



This leaflet was created in partnership with Callander Community Development Trust, Callander & District Heritage Society, Stirling Council, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park and Historic Scotland.

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Stories in the Stones



How to read...

the Stories in the Stones

Welcome to Callander, a place where Lowland meets Highland and one of the very first planned towns in Scotland. Beginning in Ancaster Square, you can use this booklet to guide you on a circular walk around the core of this fascinating burgh.

Buildings and other stone structures give the framework for the tour. Through them, you'll find out about some of the people who have shaped Callander. You'll start to read the stories behind the stones.

Certain people will feature several times. They include Sir Walter Scott (whose name may be familiar) and the Reverend James Robertson (whom you'll know by the end of the walk). Architects, artists, shopkeepers, cattle drovers, a saint and railway workers are among the others whose stories have links to the stones.

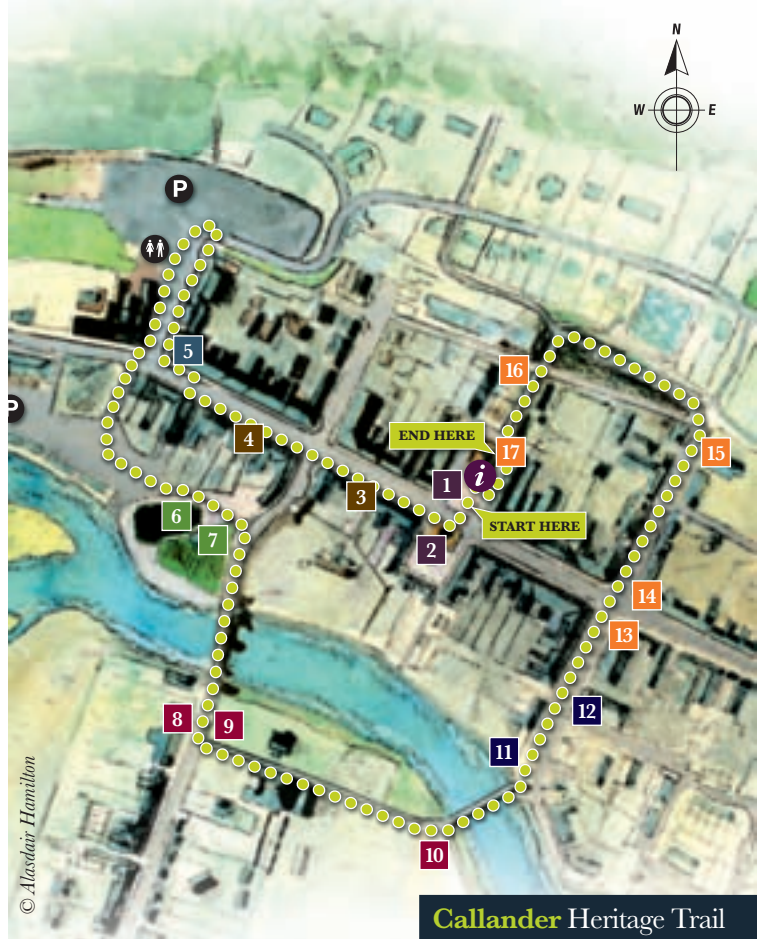
Photographs of interesting stonework are used in each section of the booklet. But you'll need to pause along the way and look carefully at buildings to see where they were taken.



Numbered pavement markers, each with a bearded face, will also show you locations where you might want to stop and look around. The bearded image is based on one of several such decorative sculptures in Main Street, Bridgend and North Church Street. See how many you can spot around town, both on the walk and slightly beyond it.

In some places on the trail, there are panels that will give you additional information and pictures. So by using a combination of this booklet, the pavement markers and panels, you'll have several ways of learning more about the town. Take your time, look up at top storeys of buildings when you can (though keep alert for traffic) and start to see Callander in a different way.

