



PRESS INFORMATION

2008

WHO WILL YOU MEET ON THE CLOSE TODAY?

The Tour Guides with a Difference

Will it be Mary King's daughter, the merchant, the maid or the foul clenger that you meet when you visit The Real Mary King's Close? Four of the former inhabitants from the close, from centuries past, are guiding visitors around this unique, strange and dark underground attraction - a time capsule of four closes with real town houses, streets and rooms dating back to the 1600s.

Visitors meet the characters from days gone by, as they tell the real life stories of what life was like in the Closes from the perspective of four one-time residents from the 17th – 19th centuries:

Mary King's Daughter

Jonet Nimmo is the youngest daughter of Mary King, after whom the famous close was named. Born in 1622, she lived in affluent surroundings all her life and has lived on the Close since she was just seven years old.

The Merchant

Stephen Boyd was a merchant in 1635 who owned the southernmost property on the east side of Mary King's Close, but conducted his business from a Luckenbooth at the top of the close, beneath the famous crown of St. Giles.

The Maid

Agnes Chambers is a maid in the household of prominent merchant burgess Alexander Cant in 1535. She will tell you about life in the town house on Craig's Close, where there was a dramatic turn of events in the form of a MURDER!

Cont...

The Foul Clenger

Walter King's distinctive uniform marks him out as a 'foul clenger' employed by the Burgh Council to clean houses affected by the plague.

Come and be fascinated as you hear the stories of real people, real streets and real history!

The Real Mary King's Close is open daily (except Christmas Day) with tours departing every 20 minutes from 10am. Pre-booking is strongly recommended due to demand. See www.realmarykingsclose.com or call 08702 430 160 to book in advance and find out more!

ENDS**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

The Real Mary King's Close is open from 10am to 9pm (last tour) every day from March 21st to October 31st, with the exception of the month of August when it opens from 9am to 9pm (last tour). From November 1st to March 31st 2009 it will be open from 10am to 5pm (last tour) Sunday to Friday and until 9pm (last tour) on Saturdays.

Admission costs: £9.50 for adults, £6 for children and £8.50 for senior citizens and students. Discounts are available for groups. For health and safety reasons we cannot permit any children under the age of five. Due to the historical nature of the site and uneven surfaces, access may prove difficult for some people.

The Real Mary King's Close is an important historic and unique site, hidden beneath Edinburgh's Royal Mile. A five star, award winning visitor attraction, it receives over 175,000 visitors a year from all over the world. It consists of a number of underground Closes which would have originally been very narrow walkways with houses on either side stretching up to seven storeys high and dating back several centuries. In 1753 the Burgh authorities decided to develop a grand new building, 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 a number of dark and mysterious underground Closes and ancient dwellings steeped in mystery!

For further information call 08702 430160 or visit www.realmarykingsclose.com

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

For further media information, images or to arrange a visit please contact: Heidi Folland on 01904 527700 or email hfolland@continuum-group.com