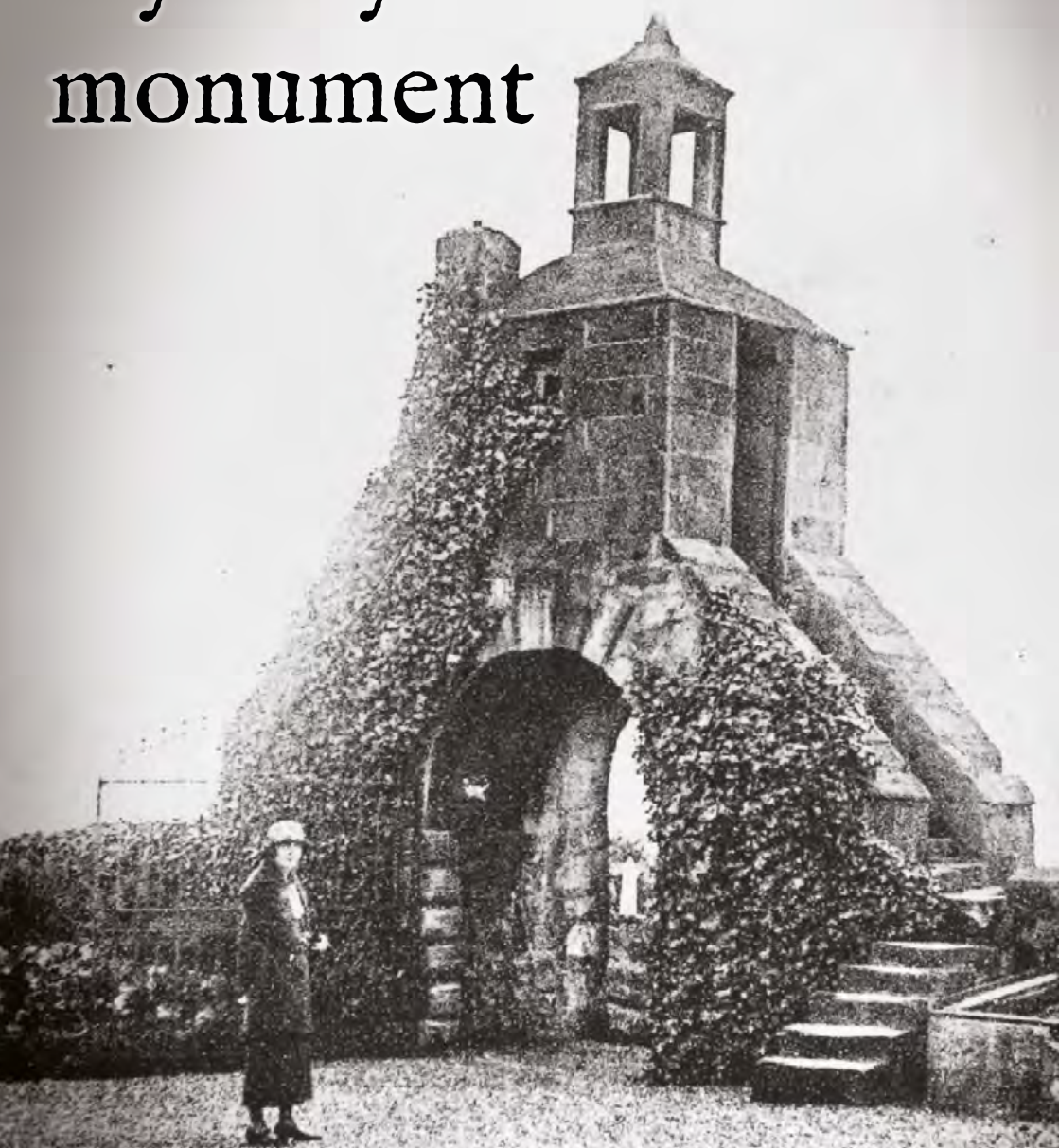


The history and mystery of an iconic monument



Graverobbers and flickering lamplight...

It is one of East Dunbartonshire's most evocative monuments, but it holds a mysterious past within its stone steps and century-stained walls.

The Old Aisle Watch-Tower in Kirkintilloch combines history and mystery - dating back to a time of graverobbers, ghouls and flickering lamplight.

It is believed that the tower, gateway and belfry were built in the 17th/early 18th century - possibly using stones from the former church of St Ninian's, which was built on the site in the 12th century (vacated sometime after 1649 when the former parish of Lenzie was separated in two).

The purpose of the tower wasn't just to provide a magnificent entry to the Old Aisle Cemetery - one of Scotland's oldest burial grounds. Its real purpose was rather more grim...



Built above a gateway leading into an earlier part of the cemetery, the tower was used by local people in the days of the 'Resurrectionists' (grave robbers) to keep watch over the recently deceased. The bell was used to warn off ghouls of a very human nature ... and summon urgent assistance.



The so-called 'Resurrectionists' made a nefarious profit in the 18th and 19th centuries by unearthing bodies and selling them on for medical research. The Watch-Tower - which is Grade A-listed by Historic Environment Scotland - was created to help ensure local people's loved ones were left in peace. It can still be seen today - perched at the top of Old Aisle Road, Kirkintilloch - and remains a powerful presence.



The building has benefited from restoration works as a result of funding from Historic Environment Scotland, with ongoing maintenance works planned for the near future, by East Dunbartonshire Council.

Inspired to find out more?

The Archives & Local Studies service - provided by East Dunbartonshire Leisure and Culture Trust - can help you to uncover centuries of fascinating local history.

You can gain access to over 300 archive collections - covering councils, schools, businesses, industries, cemeteries, clubs, individuals, families, poor relief, valuation rolls and building plans.

Use the archives to trace your family history, uncover the heritage of your house, enrich a school or college project or discover your town's past.

Why not explore the online catalogue - containing more than 17,000 descriptions from the archives? With over 500 years of East Dunbartonshire history, you never know what you might discover!

Visit www.edlc.co.uk/heritage-arts/archives

And for more information on the Old Aisle Watch-Tower, visit <http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/designation/LB36646>

Historic pictures courtesy of Archives & Local Studies

OTHER FORMATS

This document can be provided in large print, Braille or in audio format and can be translated into other community languages. Please contact the Council's Communications & Engagement Team at:

East Dunbartonshire Council, 12 Strathkelvin Place, Southbank,
Kirkintilloch G66 1TJ Tel: 0300 123 4510

આચાર્યશ્રી અભિલાષ શર્માશ્રી, જોઈને જોઈને, કૃપા 0300 123 4510

اساتذہ عالیہ ایشیا شرمہ (PhD) سے رابطہ کرنے کے لیے براہ کرم 0300 123 4510 پر رابطہ کریں

શ્રીમત સમજાવેલ લા મેંગા નવન કે પેનશી શિત્ત અનુદાન નોંડા ના મકલ છે. તિલપા નવને 0300 123 4510 ફોન કરો

Gabhaidh an sgrìobhainn seo cur gu Gàidhlig ma tha sin a dhìth oirbh. Cuiribh fòn gu 0300 123 4510

अनुमोदक करने पर यह दस्तावेज हिन्दी में भाषान्तरित किया जा सकता है। कृपया 0300 123 4510 पर फोन कीजिए।