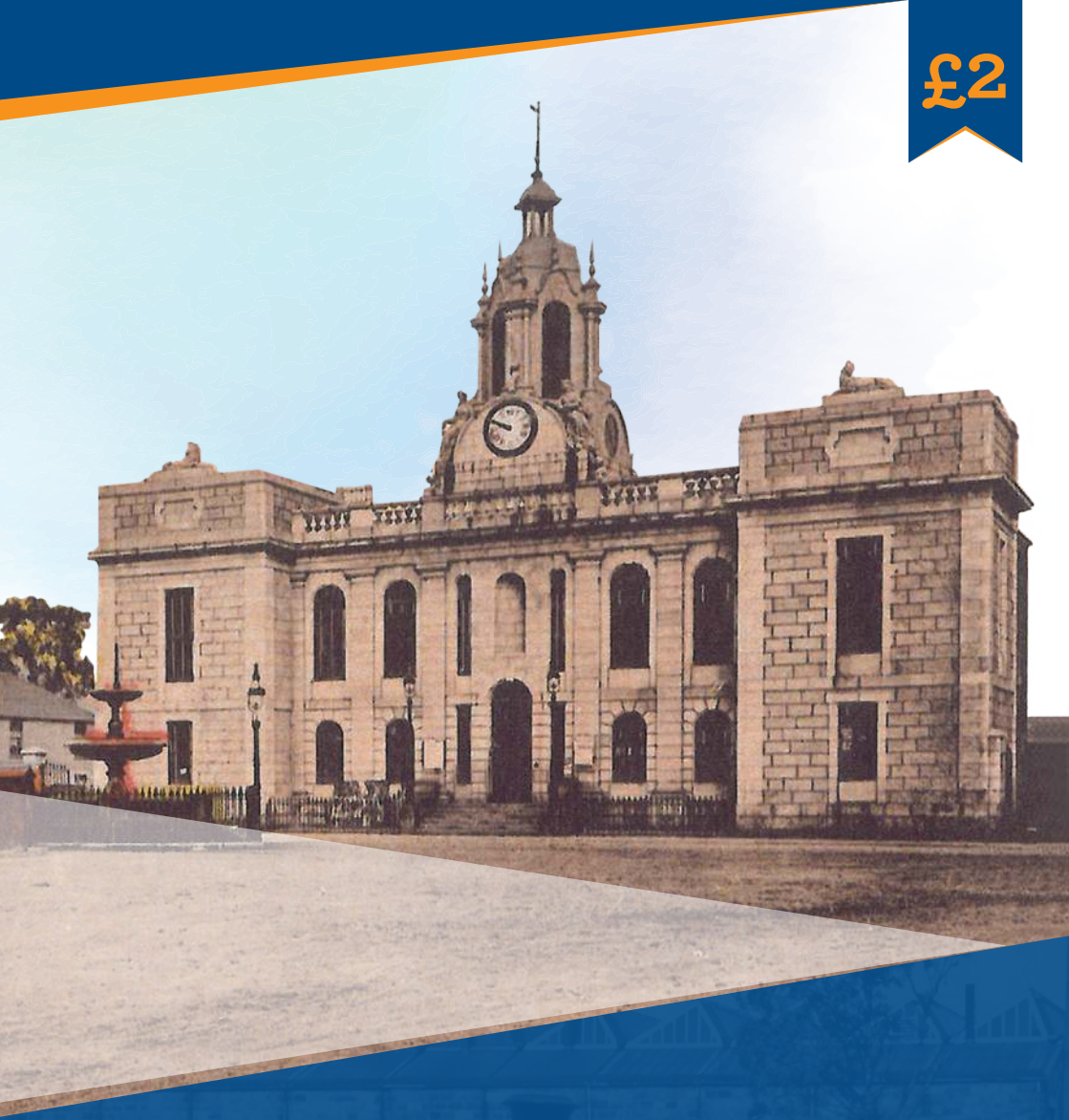
£2



INVERURIE *Heritage* WALKS



Market Place and Memorial Fountain 1905



Kellands Pleasure Park (Top of Barclay Road) 1960



View up West High Street from Market Place 1890s

Inverurie Heritage Walks

Thank you for choosing to follow a walk through some of the history of Inverurie.

