

# ***‘Previously...’***

Scotland’s History Festival

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## Review 2013

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**February 2014**

# Previously...

Scotland's History Festival – A Review of 2013

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## ***'Previously...'***

### **Scotland's History Festival – A Review**

#### **Understanding Our Partners & Audience**

Festival of History Scotland Ltd was set up as a social enterprise in 2010 and launched *'Previously...'* Scotland's History Festival in 2011. *'Previously...'* is now an established festival which takes place every November. *'Previously...'* is the largest history festival in the UK and in 2013 we presented a programme of 274 events, which ran over a period of 18 days (13th - 30th Nov). Our attendance figures show a healthy 30% year on year growth, with 8572 people attending events in 2013. We expanded beyond our established base of Edinburgh to Midlothian, Glasgow, Stirling and Dunfermline.

*'Previously...'* was a triumph in imagination and challenging our citizens to think differently about history and how it has affected and shaped our country and our lives.

***The Observer, Sunday 14 December 2013***

Our vision is to encourage people across all postcodes and communities to discover connections to family, community and national history. We aim to work with our partners in making Scottish History relevant, open, accessible and entertaining. Our ambition is to celebrate the contribution of Scots across the globe and to strive for a greater understanding and interpretation of our past.

We work with 75 partners across the heritage, academic, tourism and hospitality sectors.

After three years, we have a clear understanding of our unique role. We are confident about the value we add to our partners. We have gained a clear sense about our audience, how we plot our ambitions against our resources and continue to curate a festival, which inspires people to find out more about their place and their history.

Our financial health has improved with a three-year award from The City of Edinburgh Council. Our challenge is to leverage a breakthrough with other public sector support from organisations like Event Scotland and Creative Scotland. We continued in 2013 with support from the University of Edinburgh and by generous donations from private individuals. The festival was organised by a team of four Directors and seven volunteers. Everyone donated their time for free. Our financial plight has been well championed and most recently by Kevin McKenna in The Observer, Sunday 14 December 2013.

*“'Previously...'* you see, is a modern, Scottish cultural miracle that lives frugally and on its wits from year to year, not knowing if this year will be its last”.

***Kevin McKenna***

There is much for us to consider as we move forward: managing relationships with partners with diverse interests as pioneer partners, content providers and supporters; producing our festival brochure; plus the pressure of expansion to new cities and towns. In 2014 you will see a festival and a team coming of age. What began as a conversation and bunch of ideas in a café is becoming a national event with

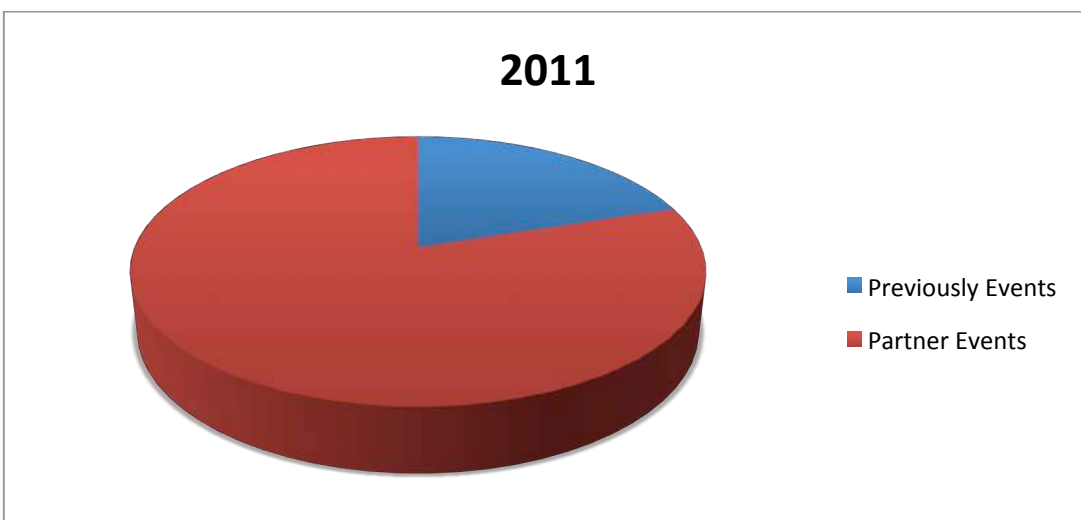
an international dimension. **'Previously...'** the story so far will contribute to the important conversations about Scotland's role in history and how we view ourselves yesterday, today and tomorrow.

