

West Highland Museum
FORT WILLIAM



Report 2020

westhighlandmuseum.org.uk

West Highland Museum Trust

Cameron Square, Fort William

PRESIDENT

Donald Angus Cameron of Lochiel

DIRECTORS

Vice- President: Mrs F. Maclean of Ardgour

Chair: Mr I.P. MacDonald

Dr C. Robinson, Ms C. Gooch, Mrs J. Wright,
Councillor A. Baxter (*nominated by the Highland Council*),
Mr R. Cameron (*nominated by the Lochaber Local History Society*),
Mr K. MacKintosh (after 7 October 2020), Mr N. MacLeod (after 7 October 2020)

The Directors are elected from the membership of the
West Highland Museum Trust with the exception of nominees.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Chair: Mr R. Sidgwick

Mr A. Kirk, Mrs J. Wright, Miss C. Barker

COLLECTIONS AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Chair: Dr C. Robinson

Mr R. Cameron, Mr. I.P. MacDonald, Mr I. Skinner, Mrs M. Shearer, Mrs V. Martin

MANAGER: Miss C. Barker

CURATOR: Mrs V. Martin

CO-ORDINATOR OF VOLUNTEERS & SHOP MANAGER: Mrs S. McLachlan

Objects: The West Highland Museum was founded in 1922 for the education of the general public and to collect and preserve objects and records connected by use, manufacture or association with the West Highlands.

Governing documents: The West Highland Museum was constituted as a Society in 1927. The last Deed of Trust was dated September 2011.

The West Highland Museum Trading Company Limited was incorporated on 17th December 2014. Company Number: SC493572.

The West Highland Museum Trust was constituted on 15th November 2017.

Scottish Charity Number: SCO 47954 **Scottish Company Number:** 581556

Bankers: Bank of Scotland, 62 High Street, Fort William
Clydesdale Bank, 58 High Street, Fort William

Independent Examiners: R A Clement Associates

Front cover: Curator, Vanessa Martin, in the newly decorated Jacobite Gallery. (*Image: Iain Ferguson*)

2020 Annual Report from the Chair

After 10 years of such positive growth, with visitor numbers and income increasing year on year, the impact of Covid restrictions in 2020 brought this trajectory to a shuddering halt. The Museum closed its doors in March 2020 and opened again from early September in a limited and tightly managed way until being obliged to close due to low visitor numbers at the end of October 2020. Our manager, Colleen Barker, Vanessa Martin and Sonja McLachlan were placed in furlough for part of the year. Many of the volunteers were in a more vulnerable age bracket and were not able to return even when the doors did reopen. A group of Directors and the team planned our reopening with care and we were able to get a steady but restricted flow of visitors and sales when we were actually open. With income from visitors more than £50,000 less than in 2019, we appreciated the Government support of £51,000 which kept the balance sheet strong. Obviously with lower costs because the building was not being used, and the furlough scheme supporting salaries, we were able to avoid losing money in this period. Our tenants at No 40 High Street, The PDSA charity, decided to relinquish their lease. This loss of rental significantly impacts on the annual income, but a significant sum was contributed by the charity to make good the condition of the building.

Despite these restrictions, the museum did not stand still. The acquisition of a beautiful oil by DY Cameron RA expresses our connection with this celebrated Scottish artist who was himself a member of the West Highland Museum and an enthusiastic supporter. Various volunteers took the opportunity to decorate areas of the museum with the Jacobite Room benefitting from a dramatic new cloak of 'Rectory Red'. This projects the paintings beautifully and is being much complimented. The transfer of the archive records to a new database has been laborious but is definitely making research considerably easier.