There are two walks, North Inverurie and South Inverurie, both taking you to some of the main buildings and historical sites in the town. Each has a map in the centre of this booklet. Both start at the Town Hall, which is the dominant feature of Inverurie, and each will also take you past some of the shops, cafés, pubs and restaurants, which will hopefully be of interest to you too.



Market Place and Town Hall 1890

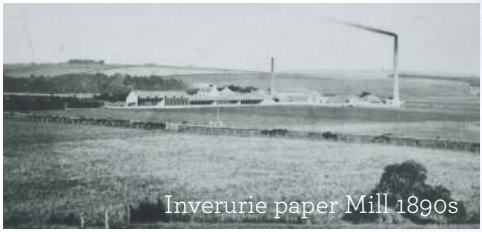
Inverurie was an important centre of habitation from the earliest days of pre-history when the population centred on the Stanners near the Bass. Inverurie's prosperity began in 1805 with the coming of the Aberdeenshire Canal linking Port Elphinstone with Aberdeen Harbour. It continued to develop with the arrival of the railway in 1852 and subsequently the

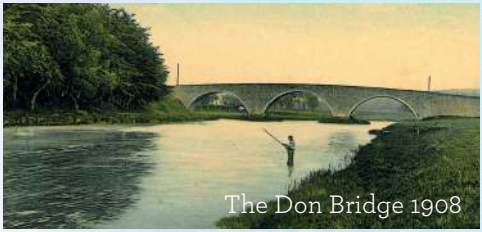
Inverurie Locomotive Works (1905–1969). Tait's Paper Mills was also a significant employer for many years until its closure in 2009. Proximity to Aberdeen and oil-related employment, alongside more traditional occupations, resulted in Inverurie developing into its current form.

It was commonly spelt 'Inverury' until the 19th century, when, with the increased use of the postal service, many letters addressed to 'Inverury' were being sent to 'Inverary' in Argyll, as 'a' and 'u' were particularly hard to distinguish in handwritten addresses. The spelling of the river 'Ury' remained unaltered, and a number of recent publications have been inaccurate in spelling the river 'Urie'.

Some of the properties along the walks are private residences, and we would ask you to be mindful of this.