*Relish the journey,
Enjoy the Stories in the Stones...*



Callander Heritage Trail

A Scottish Trend-setter

Cowpats and Commerce

Heads and Tales

Saints and Sinners

Take a Walk on the Wildside

International Links

Commuting in Style to Callander

Follow the Callander Heritage Trail using the pavement markers, which start and end in Ancaster Square.

The trail is largely along pavements and firm-surfaced paths. Walking slowly, with stops to view buildings, may take half an hour to one hour. Feel free to extend it by visiting local shops and eating places, or exploring beyond the main trail...

The tall spire of the former St Kessog's Church in the square is visible as a reference point during much of the walk.



A Scottish Trend-setter

Ancaster Square



Ancaster Square is the very hub of Callander. In part, that's because both locals and visitors like to meet, sit for a while, catch buses here or go into the VisitScotland Information Centre. But it's also because the Square has always been intended to be at the centre of things, ever since town plans were first mapped out, nearly 300 years ago.

The brainchild of James Drummond, 3rd Duke of Perth, drawings made in 1739 are among the very first efforts in Scotland to visualise a carefully planned town. But because the Duke backed the losing Jacobite side in the rebellion of 1745, his lands were confiscated and the plan put on hold until the 1770s. That's when 'Commissioners for the Forfeited Estates' used the Duke's scheme to create a stone-built town with straight, wide streets, where before there had been only scattered houses.

From its earliest years, this square housed a church. The first, designed by John Baxter, Junior, was built in 1773. Baxter was one of the architects of Edinburgh's New Town and also helped to draw out plans for Rossdhu House beside Loch Lomond.

The old Callander Parish Church was replaced in 1883 by the one you see today. Built in the 'Gothic' style popular at that time, it includes buttresses that help it to soar to a great height. Later renamed St Kessog's (after the saint you'll meet later) it was used for worship until a merger with St Bride's in 1985, after which it became a Visitor Centre.



Old Parish Church 1773



The square has long been a location for a butcher's business. This is Peter Haggart and his family in the late 1800s.



The architect of this Victorian building, Robert Baldie, designed around 30 Scottish churches. He also reconstructed Cambusmore House, near the Stirling Road just east of Callander. Decades earlier, Sir Walter Scott, the writer whose work encouraged the area's earliest tourist boom, stayed at Cambusmore on several visits to the district.

Cross Main Street with care to the South Square, directly opposite the church, and you can enjoy the elegant stonework of the old buildings. There's long been a butcher's business here. In the late 1800s, it was run by Peter Haggart and his family (pictured above).



The lion-topped war memorial, built in 1920, was designed by Archibald Kay, a landscape artist who lived at Kilmahog. Often seen around town on his bicycle, he was known as 'The Captain' because of his role as leader of the local Boys Brigade.



Cowpats and Commerce

Main Street to the Old Bank

From south Ancaster Square, turn west to go down Main Street, past the local offices of the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park. You'll notice that the street is very broad. That's exactly as it was planned, at precisely 60 feet across, in the 1700s.

Between then and the early 1900s, horses, carts, carriages and coaches would have been the typical traffic. So too, at some times of year, would have been hairy Highland cattle. Coming from many parts of the north and west, thousands were moved through here to the great cattle fairs or 'trysts' at Doune, Stirling and Falkirk. These markets eventually declined after

