



ARDVERIKIE SAWMILL

ORGANISATION: Highland Folk Museum

ADDRESS: Highland Folk Museum,
Aultlarie Croft,
Kingussie Road,
Newtonmore
PH20 1AY

DATE BUILT: 1999 reconstruction of an
1860s sawmill

LISTING: unlisted

USE: The mill was in use until the
late 1950s producing posts,
rails, boards and firewood
from estate timber for use
on-site.

WEBSITE: [www.highlifehighland.com/
highlandfolkmuseum](http://www.highlifehighland.com/highlandfolkmuseum)



Shortly after 1863 Alexander Cameron installed this water powered sawmill machinery next to his meal mill at Craigmore, Nethybridge. In 1937, his son Alexander moved to Ardverikie Estate near Laggan, gradually reinstalling the machinery there. The principal saw power was water, via the 12 feet diameter overshot wheel, until the 1940s, when a paraffin powered Fordson tractor with a pulley drive was also used. The mill was in use until the late 1950s, producing larch fence posts and rails, pine and oak boards and birch firewood from the Estate's own timber 'off the saw'. Most of this was for use on the estate.

A site report of the Ardverikie House Sawmill, Laggan and machinery was undertaken in 1991 by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland with the proposal that it be offered to the Highland Folk Museum. The shed that covered the machinery had collapsed and there was very little of the sawmill building left, only an original gable wall remained. We have a detailed description and drawings of the drive mechanism, and the water wheel and lade were repaired in 2017.

Although the machinery is original, the museum site is our own interpretation of the sawmill building as a timber construction. Since our recreation, we now know there was only one central side opening for rolling the logs onto the saw bench. Our hope is to have the wheel and some of the mechanism operating again, using a water pump from the Sawmill pond nearby. The mill has not been in use for many years, and we would like to hear from anyone who has knowledge of maintaining the machinery.



In November 2020, Dunnet Bay Distillers Ltd owned and managed by Caithness husband-and-wife team Claire and Martin Murray purchased Castletown Mill with the intention of restoring and repurposing the building and surrounding environs into a craft whisky distillery and historic environment visitor attraction. Castletown Mill is very much anchored into the landscape with its thick Caithness stone walls, and Caithness and Welsh slate roofs. It was once part of the Castlehill Estate developed by Agricultural Improver and Caithness Sheriff (Depute) James Traill of Rattar. A cornerstone of operations at the Estate was the commercial exploitation of Caithness flagstone at the Castlehill Pavement Works and export via Castlehill Harbour. Castletown Mill was built by James Traill in 1818 or 1819 as a starter enterprise for his heir George Traill. The once magnificent 'T-shaped' three storey building with its central kiln block was one of the largest and most imposing mills and grain stores in the North of Scotland.

Dunnet Bay Distillers are working with Alice Calder Hill (1928–) a Caithness based artist and daughter of George Calder, the last miller and owner of Castletown Mill. Alice is believed to be the last person to have been born at Castletown Mill. In 1930, Castletown Mill stopped working and in 1933 was declared bankrupt. It was purchased by a local farmer and butcher, and part of the building was turned into a slaughterhouse. During World War Two, Castletown Mill was taken over by the Royal Air Force who used it as a store for equipment such as camp beds, blankets, sheets, and pillows thought to be needed when/if extra men were sent north to help with the defence of Scapa Flow.



Remains of the mill-stone drive shaft and spur gear.
Copyright RCAHMS



Artists Impression Aerial View of Whisky Distillery
Copyright Dunnet Bay Distillers Ltd. Reproduced Courtesy of Organic Architects

ORGANISATION:	Dunnet Bay Distillers Ltd
ADDRESS:	Castletown Mill, Castletown, By Thurso, Caithness, KW14 8TX
DATE BUILT:	1818 or 1819
LISTING:	Category B
USE:	The mill was in use until circa 1930 and it milled bere barley
WEBSITE:	dunnetbaydistillers.co.uk

CASTLETOWN MILL



Castletown Mill has been classified as ‘derelict’ since 1991. HRH The Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay stated, ‘he could not bear to see the Castletown Mill become more and more deteriorated’. However, until Dunnet Bay Distillers Ltd purchased Castletown Mill, no suitable user, had come forward to give the building a viable future. Conservation and repair work must be undertaken on the building soon or Castletown Mill will be beyond restoration and reuse. Given its physical condition and the £4 million required to repurpose Castletown Mill it would be much cheaper for Dunnet Bay Distillers Ltd to seek permission to demolish the building and start afresh with a new purpose-built distillery. However, after undertaking extensive historical research, consulting business, tourism and community organisations Dunnet Bay Distillers have determined that there is both a local need and a business opportunity for the conservation and revitalisation of Castletown Mill into a whisky distillery and visitor attraction. The expansion by Dunnet Bay Distillers Ltd from gin into whisky is a strategic and sustainable move by experienced distillers. The Company will produce a high-quality single malt at Castletown Mill using barley grown in the surrounding fields. Castletown Mill presents Dunnet Bay Distillers with an opportunity to safeguard a historic 19th century grain mill for future generations to enjoy and fulfils the need for economic recovery in Caithness by providing the ideal venue not only for the creation of a world class distillery of great heritage distinction but also the production of a single malt whisky, which will become a legacy brand, with a lasting value and the development of a new 5-star VisitScotland tourist attraction. This will all be achieved through the revitalisation of a much-loved local landmark that represents an intangible sense of place for local people.



Castletown, Mill View from NE' dating to May 1974 from Canmore.
Copyright HES. Reproduced Courtesy of J.R. Hume





