HLF brings a sprinkling of fairy dust to Scotland’s



HLF announced grants totalling over £4.8million to projects celebrating Scotland’s heritage from the oldest cinema in continuous use to the protection of the iconic wildcat species.

Peter Pan, the much-loved boy that never grew up, and his friendly fairy, Tinkerbell, who has been loved by generations of children across the world, were first conceived at Moat Brae House when as a child, author JM Barrie played out pirate and castaway adventures in its ‘Neverland’ gardens. In Barrie’s words his "escapades in a certain Dumfries garden which is enchanted land to me, were certainly the genesis of that nefarious work". With the help of a £1.78m grant from HLF, an ambitious project will transform the house and its gardens into Scotland’s first centre for children’s literature and storytelling promoting creativity, imagination and play.

The Trust’s patron, Joanna Lumley, greeted the news, saying: "This grant will make a sensational difference to Moat Brae and the plans for the future of the Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust. It means that we can now move swiftly towards our goals of restoring the house and garden in readiness for its role in the literary life of children in Scotland. Our aims are to nurture the memories of past writers and to encourage the emergence of new young talent: to respect our extraordinary literary inheritance and to enable children's imaginations to fly, like Peter Pan. What a thrilling piece of good news! "

Colin McLean, Head of HLF, Scotland, added: “Moat Brae and its gardens have an important place in the history of Dumfries. A new breath of life has the potential to transform them into a visitor attraction that could boost the town’s tourist economy and inspire children today and tomorrow, as they once inspired JM Barrie. We are delighted to be able to support ambitious and inspirational project.”

HLF also announced grants for:

- **Campbeltown Picture House** (grant: £1.1m): One of the first purpose-built cinemas in Scotland, Campbeltown Picture House has provided the town with a centre of entertainment for the past 100years. From its origins in the silent movie days in 1913 through to the modern day and digital technologies the Picture House has provided an invaluable service to Campbeltown and Kintyre cinemagoers. As part of a three year project, its unique Glasgow School Art Nouveau design will be restored with new contemporary facilities added, including a second auditorium and a new café bar, so that it can operate as a sustainable community-based business. A cultural hub for Kintyre, this much-loved building will then be able to screen films and live relayed performances of theatre, opera and music, and stage small scale drama, music and comedy.
- **Heritage Inverclyde** (grant: £305,700): Following the route of the new coastal trail from Finlaystone to Weymss bay, this project will explain the history and stories of buildings along its way and their place in Inverclyde’s natural, maritime and industrial heritage. Locations such as Newark Castle, the Custom House in Greenock, Cloch Lighthouse and Finlaystone House garden will be highlighted. A number of work placements and training opportunities will be created and all six of the regions high schools will be involved in developing the interpretation and creating events to raise awareness of the region’s heritage.
- **Merkinch Welfare Hall** (grant: £656,400): Built in 1914 to house a temperance group who sought to attract young men away from the dangers of alcohol in the years leading up to WWII, Merkinch Welfare Hall currently stands vacant and on the Buildings at Risk register. A key building in the townscape of Merkinch and the only listed temperance hall in the Highlands, the Hall played a central role in the local community over the past 100 years as a home to Clachnacuddin FC and Inverness Judo club. It will now return to its sporting and community roots as an amateur boxing club, an easily accessible centre for people requiring employment support and much-needed office space.
- **Wildcat Action** (grant: £973,100): The Scottish wildcat is in grave danger of extinction. Eight organisations including Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Wildlife Trust, the Royal Zoological Society and the Royal (Dick) Vet School have formed a partnership to address the threats to the species and increase awareness of wildcat conservation across six priority areas. It will involve providing training in wildcat surveys and wildcat-friendly land management practices, and will involve schools, volunteers and community projects in learning about wildcats, and responsible domestic cat ownership. The work will also co-ordinate neutering and vaccination of feral cats and will monitor the wild-living cat populations through an extensive network of trail cameras.

Commenting on the awards announced today, Colin McLean, Head of HLF Scotland, said: “Heritage is an ordinary word for something that is quite extraordinary. The strands that weave the rich tapestry of Scotland’s history are too numerable to define. Literature, buildings, industry, popular culture and wildlife are all an essential part of where we come from. HLF is delighted to bring Christmas cheer to these presents from our past so that they can be cared for, enjoyed, learned from and celebrated well into the future.”

Further information

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HLF ends the year with a sprinkling of fairy dust for Scotland's heritage