

News Release
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ROYAL SCOTTISH GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY APPOINTS NEW CHAIRMAN

Professor Roger Crofts elected as Chair of educational charity

Professor Roger Crofts CBE has been elected as the Chairman of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, replacing outgoing Chairman, Barrie Brown in the New Year.

Mike Robinson, Chief Executive, said: "Barrie Brown has overseen the RSGS in probably the greatest period of change it has experienced since its original founding. He was instrumental in steering the Society's move to Perth from the University of Strathclyde, and in supporting the development of Perth's oldest house (the Fair Maid's House) into a stunning geographical education and public visitor centre, and in helping us to take such huge strides towards modernising and refreshing our organisation over the past six years."

His successor, Professor Roger Crofts has been involved in all things geographical for many years, both academically, professionally and personally. He has used his geographical skills in many senior roles in government, and as founder CEO of Scottish Natural Heritage (1992-2002).

Professor Crofts has been a Board member of a variety of international, UK and Scottish bodies (including Plantlife, the National Trust for Scotland, and SAGT), and he has a particular interest in Scotland's Earth history, Iceland's environmental protection, energy, and the world's natural wonders.

He has co-authored seven books, including *Land of Mountain and Flood: the geology and landforms of Scotland*, and his work has been widely recognised perhaps most notably with the Icelandic Soil Conservation Medal.

The Perth based educational body, one of Scotland's oldest charities, has 2,500 members around Scotland, and aims to advance the understanding of geography world-wide by supporting education, research, expeditions, and through its publications. It also runs a national talks programme in many towns and cities across Scotland, where high-quality speakers bring motivational stories of adventure, expertise on vital current issues and inspirational insights into people, places and our planet.

Professor Crofts said, "It is a rare privilege to be appointed as the Chair of the

RSGS. Now we are fully established in the Fair City, I hope we can become a beacon for new ways of looking at our world and be a formative influence in resolving the issues of the day. Like all charities, we have our challenges. I know that the Board and the staff will address these jointly with rigour and creativity. With a dynamic President, Chief Executive and staff, I relish the prospect of chairing this wonderful and prestigious organisation through its next phase.”

Professor Crofts takes over the reigns of the RSGS as its members prepare to celebrate the 130th anniversary of the Society’s founding. The Society was founded in 1884 by John George Bartholomew, of the Bartholomew map-making company, Agnes Livingstone Bruce, daughter of David Livingstone, and Professor James Geikie, a professor of Geology at the University of Edinburgh.

The RSGS has an intriguing and fascinating collection of tens of thousands of historical and contemporary maps, atlases, books, journals, papers, photographs, drawings, paintings, scientific instruments and personal artefacts, relating to the whole world, but especially to Scotland and the many areas of the world penetrated and settled by Scots.

Largely housed in the RSGS’s visitor centre, the collection is now accessible to the public as never before.

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Notes to Editors

For an extended history of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, visit www.rsgs.org/about

1. Images:
Roger Crofts, new Chairman of the RSGS.
Andy Torbet, TV presenter, extreme diver and adventurer will talk for the Society around Scotland in February.
A beautiful compass from the Burn Murdoch Globe, one of the many artefacts the RSGS has in its care.
2. The RSGS has been revitalised in recent years and, as part of its ambition to inspire people to know more about the world, it opened its visitor and education centre in 2011. The centre – at the 14th century Fair Maid’s House in Perth – displays items from the Society’s collections and hosts exhibitions, as well as acting as a base for schools, academic researchers and those planning trips. The Fair Maid’s House

was made famous by Sir Walter Scott's novel *The Fair Maid of Perth*, published in 1828.

3. Roger Crofts is originally from Leicester and now lives in Musselburgh.
4. The Society's President is broadcaster and geologist Professor Iain Stewart, well known for his BBC documentaries.