

Burns&Beyond – events taking place all week

The formal launch of Burns&Beyond, a six day long extravaganza of Burns related events took place last night at St Giles Cathedral.

The array of free and ticketed events in the Old Town and New Town have been curated by Unique Events, and there truly is a great programme for you to explore.

Penny Dougherty of Unique Events said : "We hope this will grow into an annual addition to the capital's famous festivals and events programme. Burns&Beyond presents the very best in live music and performance from across Scotland and beyond, celebrating the life, the works and the influence of Burns through contemporary and traditional arts and culture."

Alan Thomson of Unique Events mentioned some of the highlights of the programme :

Music by [Rachel Sermanni](#) – Rachel will perform her hauntingly beautiful latest work whilst attendees bask in the illumination of the Museum of the Moon on Wednesday in the early evening.

A performance by the [St Giles Cathedral choir](#) on Thursday at 9.00pm.

[Red, Red Rose Street](#) which has a bigger programme of events than before including an installation called Kindness Lane.

Alan explained the thought behind Kindness Lane just beside Assembly Rooms on George Street. He said : "Celebrating all

things Burns our New Town programme Red, Red Rose Street returns with a bigger programme of events. As well as asking audiences to marvel at the moon in St Giles, for one week only we will be bringing the stars to Assembly Lane as it is transformed into Kindness Lane a stunning new outdoor art installation called 'We'll tak' a cup o kindness yet'.

"It is by artists Open Close and is inspired by the constellations of small acts of kindness we encounter throughout our lives. From George Street to Rose Street the installation creates a star map by which you navigate the acts of kindness that we perform to others and receive. These might in turn spark new acts of generosity, empathy or thoughtfulness. This is a reminder of Burns' humanitarian values and a welcome message of positivity and hope in such fractious times."

There is a week of theatre and comedy with comedians from all over Scotland at [Gilded Balloon](#)

The festival is funded by The City of Edinburgh Council, Essential Edinburgh who planted the seed for the event over two years ago with the Red, Red Rose Street, Scotland's Winter Festivals and Marketing Edinburgh.

The beer partner is Edinburgh based Innis & Gunn while Johnnie Walker offer support to the festival. They provided refreshments at the launch event (a very neat mix of whisky and ginger ale with a twist of orange since you ask).



Burns&Beyond includes The Museum of the Moon at St Giles Cathedral

Cllr Donald Wilson Convener of Culture and Committees spoke about why the council supported this event to the tune of £50,000 which he commented is a lot of money for them these days. He said : "It fits in with our events strategy in two ways. First of all Cllr Amy McNeese-Mechan and I have been working with the committee to develop an events strategy which is about expanding the festival diet right through out the year.

"Of course this in late January ticks that box. But it is also about widening and deepening participation in events and festivals. Most events involve doing something and it has to be said that the organisers have put on a large number of free and family events throughout the week."

David Cutter President of Global Supply and Procurement for Diageo attended and said how pleased he was that Johnnie Walker could sponsor the week. He commented : "On behalf of Johnnie Walker I would like to express our excitement at partnering with Unique Events, the City of Edinburgh Council, The Scottish Government on this brilliant new festival.

"There are many crossovers between Burns and Johnnie

Walker. Our whisky is enjoyed in about 180 countries around the world. We know that Burns' poetry has been translated into 40 languages and his songs are sung all over the world. This is a great opportunity to start this new festival adding to the Burns celebrations here in his homeland and we are delighted to be part of this."

Museum of the Moon is a spectacular 7m touring artwork created by UK artist Luke Jerram and you will be able to view it during candlelit sessions at St Giles Cathedral all week. It is accompanied by lunar inspired music composed by Dan Jones.

There will be music events at St Giles, Assembly Roxy, New College Quad where they have a silent disco, Merchants' Hall, Greyfriars' Kirk, The Caves and Rose Theatre.

[Click here for the Burns&Beyond website](#)

Amidst the paid for events (including a non-traditional Burns Supper on Saturday) there are a couple of free ones :

In Assembly Lane just off George Street, the area has been turned into Kindness Lane from 8.00am to 10.00pm. This is an art installation by arts collective Open Close and inspired by the idea that one small act of kindness is connected to another.

The Rabbie Ramble on Rose Street is also free and takes place between 10.00am and 5.00pm each day. Families are invited to take a walk along Rose Street discovering facts about Burns and his work. Get a Rabbie Ramble Challenge from the Burns Bothy on Castle Street. There are prizes!

There is a free family ceilidh on Saturday at the Freemasons' Hall between 11.00am and 12.30pm when you can birl for Burns. The Kilter Ceilidh Band will play traditional dance tunes.



Candlelit sessions will be held every night this week at St Giles Cathedral