

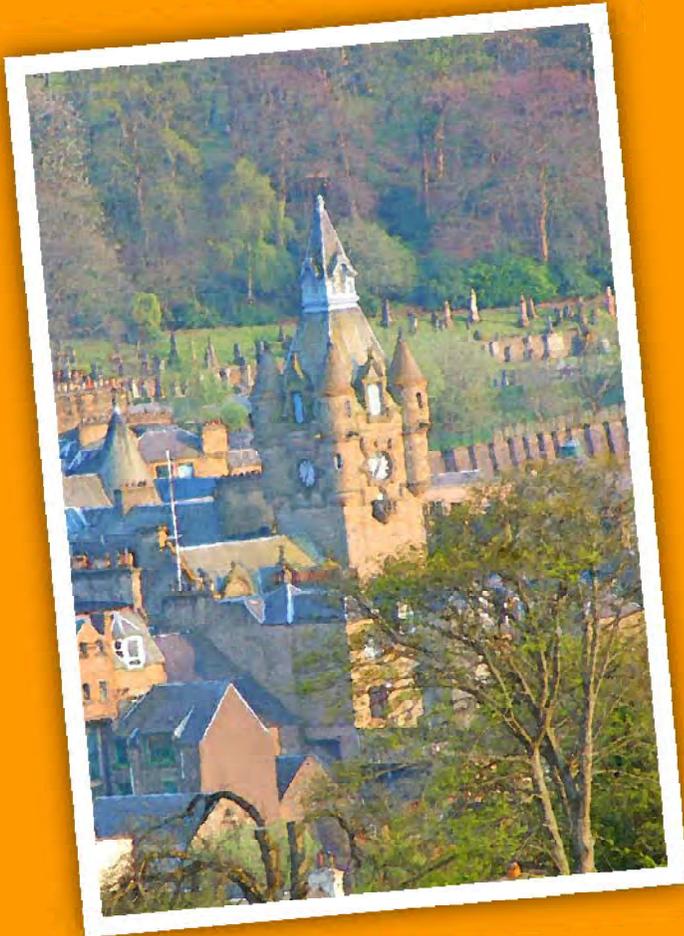


My Name is
Rupert
and this is my
KIDZ GUIDE
to

Hawick Common-Riding

It takes place in May and June,
here is what happens.....

PICKING NIGHT



7pm on the first Wednesday after the first Tuesday in May, Hawick picks a new Cornet.

The Honorary Provost and council meet in the Town Hall to dispatch a letter asking a young man to be Cornet.





The Drums and Fifes band accompany the Halberdier, who has the letter from the Honorary Provost, from the Town Hall to the Cornet Elects House.

A large crowd are gathered outside the house eager to see the new Cornet.



The Cornet Elect answers the door to the Halberdier and invites him and the band in.



The house is full of Ex-Cornets invited by the Cornet Elect



A little while later the new Cornet and his Right and Left Hand Men and Acting Father come outside to meet the crowd, and they throw money or have a "strive", as it's known in Hawick.





The Halberdier returns to the Town Hall with the letter of acceptance and a new shilling (5p) for delivering the letter.

Then the Big Four come out and surrounded by bairns, walk to the Town Hall, the long way round the town visiting the town ports and allowing the townsfolk a chance to see their new Cornet.



On reaching the Town Hall the Big Four lead the sing-song before having another strive.



After meeting the Honorary Provost, the Cornet attends a congratulatory smoker, at which he receives his Cornets Badge.

The Lasses were in the Cornet's house when he received his letter. They then attend the Lasses dinner where both The Cornet's Lass and the Acting Mother receive their association Badges.



THE RIDES OUT



On Saturdays and Tuesdays throughout May the Cornet leads a cavalcade of horses to surrounding communities, getting the horses fit in the process

The Rides leave from the Backdamgate , just behind Drumlanrig Tower. Then they pass cheering crowds on the way out of town



The Ride then continues across country to the destination, crossing fields, rivers and passing through forestry

At the destination the riders dismount and give their horses to a boy or girl to look after, this is called "hauding" a horse



Before setting off for home the Big Four sing "Teribus"
each singing a verse.



When the horses return to the town there is a Sing-song and strive. Four lucky bairns get carried round from the Backdamgate to Drumlanrig Tower, on the principals shoulders



Sing Song & Strive

The Big Four then lead the crowd in singing a Hawick song and if the crowd sing well enough there is a strive, the Big Four throw money into the crowd





In recent years the Cornet has then given out his official photo which is much sought after and if you are lucky he will sign it for you.