Lockdown has enabled so many people to communicate with the museum online. We have been working in partnership with the University of St Andrews on a digital gallery. Our "WHM100" gallery features 100 of the most treasured objects in our collection and has been created to celebrate our centenary in 2022. Work on the gallery is ongoing and has been supported by events such as a webinar in association with the University which drew a huge audience. A series of podcasts on Blarmafoldach by Dr Chris Robinson attracted remarkable reach. His podcast on our Secret Portrait of Bonnie Prince Charlie for Museums and Heritage Highland has attracted their biggest audience by far. Our Social Media channels have prospered enormously in this period and we have introduced new features such as blogs and a YouTube channel.

In 2022, the museum celebrates 100 years since inception. This provides us with a great opportunity to celebrate our exceptional collection and contribution to Lochaber society, and to consider what we wish to take forward for the next generation. Our curator, Vanessa Martin, has been working on an exceptional exhibition of Jacobite Portraits for the autumn of 2022. This will not only look fantastic but will further reinforce our reputation as an authoritative locus for the study of this period. The return of No 40 The High Street to our estate provides the museum with an opportunity to develop access directly to the High Street and the board committed to a significant initiative to create a retail space for long term sustainable income, to significantly improve visitor accessibility, to enhance the staff working context and to provide a dedicated research area by developing this building and creating



direct access through No 40 into the museum. The risk associated with the condition of the barn remained a challenge through 2020, with the costs defined for the demolition far exceeding what could be afforded. Subsequent circumstances which are currently being investigated look to allow us to retain and actually develop this building as a valuable asset.

The Board of the museum welcomed two new members both long established contributors to the museum's wellbeing in Neil Macleod and Kenny Mackintosh. Ronald Cameron stepped down as the History Society's nominee and was elected as a director. Dr Chris Robinson stepped down as a statutory director and remains on the board as the nominee for the History Society, and has replaced Betty Bruce as Chair of the Collections and Learning Committee. Our long association with Richard Sidgwick comes to a close with his resignation from Chair of the Audit Committee. His energies over many years to support of our museum, as a Trustee, then as a Director, and finally as Chair of the Audit Committee are much appreciated and enormous thanks was given by the board for his extraordinary contribution. We welcome Kenneth Barker as the new Chair of this important committee. At the very end of 2019 our Chair, John Hutchison, stepped down and also resigned from the board. John's contribution to the recent success of the museum was paramount. He presided over

decisions which led to the museum offering free entry, a step which drove phenomenal growth in visitor numbers and increased income through donations. He also took the museum through legal changes from a Trust to its current status, a move which led to the purchase of No 40 which will be the lynchpin of our further development. All these activities took considerable time and energy and the board is deeply grateful for John's contribution through his many years with the museum.

2020 was indeed a year of change and the museum has fared well with enough income and with a great team on board. And yet significant challenges lie ahead. With our manager stepping back, there is a need to have the role filled. Our cohort of volunteers who truly keep the show on the road has shrunk dramatically through the covid era as many of the more mature volunteers remain unable to come and help. This has reduced the museum's capacity and it is currently only open on weekdays from 10 until 3pm. A strict limit on the numbers in the building, and a still modest spend per visitor head all contribute to a much lower income expectation in the year ahead. Recognising this, the museum has several initiatives to increase visitor spend and to attract further funding, but this remains a considerable challenge.

Ian Peter MacDonald
Chair

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the West Highland Museum gives access to special and temporary exhibitions, lectures and other museum activities. It also allows use of the reference library by appointment. In addition members will receive the museum's literature including a newsletter.

Categories and subscription rates:

Member : £15.00 per annum

Associate member : £7.50 per annum

Adopt-A-Showcase : £30.00 per annum

Subscription renewal is due annually on 1st May and the AGM is held on the last Thursday in May unless otherwise advised.

Gifts, Loans & Purchases

Magazine. The Penny Magazine for the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. volume 181, January 31st 1835. Includes a front-page article and illustration of shinty.

Donated by Chris Robinson.

Photographs. A collection of twenty-one panoramic photographs by Andrew Paton.

Donated by Iain Abernethy.



