



NEWS RELEASE
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WHERE IN EDINBURGH COULD YOU ONCE FIND OLD CADDIES BUT NO GOLFERS?

WHERE DID WINE FLOW FREELY ON THE HIGH STREET?

JUST WHO WAS EDINBURGH'S FIRST BILLIONAIRE?

WHO WAS THE MOST FOUL MOUTHED WOMAN IN THE CITY?

JOIN STEPHEN BOYD'S NEW AULD TOWN TOUR TO LEARN ALL ABOUT THE REAL EDINBURGH!

Visitors to the award winning visitor attraction 'The Real Mary King's Close' are used to stepping back in time and learning from costumed character guides who bring to life many real stories from a network of streets below the Royal Mile. But now, led by Stephen Boyd, one of the former resident's of the famous Close, people can add a NEW journey 'above ground' through the ancient closes and streets of Edinburgh's Old Town!

Lasting one hour, this new tour is the perfect addition to the underground tour of Mary King's Close – the guide will regale visitors with tales of life in days gone by and will reveal how Mary King's Close would have appeared if its fate hadn't been sealed by the construction of the Royal Exchange. Visitors will learn things about the area not normally told, such as where would you have found lots of old caddies but no golfers? And just who was Edinburgh's most foul mouthed woman or Edinburgh's first billionaire? This walking tour will answer questions on what life was like in Edinburgh's Old Town and on other Closes in the 1600 and 1700's, and why the Royal Mile has always been one of the most important streets in Scotland. For those with a thirst, visitors will even learn about where wine flowed freely on the High Street!

Commenting on the new walking tour, Lisa Robshaw, Marketing Manager for The Real Mary King's Close said, "We've added this tour in response to people wanting to learn more about the famous streets above the Close. Our costumed guides give a unique insight to the history of Edinburgh and now visitors can take away even more from the experience".

The walking tours run every day at 11.30am, 1.00pm & 3.00pm and costs £7 a person, or just £5 when booked in conjunction with a tour of the Real Mary King's Close (this walking tour is free to children when accompanied by a paying adult)*

The Real Mary King's Close is open daily (except Christmas Day) with tours departing every 20 minutes from 10am. The above ground walking tours run every day at 11.30am, 1.00pm & 3.00pm. Pre-booking is strongly recommended for all tours due to demand. See www.realmarykingsclose.com or call 0845 070 6244 to book in advance and find out more!

***free offer valid for up to 2 children aged 5 – 15 years per paying adult**

-ENDS-

NOTES TO EDITORS:

For further media information, images or to arrange a visit to the Real Mary King's Close, please contact: **Nick Fletcher on 01904 527700** or email nfletcher@continuum-group.com or **Lisa Robshaw on 0131 225 0678** or email lrobshaw@realmarykingsclose.com

For more information on the attraction please visit www.realmarykingsclose.com or call 0845 070 6244 to book a visit.

*NB:

- Admission costs: £11 for adults, £6 for children and £10 for concessions. Walking tours above ground cost £7 for adults or £5 if booked in conjunction with the tour of The Real Mary King's Close (with children free when accompanied by a paying adult).
- Due to the historical nature of this underground facility, access may prove difficult to people with certain disabilities. Ramped access is provided to the information and retail outlet. Please call for further details.
- We regret that for Health and Safety reasons we cannot permit any children under the age of 5.
- Pre-booking is highly recommended due to demand particularly for evening tours throughout summer.
- Sensible shoes are essential!

Opening times: 10am to 4pm (last tour) Sun - Fri and until 9pm (last tour) Saturdays Nov - Mar and 10am to 9pm (last tour) daily Apr - Oct. Pre-booking is strongly recommended due to demand.

The Real Mary King's Close is an important historic site hidden beneath the Royal Mile. It consists of a number of underground Closes which would have originally been very narrow walkways with houses on either side stretching up to 7 storeys high and dating back several centuries. In 1753 the Burgh authorities decided to develop the Royal Exchange (now the City Chambers). The houses at the top of the Closes were knocked down and part of the lower sections were kept and used as the foundations for the new building, leaving the ancient dwellings steeped in mystery!

The Real Mary King's Close is operated by Continuum - visitor attraction operators and specialists in the tourism and leisure industry. See www.continuum-group.com