THURSDAY NIGHT CHASE

6pm on the Thursday before Common-Riding week the Cornet and male followers ride to St Leonards for the Ordering of the Curds and Cream. On the way there the male followers will be split into married riders and unmarried riders, and each group will then "Chase" to the top of the Nipknowes



The Acting Father "Chases" first leading the married men up the Nipknowes

Then the Cornet
leads the single men,
and the crowd cheers
loudly



Galloping from
the golf house
to the top of the
Nipknowes

The Chases completed the riders ride to St Leonards where they leave their horses with their "hauders" and proceed to "The Hut"



There are speeches and songs and the Acting Father receives his badge of office. The Curds and Cream are ordered for the following week

Once the Curds and Cream have been ordered the Cornet and the rest of the Big Eight sing Teribus in front of the house, the Official Song Singer taking the lead



The Big Four have a strive for the bairns before getting back onto their horses and heading back to the town

The Saxhorn Band meet the horses at the Tower Knowe and plays the Cornet along Hawick High Street and back to the Tower Knowe





This is a special evening when townsfolk's spirits are high

KIRKING SUNDAY AND HORNSHOLE



Kirkin' Sunday is always the Sunday before the Common-Riding and marks the beginning of Common-Riding week. The Kirkin' itself is a service held in the Cornet,s church, but as you will see there are other things that happen on Kirkin Sunday

The Cornet and male supporters meet at the Town Hall at 10.30am. The Halberdiers then lead the men to the Church.

The principals traditionally wear morning suites and tile hats, and carry a black umbrella and grey gloves. The Cornets tie is worn by the Cornet and Acting Father and Lily of the Valley is worn in the lapel



Once at the church the Halberdiers lead the men and the Honorary Provost and Bailies into the church

The service which includes a reading by the Cornet and a presentation of bibles to him and his Lass. After they leave the church the Lasses join the men

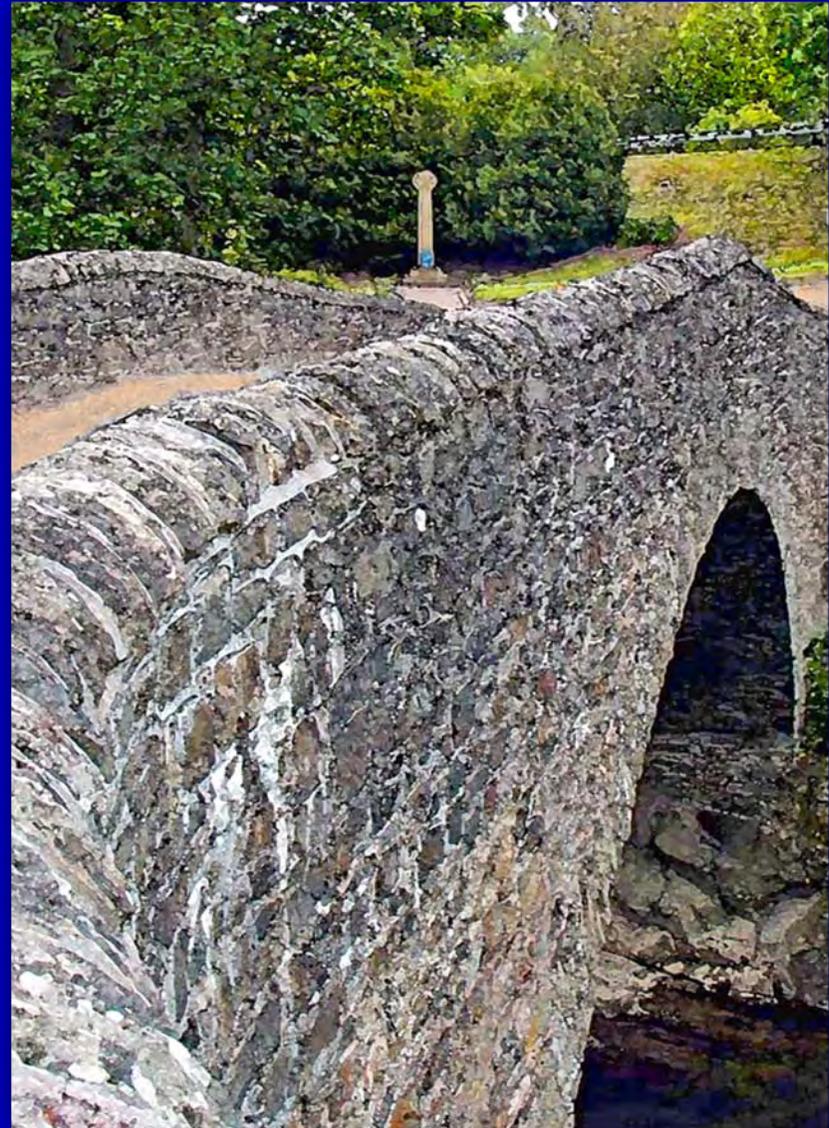


The eight principals then walk in two pairs to the Cornet Lass's lunch at a local restaurant. They walk along the High Street traditionally the crowd clap politely as they pass

