

Markinch Heritage Group

Trail Around Markinch Quiz

Markinch was once the centre for commerce, trade, entertainment and worship for miles around. Many more shops, services and businesses were based in the town than today. However, this has been changing over the past few years, with new and different businesses springing up.

Back in the 1100s Markinch or Dalginch was the legal and administrative centre of Fife ruled over by the Earls of Fife.

About the Trail:

This circular trail will take about an hour to complete and will give you a flavour of the history and architecture of the town. It's suitable for most ages and is generally accessible though there are some steep inclines and narrow pavements.

Please be careful when crossing roads.





‘Exploring Our Past Together’

Although we are interested in the past, our focus is very much upon making Markinch a better place for future generations. We organise public events, conduct archaeology, carry out research, undertake projects and publish information.

Walk leaflets are produced and distributed free of charge but donations via our website are always very welcome!



Start here ...

Exit right from Glass Street Car Park, KY7 6DP on to the street. Walk away from the church along to the corner.

Snippet:

Glass Street in medieval times was a causeway leading to the church through a boggy area.

Find it 01:

Where people used to eat. Look up to find the word.

Direction:

Cross the road to the High Street.

Find it 02:

A few yards on, look around and you will see date stones nearly opposite each other. How many years apart are these dates?

**Snippet:**

MCS stood for Markinch Co-operative Society. It occupied the site of the current modern housing extending to the railway line. For over 100 years it was a focal point for Markinch commercial and social life. Selling corsets to coal, people came from outlying villages to do all of their shopping.

Direction:

Proceed along right hand side of High Street.

Snippet:

Brunton Church, now flats, was once one of 5 churches in Markinch!

**Find it 03:**

Shortly, look for the King of the Jungle.

What is he for?

Direction:

Cross Howiegate towards Medical Centre.

Snippet:

Howiegate refers to a 'hollow way'. This shows that it was an ancient and well-trodden track.

Find it 04:

Nearly across from the Co-op, look for the 'broken' name of a northern Scottish county.

Direction:

Head towards Banners House Restaurant.

Snippet:

Formerly the Bethune Arms, an old coaching house. Beaton is another form of Bethune. The infamous Cardinal Beaton of this local family was murdered at St Andrews Castle. A relative, Mary Beaton, was one of the 'Four Marys' referred to in the ballad about Mary Queen of Scots.

Find it 05:

Approaching Banners, how many panes are there in an unusual upstairs window vantage point?

Snippet:

The window was used by award winning photographer John Terras for many High Street scenes.

Direction:

Cross Union Place and head towards the modern railway station.

Find it 06:

Who opened it and when?

Snippet:

The 1847 opening of the adjacent old station 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.



The Old Station

Direction:

Walk along the footpath past the station till you come to a little roundabout.

Find it 07:

What are the initials on the adjacent red brick building?

Snippet:

From these premises, which extend along the length of two streets, John Haig whisky was despatched all over the world until 1983. The film Whisky Galore tells the story of the sinking of the SS Politician off the Isle of Eriskay in 1941. Among its cargo were 2,000 cases of Haig's export whisky.

Direction:

Go down Selkirk Street named after a wealthy Markinch merchant.

Direction:

At the bottom of the street, turn right to Victoria Terrace



Find it 08:

A reference to a queen's house?

Snippet:

The houses across from those with the arched doorways were among the first built by Markinch Town Council in the 1930s with government money gained by demolishing slum houses elsewhere in the town.

Direction:

Continue to the end of the row where there is a large red brick house.

Snippet:

This was the offices of the Balgonie Colliery Company.

Direction:

Cross George Street directly to the stone building with crow stepped gables.

**Snippet:**

This was gifted to Markinch burgh by the Balfour Family in the late 19th century and was known as the Municipal Buildings, the burgh offices of Markinch Town Council and later used by Fife Council.

Find it 09:

What do the nearby 1915 lions decorate?

Snippet:

This building was once the Bureau of Employment and Medical Centre.