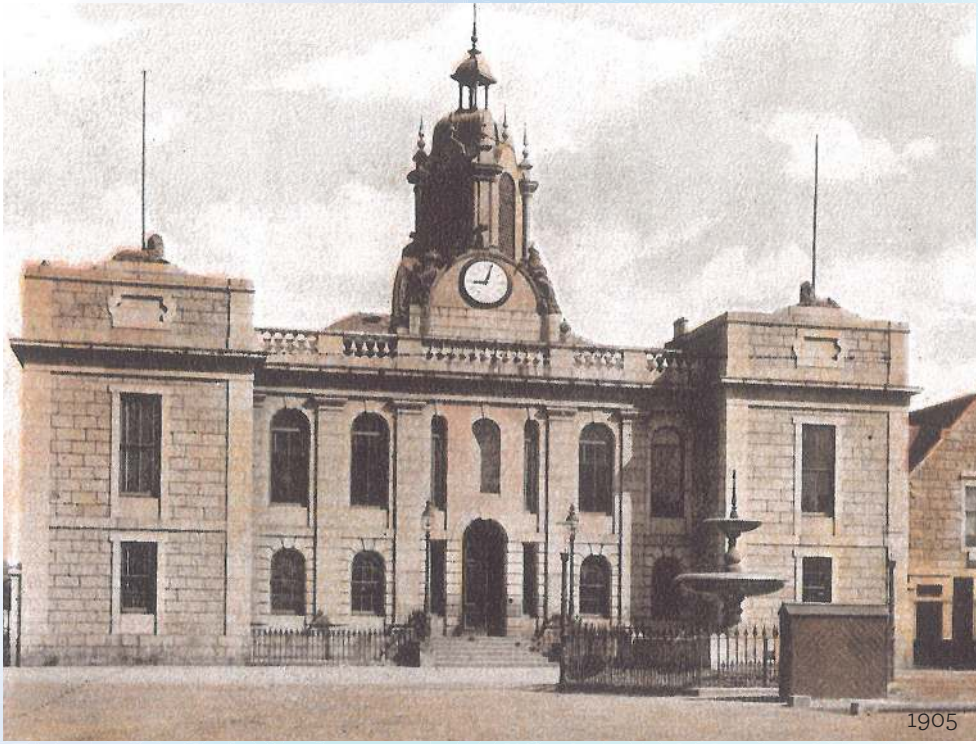

Inverurie Locomotive Works 1959


Inverurie paper Mill 1890s


The Don Bridge 1908

North Walk

1 The Town Hall


1905

A Town Hall was built on this site in 1803. The present building was completed in 1863 at a cost of £2,000, paid from the Common Good Fund. It was designed in the Italian style by the architect, J. Russell Mackenzie, and built of Kemnay granite.

Much of this Category B listed building was destroyed by fire in 1929, but reopened in the following year; fortunately, the façade was untouched. The building was also damaged in a great storm in 1953 when the cupola shifted and the top blew off.

The cupola is not made of stone and is noticeably different from the rest of the building. For many years, a fountain sat in front of the Town Hall. It was erected to commemorate the coming of a mains water supply to Inverurie from Hillhead of Keithhall and was opened in 1879 by Mrs Annand, the provost's wife.


1905


1953


1904

2 The Inverurie Coffee House


1904

Funded by Miss Anne Gordon of Manar, it opened in May 1880 as a philanthropic venture for the 'benefit of young men in the town'. It has served a variety of purposes, including as a post office (1898) a fire station (1940) and latterly a building society/solicitors with flats above.

3 The Carnegie Library and Museum

Added as an extension to the Town Hall in 1911. Funding of £600 was provided by the Carnegie Trust. The museum is no longer housed in the building.


1940s

4 Railway Station

The 'new' railway station, was opened on the 10th of February 1902. It was a three platform through-station at the hub of the Great North of Scotland Railway network.


1905



1904


1901

5 Edward's

Circa 1800, the inn built on this site was named the Mason Lodge Inn. At one point it was renamed "Findlaters Inn" It was later owned by Alexander Davidson who named it the Gordon Arms Hotel. Later, c1900, the hotel was bought by John Mann but after he died his widow decided to demolish the hotel in 1901 and replace it with a new building which opened in 1902.



Pre 1870



1940

6 The West Church


1904

A split in the Church of Scotland over the appointment of ministers in 1843 (The Disruption) led to the creation of the West Church, known locally as "The West Kirk". It was founded as a Free Church (free from Edinburgh control). Built in Constitution Street in 1843, it was moved to West High Street in 1877. In the mid-20th century the West Church elected to return to the Church of Scotland. The church now has two floors. The upper is used for Sunday worship, funerals, weddings, and concerts. The lower housing a popular café and Fairtrade shop.

7 The Salvation Army Hall


2019

Built as a school in 1871 through funds given by William Clark, a retired merchant of Kinellar, to educate the children of Inverurie.

8 The Victoria Cinema



Late 1930s

The cinema came to Inverurie in the 1920s when Alfred Young showed films in the Town Hall. On hearing another exhibitor was interested in building a rival cinema, he had the 500-seat Victoria built in 1934. In 1956 it was purchased by Messrs. Donald to add to their theatre and cinema company. In 1968 it was turned into a bingo

hall with reduced weekly screenings. Closing in 1998, it became 'Oscars' night club, before being sold to Wetherspoon and renamed 'The Gordon Highlander' in memory of the well-loved steam-powered engine which was serviced at the Inverurie Locomotive Works and is on display at the Scottish Railway Museum.

9 The Victoria Hotel

Built as a hotel, the owner was unable to obtain a liquor licence so he divided it into flats with a hall. It was later bought by the British Legion as their local headquarters and is now The Drouthy Laird.


