

And now for the Festival of Museums 2014



FESTIVAL OF MUSEUMS 2014 GETS INTO FULL SWING IN EDINBURGH THIS MAY

- Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop encourages Scots to get involved in festival line-up yet from Museums Galleries Scotland
- Calendar of 90+ events across Scotland revealed at Edinburgh's popular 1940s dance hall

This year's Festival of Museums, created and co-ordinated by Museums Galleries Scotland, officially launched in Edinburgh today and will see over 90+ events, workshops, exhibitions and performances take place in museums across the country, including Edinburgh, over the weekend of 16 – 18 May.



Providing a cultural experience with a twist, many of the Festival's events in Edinburgh and the Lothians have a 1940s theme – from a chance to improve your painting and drawing skills using a 1940s technique at Edinburgh College of Art to learning about medical advances in that decade. A family style 1940s tea party will also take place at St Cecilia's Hall Museum of Instruments at the University of Edinburgh and visitors can also learn about the birth of Rock & Roll and swing dance!



Those with a love of the outdoors can learn about John Muir's love of wildlife at the Prestongrange Industrial Heritage Museum in East Lothian, while a special collaboration will also take place between the National Galleries of Scotland and

the Edinburgh International Festival which will see a soprano, tenor and pianist perform Western classical music depicting the conflict of the First World War in the magnificent setting of the Scottish National Gallery. There even be an opportunity to learn about fossils at the Almond Valley Heritage Trust.



The launch of the 2014 Festival line-up saw Mary Queen of Scots and William Wallace look-a-likes taught swing dancing in the iconic former Excelsior Ballroom in Edinburgh, formerly Edinburgh's most popular 1940s dance hall. The hall will act as host to a glittering 'Once last Dance' event during the Festival on Saturday 17th May from 7pm inviting the public to be transported back to the glory days of tea dances.

Joanne Orr, CEO of Museums Galleries Scotland, said: "Scotland is a creative and cultural hub and a country steeped in so much history that we can often forget the stories, artefacts and exhibits that sit right on our doorstep.

"Festival of Museums inspires us to find out more about these stories and what it was really like for the people involved in them. It's about engaging with the past and getting actively involved. The range of events means there really is something for everyone, whether you're a couple looking for a day out with a difference or a family looking to entertain the kids."



Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop, said: "With such a wide range of activities and events taking place across Scotland, I would encourage everyone to take the opportunity to visit their local museums as part of the Festival of Museums 2014. The collections held in our museums tell the story of our people and our contribution to the world and are of huge educational and social value to people across Scotland. The Scottish Government recognises the importance role museums play in

bringing history to life, and this festival will help to do just that.”

Other events on the Festival of Museums calendar range from hands-on workshops exploring the mysteries of DNA at the Dundee Science Centre to an amateur baking contest that will produce cakes in the style of Charles Rennie Mackintosh at Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum in Glasgow. In Perth you can be transported back to the First World War era at Balhousie Castle’s Gala Day and see the extraordinary story of the Black Watch come alive! You will hear the rousing chorus of WWI songs and see an impressive display of restored military cars and trucks. At the Scottish Crannog Centre, visitors can become an experimental archaeologist for the day and re-live the Iron Age.

Festival of Museums events will take place in museums across Scotland including Edinburgh, Glasgow, Falkirk, Stirling, Inverness, Aberdeen, Perth & Kinross, Fife, Angus & Dundee, Highlands, Dumfries & Galloway and Argyll & Bute. Events will take place on different days and at various times throughout the weekend.

Further details are available at: <http://festivalofmuseums.com/>

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