



22 April 2023

ABERDEENSHIRE CELEBRATES NEW COUNTY FLAG AT CASTLE FRASER

- **Public flag dedication ceremony of the new official Aberdeenshire flag held by The Lord Lieutenant of Aberdeenshire at NTS Castle Fraser on Saturday 22 April.**
- **Winning design by pupils of Newtonhill School, Stonehaven and Elrick School, Westhill, as voted by the public, triumphing over 800 global entries in a competition organised by The Lord-Lieutenant of Aberdeenshire.**

The new Aberdeenshire County flag was revealed at a special dedication ceremony held at The National Trust for Scotland's Castle Fraser, Sauchen, Aberdeenshire, on Saturday 22 April 2023, with invited guests and a large crowd gathered to witness the historic occasion.

The chosen flag was based on the original designs of pupils from Newtonhill School, Stonehaven, and Elrick School, Westhill. Accompanied by the Drums & Pipes of The Gordon Highlanders Association and an honour guard of Lonach Highlanders, the children presented the flag to The Lord-Lieutenant, Sandy Manson, at the castle doors.

Following a dedication, the new Aberdeenshire flag was taken to the top of the castle tower and raised by the Lord-Lieutenant. Lone Piper, David Fraser, from The Gordon Highlanders Association Pipe Band played the famous march, 'Back o' Bennachie' and the assembled crowd gave a resounding 'Three Cheers'.

Mr Sandy Manson, The Lord-Lieutenant of Aberdeenshire, said:

"It is wonderful to see this splendid County flag now unveiled for all to see. For the children from two different local schools to produce such similar designs that were then brought together in the flag you see today, was remarkable. It's clear to see why their design triumphed over hundreds of others from all ages and corners of the world: a bold flag that heralds our past and signals a confident future.

Judging over 800 entries by the panel was certainly not easy. The five designs chosen for the shortlist went to a public vote, encompassing the many traditions and characteristics we associate with our beautiful and historic county. My congratulations to all the pupils involved in so creatively designing the winning flag.

I hope all of Aberdeenshire will be very proud as our new flag flies over the county, playing an important part in our local identity."

The Winning Design

The pupils described their winning design,

"Aberdeenshire is Scotland's 'castle country' but also the strong royal association referenced by the crown. A quarter of Scotland's arable land is in Aberdeenshire, with the gold representing the barley and the whisky that it makes, and the purple symbolises the heather of our mountains."

The Flag for Aberdeenshire Project

The project was initiated in March 2022, when the Lord-Lieutenant, Mr Sandy Manson, discovered through dialogue with the Lord Lyon's office that while Aberdeenshire had a long-standing coat of arms, it did not have a county flag as was the case with most counties in Scotland.

Two Deputy Lieutenants, Mrs Jean Haslam and the late Mrs Miranda McHardy took this historic project forward, running an open competition to design a flag for Aberdeenshire. The Press and Journal agreed to publicise, collect entries and manage the public voting. Workshops were run by Philip Tibbetts (Lyon Court Vexillologist for Scotland) during the first week in September 2022 in schools across the county.

With the help of the Lord Lyon and Mr Tibbetts, a judging panel examined over 820 entries submitted in October, the largest ever response to a flag competition in Scotland. A short-list of five designs was selected that went to a public vote, with 4,208 votes cast.

ENDS

Editor's Notes:

About the National Trust for Scotland

Established in 1931, the National Trust for Scotland is Scotland's largest conservation charity and cares for, shares and speaks up for Scotland's magnificent heritage.

Over the last 90 years the Trust has pioneered public access to and shared ownership of some of the most magnificent buildings, collections and landscapes in Scotland. It cares for more than 100 sites, from ancient houses to battlefields, castles, mills, gardens, coastlines, islands, mountain ranges and the plants and animals which depend upon them.

In March 2022 the National Trust for Scotland launched *Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone*, its ten-year strategy which sets out the ambitions of the charity over the coming decade. From speaking up for Scotland's heritage which doesn't have a voice, to improving the lives and wellbeing of people across the country, and responding to the climate and biodiversity crisis, the Trust will build on its work in recent years to grow its

impact and conserve and restore more of Scotland's heritage, as it moves towards its centenary in 2031.

Scotland's largest membership organisation, the National Trust for Scotland relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work.

For more information on the National Trust for Scotland visit www.nts.org.uk.

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