**Strathnaver Museum Heritage Awareness Project**

2012-2013

**Funding Total**: £38,513

**Funded by**: Highland LEADER 2007-13; Heritage Lottery Fund

**Project Summary:**

This project involved people in the development of heritage awareness through improvement of the Museum’s resources.

* Digitising the museum’s collection and presenting it in an accessible database for easy retrieval and to meet accreditation standards;
* Digitising census material and delivering training in genealogy to enable the establishment of a genealogy service;
* Provide guided walks in Strathnaver and other social events focused on local history, music and archaeology based on the museum collection;
* Commission artists to share creative interpretations on the Museum’s collection.

**Strathnaver Museum Development Project**

2013-2015

**Funding Total**: £49,659.64

**Funded by**: CNSF; Robertson Trust; Highland Council

**Project Summary:**

Development Manager appointed to help maximise the potential of Strathnaver Museum for the social, economic and environmental benefit of the area and its people.

* Visitors to the Museum increased by 22%;
* Participants in activities and events up by 95%;
* 80 events and activities were held;
* Income from admissions up 29%;
* Strengthened partnerships with other third sector organisations;
* Produced papers in support of redevelopment of Strathnaver Museum;
* Recruited an additional 10 regular volunteers;
* Established Strathnaver Museum Youth Group;
* Provided 187 training opportunities for volunteers through 37 events.

Since 2013 the following projects have been developed and implemented in support of the overall development of Strathnaver Museum into a community hub for north west Sutherland. Guided by Heritage Lottery Fund we have taken steps to strengthen a future application by:

* writing a robust business plan and securing pre-development funding for professional advice;
* Established and strengthened our partnership working.

**Heritage Mobile App**

2014-2015

**Funding Total**: £17,570

**Funded by:** NDA, HLF

**Partners:** Led by Venture North; all the heritage and museums in Caithness and Sutherland

**Contribution to development:** tourism development and marketing

**Project Summary:**

Creation of a smart phone mobile heritage app for Caithness and Sutherland led by Venture North. Strathnaver Museum led the coordination and gathering of the historical information, accompanied by images, of over 400 sites of heritage interest. The project brought together 68 volunteers from 24 different heritage and tourism groups to produce a database to deed the app. The app encourages visitors and locals to explore Caithness and Sutherland more widely and encourage extended visits. The app is fully downloadable and is available on Android, iOS and as a web version on the Venture North page.

**Pibrochs and Poppies WWI Centenary Project**

2015-2016

**Funding Total**: £28,285

**Funded by:** Museum Galleries Scotland, Heritage Lottery Fund

**Partner**: Fèis air an Oir

**Contribution to development**: further education and research; collection development

**Project Summary:**

Partnership project with Fèis air an Oir to commemorate WWI through music and in particular pipe music.

* 39 events held engaging 1,022 participants;
* Engaged over 100 volunteers;
* A booklet compiling the research findings produced;
* A CD of the music produced;
* A traveling exhibition;
* Professional masterclasses provided to the young musicians;
* Programme of more informal training to volunteers and other participants.

**Education Officer**

2015-16

**Funding Total:** £11,570

**Funded by:** SSE Strathy Community Fund

**Contribution to development:** further education and research

**Project Summary:**

* Developed relationships with schools and colleges to promote the use of the museum in line with the national curriculum;
* Establish a museum youth group which successfully bid for funding to stage identified workshops and training opportunities (see museum helpers below);
* Created additional loan boxes for schools;
* Alan Joyce Competition in partnership with Flow to the Future with 6 primary schools in Caithness and Sutherland;
* Work experience with film crew as part of Flow to the Future / Alan Joyce Competition prize;
* Educational talks from Pearls in Peril; Prof Jim Hunter;
* Gaelic Awareness Raising event held with Highland Council.

**Business Plan**

2016-17

**Funding Total**: £12,000

**Funded by**: Architectural Heritage Fund; The Steel Trust

**Contribution to development**: business planning, tourism development

**Project Summary**:

Research and development of a robust Business Plan for the Redevelopment of Strathnaver Museum as a heritage hub for north west Sutherland. During the course of the project we gathered:

* ideas for interpretation to better engage with children and young people;
* significantly strengthened our relationship with the school;
* 13 partnership projects identified;
* improvements to interpretation and layout;
* a need to deliver services for older vulnerable people;
* commitment from Luminate to support our work with older people;
* better partnership working with community groups;
* better partnership working with other heritage organisations across Highland;
* partnership funding secured through HMF which will result in a Business Audit and wider strategy for the sector in Highland;
* skills sharing with neighbouring heritage organisations.

