

Boxer Buchanan immortalised in bronze

The trustees of The Ken Buchanan MBE Foundation arranged for the public unveiling of Ken Buchanan's statue on Sunday.

The life-size bronze which honours the boxer from Leith is now in place at the entrance to John Lewis at the top of Leith Walk until a more permanent site is found, perhaps on the island in Picardy Place.

The statue was commissioned by the Foundation, sculpted by Alan Herriot and cast in bronze by Powderhall Bronze. The trustees know that the proposed island site will be subject to a public consultation process and they intend to make representations to the council in that process.

Former Edinburgh Lord Provosts Donald Wilson and Frank Ross carried out the unveiling, removing the Buchanan tartan cloth donated by Kinloch Anderson to reveal the life like figure. The ceremony also featured trustee and sportswriter Jim Black and former world champion Jim Watt who was beaten by Buchanan in 1973 after 15 rounds. From 69 fights Buchanan lost only eight times and in 2002 he was inducted in the Scottish Sport

Hall of Fame.

The ceremony featured pipe music and Kevin Gore singing “Ken Buchanan, Edinburgh man”. You can still buy a digital copy of Kevin’s song [here](#). All proceeds will be donated to the statue fund. It is through fundraising over the last few years that the idea of a statue became a reality. The Foundation has held two boxing dinners and several other fundraising events. Members of the public have raised and donated money through a sponsored parachute jump (by Lee McNair and Sally Lawson) and a sponsored run (Lochend Boxing Club).

The trustees of the Ken Buchanan MBE Foundation hope that the statue will be a fitting, cultural memorial to Ken Buchanan’s world class achievements. The trustees are led by former boxer Owen Smith, Buchanan’s lifelong friend. The other trustees are Peter and John Swanson, sports writer Jim Black and Mick Grubb. The secretary of the foundation is Alastair Clive.

Ken Buchanan is regarded as one of Britain’s greatest ever boxers. He won his first 33 professional fights. He became WBA world lightweight champion in 1970, defeating Ismael Laguna over 15 rounds in the searing heat of Puerto Rico. In that year he was the American Boxing Writers’ Association’s Fighter of the Year, ahead of Joe Frazier and Muhammad Ali. In 1971 Ken defeated Ruben Navarro in Los Angeles to become WBC and undisputed world lightweight champion. Many will remember Ken Buchanan’s 1972 fight against Roberto Duran at Madison Square Garden, when Ken suffered a controversial low punch in round 13; and also Ken’s 1973 hard-fought victory against Jim Watt in Glasgow. A genuine international star who topped the bill ahead of Muhammad Ali at Madison Square Garden, in 2000 Ken was the first living British boxer to be elected to the International Boxing Hall of Fame.

Ken Buchanan was born and brought up in Edinburgh and still lives in Edinburgh. In 2016 Edinburgh City Council held a reception in his honour and in 2018 Ken was the recipient of

the Edinburgh Award.

BBC Scotland recently aired a documentary about Ken entitled "Undisputed – the life and times of Ken Buchanan", which can be watched on BBC iplayer.

The former undisputed world lightweight champion attended the ceremony wearing his trademark Buchanan tartan waistcoat.