

## Gravestones through the Ages

Our unique display is located in the former nave of the kirk, converted about 1800 by the Gun Munro family of Poyntzfield into a largely unused family mausoleum.



The ornate medieval crosses are from Cullicudden and Kirkmichael, the two parishes that joined as Resolis. The ornate heads of the crosses are borne on stems arising from either a Calvary base or a second ornate cross. Following the Reformation in 1560, a more sombre set of symbols of mortality developed, represented here by the tablestone of the McCullochs of Udale, tacksmen and millers, heavy with symbols of mortality. The gentry sought a higher form of sculpture, well represented by the graceful Georgian memorial to George Gun Munro by Charles Regnart, the most northerly piece by this distinguished London memorial sculptor.



In the graveyard stands the wonderful mausoleum of the Grants of Ardoch, dated 1680, with its inspiring epitaph (*"Grieve not when friends and kinfolks die, They gain by death eternitie"*). In chancel and nave, our seats contain as-new stones, based on damaged medieval crosses at Cullicudden, to convey the original impact of these ornate stones. The seats also incorporate wood from pews from the church that replaced Kirkmichael and Cullicudden in 1769 and itself closed in 2005.

## Getting to Kirkmichael

The historic site of Kirkmichael lies 16 miles from Inverness, beside the beautiful bird reserve at Udale Bay on the north side of the Black Isle.  
From the A9, follow the B9163; satnav IV7 8LQ



Discover more about Kirkmichael and the families, heritage and graveyards of the north at [www.kirkmichael.info](http://www.kirkmichael.info) and <https://www.facebook.com/kirkmichaeltrust/>

The buildings at Kirkmichael were on the verge of collapse when they were rescued by the community through the Kirkmichael Trust. We were supported by the many funding bodies and private donors set out on our website and on our funders' on-site plaque.

Please help to maintain our buildings, display of ornate medieval gravestones and interpretation of the site and the area. You can donate via our website or by our on-site donation box.



Text by Jim Mackay.

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## Guide to Kirkmichael in the Black Isle





Entrance



Guide to Kirkmichael

## A Short History of Kirkmichael

The first records of Kirkmichael as a parish occur in the early 1400s. At least the chancel was built in this period.

The congregation met in the long nave to the west to worship, whilst the chancel was reserved for the priest carrying out holy rites, such as celebrating Mass at the altar. Following the Reformation in 1560, the chancel was blocked off and appropriated for burials. The arch of the doorway through to the nave is still there.



The parishes of Kirkmichael and Cullicudden were united in 1662, but the two kirks were kept going in increasingly dilapidated state until the lairds were forced to build, in 1769, a new central church at Resolis (whence the popular name of the united parish). About 1800, George Gun Munro of Poyntzfield built a family mausoleum within the partly rebuilt and shortened nave. The abandoned west gable, with ornamental belltower, survived until at least 1906, and its footing can still be seen as a mound well to the west.



Kirkmichael was used for burials for many centuries, as seen by its height above neighbouring land. The oldest date on a stone here is 1600, but the ornate medieval stones are much earlier. The lairds were buried within the church, but post-Reformation, when this was banned, they formed distinguished structures like the Braelangwell mausoleum, Grant of Ardoch enclosure and Gun Munro mausoleum. The tradesmen and tacksman erected substantial slabs and tablestones. And the ordinary folk, the poorest of whom were buried using Kirk Session money, had no stone at all.



1906



2012



2017