### The Changing Face of **'Previously...'**

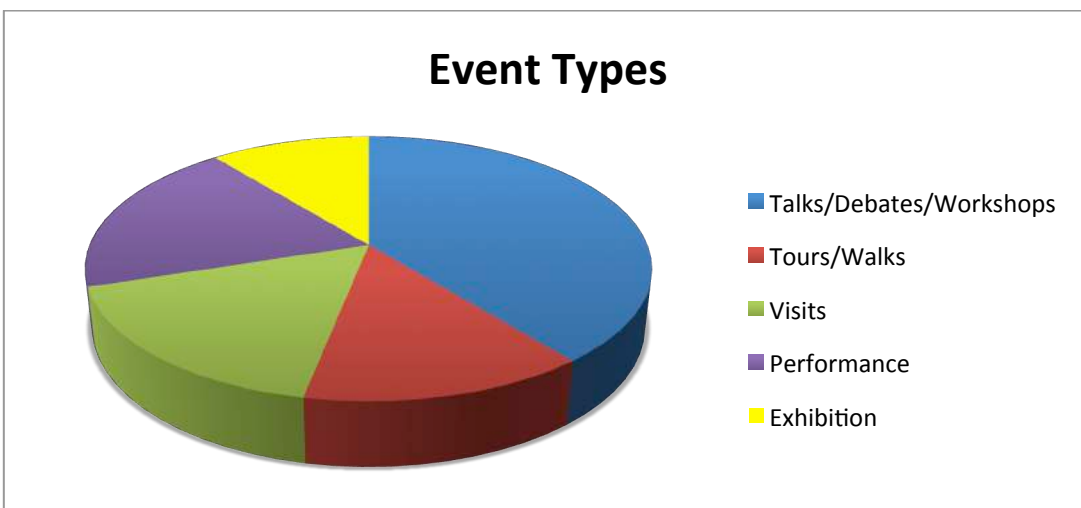
Our model from the start, and building over the last few years of **'Previously...'**, was designed around a core of curated bespoke events, which were fringed with partner events. Early research suggested November was a good time to pitch a new festival in Edinburgh.

Festival themes evolve or are suggested as we progress the festival-planning year. In 2013, themes of Radical Scotland, Scotland at Work and the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Flodden were layered into the programme. Contemporary political issues were represented. Themes for 2014 in the Year of Homecoming will be 'Jock Tamson's Bairns', celebrating the Migrants down the years who have made Scotland their home, The Scots in America, WW1 and we will continue to champion the stories and contribution of Scotland's Feisty Women.

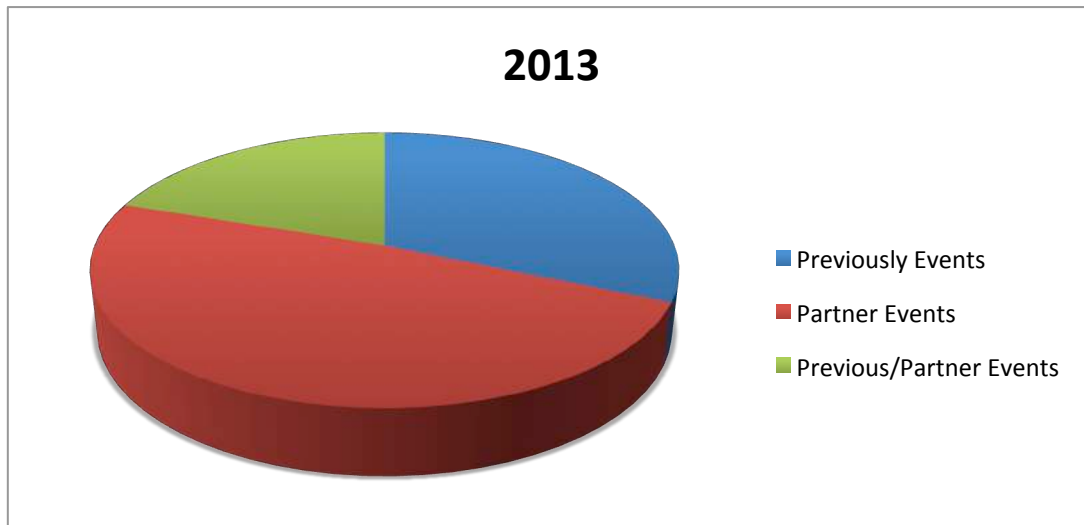
In 2011 our festival looked like this with 69 partners:



