



50 Fascinating Facts about Clackmannanshire

1. Clackmannanshire is historically the smallest county in Scotland ('The Wee County').
2. The motto of the county is "Look about ye". These are said to be the words spoken to King Robert Bruce when he lost his glove during a hunting expedition. After a search it was found on a slope to the south of the present site of Clackmannan town.
3. Archibald Tait, Archbishop of Canterbury 1869-1882, was son of the owner of the Harviestoun Estate near Tillicoultry. The baptismal font in the church of St James the Great in Dollar is a memorial to him.
4. Robert Burns stayed at Harviestoun House on two occasions in 1787 and wrote poetry about the River Devon.
5. The River Devon rises behind Ben Cleuch and joins the River Forth, five and a quarter miles from its source as the crow flies, but takes over thirty miles to reach that point on its course.
6. The present road along the Hillfoots dates from 1806 when this new Toll Road replaced the old road at the foot of the Ochils.
7. The Old Bridge at Tullibody was built as a result of money provided by Robert Spittal, tailor at the Court of King James IV of Scotland.
8. The Stirling-Alloa-Kincardine rail link will bring back into use around 21km of out-of-use and abandoned railway lines. The estimated journey time Stirling to Alloa is 10 minutes.
9. On Friday 28th June 1963 HM Queen Elizabeth II accompanied by Prince Phillip visited Tillicoultry, arriving by train at Tillicoultry Station.
10. A former sea-captain John McNabb left money in his will to found Dollar Academy in 1818. In the 1930s his remains were cremated and now rest above the entrance to the school.
11. Jamie Erskine, 14th Earl of Mar and Kellie is the Hereditary Keeper of Stirling Castle.
12. Lady Catherine Bruce, the last occupant of Clackmannan Tower, used the two handed sword of her ancestor, King Robert Bruce, to 'knight' Robert Burns.
13. Kennet Village was built by the Bruce family to house the miners at their nearby colliery.
14. Lime Tree Walk in Alloa was formed by the Earl of Mar as a formal route from Alloa to the harbour. It was much admired by Daniel Defoe, author of 'Robinson Crusoe.'
15. Ben Cleuch is the highest peak in the Ochil Hills (2,363ft). In 1863 there was a plan to have a railway to its summit.
16. Gartmorn Dam is the oldest, and for many years the largest, man-made reservoir in Scotland. Built by the Earl of Mar to provide water power via a lade to drain his coal mines.
17. The War Memorial in Alloa has a statue of Britannia surrounded by soldiers cutting barbed wire. The sculptor was the same man who created the equestrian statue of King Robert Bruce at Bannockburn.
18. Maclay's Brewery in Alloa has been brewing beer since 1830.
19. The Johnstone Mausoleum in Alva is one of only four mausolea in Scotland designed by the famous architect, Robert Adam.
20. The first Alva Games were held in 1845 but did not take place during the First and Second World War years.
21. The name 'Tillicoultry' is said to mean 'the hill at the back of the country'.
22. At Pool of Muckhart the Coronation Hall (1911) was originally a pavilion at the Glasgow Exhibition held in Kelvingrove Park.
23. In 1563 Mary, Queen of Scots attended a wedding at Castle Campbell in Dollar Glen.
24. From a rich vein of silver in the Ochil Hills above Alva in 1710, £4000 of mineral was extracted each week. The communion vessels of Alva Kirk were made from local silver.

