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Press Release

Thursday 6 May

Glasgow 2014 announces the appointment of "hero pipers" for the Delhi 2010 Handover Ceremony

Glasgow 2014 has revealed that the hundreds of Scots who will perform at the Delhi 2010 Handover Ceremony will be led out onto the field of play in the main Stadium in Delhi by a Scottish "hero piper".

Following a rigorous audition process that involved a lengthy search with the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association, the College of Piping and the National Piping Centre and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (RSAMD), Jonathan Graham, 19, and Craig Muirhead, 20, were appointed. Both study Scottish Music at RSAMD.

The Handover Ceremony marks the Flag Handover from Delhi to Glasgow, and includes an 8 minute creative programme to showcase Glasgow and Scotland to the rest of the world. The performance, which will involve a mass choreographed dance routine, will take place in the spectacular Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium and will host a capacity crowd of 60,000 for the Closing Ceremony. The performance will be beamed live across the Commonwealth to an estimated audience of 1 billion people.

The creative concept is built around one "hero piper" leading out the hundreds of volunteer cast members onto the field of play in the JN Stadium. As with any performance of this size and scale, for one main cast member it is vital to have an understudy. However, it won't be until late in the rehearsal process that the decision will be made as to which piper will go forward to perform in the stadium. Both pipers will go through all rehearsals and then travel to Delhi with the main cast.

Ian Embelton, Chief Executive of The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association, said:

"I'm delighted that bagpipes will be central to this very important moment for Glasgow and Scotland, and I think that the world will be looking out for those recognisable symbols of Scottish identity and culture.

"Both Jonathan and Craig went through a very tough process to get to this stage, I'm very pleased for them both and they will do Scotland proud."

Chief Executive for Glasgow 2014, John Scott, said:

"The appointment of the "hero pipers" is a major step forward for the Handover Ceremony project, as we are just a few weeks away from the Orientation Days which will be the first opportunity for the cast to meet each other and find out more about this exciting project.

"I can't wait to see the pipers in action over the coming months in rehearsals and see the cast coming together to put on a once in a lifetime performance."

Jonathan Graham, one of the "hero pipers", from Bishopbriggs, said:

"I am honoured to have made it through the tough auditioning process to be part of this once in a lifetime opportunity – I really can't wait to get out to Delhi, and bring the bagpipes to a stage watched by the world!"

Craig Muirhead, one of the "hero pipers", from Bannockburn, said:

"This is a fantastic opportunity and I can't believe that I've made it through! I love Scottish music, dance and culture and think this is a brilliant opportunity for us to promote Glasgow and Scotland to the rest of the world."

Glasgow 2014 aims to use the Delhi 2010 Handover Ceremony as a catalyst for engaging communities across Scotland. We will be establishing a network of people who will be motivated by the life changing experience of being involved in the Delhi 2010 Flag Handover to become ambassadors for Glasgow and the Games over the next four years.

Notes to Editors

1. Glasgow 2014 have appointed Culture and Sport Glasgow to project manage the event.
2. The Handover segment of the Closing Ceremony is made of two elements: firstly, the Commonwealth Games flag is passed from Delhi to Glasgow, and will include speeches and official music. The second part is an 8 minute creative programme to celebrate the honour of hosting the next Commonwealth Games, the production of which is the responsibility of Glasgow 2014.
3. Unspun were appointed as Creative Team for the project in October 2009 to provide an overall creative concept for the Handover Ceremony, as well as artistic direction for the delivery of the event. The company's co-founder, Sara Donaldson, along with Catherine Ugwu, an independent Executive Producer, and Mark Fisher, an independent Production Designer, will collaborate with a world-class team to develop and deliver the Ceremony.
4. For all media enquiries, please contact Glasgow 2014 PR Manager Holly Wheeler on 0141 287 3457.