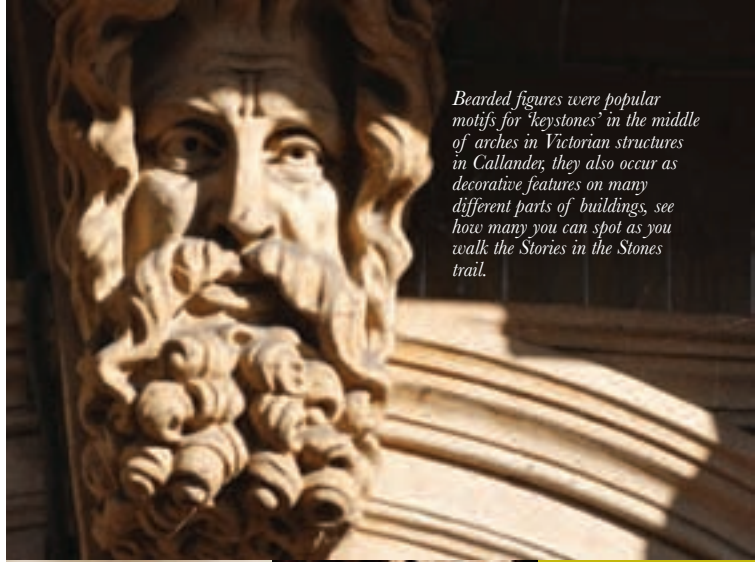
the coming of the railways in the 1800s. But cattle were still herded down this street well into the 20th century. Crossing the street nowadays means being wary of traffic. But at least you're unlikely to tread in a cowpat!



Notice the different styles of buildings you pass. Many of these, such as Lochiel House, just past the National Park office, have an elegance that reflects the wealth of business folk who built them in the 19th century.



Continue on down Main Street, crossing at the Bridge Street traffic lights, you will see an interpretation panel on the steps ahead that will tell you more about the interesting buildings at this main junction.



Bearded figures were popular motifs for 'keystones' in the middle of arches in Victorian structures in Callander, they also occur as decorative features on many different parts of buildings, see how many you can spot as you walk the Stories in the Stones trail.



David Rhind was one of the leading Victorian architects of Scottish bank buildings.

There are many kinds of fine stonework in buildings along Main Street.

Next continue down Main Street, cross at the traffic lights and take a look at the wonderfully ornate Old Bank. Now a restaurant, in the past this has also been a bank under three different names and twice a hotel.

It was built in 1883 for the Commercial Bank of Scotland and was possibly the last project of architect David Rhind, who died in the year it was constructed. In a career spanning more than 50 years, he designed more than 80 bank buildings, from Shetland to Stranraer. He also had a link to Sir Walter Scott. Rhind designed the fluted column for the monument to the writer that still towers above George Square, in the centre of Glasgow.

The bank was both home and work place for its early managers. It was intended, says Historic Scotland, "to give customers a sense of permanence, security and dependability."

Continue on to the corner and look out for the pavement marker at the corner of station road, opposite the Dreadnought Hotel.



Main Street looking west 1881

Heads and Tales

The Dreadnought

Turreted and large, the Dreadnought Hotel at the western end of Main Street is a striking building. It's notable not only for its size, but because of its role in local tourism for over two centuries.

Much expanded in later years, the original Dreadnought was built in 1802 by the chief of the Clan MacNab. It replaced Callander's original inn and was likely to have been where the famous 'Romantic' writers, William and Dorothy Wordsworth, stayed during their tour of Scotland in the autumn of 1803. While here, they had sat one evening and read account of the area written in the 1790s by the Callander parish minister, James Robertson.

Describing the Trossachs – the beautiful area of lochs, mountains, woods and rivers about 10 miles west of Callander – the Rev. Robertson said:

“..there is such an assemblage of wildness and rude grandeur, as beggars all description, and fills the mind with the most sublime conceptions.”

The Wordsworths were impressed, both by the words and the area. Other writers, such as Keats, followed. When Sir Walter Scott set his best-selling epic poem ‘*The Lady of the Lake*’ in the Trossachs, visitors began to come to Callander by the thousands, using it as a base for tours.



The Dreadnought always played a central part in that tourism, at first through trips in horse-drawn carriages and coaches. This business expanded with the arrival of the railway in 1858. When Callander station moved, later that century, to where the large car park now sits between the Dreadnought and the ‘Craggs’ above the town, the hotel was in an ideal position to offer transport, lodging and meals to travellers.



