

Getting started on
your house history
with Fife Cultural Trust
Local History Week
2017



Plan of attack

1. The final outcome: format: book, article, web-page, facebook post, blog; audience: self, children, house buyer etc.
2. What do you already know?
 - a. Gather together any documents: take copies and keep your originals safe
 - b. Analysis of the appearance of the house - drawings, photos, GPS
3. What are you interested in?
 - a. Aesthetics/architectural aspects
 - b. Social history – including the economics
 - c. House in context – including geo-heritage
4. Planning your research
 - a. Where the information is – online, library, Fife Archives, St Andrews university, National Records
 - b. Where and when
 - c. How much notice is needed
 - d. Do you need to be a member/register
 - e. What can you take into the reading room – pencils, cameras etc.

Analysis

Need a good description of the building itself: plan, elevation and section. Analyse from the top down using MacCannell's listing or some other structure eg this from Historic Scotland: Investigating heritage on your doorstep. Drawings or photographs?

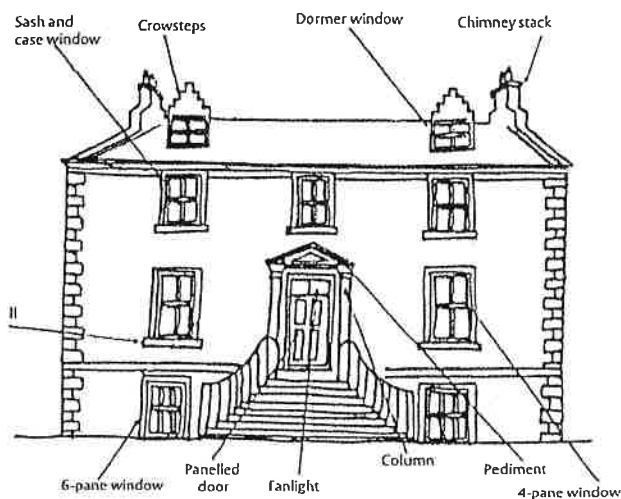
Plans, elevations and sections

Architects and architectural historians spend a lot of time presenting three-dimensional buildings in two dimensions – on paper. It's useful for learners to become familiar with three ways of presenting buildings: *plans*, *sections* and *elevations*. A doll's house borrowed from your school nursery or Infant department is an excellent tool for exploring these three conventions.

An *elevation* is a drawing of a building from the side. Get learners to draw or take photographs of your school building from different sides. These can then be labelled ('west elevation', etc) and displayed.

A *plan* is the 'footprint' of a building – an aerial view which shows the shape of the rooms from above. Help learners become familiar with this through looking at plans of buildings they know or rooms such as your classroom. Draw round the doll's house as a starting point, then get learners to draw round familiar objects to get a 'plan view' of them. Help them become familiar with some of the common conventions of plans, for example, quarter-circles to indicate the direction in which doors open. Show them plans of rooms in your school – who can identify them fastest? Exploration of plans can feed into maths work on scale. Plans of buildings are sometimes available from libraries or housing departments. Learners can research a local building.

A *section* shows a slice down the middle of a building – again, a doll's house with a front that opens out or with sides that come off is very useful for this. Learners can draw elevations of part of the school, which open up to show the corresponding section.



Architectural terms

There are many different specialist terms to describe parts of buildings and the style of designs. At this level, few are necessary. However, learners may enjoy learning some specialist terms, and depending on the buildings locally, they may help learners to describe buildings accurately. Some terms which are fairly widely used are listed below.

