



50 fascinating 'facts' around Hawick

1. Hawick is said to come from Old English and means Hedged enclosure settlement.
2. In 1513 most of the town's men of fighting age were killed at the Battle of Flodden.
3. Hawick has been famous since 17thc for the production of hosiery.
4. In 1785 Vincenzo Lunardi made a trip from Glasgow to Hawick by hot-air balloon, taking 2½ hours.
5. Hawick lies at the confluence of the River Teviot and the Stilrig Water.
6. By 1870 over a million pounds weight (around ½ million kg) of wool was turned into a range of woollen goods.
7. Legendary Rugby commentator Bill McLaren is a Hawick man.
8. The Common Riding in early summer is one of the oldest in the Borders commemorating a local victory over the English in 1514.
9. Hawick's name is said to come from Anglo-Saxon "haga wick" the settlement of Wick surrounded by the hawthorn hedge.
10. Steve Hislop who died in 2003 age 41 was eleven times Isle of Man TT champion and twice British Superbike champion.
11. Hawick Rugby Club founded in 1873 play at Mansfield Park and have won 12 Scottish Championships and two Scottish Cups.
12. A deep pool in the river known as the "drowning pool" or "murder pool" was used to dispose of prisoners. Rope was expensive. In July 1562, twenty-two Reivers were drowned in the pools.
13. The Heart of Hawick is a major regeneration initiative, which seeks to use culture as the driving force for political, social and economic regeneration.
14. By 1991 Hawick had a population of around 15,000 inhabitants half of whom lived in council flats.
15. Hawick High School is built on land gifted to the town by the Duke of Buccleuch in 1860.
16. The Edinburgh and Hawick Railway Company was founded in 1845 but before the line opened in 1849 was purchased by the North British Railway Company. The line closed in 1969.
17. Hawick is 293 miles from London.
18. The Hawick Partnership has committed over £280,000 towards 46 community and business projects since it was set up in 2001.
19. The Hawick Flag was the standard of the Prior of Hexham captured by the Hawick Callants in 1514. A copy was presented to Hexham Abbey in 1914 on the anniversary of its capture. The flag bears the date 1514 and has the initials "HC".
20. The Borders Festival of Jazz and Blues is held in Hawick in September. 2007 will be the twelfth festival.
21. Hawick Reivers Festival is held annually in March. In 2007 from 23rd to 25th March. The festival brings to life some of the region's turbulent history including a 16thc market and encampment.

22. Hawick golf course is known as "The Vertish". A hill course overlooking the town; its highest point being the fifteenth hole.
23. William McGonagall wrote a poem in praise of a tweed manufacturer in Hawick, J Graham Henderson.
24. Hawick Archaeological Society was founded in 1856 and is today a local history society.
25. The first Farmers' Club in Scotland was instituted in Hawick in 1770.
26. Hawick Balls are smooth round balls made from fine-flavoured hard peppermint toffee.
27. The name of the fabric "tweed" originated by accident about 1830 when a London customer misread the name "tweel" (twill) on an invoice but the name suited and stuck.
28. The world famous soprano Isobel Baillie (1895-1983) was born in Hawick.
29. In 1995, Houston's of Hawick supplied "Selkirk Bannocks" to Safeway's Scottish stores.
30. Pringle of Scotland was established in Hawick in 1815 and sold to Fang Bros of Hong Kong in 2000. Celebrities including Princess Margaret, Grace Kelly, Noël Coward, Robbie Williams, Madonna, and David Beckham have worn the brand. The company holds a Royal Warrant from the Queen and formerly held one from the Queen Mother.
31. Lyle and Scott started making hosiery in 1874 by borrowing money from a local corn merchant and in 1938 secured a licence to make American Y-fronts.
32. The Black Tower of Drumlanrig was built by the Douglasses in the 16c. It, alone, survived an arson attack on the town in 1570. In 1677 it was re-built as a hostelry, becoming the Tower Hotel.
33. Hawick had ten hotels in 1981 but the 36-room Tower Hotel closed that year and was derelict by 1988.
34. The Tower Hotel was restored and re-opened in 1995 as a tourist information and visitor centre including a museum and gallery.
35. Andrew Carnegie gifted £10,000 in 1902 for a grand new library building. It turned out to be so grand there almost wasn't enough money left to buy the books.
36. James Graham, Marquis of Montrose, was ambushed by General Leslie at Philiphaugh in a pivotal battle of the 17th C British [usually referred to as English] civil war. At his time Montrose was on the side of the king. The battle site can be visited as part of the Philiphaugh estate.
37. Sir Walter Scott, was sheriff of Selkirk and made his home at Abbotsford. He is credited with having a huge impact on Scottish tourism through his historical novels but was also responsible for breathing life into the Border Ballads tradition.
38. Harestanes Visitor Centre houses Buy Design the showroom for individual furniture works of art created by the Wood School a community forest
39. The Three Brethren stands at 1522 feet. This hill has three large stone cairns and it was the meeting point of the Yair and Philliphaugh districts and Selkirk Burgh. This point is ridden to each year by the Selkirk Standard Bearer and his followers as they ride the town boundaries as part of the Common Riding tradition.

40. The borders are arguably custodians to the tradition of Scottish Rugby Union, a sport where Scots have managed to distinguish themselves generally against the odds!
41. Hawick was described by William Chambers as 'Glasgow in Minature', since it is the most industrial of the border towns.
42. Drumlanrig's Tower, now part of Hawick's museum, was built as a Peel Tower House. Home of the Douglas family, and later the home of Anne, Duchess of Monmouth, and still later the Tower Hotel, the premises now house exhibits showing the history of Hawick and the Tower through the ages.
43. Standing in Motte Park are the remains of this "motte and bailey" castle, which was the stronghold of the Lovell family. All that now remains are the remnants of the main earthen mound on which stood the defended buildings. There are no signs now of the bailey or ditch which was the outside defensive work beyond the "wall" which surrounded the main mound.
44. At Hawick Cashmere it is still possible to view the manufacture of high quality woollens for which the borders are famous!
45. The reputed wizard and tutor to the Pope, Michael Scott was mentioned in Dante's Divine Comedy: Inferno ! Legend has it that his powers split the Eildon Hills.
46. Commemorating the defence of the town from the English in 1514 at Hornshole, there is an equestrian statue in the High Street. The event forms part of the annual Common Riding.
47. An outlaw, Johnnie Armstrong, of Gilnockie, second chief of Clan Armstrong and brother of Thomas, Laird of Mangerton was captured and hanged by King James V for being a Reiver.
48. Aikwood Tower has been comprehensively restored by Lord Steel former leader of the Liberal party and the first presiding officer of the Scottish Parliament.
49. Hawick RFC has produced 58 players for the Scotland in their history. Total caps are well on their way to 700.
50. Radio Scotland once broadcast a feature in which Hermitage Castle, near Hawick, was described as the embodiment of the phrase "sod off" in stone.