

NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE

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Open the Hill House Box for an Edwardian Family Christmas

It's already gaining a reputation as a Box of Delights, but the pioneering chainmail structure that protects the National Trust for Scotland's The Hill House in Helensburgh will have a seasonal surprise for visitors, as the house is decorated for an Edwardian Family Christmas.

The award-winning team have imagined how the Blackie family, who commissioned Charles Rennie Mackintosh to create their family home, might have celebrated the festive period and created a beautiful decoration scheme that adds a touch of Christmas magic to the beautiful interiors.

From 30 November until 22 December the house will be decorated for an Edwardian Christmas, from the exquisitely decorated tree and jaunty paper garlands in the drawing room to the stockings hanging in the children's bedrooms ready for Father Christmas to deliver their presents.

In the kitchen, the turkey is being prepared, the dining room has been laid out for a feast and seasonal songs from the wind-up gramophone are bringing Christmas cheer. In Walter Blackie's library, visitors will be able to read a 1908 Christmas-time edition of the Helensburgh and Gareloch Times as well as books from the collection with festive verses and themes.

National Trust for Scotland guides will be dressed in the type of uniforms that the Blackies' staff would have worn and will be on hand to show visitors how the house would have been transformed for Christmas.

Each weekend through December too, local choirs will be carol singing, musicians will be performing and children will get a chance to make their own garlands to take home.

Emma Sweeney, Visitor Services Supervisor at The Hill House said: "We've not dressed the property much for Christmas previously and although The Hill House is an architectural masterpiece, it's first and foremost a family home so it makes sense to reflect that. The team here has spent a lot of time researching how Edwardians would have celebrated Christmas and how the Blackie family would have prepared for the festive period and it really shows the house in a light that hasn't been seen by visitors before."

The café will also be open, serving a seasonal menu along with freshly baked scones and sweet treats. The shop is also the perfect place to pick up some Christmas gifts, including many Hill House-themed items not available anywhere else.

Entry to The Hill House and An Edwardian Family Christmas is free for Trust members and is included in the entry price to the property. As well as the festive fun visitors can explore The Hill House Box, the vast semi-transparent chain-mail shelter around the main house. Opened to the public in June 2019 The Hill House Box provides an innovative solution to the problem of water damage at The Hill House to permanently save the property and its irreplaceable collection.

Father Christmas will also be appearing at The Hill House through the month (Sundays 8, 15 and 22 December). Visits to see Santa are £7 per child with two adults free and includes a gift. Father Christmas at The Hill House is bookable on the property's website and does not include access to the house and box.