Styles of architecture

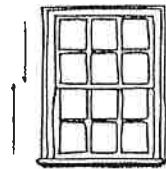
- Baronial (based on castles)
- Georgian
- Victorian



Baronial

Types of window

- Bay
- Dormer
- Sash and case



Sash and case window – sashes slide up and down

Terms relating to roofs

- Crow-stepped
- Finial
- Dome
- Gable
- Pantile



Finial

Columns

- Capital (top part of column)
- Doric
- Ionic
- Corinthian
- Plinth



Doric capital



Ionic capital



Corinthian capital

Terms relating to doors

- Fanlight
- Pediment
- Column
- Pilaster (flat version of a column)

How to read Scottish Buildings Daniel MacCannell

Don't be distracted by the colour, texture and condition – eg harling/harl/rendering applied to most buildings pre-1750 (esp in Fife because of the amount of building with sandstone which is soft) – but expensive to maintain and therefore often removed eg Sailors Walk 1930s and now – and used to make newer buildings blend in with older – key thing to look for – if the window surrounds protrude then probably pre-Victorian or window surrounds are flush then probably later – esp post Second World war when rendering became popular again.

Decay – buildings unroofed for tax reason – esp in 1940s/1950s decay v. quickly

Broadly 6 stylistic periods – to help you really consider your building – to really read it!

Pre-1540, 1540-1660, 1660-1750, 1750-1840, 1840-1920, 1920 onwards.

Items to consider: distinguishes by class and rural/urban.

Overall height of the structure;

Chimney stacks, chimney pots;

Roof details: ridges, material, crowsteps, angles, shape, flat appearance; fortifications; dormers

Walling materials

Window apertures, window fittings, arrangement, windows in pairs and trios

Segmental or hump-topped arches

Doors: size, construction, height matching the tops of the ground floor windows, steps up to the main door; multiple exterior doors visible from front/street side;

External iron work

General form: footprint

Architectural Aspects

Form and function, original style and changes, building material, who designed/built it, architectural style. Historical merit/significance – changes over time.

Resources

Miller – Fife Pictorial: its people, burghs, castles and mansions

MacCannell – How to read Scottish Buildings

OS name book – with searchable list

Buildings of Special Architectural and historical interest – 1960s

Dean of Guild Records - Search by street

Maps – Cupar, Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline with searchable map indexes

SCRAN

Fotofile – Dunfermline and Cupar photographic collection,

Various publications of old photographs – old Cowdenbeath, Cardenden in pictures etc. Stenlake

Estate Agent Particulars 1990s

Social history

Who owned it, who lived in and who were the neighbours – rent and value etc

Specialist topics: health – Typhoid in Kirkcaldy in 1895; changing aspects of women's lives; life in one room; homes tied to occupations esp. mining, but also churches, schools, estate houses, inns. War damage etc.

Development of new estates.

NB prevalence of renting in Scotland prior to 1970s

Resources

Census – 1841-1911 every 10 years except 1941– microfilm and ancestry upto 1901;
ScotlandsPeople for 1911

Valuation rolls – hard copy and Scotland's People

Electoral Rolls – hard copy – search library catalogue/Archives index – some will be on Ancestry soon

OS Name book

Woods maps

Pont maps, Roy maps, OS maps, goad maps

Estate Agent Particulars 1990s

Street directories

Legal – transfer of ownership: Sasines, Estate papers

The house in context

Geological – nearest quarry, what materials are available – more exotic building material coming from further away

Geographical – especially re access to transport links which change over time: sea, rivers and canals, railways, roads.

Place names and street names

Place names – settlements and the streets and even the buildings sometimes

-search the library catalogue – place names Fife, street names Fife

-toun implies fermtoun; Milton – coalton etc.

Not all that many villages pre-1700, but most in place by 1850

History of the development of the town/estate etc.

Early planned towns - Sinclairtown laid out c1750s – according to Gifford, Letham was created for weavers, Ladybank and Thornton in response to railways.

