New gallery for Staffordshire Hoard

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Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has announced it has awarded the venue £704,500 towards the creation of the gallery.

First objects from the Staffordshire Hoard went on temporary display at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery in September 2009, two months after the hoard was first discovered in a Staffordshire field. Objects from the hoard have been on continuous display at the venue since March 2010 and have attracted more than 590,000 visitors from all over the world since then. However, there is not currently a permanent gallery for the hoard at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.

The HLF award represents significant progress in the campaign to raise the funds needed to create a permanent gallery for the hoard. The proposed gallery will showcase approximately 300 items from the 7th century treasure trove and will interpret the story of the hoard and its context within Anglo-Saxon history and culture. Visitors will be able to immerse themselves in the story of the Staffordshire Hoard, from the creation and original use of the items within it to the thrilling story of its rediscovery and conservation.

The gallery - due to open in September 2014 - will also uncover the secrets of the jewellery-makers who crafted the exquisite pieces of the hoard with little more than simple tools. It will also uncover little-known trading routes between the UK and Eastern climes that carried the gold and garnets used in the pieces to our shores.

Simon Cane, Director Birmingham Museums Trust, said: "We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund is giving its support to this transformational project. The Staffordshire Hoard is our Tutankhamun; an internationally significant cultural and historical asset of such magnitude that it deserves the very best in its display. We at Birmingham Museums Trust are leading on the conservation of the hoard objects and continue our fundraising efforts to ensure the first, specifically designed and dedicated Staffordshire Hoard gallery becomes a reality."

Reyahn King, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund West Midlands, said: "The Staffordshire Hoard is of international significance, and for locals and visitors to have access to a new permanent display in Birmingham is fantastic news for both tourists and locals alike with the resulting investment it will bring to the city. We are delighted to see this project go ahead and look forward to this new gallery taking centre stage at BMAG soon."

The 3,500 piece Staffordshire Hoard is the largest and most valuable collection of Anglo-Saxon treasure ever discovered. The hoard is owned by Birmingham City Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and there are currently exhibitions of the treasure on display at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery in Stoke-on-Trent, Lichfield Cathedral and Tamworth Castle. The hoard was valued at £3.285m by independent experts meeting at the British Museum – the most valuable treasure discovery ever made. The fundraising campaign was led by the Art Fund, and featured a major donation from the National Heritage Memorial Fund. Over £900,000 was raised through public donations. Staffordshire County Council, Birmingham City Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Lichfield District Council and Tamworth Borough Council all made donations. For further information on donations visit the Staffordshire Hoard website.

Note to editors

Birmingham Museums Trust has been established to govern and manage the museum sites and collections owned by Birmingham City Council and Thinktank, Birmingham's Science Museum. The new independent organisation is focused on sustaining and developing key partnerships within the city and beyond, in order to deliver high quality, audience focussed museum services, and meet the needs of Birmingham communities as well as its wider audiences.

The establishment of Birmingham Museums Trust means that visitors to all venues can take advantage of even more educational and entertaining events and activities, ranging from arts and crafts to history and culture from around the world. Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery website.

Birmingham Museums have launched a free app called Birmingham Museums Quiz. The app can be played at Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery and Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum. Download Museums Quiz app.

Further information

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