



## **Bringing much loved statue to new life in The Artists' Town**

Kirkcudbright is a lovely scenic Scottish fishing town with an artistic heritage tucked away in the beautiful Dumfries and Galloway countryside. Established as a Royal Burgh in 1455, Kirkcudbright has always been supported by a busy fishing trade. Behind the harbour the streets have housed generations of creative artists, a tradition maintained today by a flourishing colony of painters and craftworkers. This has led to it being called "The Artists' Town".

Kirkcudbright is very much a working fishing town and today some 14 trawlers ranging from 40 ft to 86 ft in length are based at the port. The grounds they work extend from the Shetland Islands to the Bay of Biscay with the crews travelling home every two weeks, but, in the winter months they generally work from Kirkcudbright. Wherever they work, the normal practice of most skippers is to sell their catches to local processors. When the fleet is in the boats moor two deep at the harbour quay right in the centre of the town. It is one of the busiest fishing ports for the landing of king and queen scallops in the United Kingdom. A local economy has built around the fishing fleet; fish processing, dredging gear manufacturers, suppliers etc..

All this has come at a cost. In 1985 the "Mhari-L" was lost with all 5 hands. Then in 2000 the "Solway Harvester" was lost with all 7 hands. Both vessels were lost in the Irish Sea. On their way to the boats, fishermen walk past a memorial dedicated to the women and children of this and other Galloway fishing communities who have lost their menfolk.

The memorial "In Memory Of Loved Ones Lost At Sea" was carved in green oak by local artist Charlie Easterfield in 1994 and depicts a Mother and Child clasping each other and anxiously looking out to sea - looking and waiting for their loved ones. **"It is a very lovely piece of local art which has a huge significance to the community and which is much admired by locals and visitors alike"** says Stewartry committee administrator Hazel Kerr.

Over the years the statue was affected by the formation of algae and black spot and eventually began to rot. It was repaired by a local joiner in 2011 but algae and black spot began to develop

again. On seeing the deterioration Sioo's UK Ambassador, who is a regular visitor to the area, offered to help by providing the community a supply of the SiOO:X Wood Protection product. This was gratefully accepted and, after cleaning, the statue was treated in June 2013 by staff of Dumfries and Galloway Council. Only a few months later, the transformation is remarkable. The Mother and Child have been given new life.

SiOO:X is well known for its effectiveness in protecting timber in the harshest of coastal environments. Completely environmentally friendly, water based and using the mineral silicon the treatment gives long life and a beautiful natural silver grey lustrous surface. It protects against the formation of algae and rot, is weather proof but allows the timber to breathe. SiOO:X is particularly effective with oak as can be seen in the pictures below.

Lesley Garbutt, the Provost of Kirkcudbright says: "We are very grateful for the assistance of Sioo in helping us to preserve this much loved artwork – it truly has been given new life."

Sioo Wood Protection says: "Sioo feels privileged to be able to help in the restoration and sustaining of this lovely piece of local artwork"



Mother and Child Statue deteriorating



Statue in August 2013 after treatment with Sioo Wood Protection in June 2013



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