HIGH BRIDGE, SPEAN, SCENE OF THE FIRST FIGHT IN THE REBELLION OF 1745

Postcard. Postcard title "HighBridge, Scene of the first fight in the rebellion of 1745". *Donated by Iain Abernethy.*

Postcards. 3 postcards of local interest. "Prince Charlie's Monument, Loch Shiel, Glenfinnan", "Highland, Grand and Stations from the Pier, Fort William" and "Highland Hotel, Fort William."

Donated by Jan Locke.

18th century lace. Lace that purportedly belonged to Prince Charles Edward Stuart. The lace was gifted to the donor's mother by the Countess of Stolberg, the lace came through the family directly from the Prince. Decorated with flower design and handmade in the 18th century.

Donated by Bridget Bonthron.



Musket balls. Two impacted musket balls found at High Bridge in 2019. Thought to have been fired by Jacobites on the British Army during the first skirmish of the 1745 Rising. *On loan from Paul MacDonald.*

Trigger guard. Trigger guard from a Brown Bess musket found at Highbridge near Spean Bridge in 2020 by the lender.

On loan from Ross Hunter.

Leaflets. Three leaflets relating to tourist travel in 1959. 1) Day circular tours from Fort William by train, motor and steam. 2) Grand circular rail, steamer and coach tour to Skye 3) Observation car trip from Glasgow to Fort William on the West Highland Line. *Donated by Colin Pinkett.*

Commando memorabilia. Extensive collection of twenty-six objects relating to Syd Shadbolt who served with 5 Commando in World War II and trained at Achnacarry. Many items relate to his service in the Far East. *Donated on behalf of Syd's widow, Joan Shadbolt, by Steve Nicholl.*

Sundial. Brass sundial installed in the Parade Fort William from 22 June 1954 to celebrate the tercentenary. It includes the



quotation "A Shadow round about my face
The sunny hours of day will trace".
*Donated by Gordon Clark on behalf of the
now disbanded Fort William Community
Council.*

Oil painting. Oil on canvas by Sir David
Young Cameron RA RSA HRSW RE 1865 –
1945. Landscape depicting Knoydart in
the West Highlands.
*Purchased with the assistance of Art Fund,
the family of the late John Gooch and the
National Fund for Acquisitions.*



Snuff horn. 18th century snuff mull made
from the tip of a horn. Wooden lid with
looped leather fastening. An ivory snuff
scoop is attached to the lid by string. A
snuff metal snuff spoon is inside the snuff
horn. The horn was said to have been used
by Alexander Stewart of Invernahyle, a
Jacobite and Stewart of Appin who fought
in the 1745 Jacobite Rising. *Donated by
Robert Watt.*

Aluminium memorabilia. Various objects
and images relating to the Lochaber
Aluminium smelter. *Loan from the Alvanca
Group for a temporary exhibition to
celebrate the 90th anniversary of the
Lochaber smelter.*

Additions to Library and Archive

Black, William, **In Far Lochaber**, Sampson,
Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington Ltd: 1889.
Donated by Ben MacPhee.

Thompson, Francis, **Crofting Years**, Luath
Press: 1986. *Donated by Vanessa Martin.*

Shead, Norman F, Scottish History Society,
**Scottish Episcopal Acts Volume II: The Early
Thirteenth Century, c.1200 - c. 1240**, Boydell
Press: 2019. *Purchase.*

Bridgeman, Mark, **Blood Beneath Ben Nevis**,
Watermill Books: 2020. *Purchase.*

Johnston, W. & A.K., **Scottish Clans and Their
Tartans**, London & Edinburgh.
Donated by Syd Elliott.

Hunt, Leslie C., **The Prisoner's Progress**,
Hutchinson & Co, London & Melbourne:
1941. *Donated by Kenny Grant.*

Dickie, Donald, **The Evacuation of Soay June
1953**, Bell and Bain Ltd: 2019.
Donated by the author.

