

The **BIG** Partnership

**CLIENT:** Highland Colour Coaters

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# Metal gurus protect celebratory artwork



**PROUD SYMBOL:** the new sculpture depicting Strathaven Academy's return to the town is unveiled by, from left, Jenny Kirkwood, 14; Matthew Butter 15, Lynn Ferguson, 15, teacher Mr Jim Gilliland, Beth Poulton, 13 and Sophie Dalziel, 15, while local folk look on.

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"It isn't the first time we've coated a sculpture as we do a lot of work with the Academy and they should be extremely proud of what they've created.

"The children put a lot of hard work into the sculpture, working at lunch times and after school. The last thing I wanted was for it to rust, so I decided to contact Highland and I was delighted when they agreed to help us. The piece will be displayed on the corner of Commercial Heavy Horse and the Kelpies. "If you apply normal paint on steel, it will soon start to peel and the steel will rust. "We galvanised the school's sculpture at 450 degrees celsius in 220 tonnes of molten zinc, and this hot-dip galvanising process will ensure it remains rust free on display."

**PUPILS from Strathaven Academy unveiled a stunning piece of sculpture in the town centre at the weekend thanks to Cumberland-based galvanising firm Highland.**

By Lynda Nicol

The sculpture, which is a life-sized replica of two of the school's pupils, was created by Jim Gilliland, faculty head of technology at the school.

Entitled 'celebration of secondary teaching and learning returning to Strathaven', the sculpture took him eight months to create.

The lucky pupils who sat for the piece were 15-year-old Matthew Butter and 14-year-old Beth Poulton, while Sophie Dalziel, Lynn Ferguson and Jenny Kirkwood, all 15, helped design and create the figure, which was made using mild steel.

It was not the first time Jim had turned his hand to artwork. In 2003 he designed and crafted a piece of sculpture for Strathaven town centre, but because it was not coated adequately it started to rust very quickly.

Not wanting the same fate to befall his latest piece of work, and having heard of services of Highland which treated the sculpture using a process known as Cold-galvanising, ensuring it remains corrosion-free for decades to come. Highland coated the sculpture in the school's burgundy colour.

Jim said: "I was really disappointed when my first sculpture began to rust and it put me off ever attempting something similar. I soon changed my mind after the pupils, as part of an craft and design