



Surprising facts about Ulster Scots

1. HISTORY

Ulster is separated from Scotland by the narrow North Channel, which at one point is only 13 miles (21 Kilometres) wide.

Geography and history have combined to produce a strong Ulster Scots community in Ulster.

The term Ulster Scots has for nearly 400 years referred to people not place – the people who migrated from the Lowlands of Scotland to Ulster, and to the Ulster Scots communities that they established right across the nine countries.

Under the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages, approved in 1992 and signed by UK and ROI governments, Ulster Scots became an officially recognised regional language of Europe.

Ulster Scots enjoy a rich cultural heritage, with vibrant music and dance traditions engaging a huge number of participants.

There is a life size bronze sculpture of the famous Ulsterman Professor Pantridge at Lagan Valley Island in Lisburn.

2. LANGUAGE

Ulster Scots is distinct from Scottish Gaelic which is a Celtic Language. Other Celtic languages are Irish, Welsh, Manx, Breton and Cornish.

Political recognition that Ulster Scots is a language, and not simply a dialect of English, flows from the Belfast Agreement of 1998 and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

In the early 1960's there were an estimated 100,000 native speakers of Ulster Scots in Northern Ireland and Co Donegal.

The language is spoken principally in the Ards Peninsula, North Down, Co. Antrim, North Co. Londonderry and East Donegal.

However, elements of the Ulster Scots language can be heard across the entire province.

3.

FAMOUS ULSTER SCOTS PEOPLE

Sir Hans Sloan

From Killyleagh in County Down, was a famous Ulster Scot who invented chocolate.

Joseph Black

A famous Ulster Scot who first identified carbon dioxide in the air.

John Boyd Dunlop

A Scotsman that came to Ulster in the 19th century and created the first rubber tyre.

Harry Ferguson

A famous Ulster Scot who invented the first tractor with a special hydraulic system.

Frank Pantridge

A famous Ulsterman who developed the mobile defibrillator and became known as the “Father of emergency medicine”. He was born on the outskirts of Hillsborough Co Down.

Sir James Martin

From Crossgar Co Down a famous Ulster Scot who invented the ejection seat for aeroplanes.

4.

ULSTER SCOTS DANCE / MUSIC

Did you know that Highland dancing is a very athletic form of dancing which requires a massive amount of stamina and arm strength. Originally performed by men as a display before battle.

Ulster Scots music is commonly referred to as the folk music of Ulster.

The Lambeg drum is a percussion instrument unique to Ulster. It is one of the largest (and loudest) acoustic instruments in the world. Although large drums exist in other cultures and music traditions, these typically have a low bass pitch. The Lambeg drum has a unique crack due to the highly tensioned skins.

5.

ULSTER SCOTS WORDS USED EVERYDAY

Aye	Yes/always
Blether	Idle chat
Crabbit	Grumpy
Crack	Banter/news
Hoke	Dig/search
Red up	Tidy up
Scunnered	Disgusted / embarrassed
Thran	Stubborn
Wean	Child
Wee	Little
Wheest Teemin	Quiet pouring
Eejit	Idiot
Flit	Move
Drooth	Thirst
Footery	Awkward
Forbye	As well
Foundered	Exhausted (With cold)
Gulder	A shout
Hallion	Rascal
Mingin	Dirty
Neb	Nose
Oxter	Armpit
Poke	Ice cream cone
Quare	Considerable