Scottish History Society, **Miscellany of the
Scottish History Society, XVI**. *Purchase.*

**Transactions of the Gaelic Society of
Inverness. Volume LXIX 2018 – 2020**,
Purchase.

The deaths of the following members are noted with regret

Janet Gallon Dorothy Jean Lawson Alistair MacLeod Maria MacLeod Jenny Spencer-Smith

Printing Bonnie Prince Charlie's Jacobite Banknotes

We have printed, from the original 275-year-old copper Plate, twenty-two prints of the Jacobite Banknotes commissioned by Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1746.

In February 1746 on his retreat from Derby Prince Charles Edward arrived in Inverness very short of funds. In his view, as a future King, and as a key symbol of the potency of the intended Stuart government, he determined the right to have printed paper money to pay his troops. Perhaps an early attempt at "Quantitative Easing!"

He called upon Robert Strange, an Orcadian Artist and Engraver to produce bank notes of different denominations. Strange described in his diaries how difficult this was with limited materials.



Sir Robert Strange by Jean Baptiste Greuze

However, he had a printing press constructed, engraved the Plate, and was probably about to start production, when on 16th April 1746 the Battle of Culloden saw the destruction of the Jacobite Army and the end of Prince Charles Edward's attempt to regain the British throne.



The 2021 print



Close up of a banknote on the copper printing plate

The Plate disappears from history for 90 years until it was discovered close to a ford on the River Spean in about 1835. Bonnie Prince Charlie had crossed and recrossed that ford in August 1746 during his flight after Culloden. We can speculate that it was lost from his baggage about that time. We know that the Plate came into the possession of the family of General Hugh Ross of Glenmoidart and that he gifted it to Cluny Macpherson just before the General's death in 1864. It first reached public notice in an academic article in 1864, and probably in the 1890's a handful of prints was made from the plate by the Jacobite scholar Walter Biggar Blaikie.

The Plate was acquired by the Museum at the Sale of Cluny's effects in London in 1928. The Scottish Artist D.Y. Cameron was instrumental in raising funds to purchase the Plate and he printed 52 numbered and signed prints in 1928. These prints were sold for 10/6 each to raise funds for the museum. No other prints were made in the last century.

Alastair Clark, Studio Director at Edinburgh Printmakers, has advised throughout the process of printing and has produced 22 prints to celebrate our founding in 1922, perfect for our centenary.

A top-grade etching paper was selected with the retention of the deckled edge on the sheet. The prints were struck by Alastair in April 2021, and they look extraordinary. Imagine handling the actual banknotes



Printing from the Strange Plate

created for the anticipated Jacobite world of the mid-18th century.

The first of this numbered series will be sold by Public Auction at Messrs Lyon & Turnbull in August this year. No. one will be unique as the first of the print run and that it is being framed in beechwood sourced from the famous Beech Avenue at Achnacarry, the seat of Clan Cameron.

In 1745 as Bonnie Prince Charlie arrived to raise his standard at Glenfinnan, Cameron of Lochiel was in the midst of planting saplings for an avenue of beech trees near Achnacarry Castle alongside the River Arkaig. He left these bunched closely together and never returned to space them. These trees are now at the end of their natural lifespan and are in decline. By permission of Donald Cameron, the present Lochiel and Chief of Clan Cameron, we have sourced some beech wood from the 1745 avenue to frame the print.

The wood has been milled and fashioned by master cabinet maker Peter Davis in his workshop and has been framed by Gillian Sloan, both locally in Fort William.

A short film has been made by the Glasgow based film maker Jen Martin telling the story of the Plate and the prints production. It can be viewed on the museum's website and YouTube channel.

Five prints will be retained at the museum.

Sale of the Prints:

Details of how to obtain a Print are on the front page of the museum's website.

1. Auction

Print number one has been framed and will be sold at Lyon & Turnbull on Wednesday 18 August.

2. Raffle

One unframed Print will be available for a raffle. Virtual Tickets will cost £10 and can be purchased in multiples.

