New Calton Burial Ground is important as an early forerunner of the Victorian 'Garden Cemetery'. Across Britain, the introduction of cemeteries with their ornamental planting and designed landscapes proved a very popular alternative to the more traditional churchyard.

- **1719**: Old Calton Burial Ground is established.
- **1813**: Agreement to build Waterloo Place by cutting through Old Calton Burial Ground.
- **1815**: New Calton Burial Ground opens. The first burials are the bodies dug up when part of Old Calton Burial Ground was destroyed.
- **1816**: Edinburgh Town Council provides land for a new burial ground to the Incorporated Trades of Calton. Conditions attached to the sale mean it must be located out of view from the houses in Edinburgh's New Town.
- **1820**: The watchtower is built around this time.
- **1832**: The Anatomy Act ends the lucrative business of bodysnatching.
- **1842**: An article in "The Gardeners Magazine" praises New Calton's appearance and management above all other Edinburgh graveyards.
- **1856**: The Barony of Calton becomes part of Edinburgh and the Council takes on the management of the burial ground.
- **1863**: In this single year there are 866 burials, mostly of the poor. In the 1860s more burials take place here than in any other Edinburgh graveyard.
- **1874**: New Calton is closed to new burials.
- **1931**: The watchtower falls out of use after the large family who made it their home move out.
- **2013**: Edinburgh World Heritage fund emergency repairs to the watchtower so it can house an arts installation during the Edinburgh Arts festival.

**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 New Calton Burial Ground (2)
  - To Canongate (1) - 0.3 miles: 0.11 kg CO2
  - To Old Calton (3) - 0.3 miles: 0.11 kg CO2
  - To Greyfriars (4) - 0.9 miles: 0.3 kg CO2
  - To St Cuthbert's (5) - 1.3 miles: 0.43 kg CO2

**Please visit**


to download the New Calton Burial Ground trail
New Calton Burial Ground is one of Edinburgh’s secret treasures. Within its walls you’ll find famous figures residing side by side with unsung heroes. Enjoy striking views out to Holyrood Palace and the Scottish Parliament, set against the stunning backdrop of Arthur’s Seat.

9. Sublime Sculpture
Among Edinburgh’s finest gravestones, this monument commemorates Andrew Skene, former senior legal adviser to the Government on Scots Law. The carving by sculptor Patrick Park depicts Wisdom giving comfort to Misfortune. Park was famous for his portrait sculptures and busts. His career suffered its own misfortunes: although commissioned to supply statues for the Scott Monument, these were never received.

8. Influential Scottish Architect
During his career, architect David Bryce designed around 150 buildings. His most famous commissions include Fettes College, Edinburgh’s original Royal Infirmary and the recasting of the Bank of Scotland headquarters on the Mound. Still a dominant landmark today, the building features on current banknotes.

7. World Champion
Within three years of taking up the sport of draughts Richard Jordan won his first championship, aged 18. By 1869 he was World Champion. He retained his title until retiring, undefeated, in 1903. Tragically Richard was struck by a tramcar and died while still a young man, leaving his family destitute.

6. The Lighthouse Stevensons
Remarkably Robert Stevenson and his sons John, Robert and David (not buried here) built the majority of Scotland’s lighthouses. Even with today’s technology, they remain a monument to marine engineering. Author Robert Louis Stevenson wrote affectionately ‘Whenever I smell salt water, I know that I am not far from one of the works of my ancestors’. Although commemorated here, Robert was buried in Samoa.

5. Transatlantic Journey
After her husband’s death, American Esther Duche-Hill settled in Edinburgh to run a school. Education was one of the few options available to respectable working women. Her journey echoes one made by her father, the Rev Jacob Duche 30 years earlier. As the first chaplain to the American Congress, Jacob sought temporary refuge in London during the War of Independence, becoming chaplain at Lambeth Orphanage.

4. Mortality Poet
William Knox gave up agriculture to pursue a love of writing. His verses achieved widespread acclaim but it is his poem ‘Mortality’ that he is best remembered for. American President Abraham Lincoln recited lines from ‘Mortality’ on the day of his assassination and parts of the poem were inscribed in gold letters in St Peter’s Palace.

3. Dedicated Bird Watcher
Fascinated by birds as a boy, William MacGillivray tawed a rock dove to fly with him to and from school. Throughout his life William pursued interests in nature, even walking from Aberdeen to London (and back!) to study the bird collection at the British Museum. Sadly, his work didn’t receive the acclaim it deserved among the rather closed scientific circles of the day.

2. Architect who Reshaped Edinburgh
In 1813, a radical plan to modernise access into the City and avoid traffic crossing the cramped Old Town cut a route through Old Calton Burial Ground. As a result, the architect Archibald Elliot created the elegant Waterloo Place and adjacent Regent Bridge, whose fine views are owed to Robert Stevenson, the lighthouse engineer, who suggested it have open sides.

1. Dissector
Appointed ‘Dissector’ at Edinburgh University in 1777, Andrew Fyfe’s medical illustrations were famous throughout Europe. Fyfe worked at a time when bodies for anatomical study were in short supply and researchers often relied upon corpses sold by body-snatchers. Fyfe’s son Andrew was New Calton’s first burial.