new facilities are currently estimated at £2million.

Chairman of The Highlanders Museum Development Committee is Major General Seymour Monro, who formerly commanded the Queen's Own Highlanders in Belfast and the Gulf. He said: "We are thrilled to have received such a broad base of endorsement and support from these hugely respected organisations. I think the reason we have been so successful is that we are a most deserving project that undertakes a wide range of work with the community, as well as our unashamedly ambitious plans to take this superb Museum up to the next level. These funds have got us off to a tremendous start."

Nicola Ewing, Senior Development Manager from HIE's Inner Moray Firth Team said: "The Highlanders Museum is one of HIE's account managed social enterprises and we are working with them to support them in their growth aspirations and development plans. Our commitment of £27,189 towards the design development phase of their project is one of the ways we have been helping them reach their true potential and grow their business."

Colin McLean, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland said: "HLF's development funding of £32,376 for The Highlanders Museum means the project has the potential to transform Fort George into a modern, engaging museum. We look forward to seeing the full proposals that come out of this development phase

which will then allow the Museum to compete for a much larger stage 2 HLF grant.”

Councillor Sandy Park, Convener of The Highland Council said: “The Highland Council recognises the importance of cultural activities, events and projects to the Highlands. The Highlanders Museum not only celebrates and helps to maintain our cultural heritage but it also assists the economic vibrancy of the region in helping to generate and sustain tourism.”

Martin Culbertson, Development Officer for the Highland Leader Programme said: “In approving The Highlanders Museum application for £30,567 the Rural Inverness Leader Group felt there was an obvious and clearly justified need for the works involved. The group noted that the proposed works would have major benefits for school pupils and students, together with professional researchers. The re-development work will also promote equal opportunities, both via physical access and through offering interpretation to visitors who do not speak English. The group were particularly impressed by the potential of the Museum as a national visitor attraction”

**--Ends--**

For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact: Peter Guthrie, Development Director, The Highlanders' Museum, Fort George, Near Inverness, 01667 460 466 or 07833 051 781. [www.thehighlandersmuseum.com](http://www.thehighlandersmuseum.com)

The Highlanders' Museum tells the history of the Highlanders Regiments for the last 230 years until the present day. It is home to the largest Regimental collection outside of London and attracts over 55,000 visitors per year. The Museum sits within Fort George which is a historic monument managed by Historic Scotland although the Museum operates as an independent charity.

Notes to Editor: **Picture shows left to right-**

**Lt Col Grenville Johnston, Lord Lieutenant of Moray, Queen's Own Highlanders Trustee.  
Cllr Jimmy Gray, Provost of Inverness, The Highlanders Museum Development Committee Member.**

**Maj Gen Seymour Monro, Chairman of The Highlanders Museum Development Committee.**

**Mr Michael Chowen, The Highlanders Museum Development Committee Member.**

**Mr Pete Guthrie, Development Director of The Highlanders Museum.**