Payment for the Raffle, which will be seen as a donation to the museum, can be made:

a. In cash, or by card at the museum

b. By PayPal, or card using the Donate button on the museum's website

The Raffle will close, and the winning number established by an automatic number generator on Tuesday 7 September at 12 noon.

3. Sale of the Remaining Prints

After the sale of No.1 by Auction, the price will be announced for the sale of the remaining 15 unframed prints and will be published at 12 noon on Friday 27th August.

If you are interested in purchasing a print please register your interest with your name, address, telephone number and email address by emailing info@westhighlandmuseum.org.uk

If you have registered an interest, we will email you on the afternoon of Friday 27th August with the purchase price.

In the event that you wish to buy at that price we will ask you to confirm your interest immediately. The list of interests will close at Midday on Friday 3rd September.

If the applications for purchase are oversubscribed, the successful purchasers will be drawn at random at midday on Tuesday 7th September at 12 noon. Successful purchasers will be informed that afternoon, and payment must be received before Tuesday 14th September. The prints will be dispatched by post in a board tube (or available for collection at the Museum) in the week beginning 13th September.

Please do support the museum and buy a raffle ticket or print. All proceeds from the sales will go to support the museum.

Chris Robinson

A Volunteer's Perspective

I retired eleven years ago and after a year I started looking for something useful to become involved with. At about the same time I noticed that the West Highland Museum was recruiting volunteers to help run the museum. As I have always been interested in history and especially Scottish and local history, I thought this might be interesting. I got in touch with the museum and was invited for an interview. This was really just a very informal and relaxed chat with the Co-Ordinator for Volunteers Sonja MacLachlan. She explained that the week was divided into half day shifts for six days in the week. I decided on one morning shift a week.

So, In June 2011 I arrived for my first shift. I was to be at the front of house meeting and greeting the visitors, explaining to them how to go around the museum to get the best experience and give them any leaflets or language guides that they might require and land also in the shop. We have a small but beautifully formed shop. Lots of books about local history and Scottish history, with books also about the West Highland Railway and the Observatory and other relevant local books. We also have a varied children's section and the usual gifts and cards that most museums have. These are my main duties.

But there are also other things I have been involved in. I have some computer knowledge so when the museum was adding the collection to the computer, I helped with inputting data. I have helped with inputting paperwork for the accounts and other office duties including counting the donations, have you ever tried to make piles of 1p and 5p pieces stand up - nightmare, but we now have a facility for donating electronically - so hopefully not so much small change. I also help with stock taking - in the summer every week - to keep out shelves full. Other volunteers have been helping with painting and decorating and other jobs like wood work or repairs. Even some gardening at the back of the museum.



*Volunteer Co-ordinator, Sonja MacLachlan
and Helen Curran*

One thing that bothers some would be volunteers and it did me was - What if someone asks me a question and I don't know the answer. Betty Bruce gives new volunteers a very comprehensive tour of the museum when they start and you pick up a lot about the museum collection when you are there. If someone does ask - say if you don't know the answer, but offer to find out. Ask the Curator or the Manager - if no one is available suggest they email the curator or, and I've done this, sometimes especially if it is quiet - look it up with the visitor on the web. That way you can both find out.

One of the most interesting parts of volunteering is meeting the public. I like Autumn and Spring best - it is a bit quieter and as we get a lot of older people on tours at this time of year, we might have time to chat - they often have such stories to tell, family that were in the Commandos or relatives that came from the area and they are exploring their family tree. In the summer we meet lots of foreign visitors and can be very busy.

I can't believe that ten years has gone by. I still look forward to my Wednesday mornings. Always new people to meet and something different to do. There are changes ahead for the museum - already we have grown our visitor numbers from 9,000 per year to over 60,000 in 2019 and now we are hoping to expand. Lots of exciting things to look forward to and help with.