STAGECOACH AT DREADNOUGHT HOTEL ABOUT 1857

Tours from Callander to the Trossachs and other beauty spots at first went by horse-drawn carriage or coach. Later, large, open-topped cars called ‘motor charabancs’ were used, then buses.



The image shows the head of the chief of the Clan Neish, which was severed by ‘Smooth John’ MacNab in a raid on the MacNab fortress in Loch Earn in the early 1600s, visible over the original entrance on Main Street.

Around that time, a small group could hire a one-horse carriage and driver to take them on a return trip to the Trossachs for 11 shillings and 6 pence (less than 60p). Or you could stay at the Hotel for a week for just over £3.

The Dreadnought was also once a popular hotel with railway travellers. To find out more about Callander's railway heritage, go up Station Road to the large car park. Interpretation boards there will reveal more.

Public toilets are to the left of the car park's Station Road entrance. If you would rather continue on the trail, cross the road into the Meadows Car Park.

Saints and Sinners

Tom na Chisaig and the Old Graveyard

Go into the large Meadows car park across Main Street from the Dreadnought Hotel and two features are likely to draw your eye. One is the river – the Teith – lapping at the fringe and often hosting a range of ducks, swans and gulls likely to prove popular with youngsters.



Then there's the large, smooth-sided and flat-topped mound to the left. That's Tom na Chisaig (loosely based on the Gaelic for 'Kessog's Hill'), named after one of Scotland's most important early Celtic saints. Irish by birth, Kessog came as a missionary to the lands of Lennox (south of Callander) early in the 6th century. He was based at Inchtavannach ('Monk's Island') on Loch Lomond, close to Luss, and was martyred in a bay near there.

St Kessog



Kessog was held in such importance in medieval Scotland that it is said that Robert the Bruce invoked his name before leading his troops into battle at Bannockburn.

Kessog (who, like St Ninian, now has a North Sea oilfield named after him) may have preached near this spot. But the artificial hill that bears his name was built much later, possibly as a 'motte' or castle hill in the 12th century. The old Callander Parish Church (removed when the first church was built in Ancaster Square in 1773) also stood just beyond it, where the old kirkyard now lies.



Many of the graves date from the late 1700s and early 1800s.



The octagonal watch house was built as a lookout to guard the kirkyard from 'body snatchers'. Until 1832, when the legal supply of bodies that anatomists could study was increased, a shortage of such corpses meant that criminals could make money through robbing fresh graves.

The mound of Tom na Chisaig was used long ago as a place where archers could practise. It was later used for outdoor services while the Free Church in South Church Street was being built.



Follow the short path east from the mound to Bridge Street, then turn right and look over the wall into the graveyard. Many of the stones here commemorate people who would have known Callander before or during the earliest days of the planned town. These include the Rev. James Robertson, author of the work that impressed the Wordsworths. Between them, James and his son, Peter, were the parish ministers for some 70 years. Both are buried in the Robertson family tomb in the graveyard although, ironically, James' inscription is now unreadable.



River Teith looking towards Tom na Chisaig

Take a Walk on the Wild Side

The Red Bridge, Bridgend and the River Teith

Follow the pavement by the graveyard to use the Red Bridge to cross the River Teith. Named for the colour of its sandstone, this bridge dates from 1908 and replaces an earlier stone bridge built in 1764. See if you can spot the date stones as you pass. In the 1960s, it was seen every week by millions of viewers through being shown in the opening titles of the early hit TV series 'Dr Finlay's Casebook', which was filmed in Callander.

This section has long been a good place to cross the river. A ferry once operated near here and cattle drovers are said to have moved their herds across using a ford not far downstream. The part of Callander over the bridge is called Bridgend and has an interesting variety of buildings, from small cottages to grand, classical-style ones.



8 The black-and-white frontage to the Bridgend Hotel is a 19th century addition to a much earlier building. Stroll down the street if you like, or come back later to explore.