ORGANISATION: The Museum of Ayrshire Country Life and Costume

ADDRESS: Dalgarnven, Kilwinning, KA13 6PL

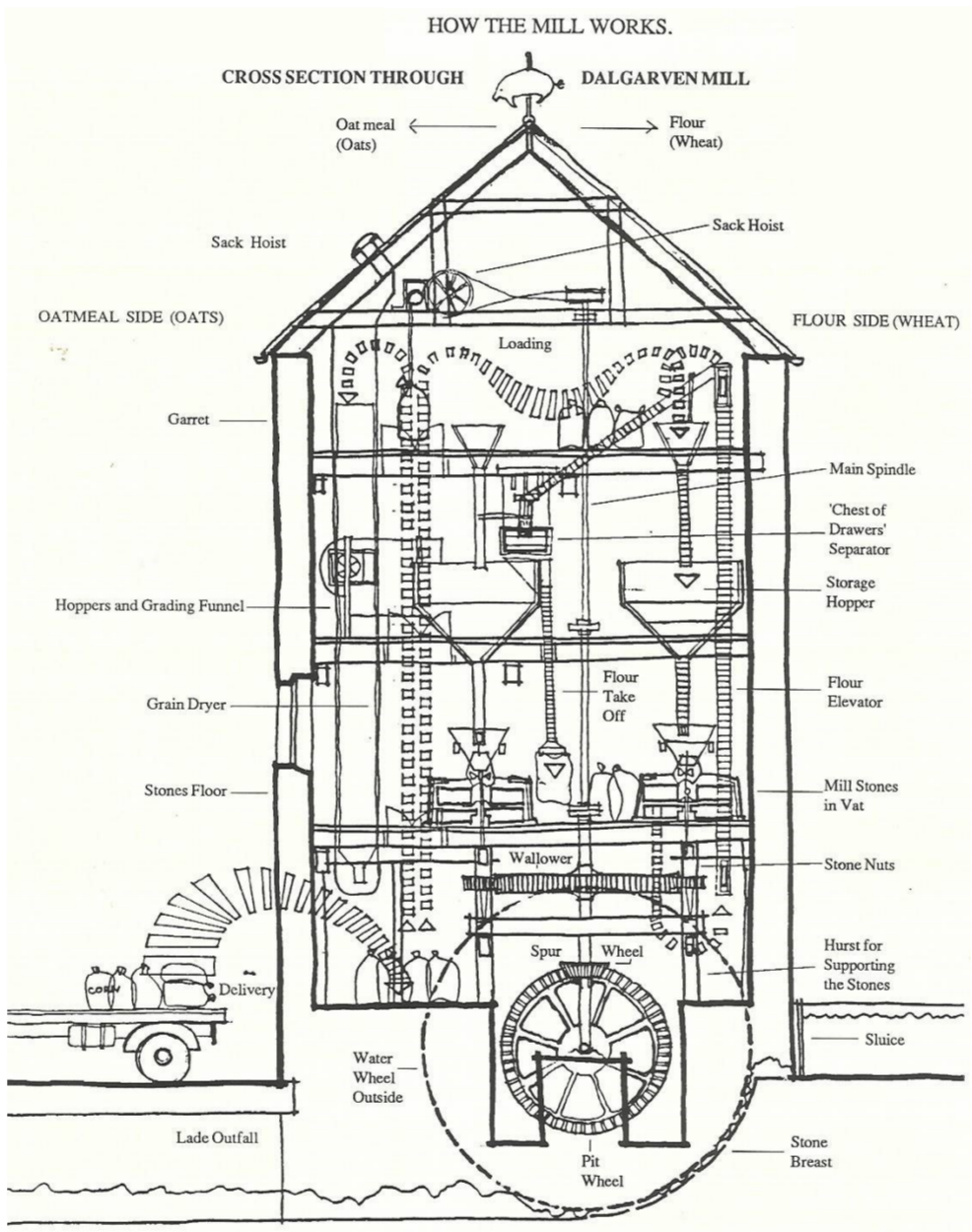
DATE BUILT: Originally 1203, with significant changes and growth points in 1573, 1622, 1876. Restored 1985.

LISTING: Category B

USE: Last functioned in 1975, produced cattle food, bruised oats, kibbled maize, bean meal and similar, serving 115 farming customers.

WEBSITE: dalgarnvenmill.org.uk

DALGARVEN MILL



Astonishingly there is written evidence of a Mill on this site in 1203. This was the Waulk Mill of Kilwinning Abbey two miles to the south. In 1573, at the Reformation, the abbot sold the Abbey Mill to William Walker who by 1614 had built a meal mill and an adjoining house on the present site. His widow sold the property to local landowner Sir Bryce Blair of Blair in 1622, and sadly both building were destroyed by fire in 1869, despite heroic efforts by the local villagers to save them. A new meal and flour mill was built within the walls of the original building, with an additional four floors of granary at the rear, new stable block opposite, and new house for the Miller, forming the courtyard you see today.

In 1883 John Ferguson came from Overend Mill on the River Ayr to be the tenant, and in 1922 his son, also John, purchased the Mill from the Blair Estate. The last miller, his grandson, also John, came in 1936 from Garrion Mill on the Clyde, running the Mill until he retired in 1969. In 1983 his son Robert Ferguson, an architect, was gifted the semi-derelict listed buildings and began the long process of restoring the group to its current condition. In 1994 the Ferguson family set up the Dalgarnven Mill Trust, a charity which owns and cares for the collections, the buildings and the site.

Over the years the collection has grown and developed, and now the Museum of Ayrshire Country Life and Costume is a nationally accredited museum falling into three identifiable themes.

The first is the Victorian Grain Mill and its machinery, water wheel, lades, sluices and weir. The second, displayed in the original granaries, contains exhibitions of craft tools, agricultural machinery, dairy artefacts, and room settings showing life, furnishings and memorabilia from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The third theme is a comprehensive collection of costume, worn and donated by local families and dating from 1770 to the present. It contains an outstanding group of men's, women's and children's clothes from all sections of local society. As you would expect there is also a large collection of Ayrshire whitework and other textiles including Mandarin Chinese silks.

The Museum is Registered Scottish Charity SC 022937.



FINZEAN SAWMILL + BUCKET MILL

ORGANISATION: Birse Community Trust

ADDRESS: Sawmill / Bucket Mill,
Finzean,
Aberdeenshire,
AB31 6NE

DATE BUILT: 1820s (Sawmill)
1850s (Bucket Mill)

LISTING: Category A (both mills)

WEBSITE: birsecommunitytrust.org.uk



Finzean Sawmill and Bucket Mill are both water-powered, their mill-wheels driven by the River Feugh, one of the principal tributaries of the River Dee. The Sawmill dates from the 1820's and is still in working condition. Its role in recent years has been to cut wood for local use, primarily tree stakes, posts, rails and boards. The Bucket Mill is unique in Britain. It was built in the 1850s to make wooden buckets or pails and is kept in full working order by miller Stan Moyes.

The Bucket Mill is a Grade A Listed historic site. It was built by Peter Brown in the 1850s and was operated by three generations of the Brown family. The current miller, Stan Moyes, took over the operation of the Mill in the 1970s following the death of Willie Brown in 1974. Birse Community Trust (BCT) became the owner and manager of the mill in 1999. Major repairs were carried out in the 1980s, ensuring its continuation as a working mill. Stan Moyes continues in his stewardship role, working with BCT to carry out on-going maintenance and repairs.

