

## BRITISH FESTIVALS AND TRADITIONS: HOGMANAY

by Richie Mullaney

<http://naukabezgranic.pl/podcasty/great-britain/>

Hogmanay is celebrated in Scotland as their New Year celebrations. No one knows the origin of Hogmanay but we can trace the name back to the 8th century and there are many customs and traditions which have been practised for hundreds of years.

The first tradition of the night is Auld Lang Syne. This was a poem which was written by Robert Burns in 1788 about remembering old friends or acquaintances. We sing this song while standing in a circle holding and shaking hands to the tune of the song. The song goes like this:

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And never brought to mind?  
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And auld lang syne!

Chorus: For auld lang syne, my dear,  
For auld lang syne.  
We'll take a cup o' kindness yet,  
For auld lang syne.

The first I'll talk about is the First Footing, which is probably the commonly practised custom. The tradition is: before the bells of the New year, a dark stranger will knock on the door and once invited in, he will pass the threshold with gifts of coal, shortbread, whisky, a black bun and salt. This tradition is said to bring good luck for the year to come.

Stonehaven is the home to the tradition of fire balling. This is when, traditionally, each family of the town make a 'fireball,' and on the night of Hogmanay a member of the family would light the fireball and parade up and down the main street, swinging the ball in circles around their head.

The reason of doing this is to cleanse the town with fire before the summer season. There is also the belief that when the fireball is extinguished, as are all the unfortunate events from the previous year.

Note: This is spoken English and spoken grammar, the script reflects the story telling style.

Like us <http://facebook.com/learningwithoutborders.eu>

Make friends with Richie at

<https://www.facebook.com/richieatlearningwithoutborders/>