The main trail continues across the street from the Bridgend Hotel, going along the path at the riverward side of the school. Now a primary school, this

9 elegant building was once the McLaren High School. It was designed by John Stewart and George Paterson in 1907, the year they designed Perth City Hall. The same architects also helped to re-model Roman Camp House (now a hotel) and built houses in Esher Crescent for veterans from the First World War.



The Teith has European importance for its range of fish, especially lampreys. But herons and other birds are easier to see.



In the past, freshwater pearl mussels were harvested from the Teith and gave an income for some families in what has since been re-named Pearl Street, across the footbridge on the town side. Native freshwater mussels are now rare in Scotland and most harvesting in Callander had stopped by the late 1800s.



10 Continue to the footbridge and pause to let the scene soak in.

"The Teith is the sweetest voiced of all Scottish streams," wrote the poet, Alexander Smith.

Its clean, clear waters support a very healthy range of wildlife, which includes the salmon and sea trout that are popular with anglers. But the Teith is also unusual in hosting three different species of lamprey – a primitive, eel-like fish. The lampreys alone are enough to give it European importance for nature conservation.

International Links

St Bride's and the Kirk Hall

"I mark not the hours unless they be bright..."

11 Go past the sundial where an interpretation panel can give you more information, and continue up the street. There's a distinct look of the sunny south about St Bride's – now Callander Kirk. That might seem surprising, given its origins. It was built in the 1840s as a base for members of the newly formed Free Church, following a nationwide split – 'The Disruption' – from the Church of Scotland. Then, as now, Free Church folk had a no-frills approach to worship.

The original building was simple, constructed in large measure by volunteers. The southern look came in 1861, when Glasgow architect, George Penrose Kennedy, made large additions. These include the distinctive belvedere (fair view) bell tower, which

12 wouldn't seem out of place in Rome or Tuscany. The Italian look reflects a fashionable style in mid-Victorian architecture. But it also reveals something of its designer's early training.

The son of noted landscape gardener Lewis Kennedy (who provided some of the first roses for the Empress Josephine's garden at Malmaison in France and was later factor of the Drummond Estate), George worked early in his career for Sir Charles Barry. Both Sir Charles (whose most famous building is the Houses of Parliament) and George were involved in some of the landscaping at Drummond Castle.

Gardens at Drummond Estate



Arched windows on Callander Kirk.

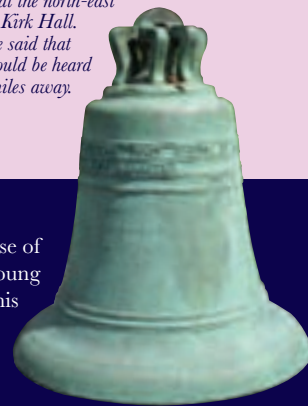


The unusual stonework on St. Bride's shown opposite is called vermiculation, which means wormlike markings or carvings.



Decorative blue bargeboards on the Kirk Hall.

The bell of the old parish church in Ancaster Square now sits in the garden at the north-east side of the Kirk Hall. It was once said that its chime could be heard up to 12 miles away.



Barry also championed the use of 'Italianate' style. While the young George Kennedy worked in his London drawing office, one of the volumes he compiled was named 'Italian Sketchbook'. Many years later, Callander benefited from that early experience. The church not only looks good from a distance; the detailed carvings on its stonework are superb.

George Kennedy also designed the Kirk Hall building, next door to the church. It was built in 1849, using money from successful local businessman and banker, Donald McLaren, and was the Free Church School for nearly 50 years. Its purpose was to promote the religious and moral training of the young in the Parish and neighbourhood of Callander. Now it functions as the hall for Callander Kirk and community.

Commuting in Style to Callander

Along old railway and back to Ancaster Square



Continue to the corner of Main Street and pause to notice the variety of traditional buildings of varying heights, design and age which give Callander an interesting streetscape.



