

23 October 2008

LORRAINE KELLY URGES SCOTS TO GET BEHIND THE POPPY APPEAL

(Issued on behalf of Poppyscotland)

Lorraine Kelly today joined forces with two war veterans to launch the 2008 Scottish Poppy Appeal in Dundee city centre.

The popular TV personality is an Ambassador for Poppyscotland, the organisation behind the Appeal, which raises funds to support veterans and their dependants in Scotland. She presented a poppy to Ben Shaw, a young veteran blinded in Iraq and Eric Gurr, a veteran of the Korean War.

Both veterans feature in Poppyscotland's new TV advertising campaign, designed to promote the message that many ex-Servicemen and women depend on the support they receive from the organisation.

After presenting Ben and Eric with their poppies, Lorraine Kelly said: "It is a tremendous honour to launch this year's Scottish Poppy Appeal.

"Meeting Ben and Eric has been truly inspirational and has really brought home to me the fact that veterans come in all ages and from all walks of life. Sadly, there are thousands of others like them in Scotland who depend on the assistance they receive from organisations like Poppyscotland.

"I really hope that everyone in Scotland will show they care by getting behind the Appeal and by wearing their poppies with pride!"

Money raised from the annual Scottish Poppy Appeal and other fundraising activities is spent on:

- Providing direct financial assistance to individuals
- Funding an advice service, including pension claims and appeals
- Supporting employment of veterans with disabilities in Lady Haig's Poppy Factory
- Grants and research for organisations that deliver specialist support to veterans

Iraq veteran Ben Shaw, said: "I lost my sight in Service and Poppyscotland has been fantastic in its support for me. For many people with physical and psychological injuries it can be very difficult to re-adjust to civilian life. The assistance given by Poppyscotland helps ex-Servicemen and women to re-build their lives and so any money given to the Appeal is money well spent."

CEO of Poppyscotland, Jim Panton, explained that he hopes 2008 will be the organisation's most successful year to date. He said: "This year we are more ambitious than ever, because the need to support our veterans is greater than ever. Recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have meant that more and more ex-Servicemen and women are returning to civilian life with mental or physical scars and they simply do not receive the assistance they need and deserve.

"We want to raise as much money as possible through the Poppy Appeal, so that we can reach as many of these people as we can and show them that Scotland cares."
Poppies are now available across Scotland in plastic-stemmed and stick-on varieties.

Notes to Editors

- Poppyscotland raised £1.76 million during the 2007 Poppy Appeal
- The organisation also engages in other fundraising activities throughout the year
- To find out more about Poppyscotland, see www.poppyscotland.org.uk