Helen Curran

Iain Lom or John MacDonald. Gaelic bard

In 1625, as the civil war raged in Scotland, two Parliamentary armies tried to bottle up and destroy the Marquis of Montrose and his loyalist force in the Great Glen. Montrose suddenly appeared and utterly annihilated one of these under the Campbell Earl of Argyll.

His army had been guided there over the high snow-covered hills by a lad of 20 something called Iain Lom. John Buchan called this the greatest flanking march in British military history. The hardship was so great to the lightly clad warriors that Montrose's own son later died of the effects.

Iain is the most outstanding of the remarkable Keppoch bards, the poets of the MacDonalds of Keppoch, near Roy Bridge. Lom is the Gaelic word for bald; his nickname rather than a surname. My favourite exhibit in the West Highland Museum is a knobby black stick believed to have belonged to the bard; as far as I know his only surviving possession, our only tangible link to an astonishing character and his part in Lochaber's Gaelic heritage.

Although unarmed Iain declined the offer of a sword at Inverlochty saying *Cathaichibh sibhse, innse mise*; "You fight, I'll tell it like it was." Having accidentally killed his own brother in a clan fight, Iain had eschewed sharp pointy objects. Instead, he climbed a tree, observed the battle and began to compose his classic account *La Inbhir Lochaidh*, The Day of Inverlochty. Iain hated Clan Campbell with a Balkan intensity which pours forth from this poem. *La Inbhir Lochaidh* isn't just a hymn of hate; it is a valuable historical source on one of the most devastating battles of the civil war.



Iain was a Stuart loyalist all his life. Charles II made him his poet laureate. When his young clan chief was murdered, he endured great danger and hardship to bring the guilty to justice, cutting off the heads of the murderers and taunting another MacDonald, who had failed to act, with his trophies. Today there is a monument beside the Inverness Road at Tobar nan Ceann, The Well of the Heads, where Iain washed his grizzly trophies before presenting them to MacDonnell of Invergarry. He recorded the event in *Murt na Ceapaich* (The Keppoch Murders) and gives us insights into the mind and thought processes of a 17th century Highlander.

Before Iain Lom Gaelic bards generally wrote poems of praise for their clan chiefs in the classical Gaelic of old Ireland. Iain Lom marks a transition to the vernacular or everyday Gaelic of his time. His verse is still largely intelligible to anyone with a reasonable grasp of modern Gaelic. He had a long and eventful life; believed to have been present at the Battle of Killiecrankie in 1689 when he would have been in his mid-60s. Loyal to James VII, he was one of the first Jacobites. His hostility to William of Orange comes over strongly in *Murt Ghlinne Comhan*, his lines on the Massacre of Glen Coe while *Oran an Aghaidh and Aonaidh* (A Song Against the Union) places him firmly against the union with England.

Dying sometime around 1710 he is believed to have been buried at Cille Choiril, the ancient Catholic burial ground east of Roy Bridge where a monument was erected to him by Charles Fraser-MacKintosh, M.P., in the late 19th century. More people should know about him.

Ron Cameron

Above: Well of the Seven Heads monument beside Loch Oich. Left: Iain Lom's memorial stone in Cille Choiril grave yard, near Roy Bridge. (Image: Kevin Cameron)



A Lochaber Lass remembers VE Day 1945

To commemorate VE Day in May 2020, museum member Betty Bruce recalled her memories in our VE Day blog. On 8 May 1945 the country celebrated VE Day. Betty Bruce lived with her parents in Inverlochty village on the outskirts of Fort William where she attended the local primary school. Here she shares her memories of VE Day in Lochaber.

It will be tomorrow. It will be the next day. It will be soon, soon, soon. All the excited chatter in the school playground was about one thing. When would peace in Europe be declared? The children in the playground had never known a world without war. The names Churchill and Hitler were as familiar as Santa Claus. But Hitler was dead. The Allies were in Berlin. We were all ready to celebrate. Preparations were being made all round the Village.