Hornshole

After lunch the Big Eight
travel to Hornshole

This is the site of the 1514
battle between Hawick
Youths and English
soldiers. The youths were
the winners and returned
home to Hawick with the
English soldiers flag



At 3pm the Cornets Lass lays the wreath and a moments silence is observed as we remember our fore fathers and why we have a Common-Riding.

There is a very sombre atmosphere when this ceremony takes place as everything is quiet and still



The men pay their respects on the ride home from Denholm ride out



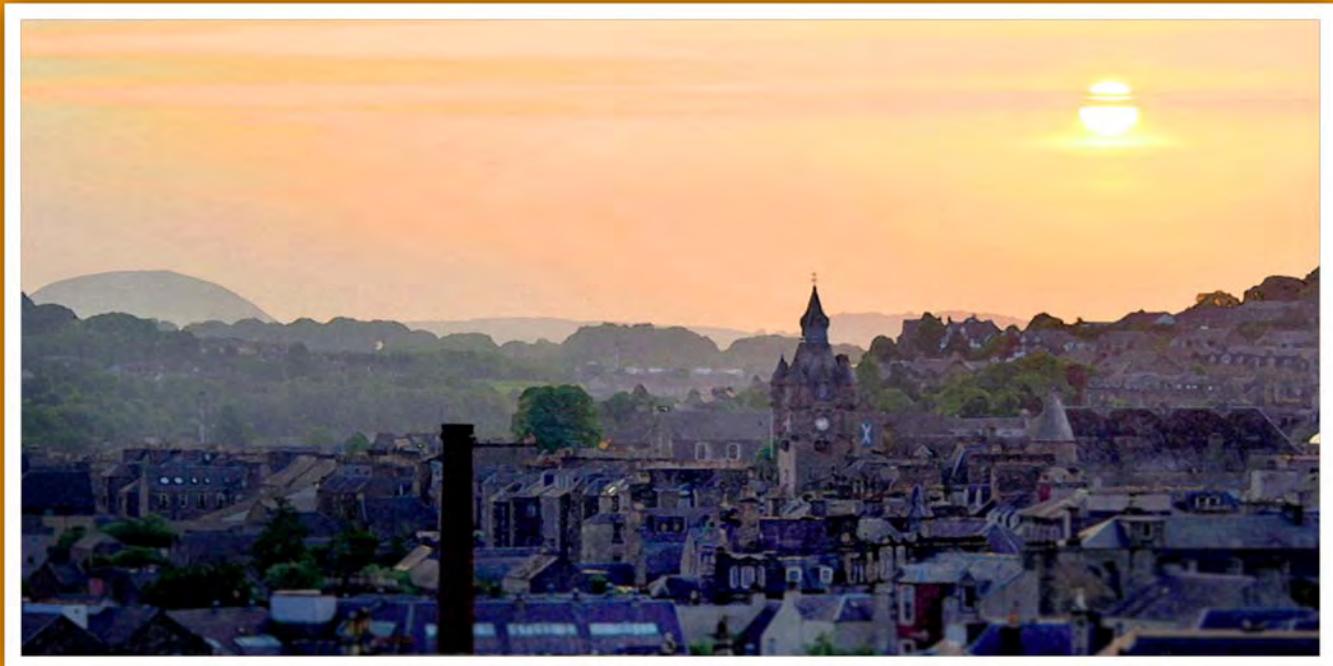
The Big Four ride to Hornshole where they quietly sing Teribus before returning to the rest of the riders. This is a quiet, emotional and quite private moment for the Four

Exhibition Sunday



It's then off to the Mair For exhibition Sunday. This is when the Big Eight walk the race course inspecting it before the racing later in the week. Dress shoes are often swapped for wellies!

THE MORNING CHASES



On the Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday the Big Four ride to St Leonards. The Wednesday ride is slightly different as the Cornet carries the practice flag.