2000

10 William Thom's Weaving Shop


c1930s

The weaving shop was used by William Thom in the early 1840s. Since then the site has been occupied by the Plymouth Brethren's Hall, a dance school and is now a model shop

11 The Northern Co-op

Built for the Don Co-op, it was bought by the Northern Co-op in 1922, and is now a solicitors and estate agent.


c1930s

12 William Thom's House

- 23 North Street, demolished 1960s

William Thom (1798/9 - The 29th of February 1848) was a Scottish weaver and poet. His notable works are 'The Mitherless Bairn' and 'Rhymes and Recollections of a Handloom Weaver'. He moved to Inverurie in 1840, and lived at 23 North Street. He died at the age of 49 and is interred in the Western Cemetery, Perth Road, Dundee, where a memorial monument was erected by admirers.


c1920

13 The Black Bull Inn


c1890

This hostelry was built in the 19th century and the business was run by four generations of the Christie family. At that time, the Market Green, opposite the Inn, was the venue for fairs, regular livestock sales and the twice yearly feein' markets where farm workers were hired.

14 The Market Green


c1900

Markets were held during the winter months in Market Place, but from spring to autumn were held at the Market Green where there were permanent wooden stalls and greater space for trading cattle and horses.

15 Commercial Hotel

The Commercial was also established in the 19th century and was a meeting place for cattle drovers at a time when Inverurie was an important centre of the cattle trade in the 'shire. The Inn provided food and refreshments, accommodation and even stabling for horses.



c1900

16 The Roman Catholic Church

Between 1848 and 1850, Father Charles Tochetti, a young priest at the Leslie's Chapel on the Fetternear Estate, and Colonel Leslie, set about raising funds for building a chapel in Inverurie. "Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception" was blessed and opened for Divine Service on the 1st of August 1852 by the Bishop, the Right Rev. Dr. Kyle.


2019

17 Brandsbutt Stone


2019

A Class 1 Pictish Symbol Stone with Ogham writing and symbols. It was broken up by a farmer in the 19th century, but the fragments were recovered from a nearby dyke and rebuilt. There is a crescent and V-rod above a serpent and a Z-rod, and to the left, the Ogham inscription transliterated as IRATADDOARENS. This is believed to mean Ethernan (Adrian).

18 Locomotive Works

Completed in 1902 by the Great North of Scotland Railway Company as building and repair workshops. Four workshops were built, along with an office block and houses for the workers in King Street, Queen Street and Princes Street. This area became known as the 'Colony'. The housing in Harlaw Road was for the supervisors and foremen (Gaffers). In 1904 they built what is now the Hopeville Social Club as the manager's house.