The Finzean Sawmill and Turning Mill site, a mile to the east of the Bucket Mill, is a complex of 19th century industrial buildings, little altered and still operational, and it is of European importance.

The Sawmill was established in the 1820s, used initially by timber contractors harvesting timber on Finzean Estate. In 1871 the operation of the Sawmill passed to Alexander Duncan, who had built Finzean Turning Mill in the 1830s on the outflow from the sawmill. The Sawmill is now owned by BCT, while the Turning Mill has been operated and maintained by the Duncan family throughout its history. The knowledge held by the current miller, David Duncan, is as unique, as significant, as the buildings in which he has spent his working life.

Birse Community Trust was formed to manage the community's heritable rights to take timber from the Commonty in the Forest of Birse. The mills on the River Feugh are an important link to these ancient shared rights, which connect local people to the forest in ways which survive in very few places in Europe.

BCT's vision for the future is to identify a viable means of conserving these sites as working water-powered mills, including options for skills training, interpretation and improved access. As localism and sustainability come to the fore, the Trust believes there has never been a better time to develop a business model for the mills which draws on this forest heritage.



JOHN O'GROATS MILL



The John O'Groats Mill was built in 1901 and lies to the west of the village of John O'Groats on the northern coast of Scotland on a site used for milling for centuries. Since 1750 successive generations of the Houston family ran the mills here up until the last miller died in 2001.

The John O'Groats Mill Trust is a charity run by local volunteers who have now acquired the B listed building and plan to bring it back into use as a heritage visitor attraction and community venue. The mill is probably the last wheel driven cornmill to be built in Scotland and is unique in Caithness in having all its original machinery still in working order.

ORGANISATION: John O'Groats Mill Trust

ADDRESS: John O'Groats Mill,
John O'Groats,
Caithness,
KW1 4YR

DATE BUILT: 1901

LISTING: Category B

USE: The mill was in use until 2001 when the last miller died. Oats and bere, a form of barley, were milled.

WEBSITE: facebook: @johnogroatsmill



ORGANISATION:

ADDRESS:

WEBSITE:

Iara Nave Calton

National Library of Scotland
92 Cowgate
Edinburgh
EH1 1JN

maps.nls.uk/projects/mills
Social media: @millswithiara

MAPPING SCOTTISH WATERMILLS



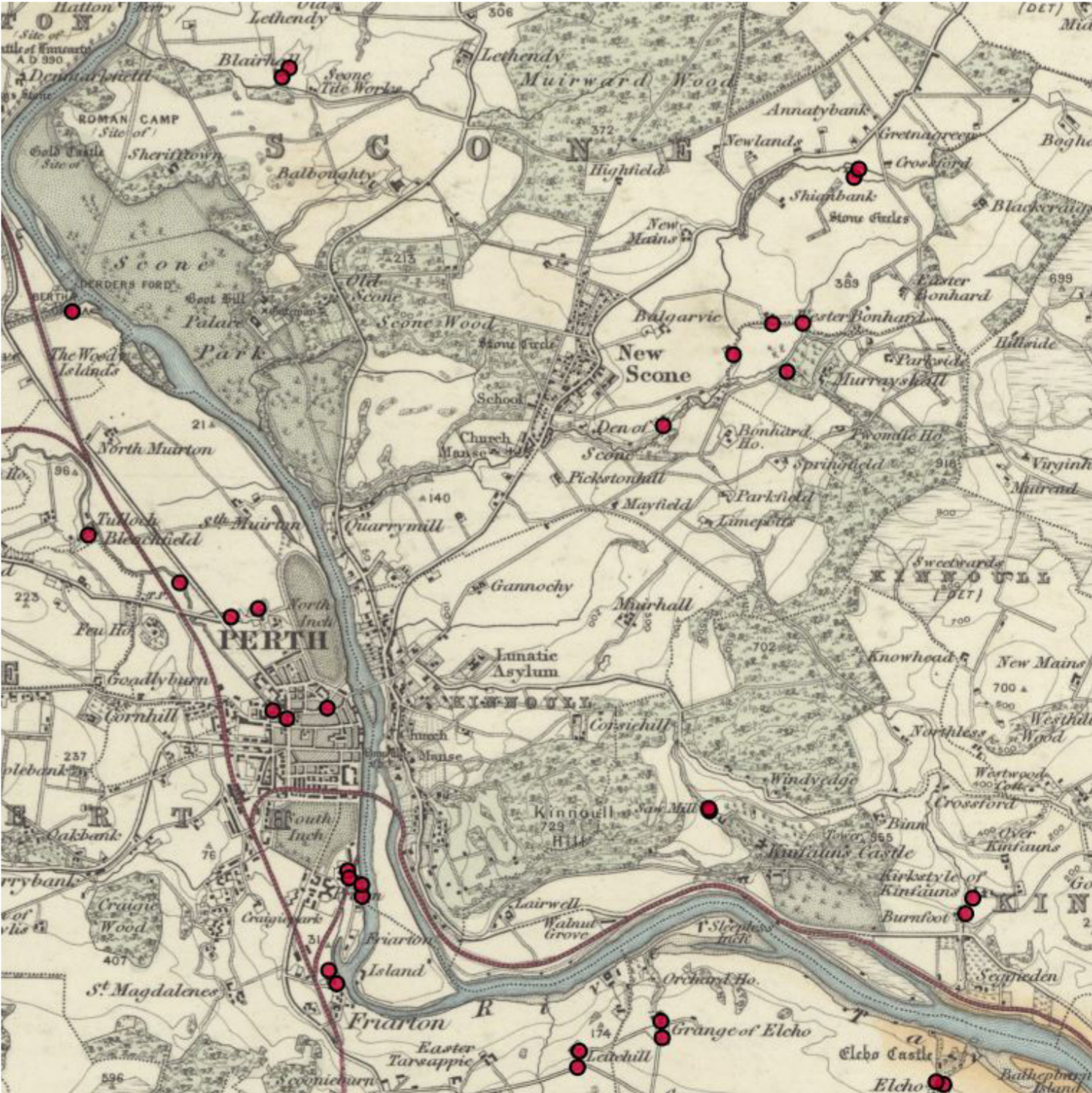
The Scottish water mills website provides a viewer for showing the locations and details of over 9,799 mills, mill dams, and lades in Scotland in the 19th century. This includes windmills and steam powered mills as well as watermills. Records were combined from the GB1900 Gazetteer and Canmore, as well as first-hand research based on Ordnance Survey first and second edition mapping.

