

Markinch Heritage Group

Balgonie Castle Walk Circular Route

The route takes in Balgonie Castle with views to Cuinin Hill, Largo Law and the Lomond Hills.

Route follows mainly narrow pavements and well made footpaths. One short steep downhill section. Crosses fast road. No gates or stiles. Suitable for cycling.



4 miles/
6.1km
Allow
2 hours

[Link to Map My Walk](#)



Start at Glass Street free car park – NO 297 018, KY7 6DP

1. Turn right out of car park, keep to this side and cross straight over to High Street. Follow road to town entrance speed limit signs.
2. The adjacent buildings are the disused Italianate style station opened in 1847. The opening was a big event with the Markinch church bell ringing as the first train came in. It was full of dignitaries who had just had a slap up meal with champagne in Cupar. When the train stopped, dozens of people jumped on board without tickets and had to walk home from the terminus at Burntisland. Cross over the railway bridge and head uphill.
3. As you climb, Largo Law can be seen obliquely left in the distance, it's the large hill with a dip in the middle, and over to your left the wooded Cuinin Hill and the [Braes Loan Trail \(not correct link!\)](#). Pass Markinch's third and current cemetery on right and then a sign to the Braes Loan Trail. Follow road alongside high stone wall that marked the deer park boundary of the 14th century Balgonie Castle.



4. At an entrance gap in the wall you can clearly see the castle that has been visited by King James IV, Mary Queen of Scots, Rob Roy Macgregor and was once the home to the Earls of Leven including Sir Alexander Leslie, allegedly the topic of the nursery rhyme "There Was a Crooked Man". On reaching a right hand corner at Bellfield Farm go down old Milton Brae to A911 by-pass.

Markinch Heritage Group

5. Very carefully cross over into Milton of Balgonie to Milton Brae. There is an information panel here by an old millstone. Continue along Milton Brae. As the road swings left go straight ahead and down to a narrow bridge across the River Leven. Follow this road soon to reach Balgonie Castle, used in hit TV series Outlander and other films, well worth a visit. (Privately owned but open to public on certain days, please check opening days/times at their [website](#) or [Facebook](#) page).



6. Shortly after passing the Castle entrance, West Lomond hill (an extinct volcano) can clearly be seen diagonally to your right. Continue to T junction and turn right. You will soon cross a blue metal sided bridge under which flows a lade, a spur of the River Leven built to power a small hydro power station near Balgonie Castle originally commissioned in 1922 to provide electricity to a nearby colliery and in more recent times as a supplement for Tullis Russell paper mills.
7. Shortly further down on your left is Balgonie Bleachfield (part of another walk) that you can detour into. The road then swings left over the River Leven and continues up past Leven Woods on your left. On your right near the bridge is the site of the ill-fated Balgonie Ironworks that once had a water wheel.



8. When a flyover high above the A911 bypass is reached, look left into the trees immediately before the flyover and you may see WW2 tank trap blocks. From the flyover view the ten arch viaduct carrying the main east coast line built across the River Leven in the 1840s. It was one of the greatest engineering feats of its time, involving hundreds of workmen including Italian stonemasons. Behind you up on the hill you may be able to see a wide slot in the cemetery wall, a gun loop.

9. Continue following road and shortly over the railway ahead can be see the red brick buildings of the former famous Haig whisky plant that operated for over a century until 1983 before moving to modern premises. The B listed Art Deco Coronation Bond still bears the John Haig & Co Ltd name, a landmark for rail travellers coming from the south.



Markinch Heritage Group

10. Ahead on your left is a concrete WW2 tank wall. Early on in the war invasion of Scotland from the east was anticipated. The railway line through Fife was utilised, with fortification as required, as a 2nd line of defence should the enemy penetrate Fife's coastal defences. Even in this small area you can see how seriously it was taken. Beyond the large iron gates opposite the wall lies a large house where Polish paratroopers, who would go on to fight at Operation Market Garden, were billeted as well as in other houses and locations in the town.



11. As the road levels out good views across Markinch to the Lomond Hills can be seen. On reaching the junction at the station, turn left and head back to the starting point via High Street.

Markinch Heritage Group

Balgonie Castle Walk Circular Route 4 miles/6.1km