He carries the Practice flag from St Leonards to the Mair





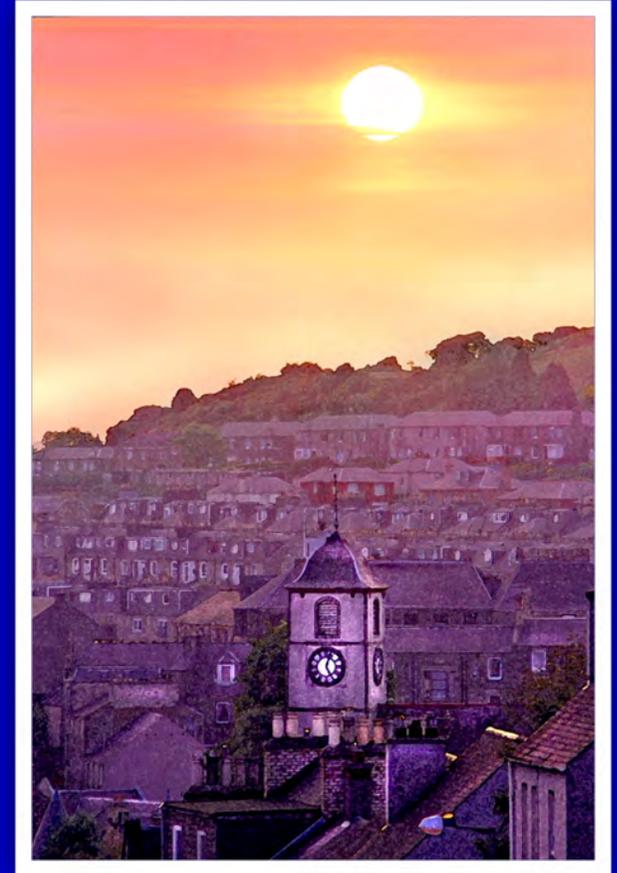
Then round the race course.

Those following also get to gallop round the course if the going is not too soft.

The Acting Father then carries the practice flag from the paddock to the crossroads at the top of the Nipknowes.

THURSDAY MORNING CHASE

6am the Cornet receives the
hawick flag, or "Banner Blue"
for the first time





Acting Father leads
the married men's
Chase

The crowd lining the
Vertish see the blue and
gold of the flag for the
first time as the Cornet
leads the single men's
chase





The Right and Left Chasing hard on his heels

Similarly to Thursday Night's Ceremony, the group sang speeches in

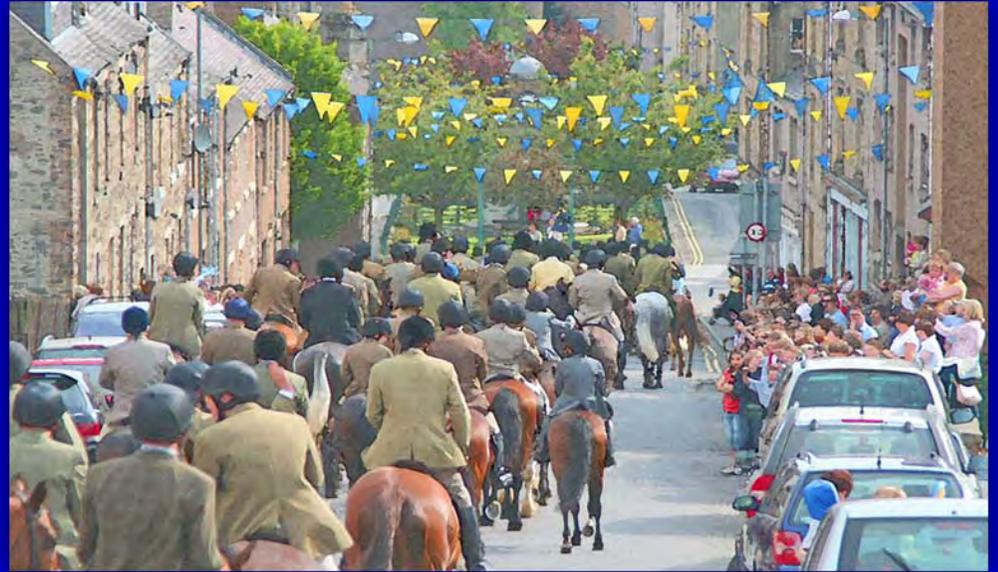


Teribus is sung in front of the farm house before the riders
get back onto their horses



Then the Cornet leads the cavalcade to the Mair and round the race course

The children at
Drumlanrig are allowed
out to watch the Cornet
pass as he makes his
way round the town...