Cross to North Church Street (directly opposite). There's some excellent use of puddingstone in buildings of different ages here, including the single storey Sorisdale Cottage near the top of the street (oldest house in Callander). You can continue straight up the hill to longer walks on the Craggs and to Bracklinn Falls or to finish the Town Heritage Trail, turn left along the small path that goes westward parallel to the track of the old railway line.

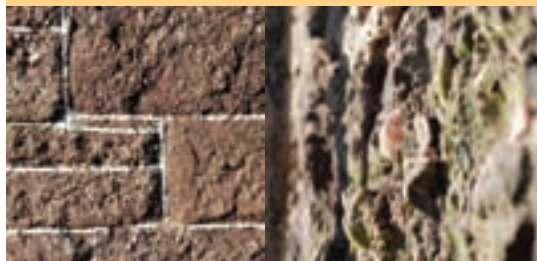


The coming of the railway to Callander in 1858 marked a huge change for both the town and its people. Before that, one coach a day had been the only connection to Stirling along a notoriously bad road. Now several trains a day made that journey at much greater speed. That allowed locals to travel more readily and made Callander accessible to many more visitors.

Some 75,000 people travelled the line in its first four years. A new type of visitor – known locally as the 'carriage-folk' – began to appear. Often from wealthy city families, these people rented local houses for the summer, both in the centre of town (where locals would move out to make money from summer lets) and in villas at Leny Feus.



The coming of the railway marked a new era in the development of Callander. The first station operated at the east end of Callander between 1858 and 1870, and changed use when a new station was built at the western end of town.



puddingstone in houses on North Church Street includes both finely worked stone, set in pale mortar, and rougher, larger blocks in older buildings.

“While the (carriage-folk) family enjoyed a long holiday the breadwinner travelled to and from business by train”, wrote Callander historian, Alastair Thompson.

Railway companies changed and lines were extended west to Oban during the 19th century. The first station was at the east end of town and became a halt/goods yard when the Callander and Oban Railway built a new station behind the Dreadnought Hotel.



Turn left through the massive stone portal formed by the supports of what was once a railway bridge. Go past two cast-iron uprights, once used as station turnstiles. An information board with suggestions of other routes to use to explore Callander and its surrounds marks the end of the Stories in the Stones trail.



From here, at the rear of St Kessog's, a few more steps will take you back to Ancaster Square.



Make the *Callander Connections...*

Using this leaflet to explore the town's built heritage is just one of the ways you can make Callander connections.

With a wealth of interesting buildings, a river running through it and wooded crags as a backdrop, Callander can reward both casual strolls and more vigorous rambles. Look out for the leaflet 'Callander Paths', available from the National Park Office or VisitScotland Information Centre. There's also a great deal to explore in the wider Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park.

For details of other walks, routes, tours and heritage links, go to the VisitScotland Information Centre in Ancaster Square, housed in the former church which is the start and finish point for the Stories in the Stones Trail.

Here's a taster of some wider links you could enjoy, including:

- **Healthy Connections** on walks that go by the side of the River Teith, along the Crags or to Bracklinn Falls.
- **Heritage Connections** by looking at other fine buildings in the town and visiting historic places beyond it, such as Doune Castle.
- **Natural Connections** through appreciating birds, plants and animals that live here. Swans on the river, trees and flowers beside paths and red squirrels in the woods all add beauty to the Callander scene.
- **Romantic Connections** by using Callander as a base from which to take trips to the Trossachs, first praised by poets and other writers more than two centuries ago and still one of Scotland's landscape gems.
- **Celtic Connections** by going to other places in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, such as Luss, linked to St Kessog.

*Take time in
and beyond Callander...*



*Above: SS Sir Walter Scott, Loch Katrine
Left: Red squirrel
Below: Luss village
Below left: River Teith at Callander Meadows
Below right: Bracklinn Falls*