All the houses in the Village were to be decorated. Some lucky people had Union Jacks to be flown. These must have been saved from the 1937 Coronation. Even if flags were available to purchase, no one would use valuable coupons to get one. No matter how patriotic, coupons were too precious to use extravagantly.

We had no flag, but my mother sacrificed part of a well-worn sheet to my pleading. No expert in arts and crafts, I cut out a number of triangular pennants and hemmed them to take a long rope. These I dyed red and blue. I already had the white. When the great day arrived my long suffering father draped them high along the front of our house. I was so proud. I had done my bit to add to the celebrations.

Finally, we knew the day! The headmaster had toured the Village the night before to tell us that there would be no school the next day. We all listened to Churchill's victory speech on the wireless. Television was a myth to us. Television was something that would come in post war Britain. The highlight of the day was the bonfire. It had been patiently assembled, waiting at the gully on the edge of the British Aluminium Company's farm land. We were allowed to stay up late because it would not be lit until dusk. Dusk came fairly late in early May. It was glorious. Bright, bright light after



Wartime Fort William (1940)

years of black out! I was not so happy about the squibs someone set off. We had had enough of loud bangs during the last five years.

Then we were back to school. The festivities continued. There was a children's fancy dress parade. The adults had an open-air dance which we all watched with glee and admiration. The king sent each child an illuminated thanks for our war efforts. These were handed out to all school children.

After the great day, not much really changed. We no longer carried gas masks to school. Black out was no longer required. The street lights came on to be gazed at with wonder for a brief minute then completely accepted. Rationing continued. Serving personnel still did not come home. War continued on the other side of the world in the Far East until the atom bomb and victory in August 1945.

But we had had a celebration. I remember my pennants with pride. Enjoyment was the two sweets handed out at school. And, I still have my missive from the King.

Betty Bruce

Into our Second Century

The museum has owned No 40, High Street since 2018 when the Scottish Land Fund made it possible for the newly formed West Highland Museum Trust to purchase the building. This foresighted decision anticipated that, at some point in the future, the building would enable museum expansion and in the meantime it could provide useful rental income. Early in the lockdown period in 2020, our tenant, the PDSA handed in their notice to terminate their lease. This left the museum with a decision to make. It was clearly a time of change on the High Street and the prospect of finding a long term tenant willing to pay a generous rent seemed unlikely.

At the same time, it is clear that it will take some time before visitor numbers and visitor spend will be as high as in 2019. Our success in the years running up to lockdown also illustrated the strains on the current set up. There were considerable challenges providing access for all. Wheelchair users could only access the first floor with difficulty and there were no secure places to keep visitors' belongings. The staff and volunteers had poor facilities, with cramped working space and no space at all for break. The shop was crammed into a small area which compromised the entrance and frustrated opportunities to extend the offer. Much of the collection in store is not able to be kept in appropriate condition and could be in danger of deterioration. Finally, the museum aims to have its fantastic Jacobite collection recognised as a collection of national importance. Without any suitable space for academic study, this cannot be granted.

With a reasonable cushion of reserves in the bank, and responsibility to take the museum forward appropriate for our second century, the board has decided to commit to developing the existing building at No 40 in order to relieve many of these pressures. Access through the building at No 40 into the museum on both floors and taking out the stairs in Room 8 will immediately increase the exhibition space as well as enabling a stairwell and lift at the back of No 40 resolving many of the current access challenges. More space will



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improve the working experience, enable better storage and substantially improve our educational possibilities. In particular having such a prominent position on the High St will enable the museum to establish a world class museum shop which will attract visitors passing on the High Street as well as museum visitors leaving through the shop. With thoughtful product selection telling key local stories, run by an informed retailer, this should provide sustainable long term income for the museum.

