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## Dalbeattie's William Murdoch was heroic during sinkin

Mar 15 2012 by Andrew McNair, Galloway News

WILLIAM Murdoch is to be portrayed as a hero in a new "Titanic" series to be shown on ITV1.

Scots actor Brian McCardie, of Rob Roy fame, will play the Dalbeattie-born first officer in a four-part show marking the 100th anniversary of the disaster which claimed more than 1,500 lives.

Murdoch's status as a hero, rather than "the man who sank the Titanic", is also being championed in a new book.

Author Tad Fitch, who co-wrote "On a Sea of Glass: The Life & Loss of the RMS Titanic" (right), feels "heroic" Murdoch's experience and calmness under pressure saved the lives of hundreds of passengers.

He said: "When the most accurate estimates of survivors in each lifeboat is examined, one sees that roughly 61 per cent of the 712 survivors were in lifeboats which Murdoch directly supervised the loading of, or played a part in the loading of.

"What is also clear is that Murdoch was very prudent in his decision to take evasive action after receiving the warning from the crow's nest, taking time to determine the bearing to the iceberg, attempting to ascertain the berg's extremities in the darkness, and making sure that the ship truly was on a collision course before issuing the hard-a-starboard order.

"He calmly and clearly calculated what he thought would give the ship the best chance of avoiding the collision, first ensuring that his actions wouldn't make the situation worse, or cause a collision that otherwise would have been avoided."

It's a far cry from the portrayal of the officer as a coward in the 1997 movie starring Leonardo Di Caprio, a view that outraged the town and led the film-maker to apologise.

Dalbeattie is planning various events to remember those who perished in 1912.

If anyone planning an event should contact the News on 01387 240357 or by emailing [gallowaynews@s-un.co.uk](mailto:gallowaynews@s-un.co.uk).

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