

LORRAINE KELLY ANNOUNCES RECORD POPPY APPEAL

Scots TV star Lorraine Kelly today (Wednesday 24 March 2010) announced that the 2009 Scottish Poppy Appeal has broken all records to raise an impressive £2.2 million.

Lorraine Kelly, an Ambassador for Poppyscotland, was joined by volunteers at Dundee's City Square to proudly display the grand total (£2,215,745*) which will go to help veterans and their families in need throughout Scotland.

Public donations in November played a large part in the tremendous success of the 2009 Appeal and was made possible by the hard work and dedication of the charity's volunteers.

Speaking at the event, Lorraine Kelly said: "This is a fantastic result and shows how much the public cares about Scotland's veterans. The work of Poppyscotland is even more relevant now than it's ever been.

"Our Servicemen and women are putting their lives on the line every day. Some are returning home with devastating injuries and memories of the horrific traumas they have experienced."

A TV advertising campaign will be launched on 25 March to encourage more people to step forward and volunteer for this year's Poppy Appeal. Worryingly, many of Poppyscotland's current volunteers, who 'sell' poppies and organise collections, are nearing retirement age and the charity is urgently appealing for people to help continue the organisation's success year-round.

Lorraine continued: "Poppyscotland relies on the efforts of its amazing army of volunteers. I would ask anyone who has some time to spare to help where they can, either by taking on the Appeal in their area, or by collecting for a few hours during Poppy Week.

"We must attract more volunteers from younger age groups in particular so that we can continue to support to veterans in five ten, and even twenty years' time."

Poppyscotland reaches more veterans in Scotland than any other veterans' charity. Money raised by the organisation is used to provide vital year-round support to veterans and their families, many of whom suffer as a result of physical, psychological and financial problems as they struggle to readjust to civilian life. In addition to this, Poppyscotland provides direct financial assistance to individuals in immediate need and also helps to fund the work of specialist organisations, such as Combat Stress and Erskine.

Over the past three years the Scottish Poppy Appeal has seen a 41% increase in donations.

Poppyscotland Chief Executive, Ian McGregor, added: "Our volunteers, Royal British Legion Scotland members prominent among them work tirelessly during the year and the total we are celebrating today would not have been made possible without their hard work and commitment. Incredibly, some of these people have dedicated ten, twenty or even fifty years to our cause but, understandably and deservedly, some are coming to a time when they think of retirement.

"We are advertising for volunteers earlier than usual as we want to ensure all vacant areas are filled and that we can provide our new volunteers with the information and support networks that they need."

Those who wish to find out more about volunteering for Poppyscotland, can call 0131 550 1542, text volunteer to 81400 (standard network rates apply) or email volunteer@poppyscotland.org.uk

*The 2009 figure of £2,215,745 is correct as of 24 March 2010 with funds still being received daily. The final audited figure will be announced in June 2010.

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