In 2011 our range of events looked like this:

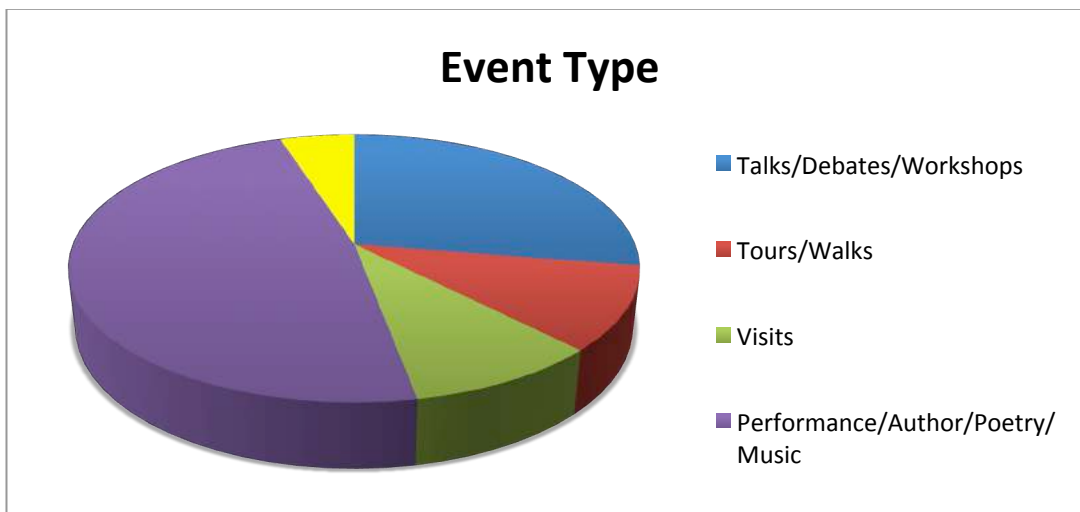


In 2013 the balance of our festival had dramatically changed with 51.3% of events being produced by the *'Previously...'* team or in association with our content partners.



In 2013 we launched the 'Scottish History Hub' at Adam House, Chambers Street, Edinburgh, and gave the festival its own dedicated space for the first time. We presented a range of events in 11 venues across Edinburgh and expanded to Glasgow, creating events with The Mitchell Library and Glasgow Life, the Scottish Tour Guides Association and Oran Mohr. In Stirling we worked again with the STGA, in Midlothian with Penicuik Heritage Trust and in Dunfermline with Visit Dunfermline and a host of others to create Andrew Carnegie Day.

In 2013 our range of events looked like this:



### Schools & Community Engagement - At the heart of what we do

In 2013 71% of events were free of charge. We sold nearly 2,000 tickets through the online ticket site Eventbrite and customers have asked us to look at providing a festival box office with cash service available, enquiry phone line and other customer services. Tickets ranged in price with the average ticket sale £5.

*'Previously...'* has grown to include a sizeable book festival in its own right and live author events combined with cultural heritage performances, poetry, theatre, music and storytelling accounted for 47% of our overall programme in 2013 - an amazing change since our first festival in 2011.

