



PRESS RELEASE

Capital to Host Centenary Exhibition Showcasing Scotland's National Treasures Edinburgh City Art Centre, 25 October 2008

The City Art Centre in Edinburgh will host a major centenary exhibition featuring Scotland's treasured places from the collections of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) from 25 October 2008 to 18 January 2009.

The free exhibition, *Treasured Places*, comprises over 180 fascinating drawings and photographs over two floors of the City Art Centre, many on public display for the first time. It will explore the unique role that RCAHMS has been undertaking since 1908, in creating a collection recording Scotland's buildings, archaeology and industry for the nation. This work and this exhibition reflect the lives of the people of Scotland from our earliest history to the present day – within the places in which we live, work and gather.

Places we live, places we work and places we gather are timeless concepts that connect us to the buildings, monuments and structures that feature in all our lives. *Treasured Places* explores our own relationships with Scotland's architecture and archaeology, from the everyday vernacular features of the built environment such as farmsteads and bungalows, to the great anchors of our past such as standing stones and hill forts. *Treasured Places*, combining both modern and historical photographs and drawings, showcases the wealth and diversity of RCAHMS' collections. The exhibition also reflects the different techniques the organisation uses to collect historical material and to create new material.

Exhibition highlights will include stunning aerial photographs such as that featuring Woden Law, an iron age hill fort revealed through the light of a winter sun and a dusting of snow; intricate survey drawings such as that of the Pictish cross slab at Glamis, which reveal the skill of RCAHMS' draughtsman; fascinating original architect's drawings including the stunning W. H. Playfair elevation of Donaldson's School for the Deaf, Edinburgh; survey photographs offering a glimpse back in time to the rapidly changing face of our industries, from textiles to shipbuilding, as well as captivating historical photographs from the 1901 International Exhibition at Kelvingrove, Glasgow.

Also featured in the exhibition are the places the nation voted as their top ten treasured places through a vote, launched by RCAHMS in September 2007. The winner, Lady Victoria Colliery, announced in January 2008, will be shown alongside the specially commissioned poem by Valerie Gillies, Edinburgh Makar from 2005-08. A selection of the comments and reflections left by the public throughout the vote about the places they treasure, act as reminders and offer an insight into the many reasons why these varied places from across our history are important.

Treasured Places will also include activities for families throughout the exhibition and a small public events programme.

Rebecca Bailey, Head of Education and Outreach, RCAHMS said:

“Now that RCAHMS has reached its landmark centenary and we look to the next century, we are even more aware that we are creating a record for the future. It was wonderful to see our collections being used in such an exciting way throughout the *Treasured Places* public vote and workshops. The poll was an ideal opportunity to involve the public in shaping the future of our collection, and indeed this exhibition.

“A sense of belonging is increasingly important to people and this is an exhibition about people and their places, and a reminder that our collection has something for everyone in every part of Scotland. The images and other items in this new and exciting national exhibition represent places and spaces that are “treasured” for many reasons, both on a personal and national level.”

City Culture Leader, Deirdre Brock, said:

“Scotland is a nation with a rich history stretching back thousands of years and a range of stunning architecture that is truly unique. This fascinating exhibition puts on display a sample of the vast record of Scotland, developed by RCAHMS over the past century, and the City Art Centre has the privilege of exhibiting many of these images for the very first time. The collection is of huge national importance and *Treasured Places* is an exhibition not to be missed by anyone with a love of Scotland.”

Both *Treasured Places* and the touring exhibition *Creative Connections* will also be available to view online. For further information please visit www.treasuredplaces.co.uk. In addition, a full-colour souvenir book will be published to celebrate the *Treasured Places* exhibition. The book will also contain an account of the fascinating history of RCAHMS by Head of Collections Lesley Ferguson, exploring the importance of recording the built environment and explaining its continuing relevance to the people of Scotland today.

A press preview and photocall will be held on Thursday 23rd October: details to be announced. Images for media use are available on request.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

1. RCAHMS is the national record of Scotland's built environment, whose mission is to identify, survey and interpret the archaeological, architectural and historical environment of Scotland, to preserve and add to the collection, and to promote public understanding and enjoyment of items in the collection.
2. *Treasured Places* was set up by RCAHMS to help celebrate its centenary in 2008. The project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Scottish Government, and run by RCAHMS.
3. To complement the national *Treasured Places* exhibition, *Creative Connections* — a touring exhibition launched in August 2008 and running until May 2009 — will visit ten venues across Scotland, close to the communities that participated in a series of workshops which ran alongside the *Treasured Places* vote. The creative outcomes from the workshops will be showcased alongside reproductions of the archive material that inspired them.
4. The City Art Centre, 2 Market Street, Edinburgh, is one of the UK's top temporary exhibition spaces hosting some of the best international touring exhibitions every year across fine art, photography, design and much more. Other exhibitions taking place alongside *Treasured Places* are *Space Age; Exploration, Design and Popular Culture*, *Quick on the Draw* and *A Time and Place: Paintings from the City Collection*.
5. The City Art Centre is open Monday to Saturday, 10am-5pm and on Sundays from 12pm-5pm. For further information please visit www.edinburgh.gov.uk/cityartcentre