

# Rutterford's latest mural commemorates William Wallace

**A monumental mural depicting Sir William Wallace and his Scottish army in a medieval battle has been unveiled.**

The 36 x 13 ft mural commemorates the 1298 Battle of Falkirk in which Wallace was defeated by England's King Edward I.

Falkirk's own hero, Sir John de Graeme, is said to have been carried slain from the battlefield by Wallace, who vowed to avenge his death.

The vast scene was painted by Chris Rutterford – the artist responsible for numerous Edinburgh murals including the spectacular Colinton Tunnel. It took over six months to complete and depicts a Scottish schiltrons (a body of troops) in the moments before battle.

It features the faces of over 100 people from around Scotland who helped crowdfund the project in return for appearing as combatants alongside Wallace and de Graeme.

The colourful artwork forms a new backdrop to the recently refurbished Sir John De Graeme memorial fountain in Falkirk's Victoria Park, erected in 1912.

The mural will also form part of an official trail to celebrate Wallace in Falkirk, due to open next year.

David Reid, convener of The Society of John de Graeme, said it was important to mark the battle fought 725 years ago, despite

Wallace's defeat on 22 July 1298.

Mr Reid, who appears as De Graeme in a battle pose in the mural, said: "The Battle of Falkirk is often overlooked because Wallace and the Scots were defeated, but the battle and its outcome played a pivotal role in Scottish history.

"The mural will help draw attention to the story of the battle.

"When I look at this new mural I see not only the faces of those who helped crowdfund this project but also those who fought and died for Scotland's cause in 1298. It's as if they have given faces to those people, whose sacrifice should never be forgotten."

Artist Rutterford, whose previous crowd murals have included Edinburgh's Hogmanay in the heart of the capital and a stunning crowd scene at Reading Football Club, said the Battle of Falkirk was his "most spectacular mural yet".

He added: "The mural shows a moment of optimism before the battle, going in with hope and expectation.

"I really wanted to get a feeling of poignancy because the Scots who turned up to the Battle of Falkirk over 700 years ago, did so because it was a cause that mattered to them.

"I think it's my best crowd mural yet."

The Battle of Falkirk was fought less than a year after Wallace's famous victory over the English at the Battle of Stirling Bridge.

King Edward I assembled a massive army of more than 20,000 men and destroyed the Scots ranks with arrows from their longbows.

De Graeme – Wallace's right hand man at Falkirk – is said to have been killed by an enemy who struck from behind through a gap in his armour.

His body was laid to rest in Falkirk Kirkyard, where his tomb can still be seen. Others killed included Sir John Stewart and the 'Men of Bute', 600 archers who came from Bute and fought under Stewart's command but were wiped out.

Wallace was captured in 1305, dragged to London and hanged, drawn and quartered.



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