Our festival was founded on the principle of widening access to history in every community. In 2013, our Schools strategy championed by our volunteer Katie Hunter saw us once again reach S5 & S6 pupils with a repeat of the successful half-day conference organised with the University of Edinburgh and featuring in 2013 the Women's History Association Scotland. The WW1 theme saw students learn how the expanding roles of women during The Great War changed Britain's society irrevocably. S1 & S2 pupils competed for The William Morrison Trophy and this year our History Quiz was won by St Augustine's High School, Edinburgh.



St Augustine's High School - Quiz Winners

S5 & S6 pupils were invited to our Andrew Carnegie Day business breakfast in Dunfermline (in association with Carnegie College) and took their seats at the networking tables along side business leaders from across the community.

Andrew Carnegie Day was developed by *'Previously...'* together with Visit Dunfermline and took place on the anniversary of his birthday, the 25<sup>th</sup> November. It is our intention to make this celebration an annual event exploring the themes of diaspora, enterprise, education and philanthropy. There are over 2400 Carnegie Libraries in the world. New York and Pittsburgh Public Libraries have expressed interest in being involved in Andrew Carnegie Day in November and it is our vision over the next few years to inspire events in every location, all linking back to Dunfermline.

In a groundbreaking initiative we created a wonderful partnership between postgraduates from the University of Edinburgh, The National Records of Scotland and young people from challenged backgrounds at Impact Arts, to create a moving drama production around the story of a young Falkirk apprentice.

Our volunteer Ellen Storrar joined the Damned Rebel Bitches Women's History Group at Tollcross Community Centre and spent 10 months as our liaison and key member of the group whose Heritage Lottery Funded project highlighted the story of four incredible local women who were moved by their faith to fire up Scotland's abolitionist movement. DRB gathered community ideas and presented an exhibition, together with The Museum of Edinburgh on how the women might be honoured by the City of Edinburgh and the Nation.

We continued to support Disability History Scotland and were delighted that a project, which we had an early input into, received substantial backing from Heritage Lottery Fund.

During Black History Month in October, we celebrated the visit of former slave and abolitionist Frederick Douglass to Scotland in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and worked closely with The Just Festival to present a short season of challenging historic theatre in November.

Our collaboration with the National Museums of Scotland at RBS Museum Lates was packed to the rafters and featured Dr Sue Black and Dr Jenny Wormald in an event called CSI Kirk O' Fields where we took a fresh look at the murder of Lord Darnley.

A variety of local heritage projects across Scotland, supported by a team from the University of Aberdeen, gathered for a special conference during 'Previously...' at Adam House on Saturday, November 23. The *Sharing All Our Stories Scotland* team, led by Dr Elizabeth Curtis of the School of Education, showcased 50 projects such as Theatre Nemo, who work with staff and inmates at Barlinnie Prison researching the prison's history and running arts activities, aiming to help the men cope better with their sentences. Gathering Threads is working with pupils in Paisley schools to educate them about the mill heritage, mainly through poetry and drama, and The Riverside Music Project in Stirling has been researching archives, talking to living musicians about their music making and composing their own tunes.

***Motion S4M-08342: Cara Hilton, Dunfermline, Scottish Labour, Date Lodged: 18/11/2013 Andrew Carnegie Day 2013***

*That the Parliament welcomes what it understands is the first ever Andrew Carnegie Day, to be held on 25 November 2013; congratulates both Visit Dunfermline and 'Previously...' Scotland's History Festival on what it considers their pivotal roles in promoting this exciting event and Dunfermline businesses on supporting this special day; notes that the day of celebrations will include an entrepreneurial breakfast attended by the Carnegie Philanthropy Medal winner, Sir Tom Farmer, the launch of Scottish Bookweek in the world's first Carnegie Library, a treasure trail taking guests to key Carnegie sites in Dunfermline and an afternoon tea at the Glen Pavilion for 120 residents of local care homes; encourages support for what it considers this fantastic day of events celebrating Carnegie's lasting legacy and showcasing Dunfermline's unique, historical attractions, and looks forward to Andrew Carnegie Day becoming a permanent day in the calendar, with Dunfermline as the world centre for global celebrations of Andrew Carnegie*

### **Morningside Ladies & Building our Audience**

The vast majority of our audience at our public events over the 18 days of 'Previously...' are over 60 (67%) and 71.8% of them are female. Local people made up 59.1% of our audience, 29.5% were from other parts of Scotland and 11.3% from other parts of the UK and Abroad, with 79% of visitors to 'Previously...' being inspired to discover and learn more about Scottish History.