And back to the Town
Hall where the Flag is
displayed on the balcony

SCHOOL VISITS



After a quick breakfast the eight Principals and some of the followers visit all the schools in Hawick, they begin with the school the Cornet attended

The School children dressed in their new Common-Riding outfits excitedly wait for his arrival

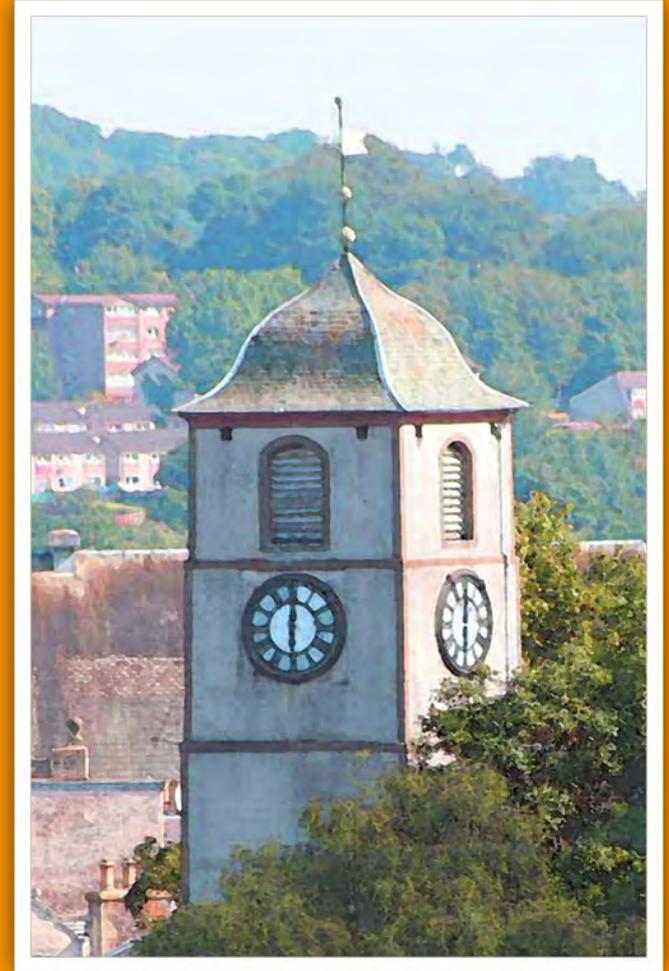


After some singing and prizes and presents being presented the Cornet asks the head teachers to give the pupils a day off, to go and support him at the Common Riding the next day. The answer is always yes!



COLOUR BUSSING NIGHT

6 O'clock on the
Thursday evening the
Common-Riding
begins....



The Start of The Common-Riding



The Drums and Fifes set off from Kirk Wynd when St Marys strike 6 o'clock. The Big Four witness the event.

The Colour Bussing



In The Town Hall the Lasses and Maids of Honour pin flashes on the lads before they take their seat in the Lads Gallery



The Lass carries the unbussed flag in,
followed by her right & left and the maids
of honour



The Right & Left hold the Flag while the Lass ties the blue and yellow ribbons to the top of the flag



Flag Bussed the Lass gives it to the Honorary Provost



Cornet watches on as the Lass gives the bussed flag to the Honorary Provost



The Lass sashes the Cornet



The Honorary Provost gives the flag to the Cornet instructing him to ride the Marches with it and return it to her in two days time "Unsullied and Unstained."

The Cornet accepts the task promising to do so



An hour of songs and speeches follows, concluding with the singing of Teribus

PROCLAMATION AND BUSSING THE HORSE



The Cornet then appears on the balcony where the Burgh Officer reads the proclamation which is celebrated with three cheers



The Cornet and his supporters then walk around the town

The walk pauses at the 1514 Memorial, "The Horse", so that the Cornet can climb up and tie the ribbons to the flag, "Bussing The Horse"





He then leads the crowd in three cheers to celebrate



The Cornets Walk then continues round the town

COMMON-RIDING FRIDAY



Drums & Fifes rouse the town



THE SNUFFIN'



As they pass the site of the Auld Brig "The Snuffin'" begins. The crowd try to get a pinch from the Snuff Mull

The Official Song Singer
has the Snuff in the Mull,
in the middle of the
maul.

He then throws packets
of snuff to the gathered
crowd out one of the
windows of the Tower, a
strive of a different kind.





At 8.30am after the Cornet's breakfast the principals and Song Singer gather on the Tower steps to sing Auld Song



At 8.45 am Drums & Fifes lead the mounted cavalcade in the Procession round the Town



The Procession completed the Acting Father leads the married men's Chase up the Mopknowes ...



