

Heritage Sites Around Innerleithen



Innerleithen was just a kirk hamlet comprising a group of unevenly spaced thatched cottages, until around 1790. With the opening of the first mill (Caerlee) in 1788 and the medicinal spring (St Ronan's Well) being publicised in Sir Walter Scott's novel of the same name, the town expanded rapidly.

Cardrona Forest (NT 2925 3845)

Cardrona Forest is situated on the south side of the River Tweed approximately 5km (3 miles) east of Peebles. There are



parking and picnic facilities and three waymarked walks, two of which afford opportunities to view the remains of an Iron Age fort and Cardrona Tower, a 16th century stronghold of the Govan family. Entrance to the tower was by a door in a corner stair turret. **There is no public access to Cardrona Tower.**

Caerlee Hill (NT 3247 3677)

On the summit of Caerlee Hill is a prehistoric settlement of a type known as a 'hillfort'. These sites are typically sited in a prominent position and enclosed (defended) by one or more banks, ditches or walls. They are generally believed to date to the 1st millennium BC and served a number of different functions. These may have included defence as well as serving as settlements and meeting places.

Innerleithen Parish Church, Carved Stone (NT 3320 3694)

The base of a stone shaft stands against the east wall of Innerleithen Parish Church. It was found in the foundations of the old parish church during demolition. It is decorated with abstract designs. Although the nature of the decoration



is more reminiscent of prehistoric art, the stone is believed to date to the 9th century AD and to have formed the lower part of a cross, which may have provided a focal point for early Christian preachers.

Kirkburn, Our Lady's Church (NT 2918 3829)

The parish church of Hopekailzie, dedicated to St. Mary, seems originally to have been a chapel dependent upon Innerleithen. The parish was a small one and, although a new church was evidently erected in 1614, the parish was

suppressed in 1674, with most of it annexed to Traquair. The church stood on the site now occupied by a burial enclosure dating from 1724. However, it may incorporate some portions of the church of 1614. Outside the enclosure there is a graveyard, but it appears to contain no stones of a date earlier than 1707.



Pirn Hill (NT 3356 3726)

Situated on Pirn Hill overlooking the Leithen Water are the remains of a 2,000 year old hillfort enclosed by two defensive ramparts. In the interior are traces of terraced areas where wooden roundhouses would have stood. On the summit of the hill is a ring of stone cairns built to represent the size and shape of one of these stone houses and on the cairns are carvings based on local



historical themes. Excellent views of the Tweed valley may be had from this elevated vantage point.



Access to the site is signposted from Leithen Road.

Robert Smail’s Print Works (NT 3321 3673)

This print works has been completely restored and contains an office, composing and press rooms and a paper store with reconstructed water-wheel. Many historic items and photographs on display give a fascinating insight into this small Borders town. Open seasonally. Admission charge.

Traquair House (NT 3306 3548)

Traquair House claims to be the oldest inhabited house in Scotland. The earliest part of the structure is a tower built in c. 1492, when James Stewart, uncle to the king, was given a charter to the property. The tower was altered and extended during later centuries.



In the tower it is still possible to see the “priest’s hole” which provided a concealed refuge in times

of religious intolerance. There is also a chapel and a functioning brewhouse. The famous Bear Gates were added in 1745 and closed in 1796 following the death of the 7th Earl’s wife and according to local tradition they will not be reopened until a Stewart is once more king of Scotland. Open seasonally. Admission charge.

Traquair Parish Church (NT 3200 3346)

The church of St. Bride, first recorded in 1116, was part of the diocese of Glasgow, which paid particular honour to saints from western Scotland, Wales and Ireland. The present parish church was built in 1778 and

subsequent alterations include the Traquair burial vault and vestry, which were added to the north wall in 1914. The Southern Upland Way passes by the church.



St Ronan’s Wells (NT 3287 3721)

This Visitor Centre tells the story of St Ronan’s Wells, immortalised by Sir Walter Scott in his novel of the same name. The visitor may also sample the “waters”. Fine views over the village and across the Tweed valley may be gained from the site. Open seasonally.

Southern Upland Way (NT 1715 0637 to NT 7742 7110)

This 340 kilometre (212 mile) long distance coast to coast footpath, from Portpatrick on the west to Cockburnspath on the east, passes many heritage sites *en route*, including Traquair Parish Church.



Walkerburn Village (NT 3604 3714)

The village was founded in or around 1854 and owes its very existence to the textile industry.

The focus of the settlement was a large mill known as Tweedvale (Ballantyne’s)



Mill. A second factory soon joined this, as did accommodation for workers, managers and mill owners. In addition, two churches, a school and police station were also built.