

# INFORMATION SHEET



## Scotland's Christmas

### Festive Celebrations, Traditions and Customs in Scotland from Samhain to Still Game

Winter festivals in Scotland have been going on for a very long time—at least 10,000 years, in fact, which means that they predate traditional Christmas celebrations by some eight millennia! Scots have always loved to party when the days are cold and the nights are long. But what was the basis for all this seasonal merrymaking, and exactly what makes a Scottish Christmas so unique? And wasn't Christmas illegal in Scotland for 400 years?

In this book, thought to be the first on the subject, popular culture researcher Dr Tom Christie and archaeologist Dr Murray Cook take a look at how Christmas and other winter festivals have been celebrated, banned and reborn throughout Scotland's long history. As well as considering the cultural impact of Christmas on Scotland over the centuries, the authors also meander into yuletide myths and legends as well as the food, the literature and many little-known facts along the way.

In the modern age, Christmas has started to have an increasing impact on the popular culture of Scotland, and the book delves into how this celebration has been portrayed across different media such as TV, film, music, computer games and more. On top of all that, *Scotland's Christmas* also highlights a series of the worst festive seasons ever to be experienced in fair Caledonia through the years—and as you will read, there's a fair bit of competition for that infamous title over the ages, from Sir William Wallace to Bonnie Prince Charlie and beyond.

So get ready to discover exactly when Scotland discovered Santa Claus (and vice-versa), why the Wulver is arguably the country's least conventional festive hero, how Edinburgh influenced Charles Dickens's creation of Ebenezer Scrooge, where the country's first deep-fried mince pie was produced, and so much more besides. But whatever else you do, avoid the dreaded Chimney Demon at all costs—it might end up scorching more than your Christmas stocking on the fireplace!

*Scotland's Christmas* includes a foreword by actor, comedian, writer and presenter Sanjeev Kohli.

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### Author Biographies

**Dr Thomas A. Christie** is a Scottish author with research interests in popular culture, literary analysis, interactive fiction and modern cinema. He has many years of experience as a literary professional, having worked in collaboration with several publishing companies. His full-length works to date have focused upon subjects such as cinema history and literary criticism, as well as the production of original prose fiction. A passionate advocate of the written word and literary arts, Tom is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and a member of the Royal Society of Literature, the Society of Authors, and the Federation of Writers Scotland. He is an Associate Lecturer at Forth Valley College in Stirling. For more details about Tom and his work, please visit his website at [www.tomchristiebooks.co.uk](http://www.tomchristiebooks.co.uk).

**Dr Murray Cook** is Stirling Council's Archaeologist and is from Leith originally, though he also lived and went to school in Edinburgh. He lives in Stirling with a long-suffering wife, three teenage girls and two pesky but loveable cats. He has undertaken numerous excavations across the region and published over 40 books and articles. He has appeared on several TV programmes, writes a regular column in the *Stirling Observer* and runs Stirling Archaeology, a Facebook page dedicated to Stirling's fantastic heritage. Murray is an Honorary Research Fellow at Stirling University, an Associate Lecturer at Forth Valley College, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, runs an occasional course at Forth Valley College on Stirling, and also co-runs regular training digs—open to all—under the name Rampart Scotland.

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