Then comes the Cornet in his Green Coat Flag in hand, with the single men chasing hard on his heels



At the top of the
Nipknowes the Cornet
gives the Flag to the
Acting Father who then
carries it to St Leonards





Where the Cornet carries it to the front of the house where it is left on display while he is in The Hut



Inside The Hut there are more speeches and song and the riders get the Curds & Cream that was ordered the previous week



The Lasses have their curds and cream
while listening outside



The Principals, Honorary Provost Bailies and guests gather in front of the farmhouse where the Official Song Singer once again leads the singing of Teribus



The Cornet sets off round the marches with 300 or so horses and riders following him



They canter round Acreknowe reservoir



Horses in single file either side of the loch, the
Flag always carried round the Hawick side



At the Southern most edge of the Common the Cornet dismounts and cuts the Sod with the Ceremonial spade marking the boundary of the Common.

Three cheers celebrate the cutting



The Acting Father then carries the flag to the Mair. Returning it to the Cornet at the Mair gates



The Cornet carries the flag round the Mair greeted by cheering crowds who anxiously wait for a glimpse of their sons or husbands as they gallop round with the cavalcade



The Cornet along with Ex-Cornets & Ex-Acting fathers ride back round to the paddock where he displays the flag on the roof of the committee room building



The Chief Guest then presents the Cornet & Acting Father with riding crops to commemorate their year as principals



Then the racing begins, The Tradesman's Handicap being the big flapping race



Large crowds gather on the mound in the paddock to watch the race

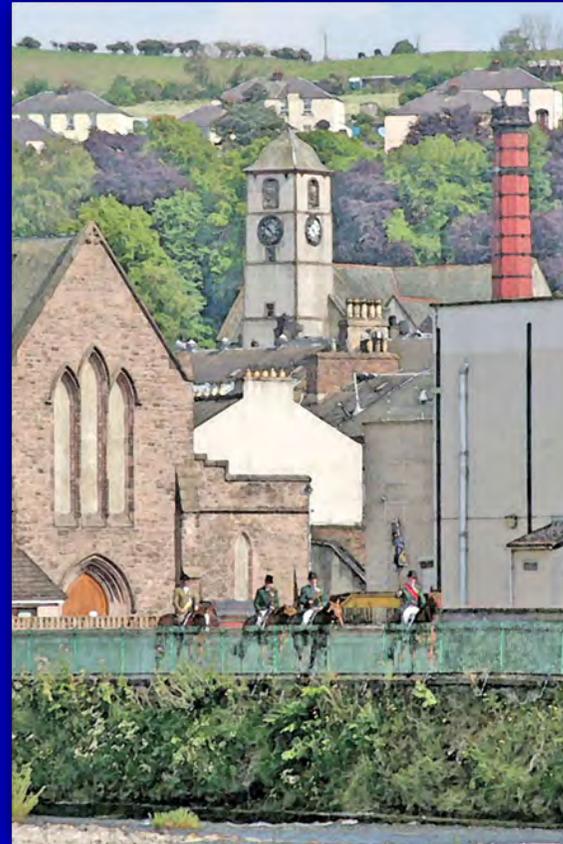


Families enjoy an afternoon of picnicking and catching up with old friends home for the Common-Riding



At 4pm the Cornet and mounted supporters leave the Mair and ride back to the town to complete the riding of the boundaries

Back in the town the
Big Four leave the
cavalcade at Myreslaw
Green and ride to the
Cobble Pool



The Cornets enter the Teviot while the Fither watches



The Cornet then dips the staff end of the Flag into the river three times, thus marking the boundary between Hawick & Wilton.



After galloping back up Beaconsfield Terrace to rejoin the cavalcade they ride via the High Street and Cross Wynd to the top of the Mill Path, where the riders are dismissed for the day



The Big Four, Provost, guests & Baillies then form up behind the band and walk to the foot of the Mill Path



