

'Oban Town Council advertised 15 Stafford Street to let; then a few years later Sandy Brown, who had a grocery shop, advertised his shop to let and I put in an offer for that and so had two shops.

'I then bought the Commercial Hotel in Stafford Street and before long had four shops in Stafford Street – a gift shop, a shell shop and two photographic shops.'

He later sold the Commercial Hotel property and two shops underneath to raise the money to buy the then Pheonix Cinema – now the Highland Theatre – with his wife Margaret and partners Angus and Alison Johnston of Iona in spring 1988.

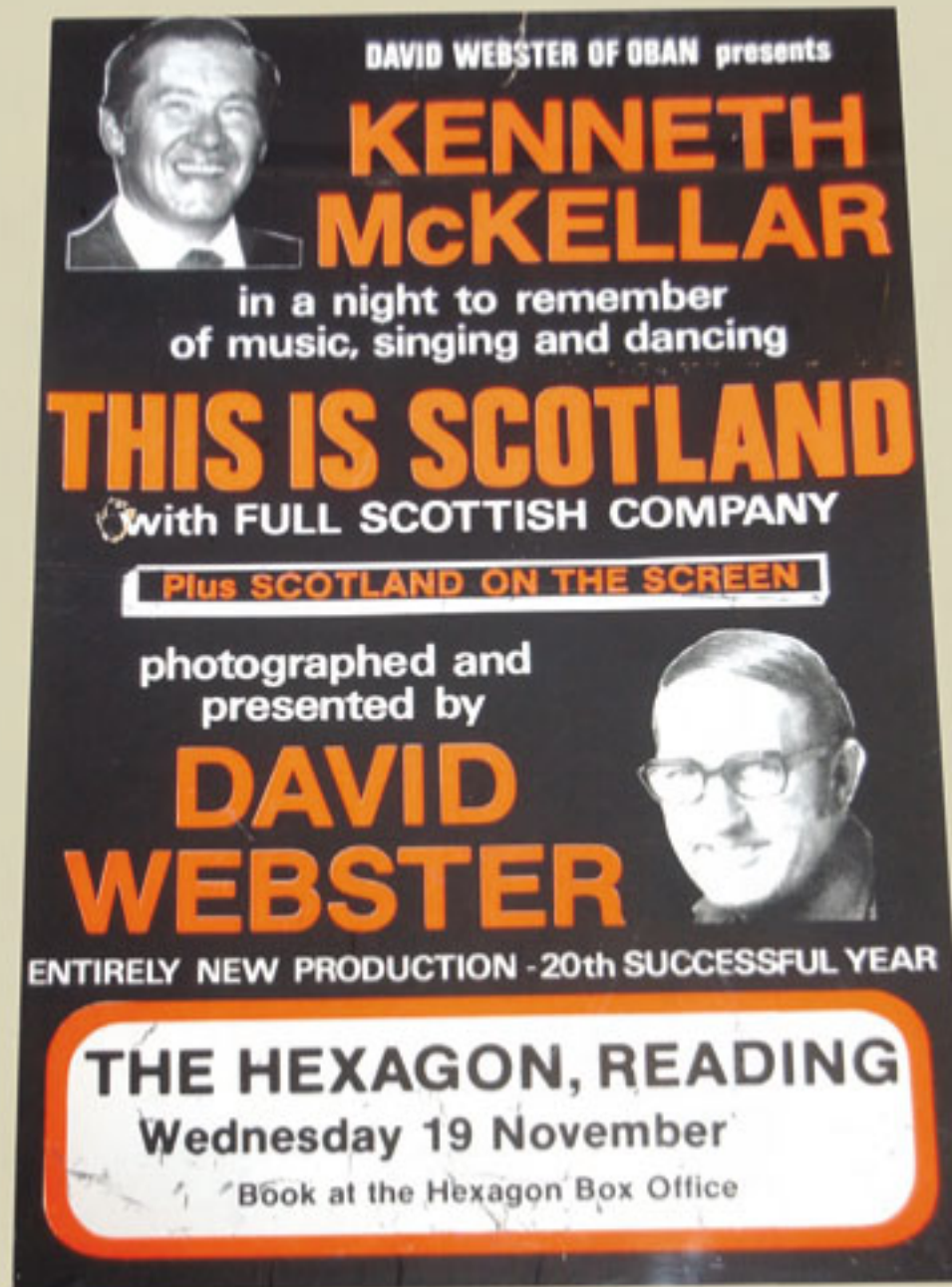
'It was in a shocking state,' said David, who along with his partners spent £100,000 doing it up, replacing the seats and bringing in a new projector. At first it did not only movie screenings but also stage shows for the tourists in the summer.

In 1962, provost Donald Thompson of Oban Town Council was also convener of the local mod committee for the Royal National Mod coming to Oban that year.