Mill records are displayed as red dots on a background map of Scotland. Users are provided options to query and filter the mill records by name, mill type, date, and related features. A side-by-side split screen viewer gives the ability to compare mill distributions.

For each mill, where available, the follow information is given: name; location (parish and county); whether or not is it present on the first and second edition Ordnance Survey mapping; mill function and power source; URL link to Canmore record.

The website also provides supporting information about mills in Scotland, a description of the project workflow, and a link to download the data.

This resource was created by Iara Nave Calton during a 6 month placement with the National Library of Scotland. It was devised and supported as part of a Collaborative Doctoral Partnership funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The aim of the project was to capture as many mills as possible but unfortunately there was insufficient time to complete this fully. Larger, commercial mills were prioritised and a number of threshing mills remain unmapped.



The Mill of Glenbuchat is a watermill situated on the Water of Buchat, a tributary of the river Don. The building uses the slope of the land, so that the upper floor of the attached kiln can be accessed from the road and the lower floor can be accessed further down the slope. The Mill was built to produce oatmeal with the adjoining kiln to dry the oats. The kiln is made up of a lower fire which used to burn wood or peat. The heat from this fire travelled up via a clay lined wooden funnel onto a steel plate floor with small holes in it. The oats were laid on this hot floor for up to 3-4 hours being turned regularly. After this they were removed via 2 stone shutes into the upper floor of the Mill and then transported across to the single set of Mill stones.

The water to power the Mill was extracted from the river via a dam along a lengthy lade. There would have been a sluice gate at the incoming end and just before the outgoing end a mechanism to control the flow of water reaching the wheel which determined the speed of the wheel's rotation. The undershot water wheel is made of a steel frame with wooden paddles. There are just enough wooden pieces remaining on the wheel to restore it accurately. The wheel shaft drives a pit wheel, which in turn drives one of the stones, an internal pulley and a large external wire rope pulley. All other machinery is missing. There are doors in the first floor for a sack lift, but the actual lift mechanism is no longer present.

The Mill was built in 1829 by Thomas Bremner with help from his neighbours on land belonging to the Earl of Fife. Thomas Bremner, and later his son, worked the Mill producing oatmeal. The Mill continued working until 1927. By 1873 the Mill had diversified into sawing timber to support the local laird's rebuilding of his estate cottages. A later miller's son John Stewart, who was too unwell to carry out physical work, was given a high quality plate camera. He took many photos of the local area, including the Mill, between 1904 and his death in 1910.

When we purchased the Mill from the Dunecht Estate in 2017 it had been badly neglected with trees growing over the Mill roof, which had caused severe damage with all sky light glass missing. This extensive damage led to serious timber decay. The trees have since been removed and all holes temporarily repaired to conserve what remains. Our plan is to create a Heritage Trust, that will have a long lease with a peppercorn rent, to restore the Mill to a fully working condition. Many locals appear in favour of this plan. Our overall vision is for the Mill to become an educational- and tourism centre, with opportunities for local employment, volunteering and skills development.



MILL OF GLENBUCHAT

ORGANISATION:	The Mill of Glenbuchat
ADDRESS:	Mill of Glenbuchat, Glenbuchat, Strathdon, AB36 8UB
DATE BUILT:	1829
LISTING:	Category B
USE:	The mill was in use until late 1927. It was an oatmeal mill, and later also used as a saw mill.



HISTORIC
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SCOTLAND

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ALBA





Preston Mill stands to the East of the village of East Linton on the north bank of the river Tyne.

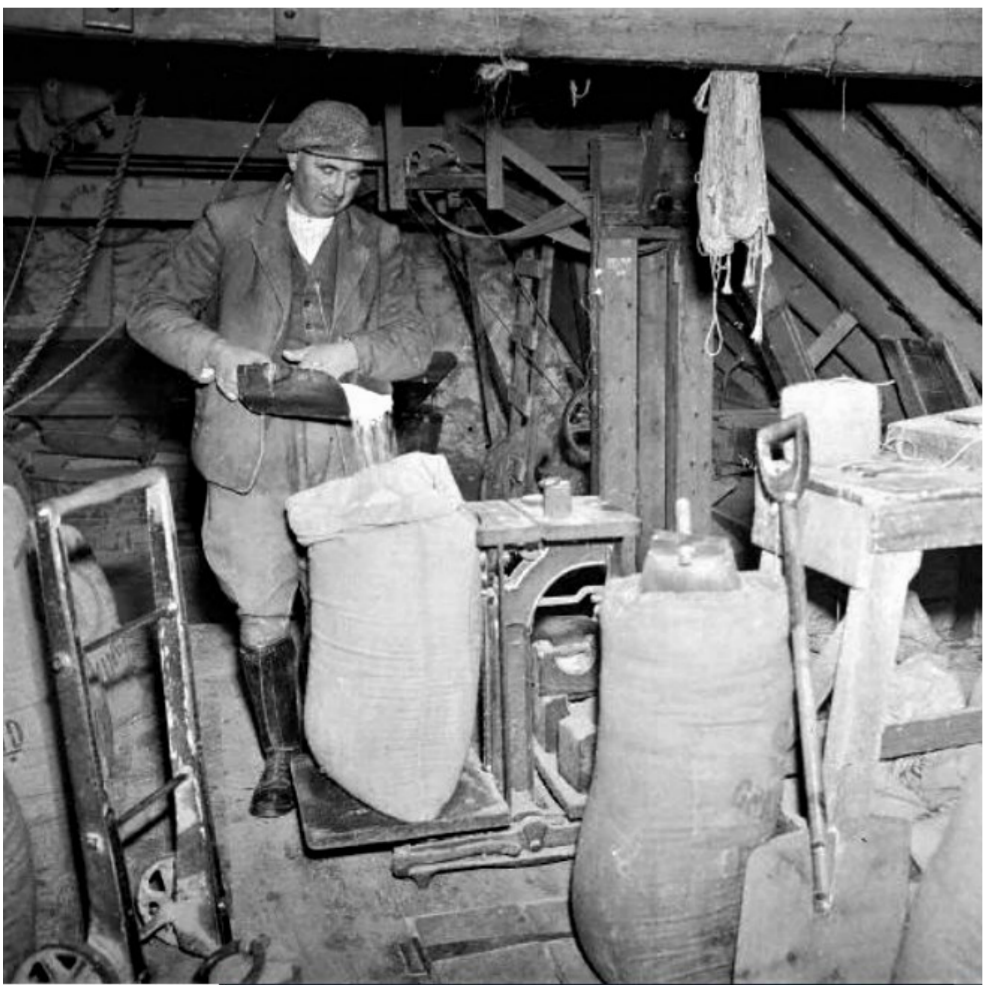
The earliest surviving reference to a mill on this site relates to repairs made in 1598, but presumably there had been a mill here earlier.

