



## THE NATIONAL WALLACE MONUMENT

# Friends of The National Wallace Monument Newsletter – April 2011



### Stirling's Famous Monument Prepares to Mark a Milestone

The 150th Anniversary of the Laying of the Foundation Stone at The National Wallace Monument is set to be marked this year by a series of special events which are sure to make the experience of visiting the famous landmark especially memorable.

The day chosen for the event back in 1861 was 24th June, the anniversary date of The Battle of Bannockburn, and scores of men, women and children travelled from all across Scotland to Stirling, and a crowd of over 100,000 people thronged The Abbey Craig for the ceremony of laying the foundation stone. As the occasion reached a spectacular climax, music rang out from over 40 participating bands, and a salute of artillery was discharged from the ramparts of Stirling Castle. Scotland was at last going to have a fitting monument to pay tribute to Sir William Wallace, more than 500 years after his famous victory at The Battle of Stirling Bridge.

150 years later, on Friday 24th June 2011 the first 150 visitors arriving at the Monument will each receive a gift of a commemorative medal, specially minted to mark the occasion, and replicating the one originally produced for the laying of the foundation stone in 1861. Every visitor on that day will also receive a copy of a special certificate which is being produced to mark the anniversary.



The programme of Special Events at the Monument in 2011 will feature regular presentations by costumed actors who will bring to life the story of Wallace's magnificent triumph over the forces of Edward I, and who will re-enact important episodes from the life of the man once acclaimed as 'Guardian of Scotland'. Additional activities will include games and quizzes for children and live music. Highlights of the programme include -



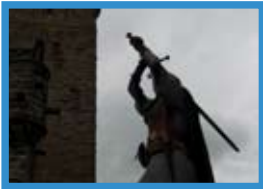
#### **A Walk with Wallace (28-30 May and 1-3 July 2011)**

Visitors will be able to join a footsoldier from Wallace's army for a walk through the woods of the Abbey Craig, to meet William Wallace in person!



#### **150th Anniversary of The Laying of The Foundation Stone (24 June 2011)**

The events of 150 years ago will be recalled, when historians will tell visitors the amazing story of how the Monument came to be built. To set the scene, entertainers and musicians will create the atmosphere of a day out in Victorian times.



#### **Encounter with Wallace (19-29 August 2011)**

Unique dramatic performances of scenes from the life of Wallace, will mark the anniversary of his brutal execution in London on 23rd August 1305.



#### **The Battle of Stirling Bridge Anniversary (10-11 September 2011)**

Interactive presentations from costumed actors will tell the story of the battle from vantage points on The Abbey Craig, overlooking the River Forth.



#### **Autumn Adventures (17-28 October 2011)**

During the school holidays there will be special activities for everyone to enjoy, including games and quizzes for children.



#### **St. Andrew's Weekend (26-27 November 2011)**

All visitors to the Monument will enjoy free admission during the weekend immediately before St. Andrew's Day (30 November).

Falconry Displays with birds of prey will also be taking place at the Monument during the **Walk with Wallace** and **Battle of Stirling Bridge** weekends, making these occasions especially memorable for visitors.

The worldwide interest in the story of William Wallace as a freedom fighter means that the Monument is looking forward to a busy season in 2011.





## The Monument's "Hidden Treasure"

The accounts of the laying of the foundation stone for The National Wallace Monument all describe the magnificent spectacle of the parade which brought Stirling to a standstill back in June 1861, but few relate one of the most fascinating aspects of the entire ceremony, when a "time capsule" was placed inside the foundation stone, to remain forever sealed within the Monument's stonework.

"A vase of the finest Edinburgh Crystal" was used for the purpose, and it was placed in a prepared cavity of the foundation stone, with the following contents:

- A copy of "Wallace and his Times" by James Paterson.
- A copy of "The Life of Wallace", published by Murray and Son.
- A complete copy of "The Poetical Works of our Immortal and National Bard, Robert Burns", published by Inglis & Gall.
- A copy of Sir Walter Scott's "Lady of the Lake"
- A copy of "The British and Masonic Calendar for the Year 1861", compiled by Donald Campbell, Esq.
- "The National Wallace Monument - the site and the design" by Dr. Rogers.
- Inscriptions on vellum.
- Circulars for the laying of the foundation stone, and a copy of the programme.
- A list of the names of the Wallace Committee and members of Stirling Town Council.
- A copy of the poem on the occasion of the ceremony by Mr. James McFarlane.
- Various coins in gold, silver, bronze and metal.
- A copy of The New Testament.



The prize-winning poem by Mr. James McFarlane ("The Battle of Stirling Bridge") was sung at the banquet which was held on the evening of the 24th June at The Corn Exchange in Stirling, and it finishes with the lines -

*"Though years like shadows fall  
O'er the dial of stones of time,  
Thy pulse o'freedom still shall beat  
With the throb of manhood's prime,  
Still shall they valour, love and truth  
That shone on Scotland's early youth,  
From Scotland ne'er disever  
The Shamrock, The Rose, The Thistle stern  
Shall wave around her Wallace cairn  
And bless the brave for ever."*

