

Edinburgh's 2015 Hogmanay Torchlight Procession

40,000 light up Edinburgh's Princes Street



When the press call invitation to the Torchlight Procession flooded into my in-box, I thought 'Why not, could be interesting...'

The evening started 5:45pm in the Assembly Halls Courtyard with a few of Shetland's Up Helly Aa Vikings to light the way. A brief appearance by the Lord Provost before he attended to his other duties, a quick interview by a Japanese film crew and we were on our way. Nearly....







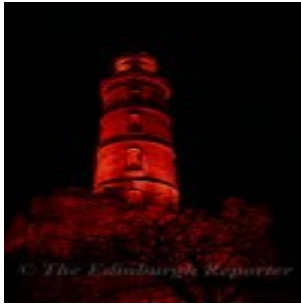
With the parade starting at 7:00pm, it took a while to get everyone organised with the Police, marshals, press, pipe band and Vikings to get into some semblance of order before the off.



Just prior to this, a couple of us set off early to see if it was possible to find a vantage point to capture the Procession

as it descended The Mound, but the numbers of spectators at the barriers meant that this idea was a non-starter. We grabbed a couple of photos and then set off – quickly – for Calton Hill and images from there of the torches processing along Princes Street. Never – and I mean NEVER – will I have anything to say about the weight of stuff I carry at a rugby match following the ‘sprint’ up to Waterloo Place with two heavy cameras and a bag to keep it all in, and then on up to the top of Calton Hill. It never used to be that high....





Once there and normal physiological services resumed, it was a fine sight to look back on as thousands and thousands of torches could be seen along Waterloo Place, along Princes Street and around the corner at The Mound. They just kept on coming.

Eventually, the Vikings made it and congregated around the canon near to the Trafalgar Monument for another photo shoot.



Job done, tram to be caught 'somewhere', so we were off. As the foot of The Mound was passed, the torch bearers were still flooding along and, that nearly an hour and ten minutes after the start, gives an indication of the sheer numbers – eventually estimated at over 40,000 – involved as the river of light barely paused on it's way to the finish.



And a blue Edinburgh Castle, to boot. All in all, a truly unforgettable sight....

