



EXPLORE THE HISTORY OF THE MILLS OF THE ERICHT FROM THE 18TH C TO THE 20TH C & FIND OUT ABOUT THE GROWTH & DECLINE OF THIS ONCE IMPORTANT CENTRE FOR TEXTILE MANUFACTURING.



Learn about how the mills worked, the innovations that were made in them and some of the challenges that the mill owners and their workers faced.



The City of Dundee became Tayside's principal textile manufacturing centre during the Industrial Revolution by drawing on the energy and expertise of a rich ecology of spinning and weaving that had evolved across the region over hundreds of years.



These skills developed out of the need for rural communities, such as those around Blairgowrie & Rattray, to diversify their sources of income in order to guarantee a stable level of subsistence throughout the year. By the close of the 16TH century, linen goods formed the chief part of the exports from Scotland to foreign countries with jute not rising to prominence until the first half of the 19TH century.

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A MUSEUM WITHOUT WALLS

The Cieran Ecomuseum is a museum without walls, all our sites are outside. Designed to reveal the hidden history of Cieran Country by the community who live here, it tells the story of its people, places and landscapes from pre-history to the present day.



Situated on the 500-million-year-old Highland Boundary Fault – the great geological feature that divides the Scottish Highlands from the Lowlands – the Cieran Ecomuseum's human history stretches back through millennia with sites identified from Neolithic times.



There are Pictish Stones to excite your curiosity, unknown stories from the legends of King Arthur and the Irish Giant Finn mac Cumhaill, contemporary histories of the Scottish Traveller Community, important events linked to the great Jacobite rebellions and fables of the Cierans themselves, the Highland clan warriors who came to be associated with cattle raiding.

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You can discover the history of Scotland's Berry Capital, Blairgowrie, and visit the site of its Victorian Textile Mills, walk a part of the Highland Boundary Fault in Alyth and enjoy its well preserved old town centre. A hike along the Cieran Trail, one of Scotland's great long distance footpaths will take you across magical Glenshee to the small villages of Kirkmichael and Glenisla, offering you spectacular views through huge landscapes sculpted by glaciation and traversed by old drove roads and ancient rights of way.



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The Cieran Ecomuseum is a social enterprise whose vision is to enable holistic, democratic and sustainable involvement with culture, history and heritage.

Enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly

- Take responsibility for your own actions
- Respect the interests of other people
- Care for the environment



**KNOW THE CODE
BEFORE YOU GO**
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The first phase of the Cieran Ecomuseum has been made possible by many people who live and work locally and by the generous financial support of the following funders:

Our Funders



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This leaflet should be used in conjunction with the Cieran Ecomuseum website which offers more detail on each itinerary and points of interest.

Visit: www.cieranecomuseum.co.uk



1. Brig 'o' Blair

A key river crossing to Highland Scotland

Before 1777 there was no bridge over the Erich at Blairgowrie. All vehicular traffic had to cross by a ford where the croy, or weir, now is.



2. Plash Mill

Turning Flax into Linen

This mill treated linen yarn made from flax. First it was soaked in water, then beaten by wooden beaters enabling the fibres to bind together more easily.



3. Muckle Mill (1798-1902) & Erich Linen Works (1867-1902)

An industry takes hold

Muckle Mill was the oldest mill on the river, used to spin flax. The Erich Linen Works, built later processed jute that had been softened in the Muckle Mill.



4. Unfinished Lade

A missed opportunity

The mills depended for their power on water rushing downstream and filling lades that were constructed to divert the water to feed the waterwheels.



5. Keithbank Mill (1864-1979)

Water & Steam Powered

Keithbank is of special interest as it was a combined steam and water powered mill. Originally it spun flax, then jute then Rayon made out of viscose from wood pulp.



6. Oakbank Mill (1830-1930)

A first for jute

Oakbank was the first mill in Scotland to successfully spin jute in 1832, an innovation that helped make Dundee the jute capital of the then modern world.



13. Lornty Bridge

A triple layered bridge

This narrow bridge incorporates the arches of two earlier bridges. One was probably military, built during the construction of the Military Road from Perth to Inverness in 1749. The even earlier bridge, built of well-dressed rectangular blocks, is traditionally reported to be of Roman origin circa 80AD. There is, however, no evidence of Roman roads north of the River Tay.



14. Lornty Mill (1814-1904)

The smallest of all the mills

This mill seems to have been in size and production the smallest of all the mills which existed in Blairgowrie and Rattray in the 19th century. The mill was built on the site formerly occupied by a lint mill and then a snuff mill.



7. Ashbank Mill (1836-1918)

Mrs Baxter & Ashbank House

The wife of Ashbank's owner, John Baxter, was a notable hostess of many entertainments held at their grand house and gardens, built next to the mill.



8. Bramblebank Works (1833-1963)

Producing flax & tow with cutting edge machinery

Bramblebank was driven originally by a condensing engine and turbine. In the 1940's it was fitted out with the latest types of flax spinning machinery.



9. Arnbank Managers House & Tenement

Mill workers housing. Mill managers often had a large house next to the mill where they could keep an eye on proceedings. Tenement housing built for mill workers was rare.



10. Brooklinn Mill (1843-1979)

Innovative water powered turbines

This mill had a hydro-mechanical turbine (not a traditional water wheel), reported to have been the first of its type in Scotland.



11. Westfield Works (1838-1934)

Twice ravaged by fire

In March 1901 a fire caused by the overheating of a bearing in a spinning frame destroyed the entire mill. Rebuilt, it was again burned down in 1934.



12. Craigmill (1834-1880)

The northernmost of all the mills of Blairgowrie & Rattray

Because of its comparative remoteness from the parish schools, a special school was built at Craigmill for the children of the mill workers.