Where the second Proclamation is read out and Teribus is sung

Then its back to the Town Hall via Staney Brae, Drums & Fifes leading the way



The Cornet then once again displays the Flag from the balcony of the Town Hall

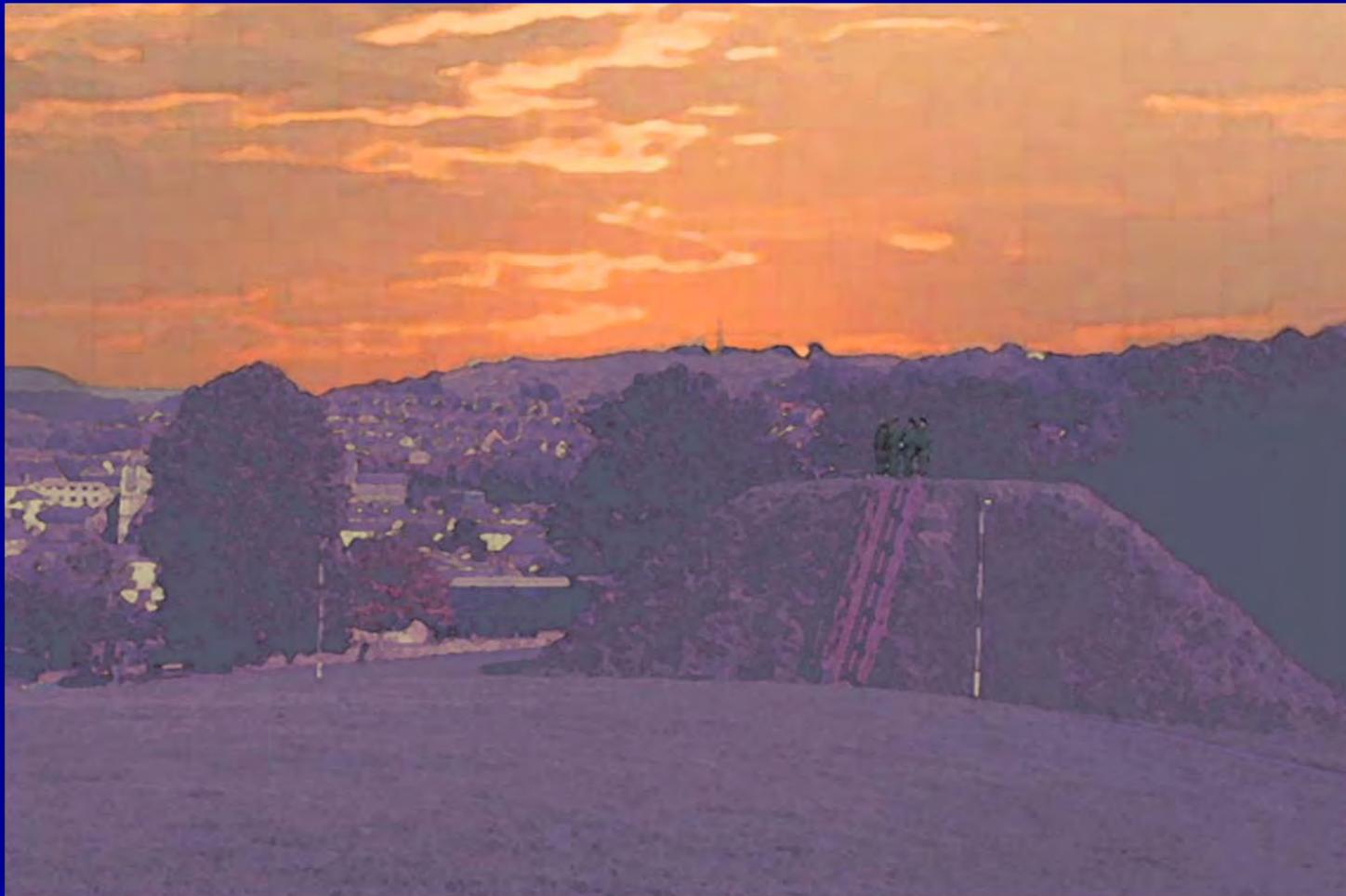


Cornet carried shoulder high to the Tower Knowe

After the Common Riding dinner it's the Ball. The Cornet, Ex-Cornets & Ex-Acting fathers and Visiting Principals take part in the Grand March to start the Ball