## Authors, Poets and Scots Language



Poets from Inky Fingers board the bus

Our festival team does not lack when it comes to ambition and in 2013 our passion to share Scotland's history took us into lots of nooks and crannies. We teamed up with poets from Inky Fingers and Edinburgh Tour Buses for a special day of verse celebrating people and places all over the City with visitors to Edinburgh on the tour bus. Collaboration with the Scottish Poetry Library delivered a brilliant night of poetry and song in "A Random History of Scottish Poetry" at the Voodoo Rooms in Edinburgh.

Our live author events continue to expand. Over 60 author and language events were woven into our 2013 programme taking place across 11 venues in Edinburgh including The Writers' Museum, Edinburgh City Libraries, ScotlandsPeople Centre, Blackwell's Book Shop, The Saltire Society and our 'Scottish History Hub' at Adam House on Chamber Street. **'Previously...'** has established a decent literature pedigree on a par with a boutique book festival and last year we featured Alistair Moffat, Rosemary Goring, David Ashton, Rosemary Hannah, Ed Hodge, Andy Wightman, Gavin Bowd, Jo MacSween, Jeni Calder, Sara Sheridan, Kellan MacInnes, Stuart McHardy, Robin Lloyd-Jones, Richard Holloway, Gregor Ewing, Allan Burnett, Lesley Riddoch, Daniel Gray, Billy Kay, Andrew Greig, Ray Perman, Margaret Skea and Louise Welsh.

Also on the literary front, the University of Edinburgh's Scottish Writing in the Nineteenth Century (SWINC) team explored the treatment of kings and kingship in Scottish literature.



## Pub Summits

We introduced the idea of staging Pub Summits in 2013, which included a lively debate exploring the use and support for Scotland's languages. We further investigated opportunities in ancestral tourism in light of a recent VisitScotland survey that claimed the industry could be worth up to £2.4 billion over the next five years to the Scottish economy. One of the outcomes of this Summit is an idea to establish a **'Previously...'** working group with our partners involved in this industry and explore ideas for special events and promotions in November.

## Film, Theatre & Music

We ran a short season of film with the Filmhouse around some of our themes, which were Radical Scotland and Scotland at Work. We worked with Tightlace Theatre, Black Dingo Productions and The Just Festival to present a week of historical theatre. Musical performance wove its way through the programme from choir and choral singing and medieval instruments to the history of traditional Jazz in Edinburgh and 90 years of Blues music.

## Family History/Genealogy

We have been working with ScotlandsPeople and the Scottish Genealogy Society along with others since the very beginning of **'Previously...'**. We have initiated road shows and workshops and in 2013, presented a new series of 'A Short History Of', supported by Family Ancestry Magazine. We profiled actor David Hayman to promote the Family History Centre in the Mitchell Library Glasgow and Richard Demarco in Edinburgh.

## The Numbers

- We had 237 events
- Over 18 days
- 75 Partners
- Total audience figures of 8,572
- 71% of our events were free
- For ticketed events, prices ranged between £3 and £50
- Our largest event had an audience of 232
- 30% of our audience were first time visitors to the festival and 70% had attended events before in 2012 and 2011
- 67% of our paying audience are over 60 and 71.8% are female
- 64.8% of our attendees from Edinburgh, 29.6% from other parts of Scotland and 11.26% from rest of UK and International
- 54% learned about events and the festival from Brochure, 36.5% from email newsletters, 22.2% from advertising, 9.5% Social Networking, 3.18% from Press/Radio & Posters
- 54% of our audience spent up to £50 on food and drink whilst attending events, 40% spent £50 - £100. 39% spent up to £50 and above on lodging and 91% less than £50 on travel.
- 90% had looked at the **'Previously...'** web site
- Over 68% of our audience said they felt inspired to find out more about family, community or national history after attending Previously events.

