



50 Facts about Stirling

1. Stirling became Scotland's newest city on 24th May 2002.
2. Butch Cassidy's great-uncle, John MacFarlane, is buried in the Holy Rude cemetery.
3. Stirling railway station is the 7th busiest in Scotland. In 2003 1.4 million passenger journeys were made.
4. The grand Prix racing driver Stirling Moss was named after his mother's home town.
5. Stirling is twinned with Villeneuve d'Ascq (France), Obuda, Budapest (Hungary), Dunedin, Florida (USA) and Summerside, Prince Edward Island (Canada).
6. Stirling has been ranked 11th out of 189 UK towns and cities for its quality of life by 21-44 year olds.
7. A new bridge costing £4 million will provide pedestrian access from the city into the heart of Stirling's 40 acre £100 million new city quarter at Forthside.
8. Scotland's first successful aeroplane flight was in Stirling in 1911. The Barnwell brothers went on to be aircraft designers during both World Wars.
9. RAF Squadron 43 was founded in Stirling in 1916.
10. At the end of the First World War, Stirling became the HQ of the RAF in Scotland, based in the Station Hotel.
11. Two large bombs fell on Stirling during the Stirling blitz. One destroyed the stand, changing rooms and offices of King's Park Football Club and the other fell on the site now occupied by Stirling Albion's Forthbank stadium.
12. In 1782 Stirling had one public house for every 48 citizens.
13. The Wolfcraig building was one of the first buildings in Scotland to be constructed with steel beams and to have electric lighting.
14. The bell in the steeple at the top of King Street was cast at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry in London where "Big Ben" was cast in 1857
15. The War Memorial Bells of the Municipal Buildings play the Scottish psalm tune "Selma" and the "Reel of the 51st Division" on eight bells.
16. In 1506, whilst staying at Stirling castle, King James 4th bought twelve golf balls to use in a round of golf in the King's Park.
17. The King's Park was established as a royal hunting ground during the reign of King William the Lion (1165-1214).
18. The oldest football in the world, dating from around 1540, is in the Smith Art Gallery. It was found in the roof structure of the Castle during restoration work in 1981
19. The University of Stirling was instituted by Royal Charter on 14th October 1967 and welcomes students from over seventy countries.
20. In 2002 the UK's oldest woman was named in the Guinness book of records. Resident in a Stirling nursing home she was 110 years old.
21. Legend has it that, in the 9th century, a howling wolf saved the town of Stirling from a Danish attack. In gratitude, the symbol of the wolf is commemorated on the burgh coat of arms.
22. David Stirling, third son of Archibald Stirling of Keir, founded the SAS in 1941. Captured in 1943 he spent the remainder of the war in Colditz castle. An imposing statute to his memory can be seen on the road between Bridge of Allan and Doune.
23. Historic Scotland has commissioned a modern interpretation of the seven-panel tapestry "Hunt of the Unicorn" to adorn the James 5th Palace at Stirling Castle. The original Flemish hangings were bought by the wealthy Rockefeller family and hang in the Cloisters in New York.
24. The MacRobert Trusts were established by Lady MacRobert after she tragically lost her three sons in flying accidents.

25. The infant James 6th was crowned at the Church of the Holy Rude in July 1567. Westminster Abbey is the only other active church in Britain where a coronation has taken place.
26. The oldest part of the Church of the Holy Rude dates from 1456 and contains an impressive collection of stained-glass windows. The Guildry Window, gifted in 1993, depicts the story of change and renewal.
27. The Stirling Heads is a collection of 38 intricately carved and brightly painted oak panels originally used to decorate the ceiling of the King's presence Chamber in the Palace and demonstrates the sophistication of the Scottish Court in the 1540s.
28. With the departure of the monarchy in 1603, the palace was converted into a fortress and a garrison remained until the departure of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in 1964.
29. Bruce's body may be in Dunfermline and his heart at Melrose Abbey but the scene of his greatest victory was, undoubtedly at Bannockburn.
30. During the 19th century Stirling became an important wool town and neighbouring Bannockburn produced around 90% of the world's tartan.
31. The National Swimming Academy was opened at University of Stirling in 2002 and assisted swimmers to gain 20 medals out of the 29 awarded to the Scottish team at the 2006 Commonwealth Games.
32. Andy Murray, Jamie Baker and many other leading Scots athletes owe their success to the support provided by the Scottish Institute of Sport based at Stirling University.
33. The Scottish Institute of Sport is holding its inaugural Athlete Event on 13 February 2007 for all Institute supported athletes.
34. The Tolbooth once the town hall, offices and jail now houses a modern theatre space and restaurant. During the conversion remains of former prisoners were discovered in the courtyard.
35. It has been estimated that the value of the retail market within the Stirling catchment is worth more than £8 billion.
36. For most of the 18th century Stirling was a fairly small market town with a population of around 4,000. According to recent figures the population is now just over ten times that at 41,243 and set to rise ten percent by 2016.
37. The first electricity was generated in Stirling in 1900. The first public library opened in 1902. The first cinema in Stirling opened in 1912.
38. Stirling, Bridge of Allan and Dunblane lie on the National Cycle Network route 76.
39. Stirling Bus station handles more than 200,000 departures a year.
40. In the 19th century Stirling had the biggest oil refinery in the UK, situated at the Forthbank works.
41. The Stirling Jug was the standard Scottish measure for liquids until the introduction of the Imperial measure in 1707.
42. Billy Bremner was born in Stirling. At just 5' 5" tall, he was rejected by Arsenal and Chelsea for being too short before being signed for Leeds at the age of 17.
43. Willie Carson, a former jockey, was born in Stirling 16 November 1942. He was British Champion Jockey five times (1972, 1973, 1978, 1980 and 1983), won seventeen UK classic races, had 23 centuries and a total of 3,828 wins in the UK, making him the fourth most successful jockey.
44. Braveheart is an Academy Award winning epic American motion picture released in 1995. It is loosely based on the life of Scottish national hero William Wallace, played by Mel Gibson. Gibson also produced and directed the movie.
45. The first public fireworks display in the UK was part of the pageant at the christening ceremony of Prince James (later James 6th) in 1566.
46. The first Forth Bridge appears on the Matthew Paris map of Scotland, which shows the mainland of Scotland, linked to the highlands by means of a bridge at Stirling circa 1250.



47. Stirling Royal Infirmary was officially opened by the Duke and Duchess of York better known as King George 6th and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.
48. When Henry Campbell Bannerman, the Liberal MP for Stirling, became Prime Minister he was the first to take the title. Previous PMs had been referred to as "First Lord of the Treasury". These words are still on the brass plate on the door of Number Ten.
49. It was Campbell Bannerman who was the first to introduce the State Old Age pension.
50. Stirling Livestock market has an annual turnover of more than £60 million. That's a lot of steaks and chops!