The mill building mainly dates from the 18th Century but has had several phases of alterations and repairs. The adjoining drying kiln is older and is the oldest part of the site, probably dating to the 16th Century. Our mill has associations with millwright Andrew Meikle and civil engineer John Rennie.

The mill belonged to the Smeaton Estate and would have served the entailed farms through the thirlage system. The mill was donated to the National Trust for Scotland in 1950 by the trustees of the late John R Gray of Preston Mains. His descendants still farm there.

The last miller to work at Preston Mill was George Denholm. He had worked at the mill since the 1930's, originally for the Draffan Brothers, but after 1943 he was working single handed. The mill was badly damaged in a major flood in 1948, but after the mill was restored in 1950 by the NTS, George continued to operate the mill until his death in 1959. Since then, the mill has been kept in working order by the NTS with support at various times from Rank Hovis McDougal, fundraising and public donations.

PRESTON MILL



ORGANISATION:	Preston Mill (National Trust for Scotland)
ADDRESS:	Preston Mill, Preston Road, East Linton, East Lothian, EH40 3DS
DATE BUILT:	18th Century
LISTING:	Category A
USE:	The mill was in operation, drying and milling oats until 1959. There was some exhibition milling in the 60s and 70s
WEBSITE:	nts.org.uk/visit/places/ preston-mill



Water is channelled by a weir through a double sluice gate into our mill lade. The weir was extensively repaired in 2014 and a fish ladder was constructed at that time.

The bearing of the waterwheel wore out and was replaced in 2018 after the axle dropped on one side and jammed in position. Financial support came from a fundraising campaign that attracted support from around the World thanks to the waterwheel having been featured previously in the TV show Outlander. Nearly 10 years later, we still get a significant number of visitors looking to see where Jamie Fraser stripped off to fix our wheel! Thankfully fact followed fiction and the wheel was restored to working order.

Sadly, time and damp take their toll on the woodwork and lime mortar of the mill, so there is always something needing done. Winter/Spring of 2022 has seen repairs to window frames, replacement of fatigued floorboards and a repaired bridge between the granary floor of the mill and the drying kiln.

The handmade (possibly dutch) roof tiles are about to be re-mortared, but that project has been delayed due to recent gale-force winds, but should be completed by the time you read this.

Although no longer in production, the machinery is kept in working order so when the waterwheel is turned it provides motive force for internal sieves, bucket elevators, a fanner and a cockler.

We say that we are the last working watermill in the Lothians however the mill stones have not been turned since the 1990s. In future, it would be good to investigate getting them turning again.

QUENDALE WATER MILL

ORGANISATION: Quendale Water Mill

ADDRESS: Dunrossness,
Shetland,
ZE2 9JD

DATE BUILT: 1867

LISTING: Category A

USE: The mill was in operation,
until 1948. Oats and Bere
were milled until that
date with the thresher still
in use for another 40 years.

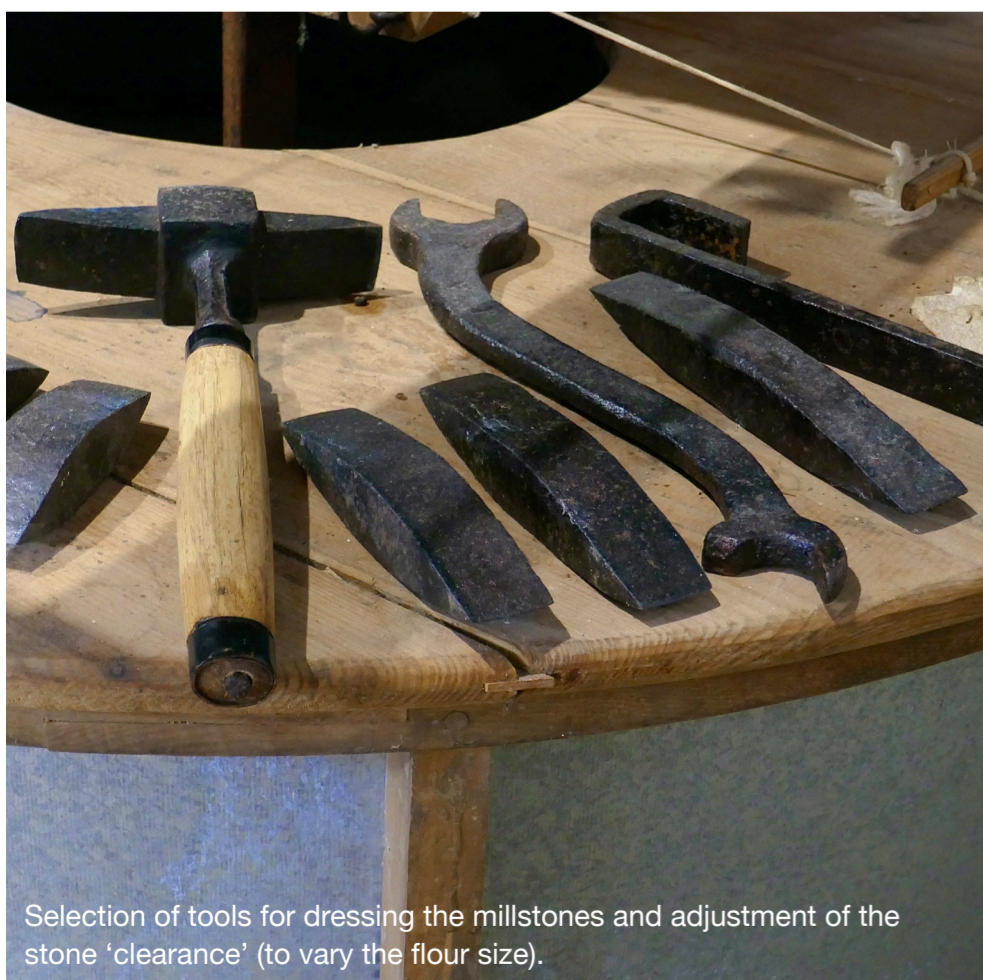
WEBSITE: www.quendalemill.co.uk



The Quern Stane. Hand operated stones for grinding meal. Toggle adjusts the 'clearance' or spacing between the stones.



