



REVIEW
2013



National
Museums
Scotland



Michael Boyd



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We care for museum collections of national and international importance, presenting and interpreting them for a broad audience.

Our wealth of objects represents everything from Scottish and international archaeology to applied arts and design, from world cultures and social history to science, technology and the natural world.

We work with museums and communities across Scotland and beyond, introducing our collections to a much wider audience than can physically visit our museums, through partnerships, research, touring exhibitions, community engagement, digital programmes and loans.

National Museum of Scotland
National Museum of Rural Life
National Museum of Flight
National War Museum
National Museums Collection Centre



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An inspiring journey





We have achieved a great deal in recent years – the transformation and continued success of the National Museum of Scotland, innovative visitor engagement and new approaches to national and international working. Yet we have ambitions to do more, to build on this success and continue to move forward.

We are immensely proud of the success of the transformed National Museum of Scotland, now recognised as one of the world’s great museums. Over four million people have visited the museum in just two years, a remarkable achievement. Building on this, we have further ambitions for all of our four museums, with transformational opportunities ahead as we explore new ways to open our collections to audiences across Scotland and internationally.

Major developments continue to progress at a pace, with three significant capital projects now underway with support pledged by the Scottish Government and the Heritage Lottery Fund. The next stage of our Masterplan at the National Museum of Scotland will showcase our internationally important Science & Technology and Art & Design collections and engage new audiences. At the National Museum of Flight, we will restore two of our Second World War hangars, developing vibrant display spaces worthy of our extensive aviation collections. We are also safeguarding the future preservation of collections by creating centralised state-of-the-art storage facilities at the National Museums Collection Centre.

A key part of our continuing success has been to keep investing in new experiences for our visitors to enjoy, such as the critically acclaimed *Mary, Queen of Scots* exhibition. We were delighted to welcome 2.5 million visitors to our museums and 1.45 million visitors to our website in 2012–13.

As a consequence of the economic recession, there have however been tough choices to make about the services we can offer. Like many organisations in the public sector across the UK, we have seen a reduction in funding which resulted in the difficult decision to close the National Museum of Costume, near Dumfries. We are now delivering new outreach services in Dumfries and Galloway as well as progressing much wider national access to our fashion collections, with examples highlighted in this report.

Many of our achievements reflect engagement and collaboration with others and this is particularly evidenced by the work we do nationally and internationally. Our loans and research programmes demonstrate the calibre of our collections and helps secure recognition of Scotland’s role and impact. We also provide strategic support, knowledge and research to the museum community across Scotland, delivering wide-ranging impacts in all 32 local authority areas and through strategic partners.

We are delighted that the vision for our museums and collections continues to inspire many supporters. Generous funding awards, partnership support, sponsorship and the commitment of many individual donors and volunteers enables us to deliver projects that otherwise would not be possible. We give warm thanks to all of these supporters and hope that they will continue to help us on our future journey.

Bruce Minto, Chair
Dr Gordon Rintoul CBE, Director



Engaging audiences

We engage with a diverse audience, revealing the stories of our collections through inspiring exhibitions, great days out, digital experiences, and learning for all ages.

We were delighted to welcome 2.5 million visitors to our museums in 2012–13 to enjoy our collections and a dynamic year-round programme of events and exhibitions. In addition we welcomed 1.45 million visits to our website.

Through major international exhibitions we bring cultural treasures from around the world to Scotland and help tell the significant stories within our own collections. In summer 2012, *Catherine the Great: An Enlightened Empress*, in partnership with the State Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg, presented one of the world's most powerful rulers through the greatest collection of Russian treasures ever seen in the UK. This summer *Mary, Queen of Scots* enthralled over 60,000 visitors with a rich and detailed picture of one of the most famous figures in Scottish history. Showing only in Edinburgh, this exhibition drew on UK and international loans to create the most significant exhibition ever assembled on the topic. Both these exhibitions were made possible by the generous support of Baillie Gifford Investment Managers. Both attracted critical acclaim from cultural commentators, such as *The Independent* review for *Mary, Queen of Scots*: "Magnificent...if exhibitions could win the Booker, this would scoop it."

Exhibitions allow us to engage broad audiences in topics ranging from *Amazing Amber* at the National Museum of Scotland to *Arctic Convoys* at the National War Museum. Over 53,000 people enjoyed our *Vikings!* exhibition from the Swedish History Museum, while the Viking Training School, a linked online game aimed at primary school children, has been played over 30,000 times.