c1950

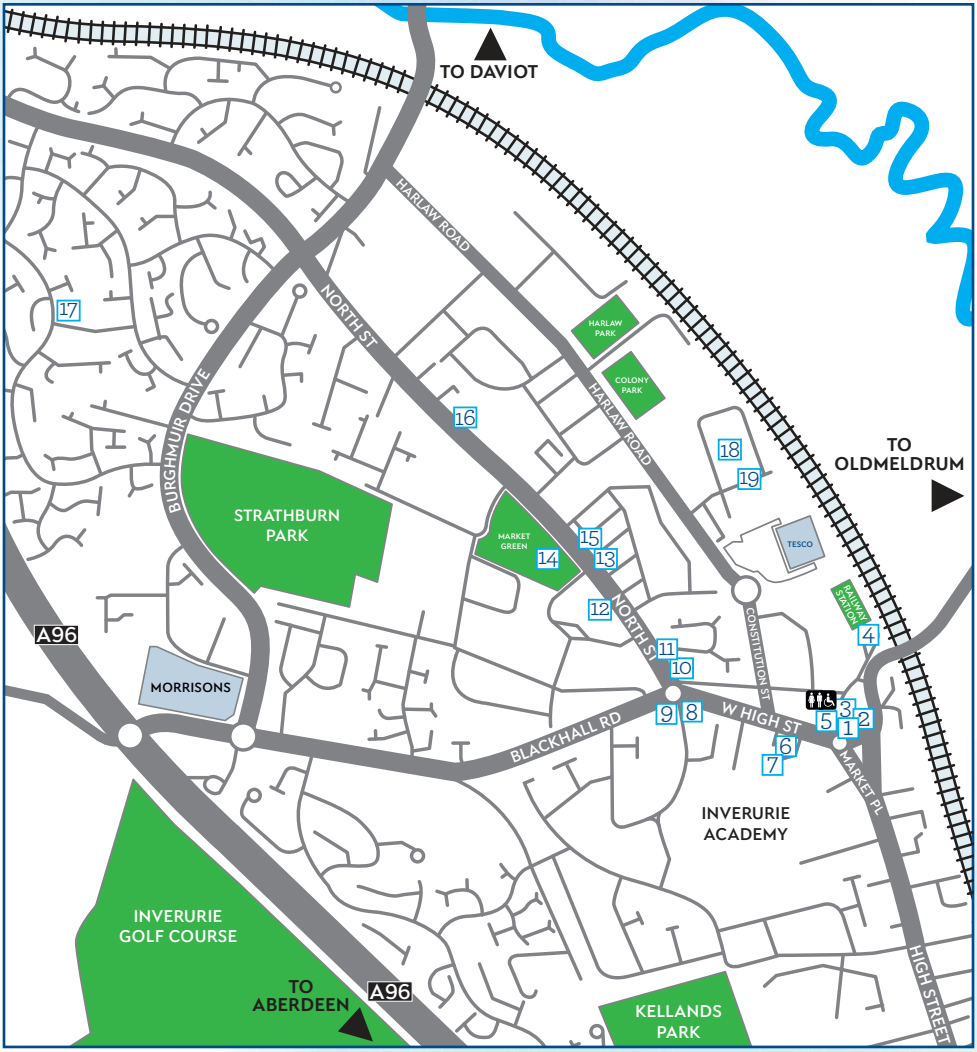

1905

19 Garioch Heritage Centre

The Garioch Heritage Society (GHS) was founded in 1987 to preserve the social history of the Garioch. Malcolm Allan Housebuilders Ltd. developed the old Loco Works into housing and asked the GHS to take over an area as a Heritage Museum, which opened in 2017.