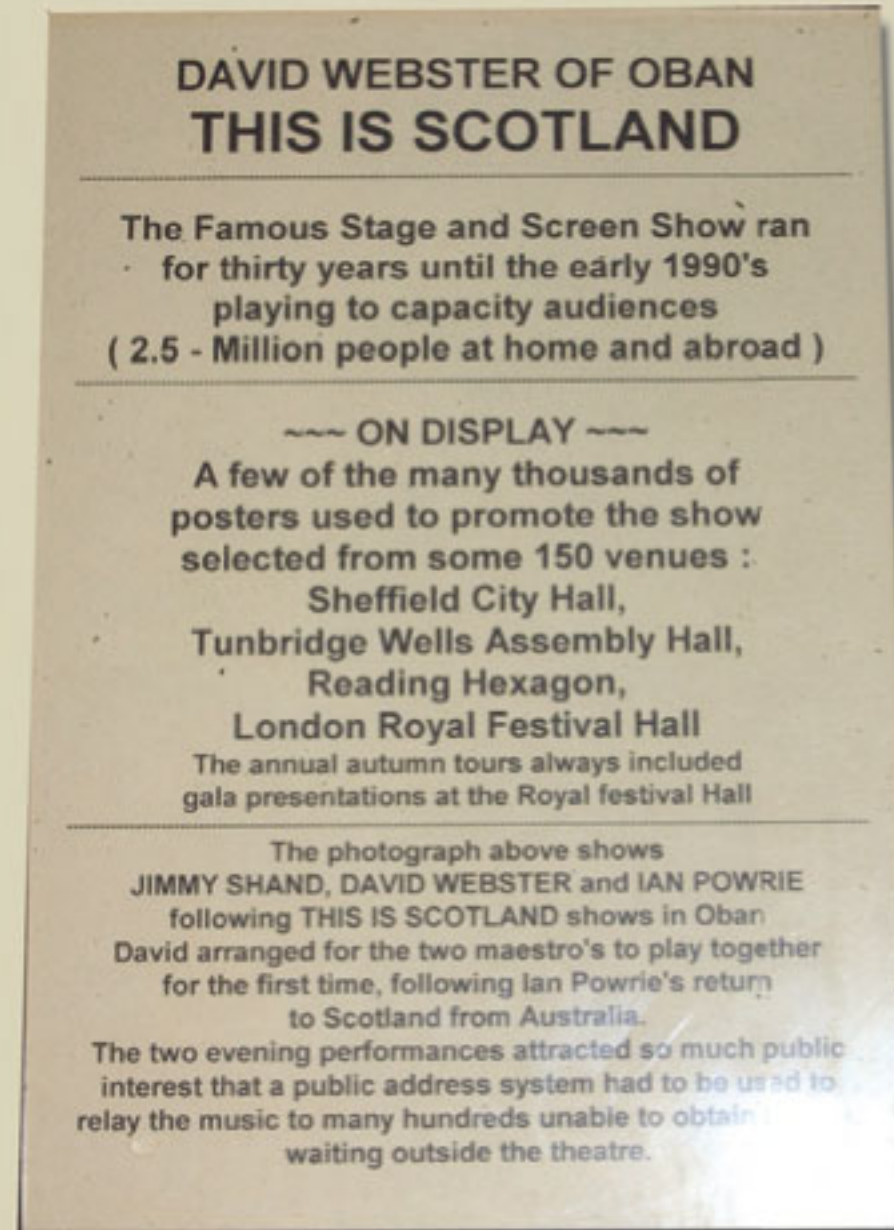
David was persuaded to do some slides shows of Oban and the West Highlands to raise funds for the Mod and it became a weekly event in Dunollie Halls.

He had more than 2,000 slides of the Highlands from covering weddings and functions all over the area.

Indeed he was instrumental in persuading the late Alan Cameron that it would be a good idea to have photographs regularly featured in The Oban Times.



A poster from David's 30-year-long running 'This is Scotland' show.



Posters from 'This is Scotland' are on display in the foyer of the Highland Theatre

'Then I had the idea of promoting the Mod in England,. We did four shows in England, including London, Newcastle and Leicester,' said David and thus his famous 'This is Scotland' shows which toured all over England, Wales and Scotland for 30 years were born.

He had the idea of having a piper piping people in at the start of the show and at the end; then he added a singer, Aunice Gillies, a gold medal winner and before long they were joined by Colin Campbell and his band.

Throughout the 1960s, 'This is Scotland' toured around England. 'Much to my surprise we had to turn people away,' said David, as the show was added to with more singers, another band, a dancer and even promoting the show at local radio stations before the event.

'We covered almost every major theatre and concert hall in England; we played the Royal Festival Hall and the Royal Albert Hall.

'We had a nucleus for the show with Jimmy Shand's Scottish Country Dance Band, who played with us almost every year until he retired.

'We had Aunices Gillies for many years, and singer Jimmy McWilliams from Sheffield, who originally came from Greenock.

'In many venues the Scottish Country Dance Society had branches and I built up connections with them and they provided two sets on stage and there were several pipe bands in the London area that joined the show.

A lone piper opened the show and was joined by the full pipe band.