In 2014 we aim to stage more events aimed at children and family audiences and aim to create a special Family Festival Day on our final weekend at Adam House in Edinburgh featuring workshops, puppets, music, storytelling and great food. Look out for a new event called Shindig (Adam House Lates), which will celebrate the cultural heritage of the economic and political migrants who have made Scotland their home down the years and have contributed to our incredible story.

## Marketing

Marketing any event is a challenge and this year was no different. The table below shows activity type vs. its use in previous years.

Activity	2011	2012	2013
Website	✓	✓	✓
Data capture	✓	✓	✓
Online display advertising	✓	x	✓
Social media advertising	✓	x	x
Facebook updates	✓	✓	✓
Twitter updates	x	✓	✓
Programme	✓	✓	✓
T-shirts	✓	✓	x
Pull up panels (re-use)	✓	✓	✓
Friends of...	x	✓	x
Posters	x	x	✓
Press advertising	x	✓	✓

### Additional key Changes / variations on previous year

- Use of posters around Edinburgh
- Extension of venues into Fife, Central belt and Strathclyde
- Increase in email marketing during Festival to partners and opt-in database

## Programme, Posters and Press

The printed programme continues to play a vital part in the promotion of **'Previously...'** with 20,000 distributed primarily in and around Edinburgh. In addition this year, we printed and distributed 500 A2 and A3 posters. The List continued to give us great reach with a robust press and online campaign.

## Website

The website, as ever, plays a key role in the marketing of the festival. We continued to use Eventbrite for ticket sales for our own events but hope to centralise ticketing at the next available opportunity. There's much more we'd like to do with the website in coming years including better integration with social media, integrated shopping basket, merchandising and commenting. Headline numbers include:

- Increase in visits of 43% based on same period 2012
- Increase in page views of 169%
- US traffic increase of 40%
- German traffic increase of 185%

## Email Marketing

Like the website, email marketing has continued to play a vital role in the dissemination and sharing of information about **'Previously...'** events, news and ticket sales.

The **'Previously...'** opt-in database continues to be extremely robust with minimal unsubscribes per distribution and way-above-industry-average reads and click throughs (15% above average) with every mail – further backing up any rationale that **'Previously...'** has for its existence – the desire is there. Email was used with even more regularity during the festival this year and had a direct and positive impact on ticket sales and site traffic.

Figure 1 - One of the emails from the campaign



## Social Penetration

Measuring reach and noise levels in social channels has been and will continue to be an important tool for *'Previously...'* and we've been hugely encouraged by the activity generated not only around the festival itself but throughout the year outwith November. We achieved an impressive reach with our activity, seeing multiple re-tweets by influential individuals across a range of subjects and events to their followers. Facebook reach peaked at c.a. 250,000 users over the period 1 October – 30 November.

## PR & Advertising

*'Previously...'* expanded its promotional, PR and press activity this year with a range of partnerships and bought inventory. Activity included:

- Media partnership with The List magazine for
  - Programme distribution through the central belt
  - Online display (banner ad) advertising
  - Printed advertising (half pages and teasers)
  - Competitions (data capture)
- Advertising with The Herald newspaper (Newsquest)
  - Printed advertisement and
  - Display (banner advertising) online to promote Glasgow events
- The Independent Magazine
  - Puff ad in the 'Going out' section
- History Scotland Magazine
  - Printed Ad
- Edinburgh Marketing
  - Website banners
- Edinburgh University
  - Website banners

We received editorial coverage in The Scotsman and many other national newspapers. There were broadcast features on Good Morning Scotland, BBC Radio Scotland. Susan Morrison appeared as a panellist on Brian Taylors Questions, which was broadcast live during the festival, there were further appearances on Culture Café, BBC Radio Scotland.

Our branding style continues to differentiate us in the space and provide real stand out recognition in the places we promote the festival.

