



POIGNANT The statue in Alrewas

Memorial tribute to executed soldier

A soldier who was executed by firing squad in World War I is to be remembered on a memorial 100 years after his death.

Gunner William Lewis, 30, was shot dead in 1916 in Rouen, France, after being accused of mutiny.

But the Edinburgh soldier – who served with the 24 Brigade Royal Field Artillery – was pardoned in 2006, along with others executed for acts which did not deserve the death penalty.

After a campaign by military historians from the Chase Project, Lewis and two others will be added to the Shot at Dawn memorial in Alrewas, Staffordshire.

Historian Richard Pursehouse said: “We got involved after being asked to look at the case of a New Zealand soldier whose name was missing from the memorial.

“We found there were two British soldiers who had been overlooked too.”

The names of Lewis, Corporal Jesse Short and Kiwi Private Cecil Braithwaite will be added at a ceremony in October.

The memorial, which shows a blindfolded soldier ready to be shot, is in tribute to 306 soldiers executed for capital offences during World War I.

Organisers have been trying to trace descendants of the men.

We tracked down Lewis's great-nephew Bryan Ritchie in South Queensferry.

He said: “It's great that he'll be honoured. I'd be keen to find out more about what happened to him.”

Wreck to be raised

The wreck of a fishing boat which sank off the Outer Hebrides last month killing three men is set to be raised this week.

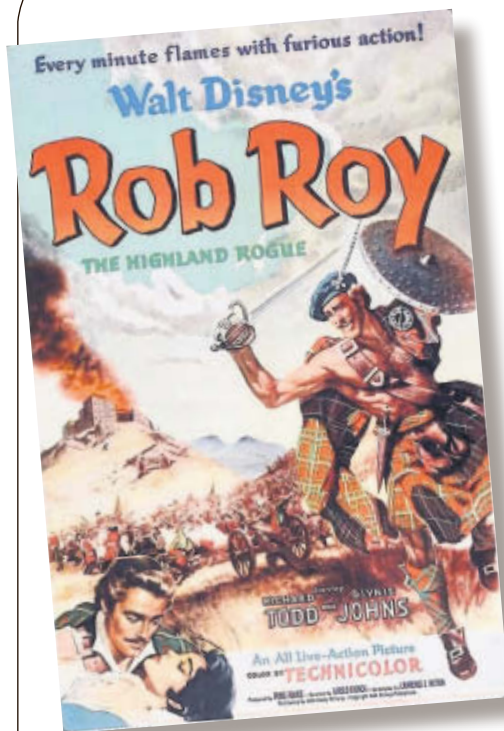
The Marine Accident Investigation Branch plan to salvage the Louisa from the sea bed to find out what caused the crabber to sink off Mingulay on April 9.

An MAIB spokesman said it would be raised “as soon as the weather allows”.

REVEALED FILM GURU'S HIGHLAND SKETCH

Walt Disney's man in the Highlands

Oscar winner saved Rob Roy drawing



ACTION A poster for the film, which starred Richard Todd

Heather Greenaway

An Oscar winner's stunning sketch for a Disney film set in the Highlands has been revealed for the first time.

John Box went on to be art director on films such as Doctor Zhivago and Lawrence of Arabia.

But his drawing for the 1953 Disney movie Rob Roy – The Highland Rogue, filmed before his career really took off, has become a treasure for his family.

It is particularly precious because John, who died in 2005 aged 85, ripped up the vast majority of his sketches after he was finished with them.

“The Rob Roy drawing is so beautiful and it is great to share it. He really enjoyed the film

drawings so the majority were, very sadly, chucked out at the end of each film.

“One we do have, which has to be the earliest example of his work, is a sketch, very small but very atmospheric, for the 1953 Walt Disney production of Rob Roy – The Highland Rogue.

“It is very beautiful and it's great to be able to share it. I know he really enjoyed his time on the film.”

John had a great affinity with Scotland and towards the end of his life he formed a close friendship with Sir Sean Connery.

John, who won four Oscars for his set designs, met the Scots legend on the set of First Knight in 1994.

Susan, who is one of the creators of BBC series Casualty, said: “It was my father's last film and a very unhappy affair.

“He was accused of overspending and was dismissed from the

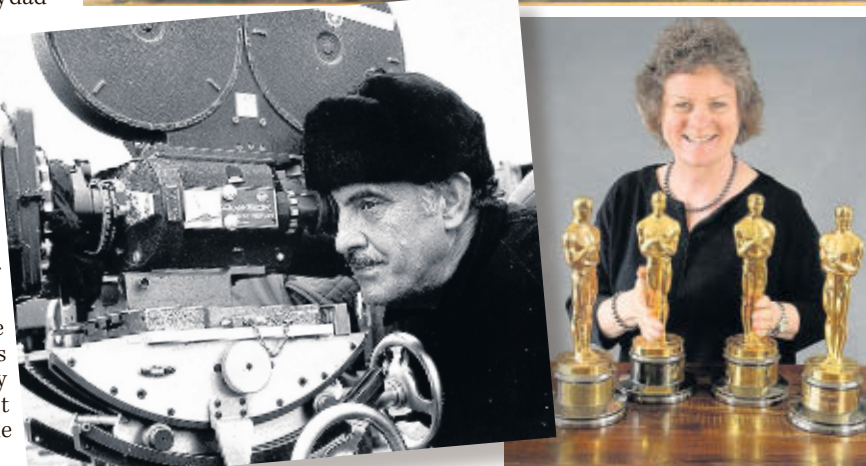
John's daughter Susan Gandar stumbled upon the illustration after his death but has no idea why he chose to save it and not others.

Susan, 60, who is delighted to be sharing the sketch with the public for the first time, said: “My dad was art director on many of the world's biggest movies and would spend hours sketching the sets.

“But we have very few of my father's sketches. He regarded them as working



ATMOSPHERIC The sketch Susan found from 1953 Disney film Rob Roy



LEGEND John Box at work. Right, daughter Susan with his Oscars

production. The producers wanted to save money by getting rid of my dad's team but he would not hear of it and said he would go.

“What the production lot did not know was his team were smuggling him in every night to help with the sets as they could not fulfil his vision without him.

“Sean Connery stood by him through the whole dismal episode and they became very good friends.”

Susan, who lives in Teignmouth, Devon, added: “From then on, Sean

became a presence in our lives. He often phoned my dad and they would chat about film and golf.

“Sean encouraged my father to come and play a few rounds with him but he never took him up on it.

“My dad was hurt by what happened to him on First Knight but knowing Connery was on his side made it better.”

John, whose career also included A Man for All Seasons, Oliver! and The Inn of the Sixth Happiness, was a legend in British film production design. He

earned the nickname “The Magician” when he recreated snowy Russia in scorching midsummer Spain for David Lean's Doctor Zhivago using crushed marble for the snow and ice underfoot.

Susan – who spent her 12th birthday on the set of Oliver! – says it was great to have such a talented father but admits she didn't get to see him much when she was growing up.

She said: “When he was working on Lawrence of Arabia he was away for three years and only returned once in that time for Christmas. It wasn't until I was older I got to know him properly.”

Susan has just published her first book We've Come To Take You Home and says her parents inspired her to write it.

She said: “The main character is a pilot, who spends most of his time away from home like my dad. I followed my father into the world of film but I went the TV route, working for the BBC.

“My mother Doris was a costume designer. I'm lucky to have inherited both my parents' creative genes.

“I'm sad they are not here to see my first book published but I know they would be very proud.”