

Greyfriars boasts the best collection of 17th century sculpture in all of Scotland. Many of the finely carved monuments are the work of renowned masons or architects. Unusually, we can trace the inspiration for some of these designs to architectural pattern books and tombs elsewhere in Europe.

1562

Mary Queen of Scots gives part of the former Franciscan friary to the City for a burial ground.

1602 – 1620

Building of Greyfriars Kirk.

1638

28th February National Covenant signed in Greyfriars Kirk.

1679

After the battle of Bothwell Bridge, 1200 Covenanters are imprisoned in an area to the south and east of the Kirkyard.

1704

Montieth publishes the first memorial inscription survey of Greyfriars.

1706

The Covenanters' or Martyrs Monument is erected. This is replaced by a bigger one in 1711.

1779

The kirkyard is so overcrowded it is a threat to public health.

1832

The Anatomy Act ends the lucrative business of bodysnatching.

1845

Greyfriars Kirk catches fire.

1858

The death of John Gray, police constable and master of Greyfriars Bobby, the Faithful Skye terrier who sat at his graveside for 14 years.

1863

The Medical Officer for Edinburgh reports on Greyfriars overcrowding, especially for burials of the poor.

c.1870s

Greyfriars is closed to all new burials.

1872

Death of Greyfriars Bobby.

Appetite whetted? Why not visit some of the other World Heritage Site graveyards?

Go green and do this on foot instead of taking the car, and you could save some CO₂ emissions, too!

Check it out: From Greyfriars Kirkyard (4) to:

- > To Canongate (1) – 0.7 miles: 0.2 kg CO₂
- > To New Calton (2) – 0.9 miles: 0.3 kg CO₂
- > To Old Calton (3) – 0.8 miles: 0.25 kg CO₂
- > To St Cuthbert's (5) – 0.9 miles: 0.3 kg CO₂



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Old and New Towns of Edinburgh
inscribed on the World
Heritage List in 1995

GREYFRIARS
an inspiring community



PART OF THE
Keep Scotland Beautiful
CHARITY

EDINBURGH
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL



Scan the
code to find
out more
about the
Edinburgh
World
Heritage
Graveyards
Project!

GREYFRIARS KIRK YARD

GRAVEYARDS TRAIL

EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE



EDINBURGH WORLD HERITAGE

Sir Walter Scott famously described Greyfriars Kirkyard as Scotland's Westminster Abbey, celebrating both the significance of the people buried here and the grandeur of their monuments. This trail introduces some of the figures who helped to shape Scotland



1 A Woman of Substance
Margaret, Lady Yester lived at a time when women enjoyed little independence within a society that stressed their duties to their families. Yet for some upper-class women, wealth and widowhood could present an opportunity to be part of society. By 1635, the twice-widowed Lady Yester had

inherited **greater wealth than any other Scottish woman**. She used part of her enormous fortune to build Edinburgh's Tron Kirk and Lady Yester's Kirk, where her monument originally stood.



2 Longstanding Lineage of Builders to the King

The inscription to the architect and master stonemason, **John Mylne** notes he was the **sixth master mason** in his family to serve **seven successive kings**. As Master Mason to the Crown of Scotland, Mylne surveyed Holyrood Palace and designed fortifications on Shetland to **protect against Dutch invasion**. Other notable work includes Edinburgh's Tron Kirk and Heriot's Hospital (now George Heriot's School). His nephew and successor, Robert Mylne, designed and built his memorial.

3 Lawyer who gifted a Legacy of Learning

An advocate by training, **Clement Little** drafted the documents to establish the legal status of the Church of Scotland. In 1579, Clement and his brother William formed part of a committee hoping to create a **university in Edinburgh**. Inspired by this cause Clement left a **bequest of 276 books** that helped to establish Edinburgh University's Library, one of the foremost research libraries in the world today.



5 Head of an Architectural Dynasty
 Scotland's foremost architect of his day, **William Adam** designed and built many

country houses and public buildings across the country. He remodelled **Hopetoun House**, which is depicted inside his **mausoleum**. His sons John, Robert and James also became architects, establishing and refining the 'Adam Style'. John designed his father's tomb.



6 Architect of the National Covenant

In 1638, the Church of Scotland asked **Alexander Henderson**, Leuchars' Minister and Professor of Theology, to draft the **National Covenant**. This solemn pledge, signed in Greyfriars Kirk, rejected Anglican prayers and bishops and set the Church, and much of Scotland, against the King, **Charles I. Civil war** followed.



7 The King maker - hero or villain?

James Douglas, Earl of Morton was the last Regent of Scotland during James VI's minority. Involved in many dramatic events of the reign of James' mother, **Mary, Queen of Scots**, he aided the **murders** of her courtier David Rizzio and second husband Lord

Darnley. He led an army to expel her third husband, the Earl of Bothwell, and **imprisoned Mary**, forcing her **abdication**. Morton was beheaded in 1581. Contrary to tradition, this Victorian stone, although inscribed 'JEM', is unlikely to mark his actual place of burial in Greyfriars.



4 The Father of Modern Geology

A farmer and naturalist, **James Hutton** observed the world closely. His **revolutionary theories** about geology swept away widely-held beliefs about the **Earth's creation**. Previously, many accepted the Earth to be about 6,000 years old and that fossils were

remains of animals drowned during the Biblical flood. Although usually kept locked, the **Covenanters' Prison** is open during Doors Open Days, or on request to the kirk.



Also keep an eye out for:

- A** Grave of Greyfriars Bobby
- B** Mortsafes to guard against bodysnatching
- C** Covenanters' Prison
- D** Grave of Tom Riddle inspiration for JK Rowling's Harry Potter series
- E** Flodden Wall, part of the City's original defences
- F** The Covenanters or Martyrs Monument
- G** Grave of Bobby's owner John Gray

8 One of Scotland's Greatest Poets

The poems of **Duncan Ban MacIntyre, Donnchadh Bàn Mac an t-Saoir**, reflect a deep love of nature and his native Argyll. Remarkably he **never learnt to read or write** and he depended upon his formidable memory to recall his verses. He made his living as a gamekeeper, soldier and even as an Edinburgh policeman. The carvings on his obelisk illustrate his varied life.