## Gallery

A selection of pictures from 'Previously...' 2013



Bus, Walking & Cycling Tours...



Largest audiences in 2013 for Tom Devine...



60 Live Author Events - Jenny Valentish



Memories & Faces from Previously 2013...



Talks, Debates, Panel Discussions...



Memories & Faces from Previously 2013...



Memories & Faces from Previously 201



Impact Arts Community Project...



Memories & Faces from Previously 2013 ...



Week of Historical Drama at Adam House ...



Impact Arts Community Project...

## Appendix I – Partners

Archaeology Scotland  
Beltane Public Engagement Network  
Birlinn Books  
Black Dingo Productions  
Black History Month  
Blackwell Books  
Church of St John the Evangelist  
City of Edinburgh Council  
City of Edinburgh Museums  
Cockburn Association  
Disability History Month Scotland  
Dunfermline Carnegie Library  
Damned Rebel Bitches Women’s History Group  
Edinburgh Bus Tours  
Edinburgh City Libraries  
Edinburgh Dungeon  
Edinburgh Napier University  
Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust  
Edinburgh World Heritage  
ETAG  
Ewan McVicar  
Filmhouse  
Gaita Medieval Music  
Gilmerton Cove / Rosslyn Tours  
**Glasgow City Council**  
**Glasgow Libraries**  
Heriot-Watt University  
Historic Scotland  
Inky Fingers  
**James Clerk Maxwell Foundation**  
Jamie Reid Baxter  
The Just Festival  
Leo's Beanery  
Le Tour - Edinburgh Ltd  
Luath Press  
Mercat Tours  
National Archives of Scotland  
National Galleries of Scotland  
National Library of Scotland  
National Museums Scotland  
National Trust for Scotland  
National Records of Scotland  
Ness Bus  
Newhaven Heritage  
Old Edinburgh Club  
**Oran Mor**  
**Our Dynamic Earth**  
Penicuik Community Development Trust  
Polish Scottish Heritage Trail  
Portobello Heritage Trust  
Robert Louis Stevenson Day  
Rosslyn Chapel  
Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh  
Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh  
Saltire Society  
ScotlandsPeople  
Scotland’s War  
Scots Language Centre  
Scottish Association of Teachers of History  
Scottish Council on Archives  
Scottish Genealogy Society/Dean Village Association  
Scottish Parliament  
Scottish Poetry Library  
Scottish Tourists Guides Association  
The History of Education Centre SCIO  
The Mitchell Library  
The Real Mary King's Close  
The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland  
The Stand Comedy Club  
Tightlaced Theatre  
University of Aberdeen  
University of Edinburgh  
Visit Dunfermline  
Visit Scotland

## **Appendix II – Advisory Panel**

Professor Tom Devine, University of Edinburgh  
Professor Ewen Cameron, University of Edinburgh  
Professor Richard Oram, Stirling University  
Dr Catriona M. M. Macdonald, Glasgow Caledonian University  
Dr Ali Cathcart, Strathclyde University  
Lesley Riddoch, Broadcaster and journalist  
Jackie Whalan, St Andrews University  
Lorna Polland, HSBC Bank plc  
Sara Sheridan, Historical Author  
Yvonne McEwan, Centre for the Study of Modern Conflict, University of Edinburgh

## **Appendix III - The Team**

Susan Morrison, Festival Director	Katie Hunter, Schools Coordinator
Ian Harrower, Festival Producer	Ellen Storrar, Administration & Community
Marie Storrar, Creative Director	Louise Ross, Live Authors, Food & Drink
Dr Ed Carter, Digital Director	June Edgar, Partnership & Funding
Angela Stormont, PR, Language, Funding	

## **Appendix IV - Supporters**

City of Edinburgh Council Museum, Library, Venue, Logistical and Creative Support  
University of Edinburgh Brochure and Invaluable venue support  
Spring, Creative, Digital, Design & Development  
The List Media Partners, Marketing & Distribution  
Scottish Memories Event Sponsors  
Indigo PR Services & Strategic Consultancy