25. In 1949 a tragic explosion in Criagfoot Quarry, Tillicoultry, killed a quarryman and blew out the doors and windows in the nearby part of the town.
26. In the early 20th Century in the grounds of Cowden House, near Dollar, there was an authentic Japanese garden. It was looked after by a Japanese gardener, Mr Matsui, who is buried in Muckhart Churchyard.
27. The motto of the Erskines of Mar is "je pense plus" – I think more.
28. Tobias Bauchop whose house dating from 1695 still stands in Alloa, was Master Mason to Scotland's first architect, Sir William Bruce. Bruce designed the original Hopetoun House and re-designed the Palace of Holyroodhouse.
29. Alloa was famous as a brewing centre and second only to Edinburgh. William McEwan, son of an Alloa shipowner, opened his famous brewery after training in Alloa.
30. The Mercat Cross in Alloa was the work of stone-mason, Tobias Bauchop. A mythical griffin's head sits on top of the octagonal shaft.
31. Menstrie Castle was the birthplace of Sir William Alexander who created the settlement of Nova Scotia in North America.
32. Robert Erskine, whose brother had opened the silver mine above Alva, was physician to Peter the Great, Tsar of Russia.
33. In 1930 eight bus services (334 buses daily) used the bus station in Murray Square, Tillicoultry. One of the first bus stations in Scotland. The clock (1931) is still there today.
34. When Clackmannan County Cricket Club was founded in 1868, the Earl of Mar and Kellie gave the Club permission to play on the lawn in front of Alloa House (now demolished) and to use part of Alloa Tower as a clubhouse.
35. Auchinbaird Windmill near Fishcross was originally built in the early 18th Century to harness wind power to drive a water pump to drain a nearby coalpit. When the pit closed it was converted into a doocot (dovecote).
36. Between 1911 and 1923, 30 steamships mainly weighing less than 3,500 tons were built in shipyards at Alloa. During the Second World War 157 'tank landing crafts' were built at Alloa.
37. During the First World War an aircraft factory near Alloa Harbour built 'Sopwith Camels' and during the Second World War, Harland Engineering Company made parts for planes and submarines.
38. In the 1800s there were at least sixteen clock and watchmakers in Clackmannan County. 'Clock clubs' were started so that workers could save up to buy a chiming clock
39. There are a number of place names near Alloa with the word 'gart' incorporated. 'Gart' is a Danish word meaning 'farm'. Gartmorn is the farm, near the morn or mere (marsh)
40. In 1921, 68 babies in every thousand died in their first year of life in Clackmannanshire. In 2001 the rate was 8.
41. In 1801 the total population of the county was 11,216.
42. Clackmannanshire covers an administrative area of 159Km² and in 2001 was home to a population of 48,630 persons, that represents 0.96% of that of Scotland and 0.08% of the population of the entire United Kingdom.
43. The Alman Dramatic Club has produced at least 2 plays a year since 1942. Its title is derived from the town of Alloa and the area of Clackmannan. It performs at the Coach-House Theatre, Inglewood in Alloa.
44. Clackmannanshire is twinned with Espartinas in Spain, and Vendargues in France. Olive oil production is the main industry in Espartinas, which is 15km from Seville in southern Spain. Vendargues is 7km from Montpellier in southern France and has one of the biggest wine co-operatives in the region.
45. Alloa Glass Works was founded about 1750 and working as United Glass today, is the oldest glassworks in Europe still operating on its original site.
46. Alloa Athletic Football Club was founded in 1878 and has been playing at their ground Recreation Park since 1895. They are nicknamed 'The Wasps' because of their distinctive black and gold striped strips.

47. Tillicoultry has an artificial ski slope designed as a teaching slope for skiing and snowboarding.
48. HM Prison Glenochil is sited near Tullibody and holds long-term adult male prisoners. They are not admitted directly from the courts but are admitted following conviction from other prisons such as Barlinnie and Edinburgh.
49. A distillery opened in Menstrie in 1746 and whisky continued to be produced until 1929. During the 1880s the distillery was huge producing around a million gallons per year.
50. 'Fraoch' Heather Ale brewed using heather flowers is produced in Alloa. The tradition of a fermented beverage made with heather flowers goes back to prehistoric times in Scotland.
51. Alva Glen Heritage Trust, a charity run entirely by volunteers, aims to regenerate and improve the glen's environment through community involvement. The Alva Glen Illuminations in September raises funds to help local community efforts to care for the Glen's environment and ensures it remains a beautiful, natural space for everyone to enjoy.