

MEDIA RELEASE

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 00:01am on Monday 23rd October 2023

Jacobite treasures will go on public display for the very first time at Easter Weekend 2024, as Perth Museum reveals opening date

Images available at <https://we.tl/t-weOS2058c8>

The new Perth Museum will open to the public at Easter Weekend, in March 2024. As part of the new permanent display, Bonnie Prince Charlie's sword and a rare Jacobite wine glass will both go on public display for the very first time. This will be the first time the sword has returned to Scotland since it was made in Perth in 1739.

Funded by £10m UK Government investment through the Tay Cities Deal and by Perth and Kinross Council, Perth Museum is a £27m transformation of the former City Hall. Through Nationally Recognised museum collections it will tell the story of Perth's place in ancient and modern Scotland, as the nation's first capital. The building has been designed by award-winning architects Mecanoo.

Bonnie Prince Charlie's solid-silver hilted broadsword was made by Perth craftsman James Brown, believed to have been given to him in 1739 by James Drummond, the 3rd Duke of Perth. It would have been an important symbol of Charles Edward Stuart's claim to the Scottish throne whilst the Jacobite court was in exile in Rome in 1739.

The stunning Jacobite wine glass will also be seen at Perth Museum for the first time and features the Duke of Perth's family motto, 'Gang Warily'. It has recently been acquired by Culture Perth & Kinross, the charitable trust which will run Perth Museum in partnership with Perth & Kinross Council, and with support from the National Fund for Acquisitions.

James Drummond, Duke of Perth, played a vital role in the last Jacobite Rising of 1745-6. He raised a regiment in Crieff and met Charles Edward Stuart in Perth in September 1745 where he was appointed joint commander of the Jacobite forces. Although Drummond was well-

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liked by the prince and his men, he was an inexperienced soldier. He was a member of the Jacobite 'Council of War' for the invasion of England, and attempted, but failed, to induce the clans to charge at the enemy during the final defeat at Culloden. He escaped but died a few weeks later at sea in May 1746.

JP Reid, Senior New Projects Officer, Culture Perth & Kinross said, "We are thrilled to be able to publicly display these two significant pieces of Jacobite history for the first time. Perthshire sits at the heart of the Jacobite story: the scene of large-scale pitched battles like Killiecrankie and Sheriffmuir, besieged homes, scorched-earth warfare and warring kinsfolk. The Drummonds are key players in the 50 years of uprisings from 1689 – 1746. Three generations of committed Perthshire Jacobites, they gambled and lost everything in their support of the exiled Stuarts."

These two new objects will be viewed alongside other significant Jacobite material from the Perth and Kinross museum collections including a rare and ornate 'star' targe or Highland shield, possibly made by William Lyndsay. Lyndsay was a shieldwright from Perth responsible for equipping many of the Jacobite troops during their occupation of Perth.

Perth Museum will tell the story of Scotland through the story of Perth as the nation's first capital: how the Kingdom of Alba was forged in the area known as the 'cradle of Scotland', and where the modern Scottish nation was later shaped through writers, artists and thinkers connected to Perth. From when the first Scottish King was inaugurated on the Stone of Destiny, also known as the Stone of Scone, the city became a medieval powerhouse driven by technological innovation, powerful national and international political alliances, and major economic forces which shaped both ancient and modern Scotland.

The Stone of Destiny is returning to Perthshire from Edinburgh Castle, close to its origins at nearby Scone, for the first time in over 700 years. As the centrepiece of the new museum, the Stone will be free for all to visit.

Charles Kinnoull, Chair of Culture Perth & Kinross, said, "The collections held here in Perth and Kinross are recognised for their national significance and are in constant development. The opportunity to bring new objects such as this beautiful Jacobite glass and

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sword alongside loans from national partners and the existing collections and the Stone of Destiny, all within a stunning new home in the former City Hall is one which I could not be more excited about.

“The collaboration between many different partners to bring all this about in the heart of one of Scotland’s oldest cities has been outstanding.”