Frew – council housing

Council plans – Methil – Development the Right to Survive – 1975; Civic plans post war period eg Kirkcaldy, Fife through time

20th century new towns: Glenrothes New Town, Rosyth Garden City,

Resources

Town histories

Burgh, town records

Place-names of Fife Simon Taylor 2008 Donington

Taylor & Skinner's survey and maps of the roads of North Britain or Scotland. - Facsimile volume of 1776 edition

Maps – esp geo-referenced map

Reading List and online resources

Place-names of Fife Simon Taylor 2008 Donington

The Buildings of Scotland- Fife by John Gifford 1988 Penguin

How to read Scottish Buildings by Daniel MacCannell 2015 Birlinn

Dictionary of Scottish Architects <http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/index.php>

National Records of Scotland

National Library of Scotland Map collection: <http://maps.nls.uk/>

Town maps

Georeferenced maps:

Fife Library catalogue: <https://capitadiscovery.co.uk/fife/> or through www.onfife.com

Fife Historical Newspapers: <http://www.onfife.com/libraries-archives/local-and-family-history/newspapers-index>

Fife Archives: <http://www.onfife.com/libraries-archives/archives/your-visit> and follow the links

SCRAN: <http://www.scran.ac.uk/> access using your library card

Dictionary of Scottish Architects: <http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/> search by building name or street name

Taylor & Skinner's survey and maps of the roads of North Britain or Scotland. - Facsimile volume of 1776 edition

	The look of the thing – appearance, aesthetics etc	Social history	Economics	House in context	Geo-heritage – how the geography and geology impacts
Maps – searchable indexes in Cupar, KG and DU	Footprint, OS name book description c1850	1820s Woods maps – Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline, Cupar, St Andrews and Burntisland	GOAD maps – shops Feu maps - Tayport	Changing street names; devt of town, village	Geology maps Quarries etc Early roads Rivers and harbours
Newspapers – Fife Historical newspapers, BNA, NE Fife Newspaper Index	Builders. Architects Descriptions of room layout	Especially re specialised public buildings – manse, church, school etc	Adverts for sales, lettings Debtors/Roups		
Census: 1841-1901 Fife Libraries (1911 ScotlandPeople)		Families incl occupation, number of people living in house; neighbours Change in status		Neighbourhood – sometimes used as the basis of a town walk eg Craighrothie	
Valuation Rolls		Householder	Owner, rent, rateable value	Neighbourhood Key landowners	Mills, railways, schools – all the farm holdings
Sasines – searchable index for NE Fife		Inventories	Property Transfer		
Wills – ScotlandPeople and National Records			Property transfer		
Online resources	Dictionary of Scottish Architects SCRAN Canmore NLS – Moving Image archive	National Archives Ancestry/Institution NLS-Moving Image archive	National archives ScotlandPeople - wills	NLS Geo-referenced maps	NLS Geo-referenced maps
Archives – Fife Archives; St Andrews Special collection and National Records	Dean of guild plans	Inventories, stories about occupants esp school teachers, police		St Andrews Special collection for many NE Fife burghs Rothes Estate – Fife Archives	Sites of early industrialization

Book sources – Fife Libraries	Buildings of Special architectural and historical interest 1960s Gifford Fife Millar: Fife Pictorial and Historical Glen Pride – Fife an illustrated architectural guide MacCannell how to read Scottish Buildings Search Fife Architecture, Scottish architecture	Any local history book also Frew on post-war public housing Search Scottish architecture	Shopkeepers and Traders	Town development plans – eg Methil, Kirkcaldy, Fife looks ahead Search village/town	
Photographic collections in KG, CP and DU – also some in Archives	Buildings			Streets	Arial photographs
Estate agents particulars 1990s (KG)	Photos, descriptions, interiors		Prices		
Civic Society/Historical society	Photographs	Key source			Place name and street name lists
Statistical Accounts		1780s, 1850, 1950s	Pre-1800, 1850, 1950s		Pre-1800, 1850, 1950s
Street Directories/Telephone Directories/electoral rolls		Who lived where and what they did The coming of the telephone Early electoral rolls give an indication in themselves of status		Changes in economic structure of town	