Main 'ring' gear, driven directly through bevel gears from the mill wheel main shaft and sliding pinion for engagement of the drive to the flour grindstone. Gear teeth on the 'ring' gear are made from hardwood, those on the pinion are iron. Gear set driving the 'shill' millstones partially hidden beyond.



Selection of tools for dressing the millstones and adjustment of the stone 'clearance' (to vary the flour size).

The Quendale Estate dates back to the 16th Century but it wasn't until 1770 that the Grierson family acquired it and became the Lairds. The Mill was commissioned to be built in 1867 by the Grierson family and grinding began at the Mill the following year. Its primary purpose was to handle the grain for crofters from a very wide surrounding area. Most of the grinding was done in winter when there was plenty of water in the dam to drive the Mill's machinery. John Anderson from Forfar was the first miller, followed in 1870 by James Burnett. In the late 1870's, Charles Langskail took over and held the job until Alex Simpson from Aberdeenshire succeeded him in 1886. He continued until George Leslie of Laxfirth took over the farm in 1899. Laurence Leslie, a young Dunrossness man, had trained with Alex Simpson and was now given the job of miller, a post he was to hold for most of his working life. The Mill by this time was extremely busy with carts coming with loads from all over Dunrossness; storage space in the Mill and outhouses were filled to bursting point. At this time the only other large Mills in Shetland were at Weisdale and Girlsta.

During the time the Mill was in operation, crofters brought their Oats and Bere by horse and cart to the Mill to be processed into Meal for eventual use in the production of Oatmeal and Beremeal bannocks – a staple diet for Shetlanders at the time (and still enjoyed to this day).

Once roads had been improved to allow vehicular transport, crofters from as far afield as Scalloway and Whiteness (40 kilometres) also joined the others in bringing their grain crops to the Mill for processing.

The Mill is now operated as a Visitor Attraction and Heritage Centre by the South Mainland Community History Group - a not-for-profit voluntary organisation who promote the history and heritage of this part of Shetland to all who visit.

This overshot watermill is the last remaining industrial building of its era in Shetland and is a category 'A' listed building. We hope to be able to continue to share this part of Shetland's heritage with visitors from near and far for many years to come.



HISTORIC
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ALBA





Credit: Ross Brown

ORGANISATION:	Dumfries Historic Buildings Trust
ADDRESS:	Rosefield Mills Troqueer Road Dumfries DG2 7DA
DATE BUILT:	1886
LISTING:	Category B
USE:	The mill was in operation until 1939 and produced woollen textiles such as worsted, serge and blankets.
WEBSITE:	dumfriestrust.org.uk/ rosefield-mills

ROSEFIELD MILLS



The Rosefield Mills buildings are the last surviving large-scale Victorian industrial buildings in Dumfries, and are therefore of key cultural and historic importance to the town. The former mill buildings are listed, Category B and are located within the Dumfries Conservation Area. The buildings are derelict, and are included in the Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland.

Dumfries Historic Buildings Trust (DHBT) has acquired the most prominent and significant of the former mill buildings, having a colossal Venetian palazzo frontage to the River Nith, a prominent and attractive architectural landmark in the town, much-loved by the local community. The river-front building was completed in 1886 as the first part of an extended building programme between 1886 and 1896. The buildings were designed by the Dumfries architect William Burgess Crombie (1845-1904), whose architectural practice is part of the cultural legacy of Dumfries through his design of villas, manses, schools and church work mostly still in use. The mills were designed and built for Charteries Spence Ltd., manufacturers of Scottish tweeds and worsted fabrics, which were exported across the world.

Rosefield Mills is of great significance to the community even as a derelict building, and the possibility of its re-use for community benefit has received spontaneous and widespread support from the public, both locally in Dumfries, more widely across the region, and even from Norway, as the building housed troops from Norway during WW2.

The wider former mills site extends to around 10 acres, much of it derelict, yet within the town centre, just five minutes' walk from the High Street. There is huge scope for both the preservation of the remaining architectural heritage as well as for an outstanding piece of new urban design fulfilling a multitude of purposes. The aspiration is for the restoration of our building to act as a catalyst for the renewal and urban regeneration of the wider 10-acre site.



Credit: Kerr Martin



Finishing Room 1890s lantern slide
courtesy Dumfries Museum collection



Credit: Kerr Martin

David Russell started to build the Silverburn Flax Mill in 1856. He had identified an opportunity to process flax on an industrial scale through the availability of 3 key technologies; steam to power the mill, the East Fife railway to move materials in and out in bulk, and the Schenk process. The latter enabled deseeding, retting and scutching to be carried out in bulk in a single mill. Retting was carried out in vats inside the mill in a controlled environment that reduced the average retting time from 10 to 2½ days.

The mill opened in 1857 and operated for 15 years before closing, then reopening again in 1887, and finally closing as a mill in 1889. There were only 4 Schenk mills built in Scotland, and this is the only survivor. Also, in 1867 there were 9 flax or linen mills in the Leven District: this mill is the only physical evidence of that industrial heritage. The mill survived because it was adapted for other uses, including requisitioning by the War Office for storage and accommodation during both World Wars

In 1974 the estate and mill were gifted to Leven Town Council on condition that the park remained forever “as a place of quiet relaxation, nature trails and organised camping for the benefit of the public in general and the people of Leven in particular.”

The mill was subsequently used by the local authority as part of a visitor attraction, as well as a Parks Department depot. The visitor facilities were closed in 2002, and maintenance was subsequently reduced with the main buildings being added to buildings at risk register. In 2012 Fife Council selected Fife Employment Access Trust (FEAT), a mental health charity, as their partner to take over the management and regeneration of Silverburn Park. A Business Plan was produced in 2014 following extensive community consultation and feasibility studies. The centrepiece of that plan was the redevelopment of the Flax Mill as a Visitor Centre and Community Hub.