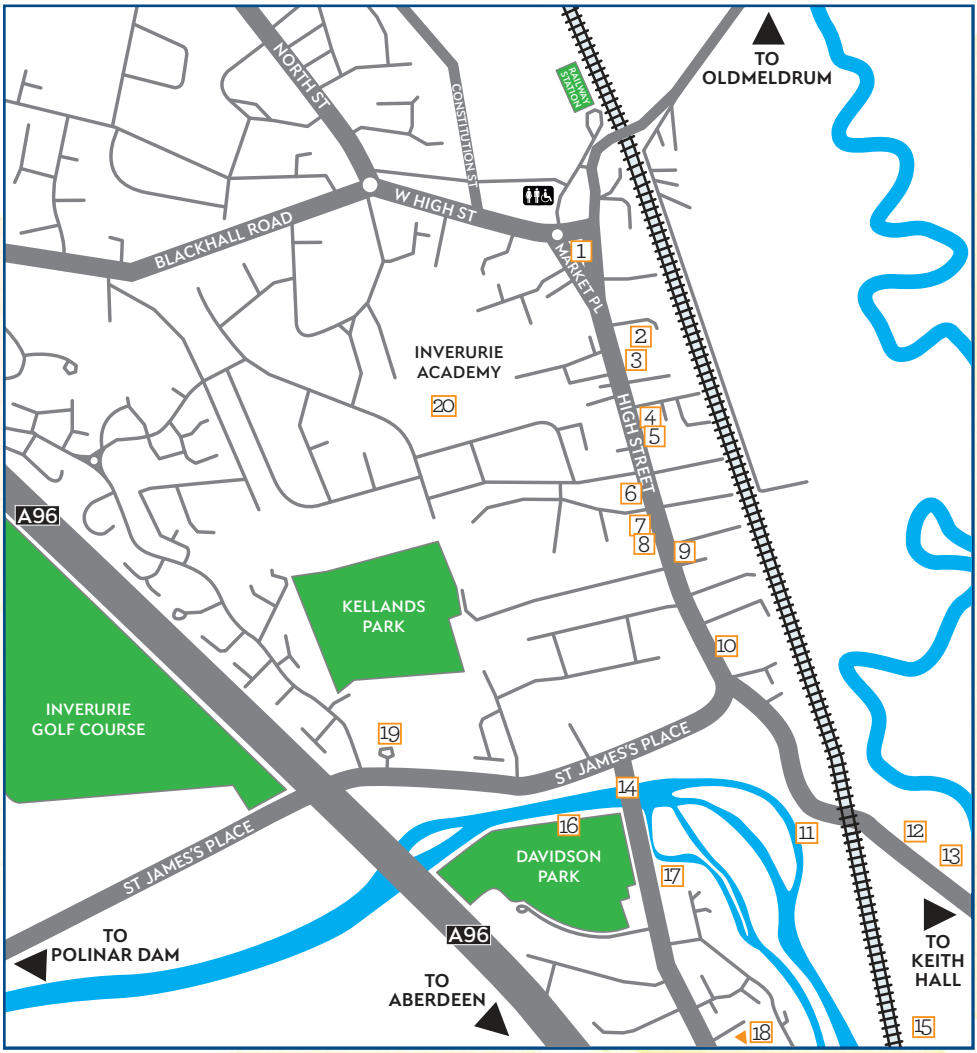
North WALK

LOCATION MAP



South WALK

LOCATION MAP



South Walk

1 War Memorial and Garden

This was dedicated on the 20th September 1921 and set within a triangular-shaped Garden of Remembrance. A Gordon Highlander of the First World War was carved by Aberdeen monumental mason, Arthur Taylor. The plinth has inset panels recording the names of Inverurie's dead from the two World Wars. The area at the point of the garden used to be the site of the Powtate Loch, a muddy, shallow area, which eventually dried up. Market Place was originally called the Ball Green until it was renamed in 1867.


1924


1905


c1950


2015

2 Former Market Place School

The proposal by the Council to build a new school was mooted around 1860 and it was built just off Market Place circa 1863. Originally one large and two small classrooms, it was added to over the years, but was closed and replaced by a new school at Uryside in October 2017 and demolished in 2020.


1933

3 The Banks of Ury Hotel


1952

Site of a coaching inn since the late 1700s, it was later re-built and became the Banks of Ury.

4 Masonic Hall (St. Anthony's Lodge)

Built in 1881, it has a stone set in the north wall with the earliest Christian Cross carved on it, probably dating from the 8th century. The significance of the stone is uncertain, as it is recorded as being a memento taken from a small chapel at the foot of Cuninghill Road where Lodge St. Anthony 154 met for 5 years after its founding in 1784. The Right Worshipful Master's throne was made from wood felled from a tree when a path was dug between the two Bass mounds.



1911

5 Inverurie Gospel Hall


1914

Built as a Weslyan chapel. In 1928, it became a meeting place for the Christian Brethren. A date stone (1819) was taken from the original Chapel in Jackson Street and placed within the south wall.

6 St. Andrew's Church

The original church in the parish of Inverurie. The present building was opened on the 14th of August 1842, and was on the site of an older church, built in 1775. The first public clock in Inverurie was on the gable end, facing the street. The present clock is a replacement bought from Ballater Kirk for £25.


1904

7 The Tolbooth and original Town Hall

In 1642, Inverurie built a Tolbooth and Court Rooms at 81 High Street. These services were replaced in 1803, when the Town Hall was built in Market Place.


1860


c1900

8 Kintore Arms Hotel (the KA)

Built in 1854 when the railway came to Inverurie. The road opposite is Old Station Road as the original station was at the far end. The central Doric porch (Grecian style) of the hotel is topped with the arms of the Earl of Kintore, who had a coach house opposite it. At one time, the town cross stood in front of the hotel.





9 100 High Street

One of the oldest buildings in Inverurie, built c.1770.



10 St. Mary's Episcopal Church

The Church was built in 1842. To the right of the Church is part of the Church Centre which served as a church school from 1853. It closed between the two World Wars after pupils were transferred to other local schools.



