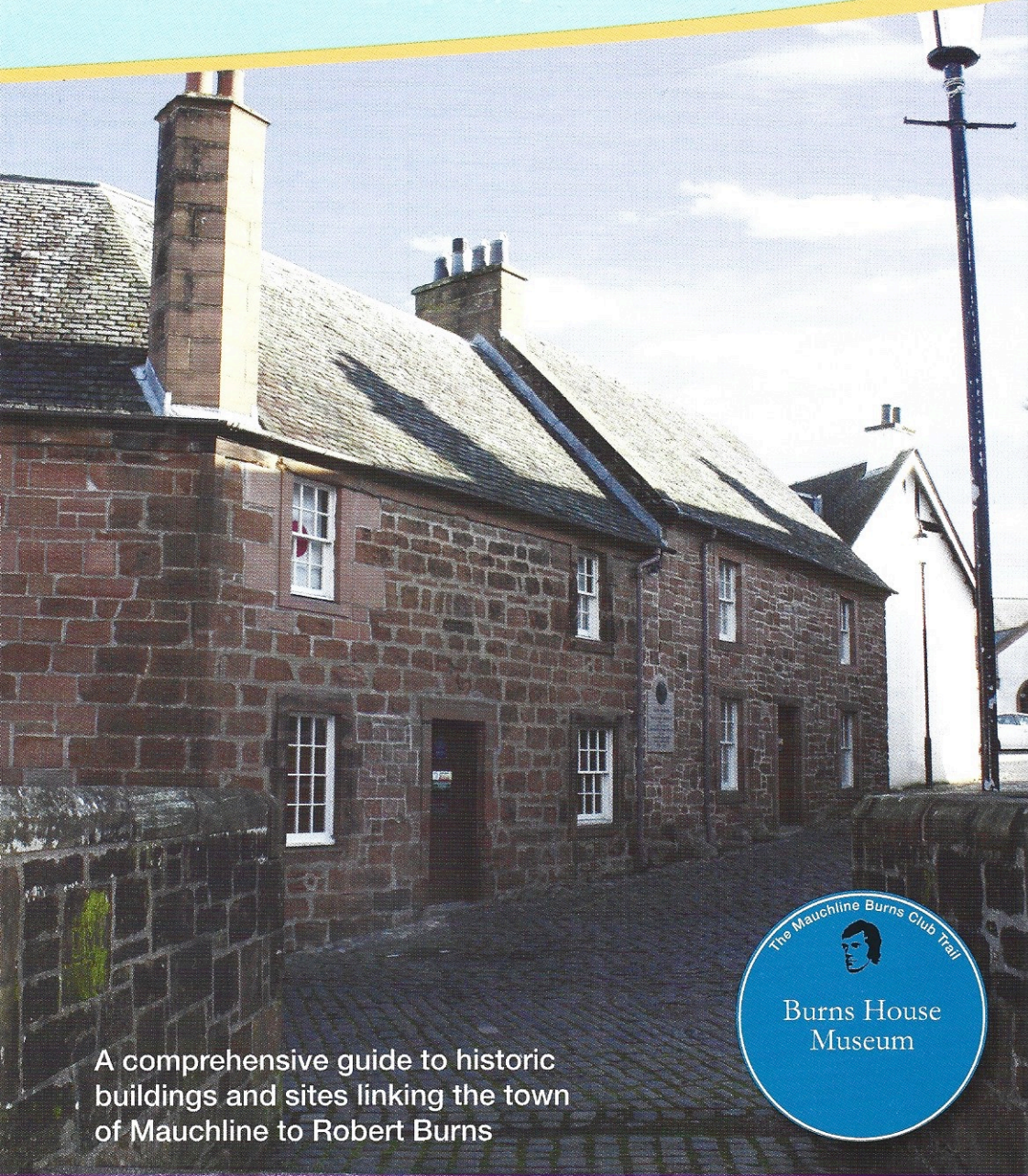


presented by THE MAUCHLINE BURNS CLUB

Robert Burns Blue Plaque Guide



A comprehensive guide to historic
buildings and sites linking the town
of Mauchline to Robert Burns





Building Plaques

Robert Burns lived at nearby Mossgiel Farm from 1784 until 1788.



Mossgiel Farm

Here he wrote many of his famous poems which he included in the *Kilmarnock Edition* in 1786. After much turmoil, he officially married local lass Jean Armour in 1788, and later that year the family moved to Ellisland Farm near Dumfries.

The plaques highlight the many close connections that the village of Mauchline had with the poet.



1

Burns House

Robert Burns and Jean Armour started their official married life here and stayed from March to November 1788 when they left for Ellisland Farm, Dumfries. Burns worked to get the steading habitable and travelled to Mauchline every second weekend, while Jean went to Mossgiel to learn to be a farmer's wife. They occupied an upper floor room with a classroom underneath. Jean gave birth to twins here on 3rd March 1788, both of whom died a few days later.

