

CAN YOU DIG IT?



MY GALLOWAY TONGLAND

For such a small place, Tongland has a lot going on and as the site of a long-lost medieval abbey, it certainly has its secrets! So it's not surprising to find that the area has a few hidden treasures when it comes to looking in the Canmore database - many of which are much older than the abbey. As always though, their records could do with your help. Here are a few entries that we've spotted - but have a hunt yourself and you'll find quite a few more!

Park of Tongland Standing Stones, Canmore ID: 64017

In one of the fields behind Park of Tongland farm sit the remains of a standing stone circle. This prehistoric feature would be amazing enough in its own right, but it's made even more special by discoveries during an excavation of the site in 1987.

The stones mark the site of a Bronze Age cremation cemetery! Large quantities of charcoal suggested that the cremations had actually taken place in the immediate vicinity, while the incomplete nature of the funerary deposits also suggested that only a token deposit of bone from the cremated body was used to complete the funerary rite.

Check out the Canmore entry to see a photograph of the excavation - but there is only one photograph of the standing stone circle itself. It's a good one that was kindly contributed through MyCanmore in 2013 but it would be great to have some more to look at. **Has anyone got some that they could add?**

Park of Tongland Rock Art Canmore ID: 64508

In the 1980s, an example of rock art was discovered to the north of Kennan's Hill near Argrennan Mains Farm.

A newly exposed outcrop was recorded as having two sets of marks. One consisted of a cup mark surrounded by two concentric rings, while the other comprised a cup mark with six concentric semi-circles measuring a maximum diameter of 60cm.

The rock art was still present in 2001 and located as being at NX 7047 5685.

There aren't any photographs in the entry and no mention in the last 20 years. **Has anyone come across it, or you able to wander that way on your daily walks?**

This type of rock art is old, dating back some 6,000 years, and Dumfries and Galloway is a bit of a hotspot for it. The designs are abstract and their meaning a mystery - nothing triggers the imagination more! Definitely worth a look and while you're there... take a photo and put it up on MyCanmore, will you?



PRO TIP!

Searching for 'Tongland' on Canmore won't include those sites which sit very near to the village but fall into neighbouring parishes. Instead, we used the interactive map at **www.pastmap.org.uk** to allow us to search through all the sites which sat nearby.

Riverside Mill, Canmore ID: 21505

The Canmore entry doesn't have much information about this mill and there's only one image included – a close up of a heraldic panel which we assume is set into one of its walls



Does anyone know anything of its history? How old is it and what type of mill? And do you have any photographs of it – perhaps some historical ones or how it looks now? What's become of this structure? We want to know everything!.

Culdoach Motte, Canmore ID: 64554

Sitting beside Culdoach farm to the east of Tongland, Culdoach Motte was first recorded by Frederick Coles in 1891 as a small sub-oval mound sitting 2.4m high, with a summit measuring 26.5m by 14.6m. At its base, he was able to spot the remains of a ditch that measured roughly 5m wide.

Unfortunately, there aren't any photographs of the motte in the entry, **so if anyone has any or could go for a wee visit to take one**, that would be lovely!

These mottes represent what's left of the earliest of our castles. Dating back to the 12th century, these sites were at the heart of their communities and played an important role in our history. The fact that there isn't a pretty ruin to see does not diminish their stories, but it can mean that they're often neglected!

Forts at Netherthird, March Cleugh and Carse, Canmore ID: 64514, 64490 and 64047

In 1891, Frederick Coles also recorded the remains of fortified sites at Netherthird, March Cleugh and Carse.

He identified two of them – Netherthird and Carse – as medieval mottes (a third motte he described to the SW of March Cleugh has since been deemed natural) but all three have been included within the 2016 Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland.

With no evidence of their date, it is possible that all three could represent the remains of much older fortifications, dating back to the Iron Age.

While their Canmore entries contain descriptions from these surveys, neither Netherthird nor March Cleugh has a single photo included, and Carse only has aerial views.

If anyone has ever been, or is up for a visit, to any of these sites, then please share your photographs through MyCanmore and show these intriguing sites off to the world!

Cumstoun Castle, Canmore ID: 64129

If you would like a ruinous castle to visit though, then head for Cumstoun Castle. Sitting just over the river to the west of Tongland, it still stands to a height of 7.6m, with walls measuring over 1.5m thick!

Believed to have been built for Sir John Kennedy of Blairquhain in the early 16th century, Canmore has many lovely aerial views of the site but the only ones taken close-up date back to the 1970s.

Has anyone taken a photo of it more recently or fancy a visit? We're sure that there's will be some stories about its history or even childhood memories of it as a ruin – feel free to share them too!

NEW SITES

What you can't do in MyCanmore is add new sites, but if there are any that you would like documented, you could upload their images to Canmore entry ID: 214995, Tongland General, and include a description. This way they can still be included in the national record for everyone to see.