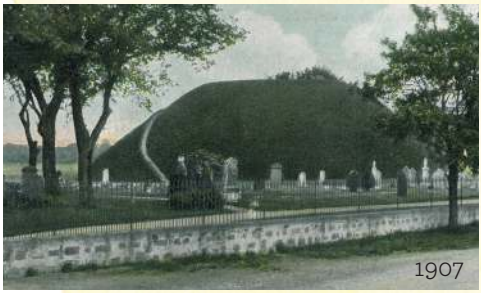
11 The Battle of Inverurie

23rd of December 1745

This was one of the last battles fought on British soil. The battle between the Hanoverian forces (loyal to the Crown) and the Jacobite supporters of Bonnie Prince Charlie lasted only twenty minutes. An interpretative board on the riverside gives information on the battle.

12 The Old Cemetery

Left of the entrance gates is the original kirkyard, with the remains of the parish church. The church dates back to the 9th century. The area flooded frequently, so the church was moved in 1775 to its present position in the High Street. Four Pictish symbol stones dating from between 400 and 900 A.D. are situated between the Bass mounds. The carvings include a serpent, mirror case, crescent with double pin on one stone and double disc on another. On the back of the upright stone is a carving, unique in its style, depicting a horse, known as the Inverurie Horse. This horse has been replicated on the flower basket brackets throughout the town. The gravestone of Marjorie (Mary-eery-orie) Elphinstone of Ardtannes is beneath the trees on the left. She fell into a deep trance and was thought to be dead. However, when a gravedigger cut her finger to remove a valuable ring shortly after her burial, she was said to have risen from her coffin, apparently alive. Unfortunately, the gravestone cannot be read clearly due to weathering. The long stone nearer the River Ury is a relic of body-snatching days, when bodies were bought for dissection by the University of Aberdeen. The stone was lowered on top of the coffin by a block and tackle and left for several days, so that the body would not be suitable for dissection.


1907


1930s

13 The Bass


Reconstruction of the Bass of Inverurie c1200

The Bass is composed of gravel and silt, and was formed by the rivers flowing from melting ice fields during the Ice Age. A motte and bailey castle was built on the top in the 12th century by David, Earl of Huntingdon (great-great-grandfather of Robert the Bruce) who became the first Earl of the Garioch. The mound was reshaped and cut in two during the 1800s and the smaller mound is known as the Little Bass.

14 The Don Bridge

Until 1789 Inverurie could only be reached by fords across the River Don and was isolated from the south when the river was very high. The first bridge had to be replaced as the camber was too steep for motorised transport, which grounded on the arch. During the construction of the present bridge, a huge spate almost washed away a temporary bridge that was put in place pending the permanent replacement. A brass plate fixed to the wall under the north arch marks the height of the flood. A bronze plate on the bridge commemorates the reconstruction of the present bridge in 1924.

A steel box behind contains a 41-page record with details of the construction and lists of Town Councillors and officials at the time. The bridge was opened by the Earl of Kintore on the 30th of May 1925. Inside the entrance to the footpath on the north side is a pillar stone from the first bridge across the river, dated 1791.


c1900

15 The Stanners

The earliest site of habitation in Inverurie, where Bronze Age artefacts and a flint 'workshop' have been found. The land has this name because of the stony nature of the ground. The townspeople gradually moved up to the glacial terraces of Inverurie's present position to avoid the frequent river floods.

16 Seymour Cobley Bulb Farm (1906-1971)

Established to take advantage of the later growing season, it specialised in daffodils, lilies, irises and tulips for their flowers and also for the bulbs, which were dried in open barns at Shunnery Brae. The daffodils which bloom on the banks of the River Don originate from damaged bulbs discarded by workers on the bulb farm.


Late 1940s

17 Aberdeenshire Canal

Opened in 1805, the canal can be seen from the Don Bridge. At the south end of the bridge, an interpretative board gives details. The canal was built with 17 locks to take it down to Aberdeen Harbour. It transported goods to and from Aberdeen in barges and people on a fly-boat. The canal greatly benefitted the traders in the Garioch, but did not make much profit for its investors. It was closed in 1853 when the Great North of Scotland Railway bought the company and used much of the canal bed for the railway track between Aberdeen and Inverurie.


2010

18 Broomend of Crichie Stone Circle

An ancient stone circle and ceremonial meeting place dating back to 3000 B.C. Later additions in 2000 B.C. included an avenue leading to Kintore. Many of the stones were destroyed or used as ballast when the G.N.S. Railway embankment was built.