The challenge is to make these changes in a way which will build on the current character and style of our museum. In order to address this, a highly respected heritage consultant, Kate McHugh from "Bright" in Edinburgh has been commissioned to assess the challenge and inform the final brief. She is working with Helen Lucas a celebrated architect with a base in Roshven in order to draw up the initial proposals. This document will inform the primary fundraising campaign. A team consisting of Neil Macleod, myself, Carrie Gooch, Vanessa Martin, Colleen Barker and Martha Barker are driving this campaign. Martha has considerable experience raising capital sums at various museums mostly in the US and this has been enormously useful in helping us understand the process and efforts involved. This is a considerable and ambitious project which will take us carefully and excitingly into our second century. It will involve each and every one of our supporters and we are very much looking forward to sharing this challenge with our local community and our fans from across the world.

Ian Peter MacDonald

West Highland Museum Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)
Statement of financial activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account)
For the year ended 31 December 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total £
Income from:				
Donations, Grants & Legacies	2	68,002	13,000	81,002
Investment income	3	38,677	-	38,677
Sundry income	4	14,443	-	14,443
Total income		<u>121,122</u>	<u>13,000</u>	<u>134,122</u>
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	5, 6,	107,062	-	107,062
Total expenditure		<u>107,062</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>107,062</u>
Net income/(expenditure) for the year before gains and losses		14,060	13,000	27,060
Net gains/(losses) on investments	13	(19,402)	-	(19,402)
Transfers between funds		(500)	500	-
Net movement in funds		<u>(5,842)</u>	<u>13,500</u>	<u>7,658</u>
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds bought forward		457,529	370,607	828,136
Total funds carried forward		<u>451,687</u>	<u>384,107</u>	<u>835,794</u>

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2019 Total £
	76,807	15,812	92,619
	26,759	-	26,759
	8,310	-	8,310
	<u>111,876</u>	<u>15,812</u>	<u>127,688</u>
	77,382	9,242	86,624
	<u>77,382</u>	<u>9,242</u>	<u>86,624</u>
	34,494	6,570	41,064
	4,327	-	4,327
	(3,180)	3,180	-
	<u>35,641</u>	<u>9,750</u>	<u>45,391</u>
	421,888	360,857	782,745
	<u>457,529</u>	<u>370,607</u>	<u>828,136</u>

Balance sheet
as at 31 December 2020

	Notes	2020		2019	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		194,304		198,478
Heritage assets	12		24,960		11,460
Investments	13		380,990		400,392
			<u>600,254</u>		
			610,330		
Current assets					
Debtors	14	25,447		25,087	
Cash at bank and in hand		214,082		197,263	
		<u>239,529</u>		<u>222,350</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year					
	15	(3,989)		(4,544)	
Net current assets			<u>235,540</u>		217,806
Net assets			<u>835,794</u>		828,136
Funds					
Restricted income funds	16				
	18		384,107		370,607
Unrestricted income funds	17		451,687		457,529
Total funds			<u>835,794</u>		828,136

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The directors' statements required by s475(2) and s475(3) are shown on the following page which forms part of the Balance Sheet.

**WEST HIGHLAND MUSEUM TRADING COMPANY
LIMITED**

**INCOME STATEMENT
For The Year Ended 31 December 2020**

		2020		2019	
Notes	£	£	£	£	
TURNOVER		7,035		49,547	
Cost of sales		<u>3,327</u>		<u>26,091</u>	
GROSS SURPLUS		3,708		23,456	
Distribution costs		378		504	
Administrative expenses		<u>21,149</u>		<u>2,219</u>	
		<u>21,527</u>		<u>2,723</u>	
OPERATING (DEFICIT)/SURPLUS	4	(17,819)		20,733	
Interest payable and similar expenses		<u>122</u>		<u>206</u>	
(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS BEFORE TAXATION		(17,941)		20,527	
Tax on (deficit)/surplus		-		-	
(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR		<u>(17,941)</u>		<u>20,527</u>	

West Highland Museum

F O R T W I L L I A M



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TWITTER (@WestHighMuseum)



Scottish Land Fund
Iomhas Fàrainn Na H-Alba



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service



Association
Independent
Museums



Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean



Museums
Galleries
Scotland