The redevelopment is a joint project between FEAT and Fife Council, supported by Fife Historic Buildings Trust (FHBT), and work is now underway on the Delivery Phase of the project at a total cost of £8,293,188. The project has been awarded £3,476,000 by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, £2,000,000 by Fife Council, £1,500,000 by the RCGF, and £510,000 by HES. The remainder of the funding has come from trusts and funds, with a significant crowdfunding contribution from the local community.

The B listed building will be sensitively renovated to provide a backpackers’ hostel with a total of 26 beds in 10 ensuite rooms, a café and restaurant, a reception and shop, a meeting and event space, 3 arts and crafts studios, office space, public toilets including an accessible Changing Places toilet, and interactive heritage displays that tell the story of the Flax Mill, flax processing, and how the mill fitted into the wider flax industry across Fife. The projected opening date is April 2026.



Credit: Michael Wolchover

ORGANISATION:	Silverburn Flax Mill
ADDRESS:	Silverburn Park, Largo Road, Leven, Fife, KY8 5PU
DATE BUILT:	1856
LISTING:	Category B
USE:	The mill was in operation, until 1889. The mill processed flax, carrying out the first 3 stages required to produce the long fibres used to make linen: deseeding, retting and scutching.
WEBSITE:	www.silverburnpark.co.uk/flaxmill

SILVERBURN FLAX MILL



Credit: Michael Wolchover



Credit: Michael Wolchover





Ham Mill. Credit: Mark Watson

SVBWG

The Scottish Vernacular Buildings Working Group studies vernacular buildings throughout Scotland, and also those further afield where there are parallels and influences.

Vernacular architecture follows traditions passed down from person to person, generation to generation, at any level of society. In contrast to polite architecture, the aesthetic of a vernacular building derives from its being rooted in folk, place, materials, and function.

The buildings that attract our interest vary in size and construction from small, temporary shelters, through cottages, tenements and farm steadings, to large, enduring tower houses. Usage is likewise diverse, including seasonal shelters, permanent dwellings of all sizes, farms, smithies, watermills and larger industrial concerns.

They are found throughout the country, in both rural and urban settings, and represent many aspects of our history, and of Scotland's identity. What they all have in common is their construction from local materials using local methods, resulting in characteristics that reflect their environments, so that they sit comfortably within the landscape.

SVBWG was founded in 1972 to provide a focus for people interested in these buildings. Our membership is as diverse as the buildings themselves: it includes archaeologists, architects, ethnologists, geographers, historians and surveyors, but especially those who are just fascinated by the buildings and want to know more about them. Membership and meetings are open to all with an interest, and we welcome contributions and suggestions.

SVBWG publishes an annual journal, Vernacular Building and holds at least one meeting a year which can be conference or visit based. SVBWG is happy to answer questions and facilitate discussions on vernacular buildings through enquiries and its social media. The wide range of articles we have produced are available through our website. Some articles relevant to the subject of mills include Carmichael Mill by Ken Fawell, VB22, 1998; Click Mills East and West by Jocelyn Rendall VB24, 2000; An examination of the different forms of vertical water mills in Orkney by Graeme Collie, VB31 2007-8; Whin millstones in Baldernock, western Central Belt by Paul Bishop VB34 2010-11.

Please visit www.svbwg.org.uk

ORGANISATION: Scottish Vernacular Buildings Working Group

ADDRESS: Veronica Fraser
c/o John Sinclair House
16 Bernard Terrace
Edinburgh
EH8 9NX

ESTABLISHED: 1972

SITES: 1) Carmichael Mill
2) Orkney
3) Baldernock
4) Ham Mill

WEBSITE: svbwg.org.uk



Ham Mill. Credit: Mark Watson



Ham Mill. Credit: Mark Watson





Upper wheel, an overshot wheel



Mill yard in 1910 showing wood for bobbin making and the now demolished upper mill

ORGANISATION: The Mill on the Fleet

ADDRESS: High Street
Gatehouse of Fleet
Castle Douglas
DG7 2HS

DATE BUILT: 1788

LISTING: Category B

USE: Originally a cotton mill it was in operation until the late 1930s, latterly as a bobbin mill.

WEBSITE: millonthefleet.co.uk

THE MILL ON THE FLEET



The Mill from the bridge

The Mill on the Fleet is a 3-storey mill built in 1788 as a cotton spinning mill by James Birtwhistle from Yorkshire and was the second mill to be built on this site by him. The first, the upper Mill, originally a 4-storey mill is now a ruin, having sustained two major fires in its history. After the second in 1919 it was demolished to single-story level, re-roofed, and it continued to be used up until the late 1930s.

The Mills were early water-driven cotton Mills but closed in the early 1800s as they became uncompetitive in the face of industrial development in larger centres elsewhere. After lying abandoned for some twenty years, the upper Mill was refurbished and kitted out with new power looms. It was refurbished again after a major fire in 1840 and despite this closed again in 1850. In 1858 the machinery was auctioned off, the contents being comprehensively listed in surviving sales records.

In 1859 the mills were bought by timber merchants and the upper mill was used to make wooden bobbins for the textile industry while the lower mill was used as a store and bark mill for the processing of oak for the leather tanning industry which was thriving in Gatehouse at the time. The site continued to make bobbins until it closed finally in the 1930s and the site was abandoned.

In the 1980s the lower mill was restored by Dumfries and Galloway Council and opened to the public as a visitor and exhibition centre in 1991. As little remained of the internal structure of the Mill, the building was reconstructed using salvaged materials from other Mills. The two working water wheels were also brought in from other former mills. The Upper Mill wheel is a 20ft diameter 3ft 9 inch broad overshot wheel. The lower mill wheel is a 12 ft diameter, 3 ft broad breastshot wheel. They are essentially decorative as they no longer connect to any equipment and the mill lade no longer carries the volume of water it did in their heyday.

The Mill on the Fleet continues to operate as a visitor and exhibition centre, introducing the history and heritage of Gatehouse of Fleet and the Fleet Valley. It hosts a programme of temporary exhibitions through the season and is used as a venue for concerts and talks programmes. On the top floor it houses a large secondhand bookshop and a regional arts and crafts outlet run by a local artists' co-operative.



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VERDANT WORKS



Verdant Works is at the heart of one of the earliest urban industrial areas in Scotland, with the Scouring burn offering a readily available supply of water to steam engines. The seemingly incongruous 'green' name of 'Verdant' for a textile works dates to when Verdant was built, when most of the surrounding area was still green fields.