Our learning programmes are designed to foster excitement, enjoyment and discovery – over 216,000 people took part in 2012–13. We staged events in partnership with all of Edinburgh's Festivals at the National Museum of Scotland. The giant balloon sculpture 'Pisces' by New York artist Jason Hackenwerth (pictured right) helped generate audiences of 50,000 people during our Edinburgh International Science Festival programme. For the Edinburgh Art Festival we commissioned *The Library*, new work created in response to our geological collections by Glasgow-based artist Ilana Halperin, the first recipient of our Artist's Fellowship funded by Creative Scotland.

We also held over 20 large-scale event days across our museums, welcoming over 70,000 visitors. Highlights included the annual Airshow at the National Museum of Flight attracting 12,000 visitors, and a series of events at the National Museum of Rural Life, some linked to the Year of Natural Scotland, attracting 6,000 visitors.

Creative partnerships have inspired new audiences and critical acclaim. The RBS Museum Lates, innovative after-hours events, reached 12,000 young adults and secured an Arts & Business Sponsorship Award and a Scottish Event Award. We created the Museum Explorer, an iPhone app for the National Museum of Scotland, as a fun way for visitors to discover objects and share their experience. Capture the Museum, a team game based in the museum's galleries supported by a mobile app, won plaudits for its inventiveness and novel approach.

Right: Over 50,000 people enjoyed Edinburgh International Science Festival events at the National Museum of Scotland





1. The RBS Museum Lates, after-hours events for young people, have been a sell-out success
2. Getting up close to life on the farm at the National Museum of Rural Life
3. *Arctic Convoys* exhibition at the National War Museum
4. Digital programmes are engaging new audiences
5. 12,000 people attended the Airshow at the National Museum of Flight.





Extending our reach





1. Installing objects from our excavations at Birnie in Elgin Museum
2. Museum2Go touring learning resources
3. Footage of a working lace loom inspired young people to create a dance with Scottish Ballet at The Dick, Kilmarnock
4. Rock the Lab toured music festivals to reach new audiences

Through loans, outreach projects and digital channels, our collections are inspiring an ever-increasing number of people. We are also supporting other museums and venues reach new audiences.



Innovative ways to connect with audiences across Scotland were again at the forefront of our public and national delivery programmes in 2012–13. Rock the Lab was created in partnership with the Edinburgh International Science Festival with support from a Scottish Government Talking Science grant. Aimed at young adults who do not normally engage with science, a ‘science busking’ team toured music festivals from Dumfries and Galloway to the Highlands, reaching 2,000 participants and 30,000 digital followers.

Young people across Scotland are curating their own exhibitions inspired by our collections through the youth engagement programme Scotland Creates: A Sense of Place. Supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Creative Scotland, we have worked with partners including Scottish Ballet, Live Music Now and museums in Greenock, Dundee, Western Isles and East Ayrshire.

Over 1,700 primary school pupils across Scotland discovered more about Vikings through a very successful pilot sessions on Education Scotland’s GLOW TV, a live programme broadcast from the museum delivered to classrooms via the Scottish schools intranet. Pupils could see real objects up close and put questions directly to our experts. Museum2Go is a touring learning resource for teachers and pupils created with funding from the Robertson Trust and the Mickel Fund which extends the programme of 50,000 schools visits to our museums.

