

## **SCOTTISH POPPY APPEAL SMASHES £2 MILLION TARGET**

Poppyscotland today (Thursday, 26 March) announced that the 2008 Scottish Poppy Appeal was a record-breaking success, exceeding the ambitious target of £2 million, achieving an increase of 16% on the 2007 total.

An impressive £2,041,202 was raised, which will be used to help veterans and their families throughout Scotland, many of whom suffer as a result of physical, psychological and financial problems as they re-adjust to civilian life. Poppyscotland set a higher target for the latest Appeal because of the growing numbers of veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan who need specialist support and assistance.

The fantastic achievement was announced at famous Glasshouse Hotel in Edinburgh and was followed by an event at the nearby Omni Centre. Brigadier Andrew Mackay CBE, Commander of 52 Brigade in Helmand Province, Afghanistan from October 2007 to May 2008, was joined by 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Alexander 'Beatie' Barclay MC, who was injured and awarded the Military Cross for bravery in Iraq. Brigadier Mackay unveiled the total to a group of Poppyscotland volunteers and veterans who have benefitted from the organisation's support in recent years.

Brigadier Mackay said: "It is clear that recent conflicts will lead to more veterans returning to civilian life in Scotland and it is heartening to see that the Scottish public wishes to support them by giving so generously to the Scottish Poppy Appeal.

"Without their donations, this excellent charity and the organisations that it supports would not be able to fund their extremely important work assisting Scotland's veterans and their families."

Poppyscotland relies on money raised through the Appeal to provide a range of services to the veterans' community, including financial assistance to individuals and other organisations, such as Combat Stress, the funding of advice services, research and the supported employment of veterans with disabilities.

The Appeal was launched in October 2008 by Poppyscotland Ambassador and TV presenter, Lorraine Kelly, who was joined by injured Iraq veteran Ben Shaw and Korea veteran Eric Gurr, who also featured in a hard-hitting TV advertising campaign. A number of events and initiatives followed, which saw all 12 SPL football clubs proudly wearing poppies on their shirts for the first time and a display of giant poppies bearing over 6,000 heartfelt messages from members of the public.

Jim Panton, Chief Executive of Poppyscotland, said that he was overwhelmed by the public response. He said: "This amazing result sends a clear message to veterans and their families that the people in Scotland are behind them and want to ensure that they get the help they deserve.

"We are especially proud of this achievement in a year that was set to be very challenging due to the economic climate. I look forward to seeing the money being put to good use to help veterans of all ages and of all military backgrounds.

"I would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who made the 2008 Scottish Poppy Appeal such a huge success."

**Ends**

Attending the photocall:

Brigadier Andrew Mackay CBE

2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Alexander 'Beatie' Barclay MC

Eric Gurr, Korean veteran and star of TV advert

Jim Panton, CEO, Poppyscotland

Denise Ward, recipient of Poppyscotland small business loan

Tynecastle High School pupils:

Claire McGauchie

Nicolle Aird

Lee Manclark

Lewis McGregor

**Notes to Editor:**

The 2008 record is a 16% increase on the 2007 record of £1.76 million, which was 14% up on the 2006 total

The 2008 figure of £2,041,202 is correct as of 26 March 2009 with funds still being received daily. The final audited figure will be announced in June 2009.

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