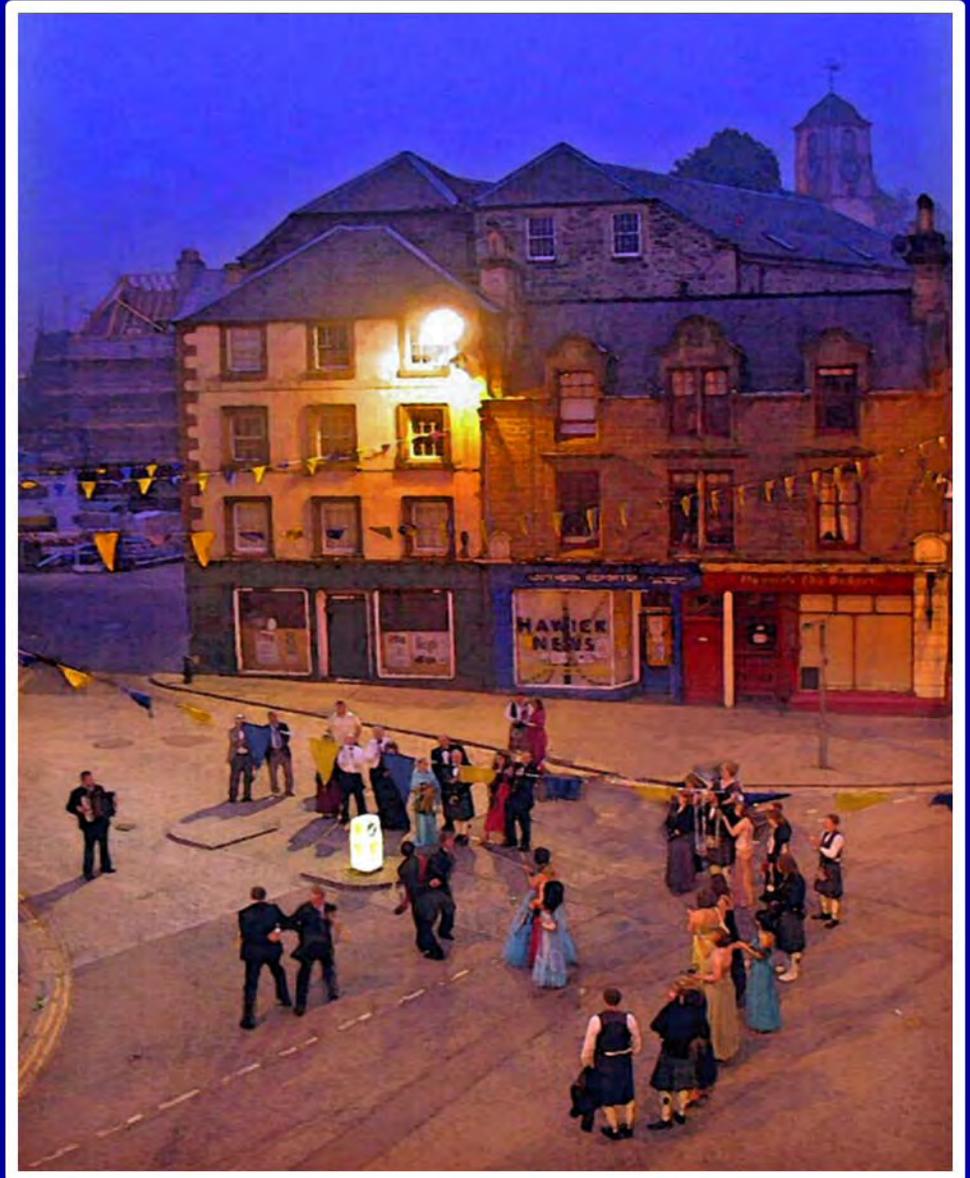


At Midnight the Cornets Reel is danced the Lass wears the sash while she is dancing it



At Sunrise and the big four sing Teribus at the top
of the moat

Before returning to
the Tower Knowe to
dance the reel



Common-Riding Saturday



The Drums & Fifes rouse the town



The Cavalcade
ride to the
museum, via the
Avenue

Stopping to sing
Teribus at the
Laurie Brig'



The Cornets collect the wreaths from the museum and carry them to the War Memorial, the Acting Father carries the Flag



The Fither Lowers the Flag while the wreaths are laid, and respects paid. The Cornets then about turn and return to the museum



The Cavalcade then ride to the Mair via the Dukes Wood, Flex Farm and Pilmuir. The Cornet carrying the flag all the way

As on the Friday the cavalcade gallop round the Mair



Then the whole cavalcade follow the Cornet back to the paddock

The Flag is displayed on the roof again





Another afternoon of Family Picnics

Windbreaks and wellies
never go wrong





and there is more horse racing, Cornets races and flapping races



At 3pm the flag is taken down and the Cornet leaves the Mair for the last time

Riding back to the
town via
Crumhaughhill



The Lasses and townsfolk wait at the Town Hall



The Flag is carried along the High Street for the last time

The Cornet dismounts and the principals enter the Town Hall



The Drums & Fifes play the flag out onto the balcony

The Flag is lowered





The Saxhorn Band play the
“Invocation” an emotional
tune at an emotional
ceremony



Only the music can be heard



The horses and riders stand in silence



The Flag returned it's time for the principals to
let their hair down



The Reel is danced one more time
the Drums and Fifes accompanying them



Then it's off to the shows

And it's all by for
another year

The End