Direction:

Continue to the primary school.

Motto – Virtute et Opera.

**Snippet:**

The current building replaced the old school which burned down in 1948. Its design has a nautical theme and was used as a secondary school (a primary lay behind it to the west). Children from the surrounding villages attended until the new town of Glenrothes built its first secondary in 1957.

Find it 10:

How many little 'portholes' can you see on this side?

Direction:

With the Old Police Station on your right, turn left into Bowling Green Road.

Find it 11:

What is the difference in age between the Old Police Station and the Bowling Green?

Direction:

Walk along the narrow Bowling Green Road.

Find it 12:

Where are the compass and dividers?

Direction:

Continue to park gates.

Find it 13:

What number do you get when adding the last two numbers of each carved date either side of the gates?

Snippet:

The park was gifted to the people of Markinch by local mill owner and Provost, John Dixon.

At this point you may want to spend some time at the play area and outdoor gym close to the gates.

Direction:

Retrace your steps along Bowling Green Road to the Town Hall.

Snippet:

An air raid siren sat on top of its tower. Later the siren was used to summon part time local firemen.

Direction:

Turn left. (Betson Street)

Find it 14:

Where the uniformed association meets.

Snippet:

Formerly known as Markinch Institute it was presented in the 1920s by Tullis Russell paper makers as a library and recreation centre for employees and the people of Markinch. It was also intended as a memorial to those who died in the 1914-18 war. During its construction a Stone Age axe head was discovered.

**Snippet:**

You will soon pass a grand, tall building with a turret. This was purpose built in 1906 as a Post Office.

Here a hill or knowe was levelled in 1793 to help lay out a modern new town just as Edinburgh was also doing.

Can you see?

Without crossing, can you see another partly hidden turret nearby?

Direction:

Stay on this side until reaching the corner.

Snippet:

There has been a shop here for over 150 years.

Find it 15:

Before using the zebra crossing, look for a date you would not normally associate with Dunkirk.

Direction:

Cross over Balbirnie Street, turn right then immediately left into Commercial Street.

Snippet:

This corner building was the last bank in the town. It closed in 2015.

Find it 16:

Twinkle, twinkle, route number?

Snippet:

Former Scottish Parliament Presiding Officer Tricia Marwick used to operate from the nearby SNP office.

Direction:

Continue along Commercial Street.

Find it 17:

A house with a circle in a triangle. What house number is it?

Snippet:

The garden used to have an uncovered outdoor swimming pool!

Direction:

Continue up Commercial Street.

Find it 18:

What name would you get using the first name of a famous scientist and the last name of a potato pioneer?

Snippet:

The scientist was responsible for the revolutionary anti-ulcer drug Zantac and the potato breeder for developing many strains of blight resistant seed potatoes that helped us survive both world wars.

Direction:

Bear right and through a landscaped area where you can read about the town's conservation area.

Snippet:

You are standing across from what was the Galloway Inn, an old coaching inn.

Optional detour: Facing the former Galloway Inn, go left along Stob Cross Road about 100 yards to enter the area of Markinch Hill with its nature trail. There you can see large terraces cut into the hill and view the ancient Stob Cross. The hill also gives views over the town and beyond. Afterwards, return to this point.

Direction:

Facing the former Galloway Inn, go right to the church.

Snippet:

The church tower was built in the 1100s and the site has probably been a religious site since prehistoric times.

Can you see?

As you leave to go down Kirk Brae look out for two possibly ancient stone pieces built into the churchyard wall.

**Snippet:**

A tight ring of houses that circled the church stood where the wall is now. Imagine the conditions with their backs against the churchyard. They were swept away in the slum clearances mentioned earlier.

Direction:

On reaching the foot of Kirk Brae bear right to Glass Street and the starting car park.

We hope you enjoyed the Trail.
Check your answers on our website at
www.markinchheritage.org.uk

Other free leaflets, publications and app are also available. While on the site please consider making a donation to help us continue our work.



Answers:

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