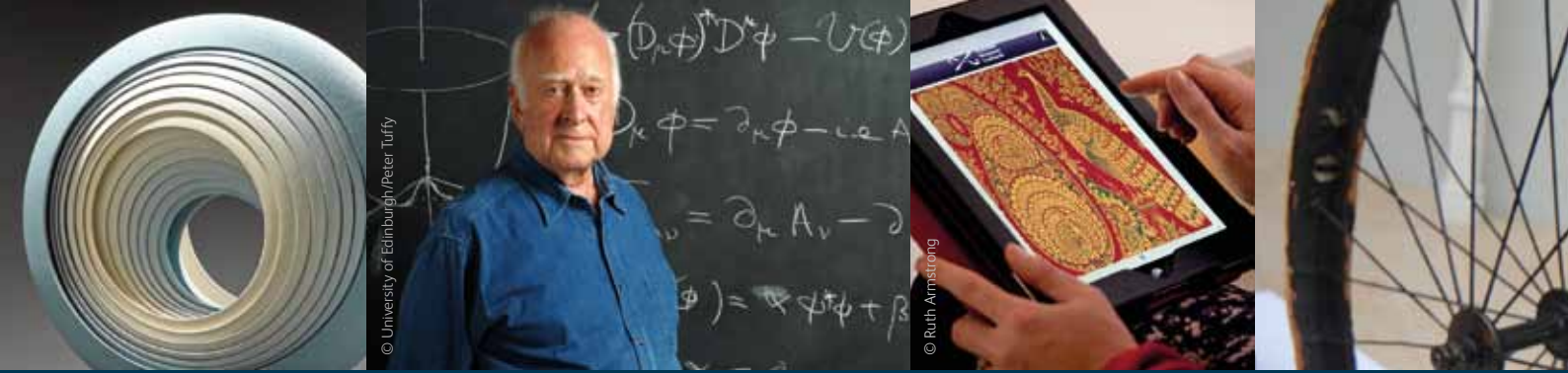
We created an award-winning outreach resource aimed at families with children under five in traditionally non-participative areas. This builds on our successful Magic Carpet storytelling programme at the National Museum of Scotland. The Magic Carpet resource is now loaned to nurseries and family groups across Edinburgh and the Lothians, and has inspired a similar project in Raploch, Stirling.

Our National Programme shows real evidence of what national and local museums can achieve by working together. Both National Museums Scotland and the British Museum are supporting the development of the £4.6m Lews Castle project in Stornoway. This partnership will give local people and visitors an opportunity to see internationally significant artefacts such as the Lewis Chessmen.

Loans of objects to local venues mean more Scots than ever can enjoy our collections. These include a range of silver treasures lent to the Aberdeen Art Gallery for *Silver – The Aberdeen Story* and personal items associated with Sir Walter Scott to display in the new visitor centre at Abbotsford, his home in the Scottish Borders.

We administer the National Fund for Acquisitions, a Scottish Government scheme, which enables regional museums, galleries, archives and libraries to make new acquisitions. In 2012–13, 81 grants were made to 33 organisations enabling the purchase of objects worth just under £500,000. For example, both Dundee Heritage Trust and Culture Dundee acquired items related to Captain Scott’s Antarctic expedition.

Left: Events across Scotland introduce our collections to new audiences



Investing for the future

We are investing in our museums and programmes to share our wealth of treasures in new ways and to safeguard the National Collections for future generations. Three major capital projects are underway.

The National Museum of Flight houses our aviation collections, one of the most significant in Europe. These range from one of only two remaining Vulcan bombers to have seen military action, a rare example of a Bristol Beaufighter, and British Airways' first operational Concorde. Collections are displayed in 1940s hangars, part of the East Fortune Airfield Scheduled Monument. A £3.6m project will restore two of these hangars and create vibrant new display spaces over the next few years.

The National Museum of Scotland continues to be a hugely popular and critical success after its £47m transformation, and we plan to build on this. We have an ambitious Masterplan for this site which is enabling us to rediscover and redisplay outstanding collections. In 2011, we revealed thousands of unseen objects from the natural world and world cultures. Yet other collections of international significance have equal potential. The next stage will showcase our Art & Design and Science & Technology collections, with ten new galleries being created through £13m of public and private investment. The magnificent tea service created for the Emperor Napoleon in connection with his marriage to Archduchess Marie Louise of Austria in 1810 and the Nobel Prize gold medal awarded to Sir James Black for the discovery of beta blockers and anti-ulcer drugs are two examples of the outstanding objects which will be displayed.

Fundraising is already underway for both the National Museum of Scotland and National Museum of Flight projects, underpinned by significant pledges from the Heritage Lottery





Michael Boyd

1. Stoneware sculpture by Matthew Chambers, acquired in 2011
2. Our *Hunting the Higgs Boson* display at the National Museum of Scotland in 2013 is a taster for the stories of scientific achievements which will feature in the new galleries
3. Digitising collections such as our Turkey Red printed cottons help reach new audiences
4. The world's first pneumatic tyre invented by John Boyd Dunlop in 1888
5. Sir James Black's Nobel Prize Medal for the discovery of beta-blockers and anti-ulcer drugs
6. Rare and historically important table carpet commissioned for Glamis Castle in 1618

Below: Inspiring new aviation displays are planned for the National Museum of Flight



Fund and private sources. In addition, the Scottish Government is supporting the National Museum of Flight development. If you would like to find out more, please contact the Development team on 0131 247 4095 or email development@nms.ac.uk.