The High Mill of Verdant Works was built in 1833 for David Lindsay, merchant and flaxspinner, with warehouses, batching areas and offices evolving at the site over the following 30 years. Like many Dundee flax mills, Verdant Works switched to processing jute in the 1840s and 1850s. By 1864 Verdant possessed three steam engines driving 70 power looms and 2,800 spindles, and employed a workforce of 500.

By 1889 Verdant's time as a true textile mill was over, but during the 1900s, under the ownership of Alexander Thomson & Sons, Verdant was used to recycle large amounts of jute waste produced as a by-product of the industry.

Verdant Works is a rare surviving example of a courtyard type mill, meriting its category 'A' listing as a building of national architectural importance, and a host of original features are retained. Dundee Heritage Trust bought the site in 1991 when the site was in a derelict condition, the majority of the site opened as a museum in 1996, and the High Mill was stunningly restored and opened to the public in 2015.

Verdant Works is run by Dundee Heritage Trust. Formed in 1985, the Trust sprang from a small, dedicated band of local people concerned that unless action was taken important aspects of the city's history would be lost forever. The trust is also responsible for the internationally significant Royal Research Ship Discovery. The purpose of Dundee Heritage Trust is 'The guardianship, preservation, and portrayal of Dundee's Heritage in ways that educate, inspire and enlighten current and future generations.'



ORGANISATION:

Verdant Works

ADDRESS:

West Henderson's Wynd
Dundee
DD1 5BT

DATE BUILT:

1833

LISTING:

Category A

USE:

Milling jute stopped in the 1880s, and jute recycling began.

WEBSITE:

verdantworks.co.uk
Facebook: @ScotlandsJuteMuseum
Instagram: @VerdantDundee
Twitter: @VerdantWorks

CARLUKE HIGH MILL



Carluk High Mill (south-western aspect), photo believed to have been taken in 1900 and was reproduced on a postcard postmarked 1910. The mill manager's house on the left was subsequently extended with a second storey.



Current condition of High Mill, Carluk Tower – 2022
Image credit: Carluk Development Trust



Western aspect of the High Mill in about 1971.
Image credit: Canmore Collection
<https://canmore.org.uk/collection/775974>

ORGANISATION:	Carluk Development Trust
ADDRESS:	Carluk High Mill Chapel Street Carluk ML8 4BD
DATE BUILT:	1797-1801
LISTING:	Category A
USE:	Milling of grain and wheat until the 1930s
WEBSITE:	www.onecarluk.org.uk/groups/carluk-high-mill/

WIND ERA

Recent public documents (since the mid-1960s) state that the Carluk windmill was built around 1797, although 1801 seems a more likely construction date given that the land was leased to a mason (John Watt) and a millwright (David Prentice) in April 1801. A 1937 public lecture stated that the High Mill was built in 1801, and also that Chapel Street was not laid out until the late 1790s.

No records survive of the original design of the mill. Windmills of the era may have had four, five, six or even eight sails, the sails may have been canvas or spring sails, and the sails may have been turned to face the wind manually by means of a pole or a pulley, or automatically by use of a fantail. William Forrest's 1816 map based on an 1813 survey appears to show the Carluk windmill with six sails (and the Hamilton windmill with four sails), but it is unknown whether this was a result of observation or artistic licence.

In 1801, the population of Carluk town was only 382, and the windmill originally ground small quantities of meal and barley for the local market. At that time, most farms had their own hand-mills for grinding for their own use. It is not certain when the miller's house and cart shed to the west of the mill were added. It is probable that they were built at the same time as the mill, although they are not shown on the maps of the 1813 or 1822 surveys. Both are shown in the 1864 OS map based on the 1896 survey.

STEAM ERA

The Carluk mill was recorded on contemporary maps as a windmill in the 1822 survey and was no longer shown as a windmill by the 1859 survey. The conversion to steam occurred between these dates, and several factors suggest it is most likely to have occurred in the 1830s. Driven by industrial development, the population of the parish increased by almost 50% from 3,288 in 1831 to 4,791 in 1841 (and by a further 30% to 6,283 in 1851), with a resultant increase in demand for flour and meal. More importantly, a water-driven corn mill (the "Low Mill") was constructed on Jock's Burn in about 1833.

In order to compete with the Low Mill, the High Mill had to cease to depend on wind. David Dick was a respected businessman (he was appointed Baron Bailie in 1815), his eldest son William was a millwright and miller, and his second son James was an engineer with an interest in steam power. It seems likely that they would have responded quickly to the competitive threat to the family business. In the 1837 edition of Pigot and Co's National Commercial Directory, Robert Forest was listed as the miller, watermill, and William Dick was listed as the miller, Chapel Street (i.e. not "windmill").

Since the conversion of motive power was a business decision, it also seems likely that the specialised windmill structures and machinery were disposed of at this time, partly to offset the cost of conversion and also to avoid the ongoing cost of maintaining redundant infrastructure. In addition to the boiler house and chimney to the north-east of the mill tower, a threshing room and drying kiln had been attached to the southern arc of the tower by 1859 and were enlarged in the late nineteenth century. This would have enabled the mill to exploit economies of scale in responding to growing demand as better transport links facilitated the serving of the Glasgow market as well as local consumers.

GAS ERA

The mill's steam engine was replaced by a Tangye gas suction engine by April 1928. All country grain mills in Scotland came under pressure in the 1920s from cheap imported flour and grain, and the High Mill is likely to have become increasingly uneconomic through the 1920s.

THE VISION FOR THE HIGH MILL, CARLUK

In February 2018, the Carluk Development Trust obtained a grant from the Scottish Land Fund to purchase the High Mill and the surrounding land of Black Knowe and the remaining portion of Officer's Acre for community development purposes. On 30 April 2018, the purchase was completed, and ownership of the High Mill transferred from High Mill Developments Ltd to the Carluk Development Trust on behalf of the communities that make up the Parish of Carluk and a number of activities ensued to bring Carluk's Treasured Heritage site back to community use.

In May/June 2015, with the permission of the owner, the Carluk Development Trust used funding from an Ancient Monuments Grant from Historic Scotland to commission stabilisation works including internal and external bracing of the tower and bricking up of the window spaces. The remaining roof sheets of the attached buildings were covered with industrial netting at the same time. Over almost 40 years, there have been numerous discussions, inspections, studies, reports, plans, emergency stabilisation works and security fencing, costing many thousands of pounds and variously paid for by the owner, the Council, prospective purchasers and government funding bodies through interested community groups.