1910

19 Inverurie Hospital

In 1895 several neighbouring Councils co-operated to build an eighteen-bed isolation hospital in Cuninghill Road, now the site of Hanover House. The ambulance prior to motorised vehicles was a horse-drawn black cab with yellow frosted windows, driven by James Dey, or 'Paddy' as he was affectionately known. When the Cuninghill Road hospital closed in 1940, the patients transferred to the new County Infectious Diseases Hospital in Upperboat Road.


1940s

20 Inverurie Academy

The first Higher Grade school opened in 1909 with the title of Inverurie Academy. At that time the school existed as 2 separate buildings: one a primary school, which took students up to the then statutory leaving age of 14, and the other a secondary school which took those students who had passed their 'qualifying' exam up to the age of progressing to further education. Inverurie Community Campus was built on the old playing fields and opened in 2020.


1930s

A TIMELINE OF EVENTS

1308 Battle of Inverurie (Barra).
1411 Battle of Harlaw.
1558 Royal Charter granted by Mary Queen of Scots.
1647 Inverurie quarantined for 6 months due to Black Plague.
1745 Battle of Inverurie (Jacobites).
1791 The first bridge over the River Don was built.
1796 The Aberdeenshire Canal was established.
1800 The Toll Road to Aberdeen was opened.
1803 The first Town Hall was built - similar to the present Kintore Town Hall.
1805 The Aberdeenshire Canal was opened.
1816 The premises now occupied by Wm. Strachan Newsagent were built.
1829 The Great Flood: The churchyard at the Bass was completely covered, only the tallest headstones were visible.
1835 The Forgue Turnpike was made and the 'New Street' became Constitution Street.
1837 Queen Victoria came to the throne.
1839 Gas Lighting installed in the town & J.J. Watson (Ironmonger) was established.
1840 William Thom, the Inverurie Poet, took up residence at 23 North Street
1843 The Free Church of Inverury was born.
1848 Lord Kintore feued (gifted) to the congregation of the Free Church a piece of land for erecting a school.
1852 The Aberdeenshire Canal was closed.
1854 The Railway Line was opened.
1857 On the 18th of October, Queen Victoria passed through Inverury en route to Haddo House.
1862 The foundation stone for the Town Hall was laid on 10th of July.
1863 The Town Hall was completed and opened on the 9th of July.
1863 Market Place School was built.
1866 The name of the town was officially changed from Inverury to Inverurie.
1871 William Clark's Free School was built on Chelsea Road.
1876 A gravitation water supply from Keithhall was introduced.
1877 The Free Church (West Church) was opened.
1878 The Reverend Doctor John Davidson wrote "The Earldom of the Garioch".
1879 A fountain built of red Peterhead granite was erected in front of the Town Hall.

1895	Market Place School was extended and 3 classrooms were added.
1897	To commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee a fountain was erected at the Market Green.
1900	The Town Council decided to erect a public slaughterhouse in North Street.
1902	The G.N.S. Railway Works were transferred from Kittybrewster to Inverurie.
1902	Houses were built for the workers and the area was known as the "Colony".
1902	The new Railway Station was officially opened.
1903	The Loco Works commenced operations. Wm. Clark's Free School closed.
1905	The Public School planned in 1902 was completed.
1908	The foundations of Inverurie Academy were laid.
1909	The Academy was completed.
1911	Trees planted in a triangle near the Town Hall to commemorate the coronation of King George V. The Carnegie Library was added to the Town Hall.
1920	The first council houses in Inverurie were built in Westfield Gardens.
1921	Port Elphinstone was added to the Burgh of Inverurie. The War Memorial was erected.
1924	The building of the second Don Bridge started.
1925	The new Don Bridge was officially opened.
1969	The Inverurie Loco Works closed.

A number of individuals have helped with the development of the booklet and thanks are extended to:

Aberdeenshire Council

Alex Malley

Garioch Area Committee

Garioch Heritage Society

Inverurie Community Council

Jack Hendry

Shona Fraser and Inverurie Library Service

Inverurie Academy

Stonehaven Heritage Group

Stuart Watson

The University of Aberdeen Library

Bob Marshall

CP&Co. Inverurie

INVERURIE *Heritage* WALKS