Behind the scenes, we are also realising our long-term ambition to bring all our stored collections into one location: the National Museums Collection Centre. With support from the Scottish Government, objects are being moved out of inadequate buildings into new state-of-the-art facilities at the north Edinburgh site. With this phase due for completion in 2015, the aim is to improve the care of the National Collections and improve access for research, conservation and learning.

While these developments progress, we will create new Development Plans for our two other museums: the National Museum of Rural Life near East Kilbride and the National War Museum at Edinburgh Castle.

We are increasingly using digital media to complement visiting and as a tool to engage audiences who might never come to our physical sites. With a redeveloped website planned in 2013–14, we are investing in improving both our technology and user experience. A range of projects are also putting more collections online, such as the digitisation of 500 images of the Turkey Red printed cotton collection in partnership with the University of Edinburgh with funding from the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Scottish Government.



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1. Cultural events bring the world to Scotland
2. Christine Chow, First Lady of Taiwan, visiting the *Mary, Queen of Scots* exhibition
3. The Glenmorangie Research Project supports new insights into the Early Medieval period of Scottish history
4. School children celebrating the 200th anniversary of David Livingstone's birth

Below: Jimmy Mussa, Museums of Malawi, at a taxidermy workshop at the National Museums Collections Centre





On a world stage

Inspired by collections of international significance and our worldwide connections, we make an impact far beyond Scotland. Collaborations allow us to share knowledge, learn from others and make our treasures available to the widest possible audience.

The 2013 celebrations to mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of one of Scotland's most famous explorers, David Livingstone, inspired an innovative project to showcase and extend our collections and support museums in Africa. Funded by the Scottish Government, an 18-month project with the national Museums of Malawi has delivered a skills development programme for museum staff and the creation of a new display at the Chichiri Museum, Blantyre, Malawi. This followed our own popular David Livingstone exhibition at the National Museum of Scotland, which attracted 30,000 visitors.

Our partnership with Museums of Malawi illustrates clearly the approach we are taking to international strategic partnerships in areas where we have strong collections links, a commitment set out in our new International Strategy.

Offering objects on loan for exhibition overseas is an important way in which we can connect directly with audiences who might never visit our museums. We lent significant objects to venues such as the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, for their exhibition on the art and culture of the Late Shang Dynasty, and the Musée National de la Marine, Paris, for their exhibition on lighthouses. Loans to UK venues included a 17th century witch's iron collar and other objects associated with witchcraft to *Shakespeare: Staging the World* at the British Museum, as well as over 20 gold artefacts including Iron Age gold torcs, to *The Glory of Gold* at The Goldsmiths' Company, London, to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the London 2012 Olympic Games.

As our profile grows, we are welcoming many more diplomatic and museum delegations. In 2012–13 these included visitors from across Europe, Brazil, China, Japan, Russia, India, Africa, and Taiwan. As well as an active programme of presentations at conferences around the world, we are now a sought-after conference venue, with highlights from our own sector in 2012 including the Museums Association Conference, the largest gathering of UK museum professionals, and ARTEFACTS which brought together leading museums of science and technology across the Northern Hemisphere.

Our research programme, which produced 110 academic publications in 2012–13, demonstrates the scope, breadth and calibre of our collections to the wider world. A three-year Natural Environment Research Council grant will help us better understand the nature and importance of significant fossil finds from the Scottish Borders acquired with support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the National Museums Scotland Charitable Trust. Our partnership with The Glenmorangie Company supports the research and understanding of Early Medieval Scotland with the findings published in a well received book in 2012 and exhibited at the National Museum of Scotland in 2013–14.

We generated over 700 million opportunities to see, hear or read about National Museums Scotland, its sites and collections in the media in 2012–13. A major highlight was our collaboration with the BBC to present *Scotland: Rome's Final Frontier*. Shown on BBC Two, this programme reached 170,000 UK viewers.



With grateful thanks

We are extremely grateful to the many individual donors, trusts and foundations, and corporate supporters who have generously contributed to National Museums Scotland this year.

KEY FUNDERS

Scottish Government
The Heritage Lottery Fund

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Ellsworth G Stanton III

And all those who prefer to remain anonymous

If you would like to learn more about ways you can be involved and support our work, please contact our Development team on 0131 247 4095 or development@nms.ac.uk





Cover image and above detail: Exquisite gold enameled locket from the *Mary, Queen of Scots* exhibition, National Museum of Scotland

This review is also available in large print, in Braille and on CD.

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