

Beat: News

Firework Finale for Forth Road Bridge

50 Years old

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USPA NEWS - The Forth Road Bridge's 50th birthday celebrations have concluded in style with one of the most spectacular fireworks displays ever seen in Scotland. The display was one of the largest and most complex ever launched from a UK structure and the first ever to take place on the Forth Road Bridge.

Crowds lined the banks of the Firth of Forth as a breath-taking barrage of fireworks was launched from the full length of the famous suspension bridge at 10:06pm "" in recognition of the bridge's 1,006 metre main span, which made it the fourth longest in the world when it opened in 1964. Viewers were treated to a sequence of carefully choreographed special effects, including rows of giant thistles, an enormous number 50 lighting up the sky and a dazzling 1,000-metre ""waterfall" cascading from the deck.

Pyrotechnics were launched from 95 firing locations along the full suspended span of the bridge. At 1,800 metres, this was the widest bridge display ever staged in the UK. Using over 12,000 fireworks and over 6,000 firing circuits, the mammoth spectacle was computer-controlled using 12 kilometres of data cable and 20 kilometres of wire. The entire display lasted a total of 7 minutes and 24 seconds. The festivities had earlier got off to a spectacular start, as 2,014 torch-bearers formed a kilometre-long "river of fire" across the bridge, led by massed pipe bands and a contingent of Vikings from Shetland's Up Helly Aa fire festival.

As the countdown to the fireworks continued, over 4,500 people joined the celebrations at the official "Bridge Party", entertained by legendary Scottish rockers Big Country, supported by local favourites Bwani Junction. The fireworks finale formed the climax of the ten-day Forth Bridges Festival, held by the Forth Estuary Transport Authority in partnership with the local business community to celebrate 50 years of the Forth Road Bridge. Highlights of a packed and varied programme included 2,014 members of the public climbing to the top of the bridge's 156-metre main towers, a rally of 1,000 bikers crossing the bridge and a flotilla of 180 vessels passing underneath.

The fireworks finale was produced on behalf of the Forth Estuary Transport Authority by Edinburgh-based Unique Events and their firework partners Titanium. This was the same team behind the London 2012 Olympic opening and closing ceremonies, Edinburgh's Hogmanay fireworks and, most recently, the pyrotechnic display for the opening of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. The Forth Bridges Festival formed a signature event in the Year of Homecoming Scotland 2014, and was supported by funding from the Forth Estuary Transport Authority, Homecoming Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council, Fife Council, Heritage Lottery Fund and Queensferry Ambition.

Councillor Lesley Hinds, Convenor of the Forth Estuary Transport Authority, said: "Tonight we celebrated Scotland's largest and most hard-working structure with a once-in-a-lifetime show that will live long in the memory of all who witnessed it. "Just as a new bridge emerges from the water, these 50th anniversary celebrations have inspired us to see the Forth Road Bridge in a new light "" as a thing of beauty and an engineering icon as well as an important piece of transport infrastructure. We have also gained a new appreciation for the men and women who built the bridge as well as those who keep it safe and open to traffic today.

"This was an ambitious programme of events and I am delighted that the team has pulled it off so spectacularly. "Mike Cantlay, Chairman of VisitScotland, said: "What an incredible evening and a fitting end to what has been an amazing ten days of celebrations for one of Scotland's most well-known landmarks. "The atmosphere tonight has been fantastic. It was a tremendous honour to be among those leading the torchlight procession and to be part of what is a special chapter in the Forth Bridges' history.

"The year of Homecoming, put simply, is a celebration of Scotland. It's an opportunity for those in the country to celebrate their "home" and for many the Forth Road Bridge, along with the world-renowned Forth Rail Bridge, is a symbol of "home" and a true icon of Scotland." Baillie Norman Work, who welcomed spectators to the event on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council, said: "Against the backdrop of the Forth Road Bridge, this was a truly spectacular fireworks display. You could see families thoroughly enjoying the

night of live music and the Bridge Party, and it was great to see so many local people come out to celebrate their local history. It was a very fitting end to the Forth Bridges Festival.“

Councillor Jim Leishman, Provost of Fife, said: “The torchlight procession and fireworks provided the perfect finale to the Festival, marking the 50th anniversary of the iconic Forth Road Bridge and bringing 2,014 people across the bridge to Fife. Since its opening the bridge has provided an essential gateway to the Kingdom and is used by many thousands each year. It was a brilliant opportunity to showcase all that the area has to offer and I was delighted to be part of this once-in-a-lifetime event.“

Source: Communications Dept. Forth Road Bridge
Click below to see Youtube video.

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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