2

Dr. Mackenzie's House

The Doctor moved from the Cross to here. He introduced Burns to Professor Dugald Stewart of Edinburgh University, whose father, also of the same University, had a house in Catrine. This meeting opened up the capital's academic world to Burns. In 1801 the Earl of Eglinton invited Mackenzie to move near to him at Irvine. The Doctor presided over the first Burns dinner on 25th January 1827.

3

Nanse Tinnock's Tavern or The Sma' Inn

In the upper floor a door opens directly into the site of the Holy Fair. Nanse claimed Burns - seldom darkened her door...but he claimed otherwise. She died in 1858.

4

Site of Ronald's Ballroom

This is reputed to be the first meeting place of Burns and Jean Armour at a dance held here. Burns' collie dog also attended, getting mixed up with the dancers' steps.

5

Site of Morton's Inn

Christina was a Mauchline Belle "There's beauty and fortune to get wi' Miss Morton".

6

Abbot Hunter's Tower

Known locally as the Castle, it was erected in the early 15th century as part of the Monks of Melrose complex.

7

Home of Gavin Hamilton

Hamilton encouraged Burns to print his poems in 1786 and in turn the poet dedicated the volume to Hamilton. As a result of the lawyer's feud with the kirk session Burns wrote *Holy Willie's Prayer*. The official wedding of Burns and Jean Armour possibly took place in the dining room. Highland Mary was the family nursemaid. The house is privately owned.

8

Bleaching Green

This area around the River Chalk was used by women for washing and bleaching clothes. After his first encounter with Jean Armour (at the dance) Burns met Jean again when his dog ran through her washing. The romance sprang from there.



- 9 Site of home of Mary Morison**
Brownlea House. The famous song was written when Mary was only 14 years old and Burns 12 years older. He possibly had another girl in mind or wrote it to please Mary. She died at the age of 20.

- 10 Site of Elbow Tavern**
After Burns' estrangement from Jean Armour in 1786, he met Mary Campbell 'Highland Mary'. She was temporarily nursemaid to Gavin Hamilton's wife. They met secretly here and planned their voyage to Jamaica. The landlord was known as the Old Tar. The crook of the road indicates how the tavern got its name.

- 11 Dr. Mackenzie's first house and surgery**
Burns first came into contact with the Doctor when he tended the poet's father at Lochlea in 1783. He married Helen Miller a 'belle'. He is 'common sense' of The Holy Fair. An exterior sign indicated Surgeon and Midwife.

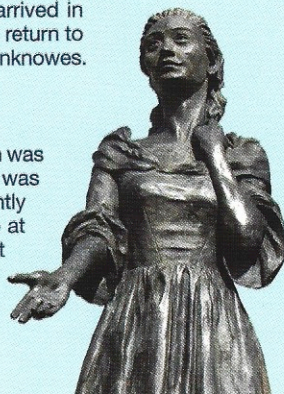
- 12 Home of Miss Markland**
The family kept a shop at this corner. Daughter Jean was a 'divine-belle'. She married John Findlay, an excise officer who trained Burns in his duties. She died in 1851.

- 13 Home of James Lamie**
He was one of the strict Kirk elders who with Holy Willie, visited the Armours to investigate Jean's pregnancy and left with a flea in his ear. He married the widowed mother of James Smith. Inevitably his rebel stepson and he lived at loggerheads.

- 14 Site of James Smith's Shop**
The building was demolished in the 1820s to make way for the new road. As a result of his bad relationship with Lamie, his stepfather, Smith moved to near Linlithgow as a calico printer. He subsequently emigrated to the West Indies. His sister was a 'Mauchline Belle' - 'Miss Smith she has wit'.

- 15 Home of John Richmond**
Richmond was a clerk to Gavin Hamilton, but moved to Edinburgh to become a lawyer. Burns lodged with him when he first arrived in Edinburgh in November 1786. He bought this house on his return to Mauchline. It was known locally as the New Hoose of the Kilnknowes. He died in 1846.

- 16 Site of the Earl of Eglinton's 'The Place'**
It was an imposing two storey building dating to 1756 which was the home of the two ladies of the Eglinton family. It was converted into a tenement and shops and was subsequently demolished in the 1930's. The Springfield summerhouse at the junction of High Street and Mansfield Road is all that remains.





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Mauchline Map

Blue Plaque Guide



KEY TO BUILDINGS

- 1 Burns House
- 2 Dr. Mackenzie's House
- 3 Nansie Tinnock's Tavern
- 4 Site of Ronald's Ballroom
- 5 Site of Morton's Inn
- 6 Abbot Hunter's Tower
- 7 Home of Gavin Hamilton
- 8 Bleaching Green
- 9 Site of home of Mary Morison
- 10 Site of Elbow Tavern
- 11 Dr Mackenzie's First House
- 12 Home of Miss Markland
- 13 Home of James Lamie
- 14 Site of James Smith's Shop
- 15 Home of John Richmond
- 16 Site of 'The Place'
- 17 Site of The Sun Inn
- 18 Site of the Holy Fair
- 19 Poosie Nansie's Hostelry
- 20 Site of The Whitefoord Arms
- 21 Site of Jean Armour's Home
- 22 Home of Robert Morison
- 23 McClelland's Inn



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