

Poppyscotland news release

## **ARMED FORCES PAST AND PRESENT LAUNCH GIANT POPPY DISPLAY**

Veterans from World War II, the Falklands, Iraq and Afghanistan today (3 November) launched the opening of a giant display of poppies at the Omni Centre, Edinburgh.

Poppyscotland, the organisation behind the annual Scottish Poppy Appeal, has been overwhelmed by the response to a letter sent to 35,000 supporters, asking them to return a 'pop-out' poppy with messages of remembrance, respect or support for the Armed Forces, veterans or loved ones.

Jock Dempster from Dunbar who served in World War II, Falklands veteran William Sutherland and serving soldiers, Jamie Thomson from 1<sup>st</sup> Bn Royal Scots Borderers and Troy Felix from 4<sup>th</sup> Bn The Highlanders, who have seen active service in Iraq and Afghanistan, were at the event today to write their own personal messages.

The men's service spans 60 years and they represent three of the bloodiest conflicts that British armed forces have been involved in. There has only been one year after the Second World War in which British troops have not been killed – 1968.

Ian McGregor, Poppyscotland Chief Executive, said: "The response to the pop-out poppy campaign has been outstanding, with messages ranging from simple thanks to current serving troops to heartfelt tributes to lost loved ones. This is a unique way for people to get involved and show their support. We need to raise as much money as possible during this year's Scottish Poppy Appeal so that we can continue to make a real difference to the lives of veterans and their families who desperately need our help."

The poppies will be displayed on banners in the large windows of the city centre venue and there will also be an interactive facility for members of the public to create their own messages, which will be displayed on screens in the centre.

The Omni Centre in Edinburgh, which sees 100,000 visitors each week, has once again partnered with Poppyscotland to host the giant display during Poppy Week – 2-8 November.

Ends

Contact Leigh Howieson at Poppyscotland on 0131 550 1580 / 07766 475886

### **Notes to Editors:**

Poppyscotland supports more veterans and dependants in Scotland than any other veterans' charity. This is in two ways:

- Directly through financial assistance – last year we helped 1,424 individuals
- Indirectly by giving grants to veterans' organisations who specialise in veterans' issues, such as Combat Stress and Erskine. In the last five years we have given over £1 million to Erskine alone.

Poppyscotland supports veterans of all ages and, increasingly, those from recent and current conflicts, namely Iraq and Afghanistan.

**To find out more visit [www.poppyscotland.org.uk](http://www.poppyscotland.org.uk)**