

# Annuals

40 YEARS OF  
SCOTTISH  
PUBLISHING  
1974-2014

The tradition of buying and giving annuals based on popular comics, characters, TV programmes or even pop stars has become a fixed part of the Christmas calendar. Most of these will originate with one Scottish publisher, DC Thomson of Dundee. Thomson began publishing comics such as *The Beano*, *The Dandy*, *Rover*, *Wizard*, *Hotspur*, *Bunty*, and *Judy* in the 1930s. Thomson's first annuals appeared in 1939.

Gifted artists and writers produced a range of memorable characters for these publications such as Desperate Dan, Lord Snooty, and (for Thomson's newspapers) Oor Wullie and The Broons. Oor Wullie was voted the top Scottish icon in 2004 – ahead of Sean Connery and William Wallace!

While comics went into decline from the 1980s, the annuals have prospered for longer. Some continued to appear even after the disappearance of the comic itself. The most popular annuals are now those based on Oor Wullie and The Broons, tapping into both the extensive readership of the weekly Sunday Post and the market for nostalgic reminders of childhood.

Their popularity was further proven by the publication in 2007 by Waverley Books of *Maw Broon's Cookbook*, which became a bestseller, and a subsequent series of Broons-based titles covering topics from 'gairdening' to holidays (in the But 'n Ben, of course).

