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News Release

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Words and music pay tribute to lives lost in Great War sinking

An evening of words and music will be held in Glasgow's Tall Ship on Friday (8 May) to commemorate 100 years since the Lusitania was sunk during the First World War.

The event marks the centenary of the sinking of the Clyde-built ship, which was torpedoed by a German U-boat on 7 May 1915. The sinking off the south coast of Ireland, cost the lives of 1,195 people – 128 of whom were American. The ensuing international outcry is thought to be one of the major factors leading to the United States participating in the First World War.

The one-off event, backed by the Heritage Lottery Fund, has been organised by military charity Glen Art in association with the University of Edinburgh-led project Scotland's War.

Edinburgh historian and Director of Scotland's War, Yvonne McEwan, will open the evening, telling the stories of those that lost their lives on the Lusitania 100 years ago.

The programme includes songs by composers who lost their lives in the First World War. They will be performed by McOpera – members of the Scottish Opera orchestra – led by conductor Tobias Ringborg.

Lament by Frank Bridge, will also be performed, which was written for a nine-year-old called Katherine, who was killed during the attack.

Scottish actor Scott Ryan will recite a poem by American poet Alan Seeger, who later lost his life at the Battle of the Somme.

An exhibition highlighting a number of those on board the Lusitania – including Albert Bestic, who was a Junior Officer on the Lusitania and survived the ship sinking – will also open on the night.

Director of Glen Art, Fiona MacDonald, said: "We are delighted with the support from Heritage Lottery Fund, which has enabled us to commemorate this internationally significant event. It has also been fantastic to work with Scotland's War, which has proved to be an invaluable resource and a relationship we hope to continue in the future. We look forward to sharing stories from the Lusitania and feel it is a fitting tribute to those that lost their lives."

Consular representatives from German, France, USA and Ireland and the European Commission will attend the event, as well as members of the veteran community.

An Evening of Words and Music. 8 May 7.30-10pm at the Tall Ship at the Riverside, Glasgow, G3 8RS. Tickets are free, but booking is essential. Please contact Fiona MacDonald for more information: fiona@glenart.co.uk; 07980 631 110.

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