Perth Museum will be a new addition to an already vibrant cultural scene in Perth and Kinross which includes the recently transformed Pitlochry Festival Theatre, a facelift for Perth Art Gallery and the ongoing expansion of the Iron Age Crannog Centre in Highland Perthshire. The new museum represents a major investment in the economic and community wellbeing of the area as part of a wider regeneration strategy for Perth.

Councillor Grant Laing, Leader of Perth & Kinross Council, said, “Perth Museum will be a landmark attraction that brings Scotland’s history to life and is the culmination of our long-term cultural regeneration vision for Perth. It will significantly increase visitors from across the UK and internationally. It has created new skills and employment opportunities, and it will ignite our sense of civic pride in our beautiful and historic city.

“Visiting Perth Museum will be an unforgettable experience and from next Easter, I am sure we will be welcoming visitors from far and wide to Perth to see its treasures for decades to come.”

UK Government Minister for Scotland, Malcolm Offord, said, “These Jacobite treasures are an integral part of Scottish history, and visitors from around the world will come to Perth to view and learn about these magnificent artefacts when the museum opens next year.

“The UK Government has invested £10m in Perth Museum as part of our £150m support for the Tay Cities Region Deal.”

For further media information, contact Culture Perth and Kinross at marketing@culturepk.org.uk

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Notes to editors

About Perth Museum

The new Perth Museum will open its doors at Easter Weekend in March 2024, after a £27 million development project. This world-class cultural and heritage attraction will highlight the fascinating objects and stories that put Perth and Kinross at the centre of Scotland's story.

At its heart will sit the Stone of Destiny, also known as the Stone of Scone, one of Scotland and the UK's most significant historical objects. Returning to Perthshire for the first time in over 700 years, the Stone will be the centrepiece of the new Museum and will be free for all to view.

Alongside the stone, the Museum will display Perth & Kinross's Recognised Collections of National Significance as well as iconic loans and exhibitions from the UK and abroad.

The Museum is housed in a heritage Edwardian building that once served as a gathering place hosting everything from markets and concerts to political conferences and wrestling matches. This historic venue has been transformed into a major visitor attraction by award-winning architects Mecanoo. The Museum will also feature a café, shop, learning and event spaces, and a major exhibition programme throughout the year.

Perth Museum is operated by Culture Perth and Kinross on behalf of Perth and Kinross Council and is supported by £10 million from the UK Government as part of the Tay Cities Region Deal – a £700 million regional investment programme jointly funded by the UK and Scottish governments and regional partners.

perthmuseum.co.uk

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About Culture Perth and Kinross

Culture Perth and Kinross is a charitable Trust responsible for the delivery and development of the archive, library, museum and galleries, and creative learning in Perth and Kinross.

As a charity, Culture Perth and Kinross fundraises on an ongoing basis, and donations made are directly reinvested back into the trust. By donating via www.culturepk.org.uk/donate, you would be directly supporting your local libraries, museums and archives in a meaningful way that allows us to do more.

Culture Perth and Kinross operates Perth Art Gallery, Alyth Museum, and the new Perth Museum opening in 2024, as well as libraries and archives across Perth and Kinross. Our vision is to be at the heart of a cultural community that connects people, ideas, knowledge, and collections. Our mission is to develop and deliver a range of sector-leading services, public programmes and partnerships which engage a wide and diverse audience in the best of local, national, and international culture.

About the National Fund for Acquisitions

The National Fund for Acquisitions, administered with Scottish Government funding by National Museums Scotland, contributes towards the acquisition of objects for the collections of museums, galleries, specialist libraries and archives throughout Scotland. During financial year 2022/23, the NFA made 50 payments totalling £204,129 to 31 organisations, supporting acquisitions with a total purchase value of over £700,000. Find out more about the work of the National Fund for Acquisitions on the National Museums Scotland website: <http://www.nms.ac.uk/about-us/services-and-expertise/national-fund-for-acquisitions/>

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