

December – some notable dates this month

This is a list of notable events which have occurred in the past in December compiled for us by the Old Edinburgh Club.

3rd In 1894, Edinburgh-born author Robert Louis Stevenson died in Samoa, at the age of 44.

7th In 2002, in the evening, a fire started above the Belle Angele nightclub off the Cowgate; it swept up through the eight-storey structure to other buildings on Cowgate and above it on South Bridge; it took more than a day for the fire, to be brought under control, and several days for it to be completely extinguished; thankfully no lives were lost.

8th In 1669, the Council granted a warrant to Robert Clerk to organise the Pricing Book Lottery.

10th In 1768, the first volume of the Encyclopaedia Britannica edited by William Smellie went on sale in Edinburgh.

16th In 1601, Andro Turnbull was beheaded at the Mercat Cross for the murder of Thomas Ker the previous month.



A proclamation was read by The Lord Lyon King of Arms Joseph Morrow at the Mercat Cross in September 2022 PHOTO `2022 The Edinburgh Reporter

18th In 1780, the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland was founded.

19th In 1887, Rumford Medal-winning Leith-born scientist Balfour Stewart died during a journey from Scotland to his country estates in Ireland. And in 1904, the "Scotsman" newspaper moved to new offices on North Bridge.

20th In 1862, surgeon and anatomist Robert Knox died; Knox became notorious as one of the men to whom the murderers Burke and Hare delivered corpses for dissection.

21st In 1965, Stuart Mitchell, Scottish pianist and composer, best known for his Seven Wonders Suite, was born in Edinburgh. And in 1989, the City Bypass was completed.

24th In 1650, Edinburgh castle surrendered to Oliver Cromwell.

27th In 1794, Major Alexander Gordon Laing, the first European

to reach Timbuktu via the north/south route, was born in Edinburgh.

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The Club is Edinburgh's local history society, concerned with all aspects of the city's history and development.

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