

NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE

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National Trust for Scotland sends birthday message to Charles Rennie Mackintosh as Hill House fundraising reaches milestone

- Hill House 'box' campaign reaches £900,000 on Charles Rennie Mackintosh's 150th birthday
- Donations past halfway point of £1.5m target

Today (Thursday 7 June), National Trust for Scotland announces that its fundraising campaign to save Charles Rennie Mackintosh's globally-renowned masterpiece, the Hill House in Helensburgh, has reached £900,000 worth of donations. The announcement is made on the 150th anniversary of the architect's birth.

The Trust is calling on all Rennie Mackintosh fans to mark his birthday by donating that little bit extra to reach the next milestone of £1 million. The appeal funds will be added to the £3 million already secured by the Trust.

The fundraising campaign was launched in February this year with the aim of raising £1.5 million to build a fine stainless-steel mesh "box" around the iconic property to protect and preserve its sandstone structure which is dissolving under its cement render. Preparatory work is expected to begin on the site in early July this year.

Richard Williams, General Manager for Glasgow and West at the National Trust for Scotland, said: "To have raised £900,000 in only four months is extraordinary and shows the respect and admiration that is felt for Charles Rennie Mackintosh and his vision.

"By some way this is the most successful appeal that the National Trust for Scotland has ever run in its 87 year history and we're incredibly thankful for the support thus far. It would be wonderful if we could reach our next fundraising milestone of £1 million and we're asking the public to send Charles a birthday message this week of a donation to save this masterpiece of domestic architecture."

The Hill House appeal is number four of the '100 Ways' that the charity has pledged to protect Scotland. The list represents the living, breathing reality of what the Trust does day in, day out, across the length and breadth of the country, to make sure that our heritage, our landscapes and our legacy are kept safe for generations to come.

Donations to the appeal can be made online at: <https://www.nts.org.uk/Campaign/Help-us-save-the-Hill-House>

More information about the appeal can be found at <https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/boxing-the-hill-house>

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Editor's Notes:

- Charles Rennie Mackintosh, the son of a police superintendent, was born in Glasgow on 7 June 1868. The 150th anniversary of his birth will be marked in 2018.
- He enrolled at Glasgow School of Art in 1884. After completing his apprenticeship in 1890, he met his future wife Margaret MacDonald, her sister Frances and, together with his friend, Herbert McNair, they became known as 'The Four' who created the 'Glasgow Style' of architecture and interior design.
- In 1902, the publisher Walter Blackie purchased a plot of land at the top of a hill in Helensburgh for which he planned a new home with views over the Gareloch and the Firth of Clyde.
- Blackie already had an interest in the Glasgow Style and Mackintosh was recommended to him.
- Mackintosh was heavily influenced by the traditional plain style of historic Scottish towns and villages and disliked the then current vogue in architecture which copied Tudor, Gothic and Classical detailing. It was a meeting of minds with Blackie.
- At a cost of £5,000, Mackintosh, along with his wife Margaret MacDonald, oversaw the design and construction of every detail of the Hill House, which was completed in 1904.
- Mackintosh made use of an experimental material – Portland cement – to form a smooth layer of render. Unfortunately, the finish allowed water to seep in to the sandstone from the day it was first applied. Decades of driving west coast wind and rain have saturated the wall of the Hill House – and threaten the long-term survival of the building and its priceless, Mackintosh-designed interior.
- The Hill House proved to be incredibly influential in Europe, becoming especially inspiring to the German Bauhaus school and architectural/design movement, which in turn inspired much mid-late 20th century architecture.
- In 1953, the property was sold to Mr T Campbell Lawson. In 1972 it was sold to the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS) and by 1978 the Landmark Trust took over a specially converted top flat for holiday-letting.
- The National Trust for Scotland acquired the Hill House in May 1982, with financial assistance of £425,000 from the National Heritage Memorial Fund.
- In 2015, the Getty Foundation awarded a grant of £95,000 through its Keeping It Modern initiative to support the development of a conservation management plan for the Hill House.

The National Trust for Scotland is the charity that celebrates and protects Scotland's heritage. It relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work of caring for the natural and built heritage of Scotland for everyone to enjoy.

Every day, the hundreds of thousands of members, donors, volunteers and staff at the charity help to protect Scotland's natural and national treasures for us all to enjoy. From coastlines to castles, art to architecture, wildlife to wildernesses, we do what we do... for the *love* of Scotland. Join us at www.nts.org.uk/love

