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Yearly Holidays

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Yearly Holidays

Holiday Customs

Informant:

Richard J Connelly was born in Tooele, Utah on March 1, 1939. Growing up he enjoyed playing with his dog Smokey and his friends Dave and Tom. He attended BYU Provo and received his PhD in Gerontology. During his time at BYU he met a cheerleader named Cheri. Over the years, he and Cheri fell in love and eventually tied the knot on December 22, 1961 in the Salt Lake LDS temple. After both of them completed their degrees they moved to Corvallis, Oregon where they had their first child, Cristen. Throughout his adult life, he taught at the collegiate level in various states. After several years of moving, Richard and his wife settled down in Bountiful, Utah where they had the remaining seven children.

Context:

I know Richard as my humorous, playful, and intelligent grandpa. Richard has always enjoyed learning and associating among various cultures and people. Because of this, he and his wife went on two missions during their mid and late 70s. Their first mission call was to China to teach English. Their second mission call was to Scotland. Upon receiving their second mission call both Richard and Cheri were belated. Richard's ancestry dates back to Scotland and many of his extended family members still live there. During their time in Scotland they were able to visit Richard's family and was able to first-hand experience the significance of Scottish history and holiday customs. Due to the long drive to Bountiful I spoke with Richard through email. Prior to his email that outlines the yearly holiday traditions we spoke on the phone. This allowed me time where I could give him an idea of what information I wanted to collect.

Text:

With 1200 years of history Scotland has some unique culture events and celebrations associated with many wars, religion, famous people, its relationship to England, Ireland and Wales. Food, music and dress and major parts of most holidays. Haggis is a traditional food made of the minced lungs, heart, and liver of a sheep, encased in the stomach along with beef or lamb, onions, and spices. It is often served with neeps (turnips) and tatties (potatoes). Other traditional foods include shortbread and scones. Shortbread is a cross between a cracker and cookie made from flour, sugar, and butter. Scones are similar in appearance to American biscuits, but more of a pastry, can be sweet or savory, depending on the ingredients.

Non-Alcoholic Irn Bru

Irn Bru is a bright orange carbonated soft drink that has higher sales than both Coke and Pepsi in Scotland. Irn Bru is regarded as Scotland's other national drink in addition to Scotch Whisky. It can be described as tasting sweet like bubble gum with a tingly feeling like popping candy. It has a hint of vanilla/citrus flavor and a slightly metallic aftertaste. Some even claim that it's a hangover cure.

Bagpipes

Bagpipes are the most recognizable instrument. They are on grand display in the The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. There you will also find performers and others dress in Scottish plaid and kilts which are traditional dress. The Highland Games held throughout the summer are also times to witness the bagpipes and traditional dress.

Hogmanay

Hogmanay means New Year's Eve (Dec. 31) and is more important to some Scottish people than even Christmas. As having a dirty house at midnight on Hogmanay is considered bad luck, it is common to spend the day cleaning. At midnight, people stand in a circle, cross their arms, hold hands with the people next to them and sing *Auld Lang Syne*, an original Scottish song. Another Hogmanay tradition is called first-footing. The first person through the door at midnight should be male, with dark hair, bearing a gift of coal, shortbread, salt, black bun or whisky. This is said to ensure that the household will be safe, warm and have enough food for the winter. Some families go first-footing until the wee hours of the morning.

New Year's Day (Jan 1) and New Year's Holiday (Jan. 2)

New Year's Day (Jan 1) and New Year's Holiday (Jan. 2) are Bank and public Holidays. Scotch Whiskey is consumed in large quantities during these two days and the day before. Toasting with

Scotch whisky remains a popular tradition in the country. The word whisky originates from "the Gaelic 'uisge beatha', or 'usquebaugh', meaning 'water of life'" and the beverage can be traced back to a 1494 official reference, though some think it was developed way before that.

Burns Supper

Burns Supper is a holiday which tributes famous Scottish poet Rabbie (Robert) Burns and is held on January 25, the anniversary of his 1759 birth. One of his most famous poems, *The Address to the Haggis*, has become central to the celebration of Burns Supper. The ritual consists of reading Burns' work and eating a meal that includes haggis, neeps and tatties rounded off with drams of whisky. At the end of the evening, everyone joins hands and sings Burns' most popular work, "*Auld Lang Syne*" which is also traditionally sung on New Year's Eve.

Good Friday (April -date varies but it is a Bank Holiday)

According to the Bible, Jesus Christ's death and resurrection occurred around the time of the Jewish Passover, which was celebrated on the first Full Moon following the vernal equinox. This soon led to Christians celebrating Easter on different dates. Good Friday is the day when Christians commemorate Jesus Christ's crucifixion, which plays an important part in the Christian faith.

Bank Holidays (May Day -First Monday in May and Spring Holiday-Last Monday in May)

Bank Holidays are public holidays and regulated by law. There are 9 Bank Holidays. Scotland has harmonized most of these public days with England and Wales.

Summer Holiday (First Monday in August is a Bank Holiday)

Halloween

Halloween is similar to Halloween in other parts of world. On October 31, children dress up in costumes and go door-to-door, trying to get candy. In Scotland, this is called 'guising' (from the word 'disguising'), whereas in the U.S. it's called trick-or-treating.

Guy Fawkes Night

Guy Fawkes Night, or Bonfire Night, is celebrated on November 5. Guy Fawkes was a Catholic who tried to blow up Parliament in the 1600's using gunpowder. He was caught and executed by burning. Every year, before Halloween, Scots make an effigy of Guy Fawkes using clothing stuffed with straw and a pumpkin head. After Halloween, they wheel the scarecrow around the neighborhood calling, "A penny for the Guy," attempting to collect pennies to buy fireworks. On this night the effigy is burned over a large bonfire, followed by a fireworks show.

St. Andrew's Day (Nov 30 and Bank Holiday)

St. Andrew's Day, the national day of Scotland is celebrated on Nov. 30. Saint Andrew was one of the 12 apostles of Christ. The flag of Scotland, the St Andrew's Cross, was chosen in honor of him. Also, the ancient town of St Andrews was named due to its claim of being the final resting place of St Andrew.

Christmas Day (December 25 -Bank Holiday)

Christmas was first called Yule but in the post reformation period the celebration was suppressed. Two acts 1640 and 1690 abolished Christmas recess. Laws in 1686 and 1711 partly repealed some of the early restrictions. But the day was observed very quietly as the Scottish Church a Presbyterian church for various reasons never placed much emphasis on the day. Christmas day only became a public holiday in 1958.

Boxing Day (December 26- Bank Holiday)

A 'Christmas Box' in Britain is a name for a Christmas present. Boxing Day was traditionally a day off for servants and the day when they received a 'Christmas Box' from the master.

Traditionally, it was day when employers distributed money, food, cloth or other valuable goods to their employees. The servants would also go home on Boxing Day to give 'Christmas Boxes' to their families. It became a public holiday in Scotland in 1974.

Texture:

Through communicating via email, I felt as if this interview was slightly less personal. Because I know Richard as my grandpa, I am familiar with his sense of humor, love, and passion for history. Upon receiving his email with the detailed descriptions of the yearly holiday traditions I immediately became aware with his tone within his writing. His stylistic way of writing this information was extremely detailed and you could sense that he had put a lot of thought into recalling these experiences he had while on his LDS mission in Scotland.

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