



Lord Lieutenant of Moray, Grenville Johnston, gifts a special bottle of malt to blacksmith Gordon Masson as a thank you for repairing Tommy Picture courtesy of Press and Journal. P&J copyright Mo

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Council's blacksmith gets special thanks for repairing vandalised WW1 'Tommy'

The man who repaired Elgin's 'Tommy' figure after it was vandalised received the personal thanks of Moray's Lord-Lieutenant.

Gordon Masson, a Moray Council blacksmith, was visited at his Ashgrove workshop by Lt Colonel Grenville Johnston who expressed his gratitude for the work done on the symbolic sculpture.

"I saw the online reaction to both the vandalism and the wonderful repair, and I wanted to meet the man that did such a first class job in restoring our Tommy.

"We were saddened to see the damage to this sculpture, which we planned to have as part of our Remembrance Service in Elgin on November 10. Gordon's work restoring the figure to its former glory means a great deal to us all, and on behalf of the Moray community I wanted to meet him and pass on the grateful thanks of everyone."

The figure represents a WW1 soldier and was created to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the Great War. The figure was placed at New Elgin war memorial when it was attacked and badly damaged by vandals.

As well as the thanks of the Lord Lieutenant, Gordon was presented with a special bottle of The Lord-Lieutenant's Speyside single malt whisky -an 18 year-old single-cask bottling of The Macallan.

Gordon, 61, received praise on social media after his repair work was made public, but said he was ‘just doing his job’.

“Unfortunately this is the second time I’ve had to fix the sculpture after it’s been vandalised,” he said.

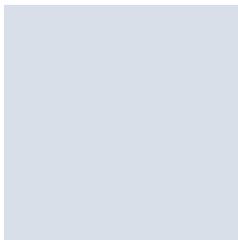
“This time it was in pretty bad shape, just looked like a twisted pile of metal on my workbench.

“It took about a day and a half to fix and re-paint it, which I was pleased to be able to do. It’s such a shame that those that damaged it clearly don’t understand what this figure stands for or what it means to many others.”

A time-served blacksmith, Gordon has been with Moray Council for 18 years, having previously worked for fabrication companies in Moray. His work encompasses everything that needs to be repaired or made from scratch, and swaps bodies on HGVs. Last year he made a snowplough attachment for a new truck at significantly less cost than one from the vehicle manufacturer.

Famous for its colony of dolphins, fabulous beaches and more malt whisky distilleries than any where else in Scotland, Moray is a thriving area and a great place to live. Nestling between Aberdeenshire and the Highlands, Moray stretches from Tomintoul in the south to the shores of the Moray Firth, from Keith in the east to Brodie Castle in the west.

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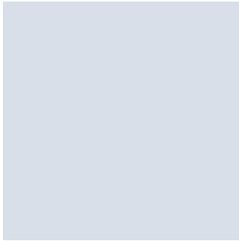
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