**Museum Helpers**

2016-17

**Funding Total**: £3,015

**Funded by**: Museums Galleries Scotland Small Grants

**Contribution to development**: further education; skills development; engaging with children and young people

**Project Summary:**

* Work experience placements for 4 senior pupils at Farr High School;
* Family area created by the young people;
* Improved the displays and interpretation;
* Held 9 skills workshops: film making, pottery and creative writing;
* 12 sessions held at Farr High School with students.

**Volunteer Development Project**

2017-2019

**Funding Total**: £29,309

**Funded by**: Caithness and North Sutherland Fund; SSE Strathy Community Fund; Bettyhill Renewables Fund

**Contribution to development**: skills development and knowledge exchange; strengthening the organisation

**Project Summary:**

As we work towards a major refurbishment, to increase the resources and activities we deliver within and out with the museum, the role volunteers play will become even more important. Strathnaver Museum’s Volunteer Coordinator manages all elements of volunteering within our organisation on behalf of the Board of Trustees. The variety of work done by Strathnaver Museum is diverse and the range of skills which volunteers can bring is boundless. We have identified the need to develop the role of volunteers and coordinate their interests in developing their creative pursuits to the benefit of the museum.

**Threading** **Rob Donn**

2017-18

**Funding** **Total**: £5,400

**Funded by**: Heritage Lottery Fund: Stories, Stones and Bones

**Partner:** Mackay Country Community Trust

**Contribution to development:** further education research; collection development

Community research project using craft to celebrate and explore the work of renowned Gaelic bard Rob Donn Mackay.

* 27 panels produced by craft groups and individuals;
* 3 workshops with an artist held;
* 1 workshop with academic advisor held;
* Participants reported positive feedback and that they’ve learned more about Rob Donn, his work and the time in which he lived;
* Wall hanging for display being produced to exhibit in October 2018.

**Trailing Rob Donn**

2017-18

**Funding Total**:£51,640

**Funded by**: Heritage Lottery Fund, Caithness and North Sutherland Fund, SSE Strathy Community Fund

**Partner:** Led by Mackay Country Community Trust

**Contribution to development:** tourism development; further education and research

**Project Summary:**

Creation of 9 interpretive panels to commemorate and explore the life and work of renowned Gaelic bard Rob Donn Mackay. Working with an academic advisor, Dr Ellen Beard, we are engaging with the community through workshops, events and activities. Outputs will include:

* 9 interpretive panels;
* A bi-lingual guide book;
* A trail map;
* A programme of events.

**Reprint of Tales of the North Coast**

2017-18

**Funding Total:** £7,386

**Funded by:** SSE Strathy North Community Fund

**Partner:** Led by Bettyhill Community Council

**Contribution to development:** sustainability;

**Project Summary:**

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the original publication a facsimile edition has been produced. This popular collection of stories emerged from a seminal oral history project led by then English teacher, and now award-winning children’s author, Alan Temperley with his students at Farr Secondary School.

**Redevelopment of Strathnaver Museum as a heritage hub for north west Sutherland**

2018-19

**Funding Total:** £39,132

**Funded by:** Highland LEADER

**Contribution to development:** business planning; tourism development; sustainability

**Project Summary:**

The development funding will secure the services of professional contractors to devise and cost a final design for the redevelopment project:

* Strategic definition and brief preparation;
* Concept design;
* Developed design;
* Production of acquire costings;

To support a Stage I application to HLF and match funders.

**Examples of small project funding:**

2019-20 Bettyhill Renewables Fund £1,000 Rosal investigation

2018-19 MGS Purchase Fund £400 purchase of laptop

2018-19 Bettyhill Renewables Fund £200 for Tales of the North Coast Launch

2017-18 MGS Purchase Fund £229 for archive material

2016-17 MGS Purchase Fund £587 for a new computer

2015-16 MGS Festival of Museums £994

2015-16 SSE Strathy Community Fund £1,488 sign at Badinloshkin

2015-16 Edinburgh Sutherland Association £500 sign at Badinloshkin

**Highlights:**

* Visitor numbers to Strathnaver Museum have increased by 120% since 2003;
* Income from admissions has increased by almost 250% since 2007;
* Retail sales have increased by 155% since 2007;
* £277,012 of grant funding brought into the area since 2013 and contributed to £92,300 being brought into the Highlands through the HMF.