

# The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

## Fyvie Castle-Fyvie Loch-Fyvie Kirk Circular (Aberdeenshire)

### Route Summary

An easy but very enjoyable walk with negligible overall ascent. The focal point is the visually impressive and intact baronial castle, although the landscaped grounds and lake, with walled garden come a close second. The visit to the Old Kirk of Fyvie is interesting.

Duration: up to 3 hours



### Route Overview

**Duration:** up to 3 hours.

**Transport/Parking:** There are frequent bus services between Aberdeen and Turriff that stop on the A947 main road in Fyvie. Check timetables. Public car-park at start/finish point of walk. Just off B9005 road across from Co-op shop in Fyvie village.

**Length:** 6.850 km / 4.28 mi

**Height Gain:** 90 meter **Height Loss:** 90 meter

**Max Height:** 69 meter **Min Height:** 49 meter

**Surface:** Smooth. Mostly very good, surfaced paths and estate roads.

**Child Friendly:** Yes, if children are used to walks of this distance.

**Difficulty:** Easy.

**Dog Friendly:** Yes, but keep dogs on lead on roads, in public areas and near to any livestock.

**Refreshments:** Tea-room in Fyvie Castle. Options in Fyvie.



### Description

This is a gentle stroll in very scenic surroundings, mostly in the mature landscaped grounds on the approaches to the historic baronial Castle of Fyvie, with its large and picturesque lake, and wonderful walled garden. On the return section there is an interesting diversion to Fyvie Parish Church. Fyvie Castle started life as a royal outpost around 1200. The development of the castle over the centuries into the current substantial and imposing building with five towers, by different owning families, and taking in visits by King Edward I, William the Lion, Robert the Bruce, and Charles I, makes for an interesting story, tied into the social and political history of the times. Fyvie Loch is a large and beautiful artificial lake created during the 19th Century landscaping of the estate. It supports large numbers of wildfowl, joined in winter by greylag geese. The Parish Church in Fyvie is of interest for three main reasons: 1) there is a set of four Pictish stones with Celtic symbols built into the east gable of the church; 2) there is a stunning example of the artistry of Louis Comfort Tiffany and the craftsmanship of the Tiffany Glass Company in a stained glass composition, again on the east gable; 3) in the graveyard, lies the resting place of Agnes ("Annie") Smith from the late 17th Century. Annie's fate is the subject of a haunting traditional ballad entitled "Mill o' Tifty's Annie" (or "Andrew Lammie"). There are various versions of the lyrics, but, in summary, the song tells of the brutal and tragic outcome of a love affair between Andrew Lammie, the Laird of Fyvie's trumpeter, and Annie, daughter of the miller in nearby Tifty. To deny true love is a mistake, is the undeniable message! Note that Fyvie Castle is a National Trust for Scotland property with an impressive portrait collection, including works by Raeburn and Gainsborough. See:



See: <https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/fyvie-castle> and <https://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/fyvie/fyviycastle/index.html> and <https://www.electricscotland.com/culture/features/singasang/tifty.htm>

## Waypoints

### (1) Start walk at car-park in Fyvie

(57.42916; -2.39533) <https://w3w.co/upwards.unrated.happier>

The walk starts from the car-park across from the Co-op shop on the B9005/Main Street in Fyvie. With your back to the car-park walk up the road towards the war-memorial, going left past the memorial to continue on Main Street.



### (2) Left off Main Street for Fyvie Castle

(57.43125; -2.39489) <https://w3w.co/munch.goodness.verifyng>

In 250 m, go left off Main Street to take the access road to Fyvie Castle. (253 m)



### (3) Through the gates and up access drive

(57.43417; -2.39770) <https://w3w.co/exposes.cans.passively>

In another 400 m, pass through the gate posts onto the access drive for the castle. When you see Fyvie Loch ahead of you, veer slightly right off the road to the loch-side to join a path at the loch (and get a wonderful view up the loch!). Go clockwise on this path. (641 m)



### (4) Follow path over access drive

(57.43583; -2.39755) <https://w3w.co/superhero.clock.rang>

In 400 m from the gates at the previous waypoint, follow the path as it crosses the access drive road. Keep walking along this path, parallel with the access drive road, with open fields on your left and trees and the loch on your right. (843 m)



### (5) Cross access drive and take path veering left

(57.44038; -2.39185) <https://w3w.co/coil.anguished.blotches>  
In about 650 m, follow the path as it veers right to cross the access drive road, then swings left into the trees by the loch-side. (1.5 km)



### (6) Right along the top of the loch then left

(57.44108; -2.39180) <https://w3w.co/pupils.scrambles.glares>  
In just 70 m, go right to take the path at the top of the loch, passing a memorial stone. At the end of the short path, go left and follow the path through gates that will take you through the National Trust for Scotland car-parking area towards the walled garden. At the garden wall, turn left and head towards the entrance gateway to the garden opposite an information board in the corner of the car-park. (1.57 km)



### (7) Enter and explore walled garden

(57.44278; -2.39143) <https://w3w.co/should.decreased.inviting>  
In 330 m from the top of the loch, enter the walled garden - a wonderfully sheltered and productive place, renowned for its fruit, flowers and sculptures. Wander around the garden at your leisure, before returning to the entrance gate to exit the garden. (1.9 km)



### (8) Leave garden and right for path to castle

(57.44278; -2.39154) <https://w3w.co/should.decreased.inviting>  
Upon leaving the walled garden, turn right through the wooden gates to follow the path to the castle, through an area known as the American Garden. (2.2 km)



### (9) Left at castle to take drive along east side

(57.44336; -2.39342) <https://w3w.co/listen.miracles.audible>

In 200 m, emerging at the immediate grounds of Fyvie Castle\*, turn left to follow the driveway that sweeps around the east side of the castle, keeping the castle on your right side. Follow this road as it swings around to the south side of the building and becomes a path, passing the glass-roofed Racquets building on your right and the castle tea-room on your left. Follow this path around to the north-side and open courtyard of the castle. After taking in the impressive architecture, take the path down hill into the trees towards the river, with the castle at your back. (2.4 km)

*\*Note: Fyvie Castle started life as a royal castle some time around 1200, probably as a wooden structure surrounding a keep. By 1296, when the castle was taken by Edward I of England, it probably comprised a stone keep and surrounding wall containing a hall and domestic buildings. The development of the castle over the centuries into the current substantial building with five towers, by different owning families, makes for an interesting story, tied into the social and political history of the times.*

See: <https://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/fyvie/fyviecastle/index.html>



### (10) Left along avenue to bridge

(57.44407; -2.39302) <https://w3w.co/stung.pigtails.screening>

When the track leading downhill, away from the castle, reaches the level of the riverside, turn sharp left through the avenue of trees, with the river on your right side. (3.0 km)



### (11) Bridge

(57.44385; -2.39727) <https://w3w.co/modifies.promotion.generally>

In 300 m, you will arrive at a pretty spot with a stone bridge. Stop at the bridge to take in the views up and down river (an early stage of the Ythan River). When you are ready, re-trace your steps along the avenue of trees but carry straight on past the track you descended from the castle on. There are estate buildings on either side as you approach a t-junction ahead of you. (3.3 km)



## (12) Right behind back of walled garden

(57.44397; -2.39104) <https://w3w.co/approvals.flicked.cotton>  
In 400 m from the bridge, turn right at the t-junction to take a narrow estate road as it winds past the rear of the walled garden on your right and the Old Home Farm buildings on your left. Carry on taking this estate road as it straightens out, passing the eastern end of the walled garden perimeter. (3.7 km)



## (13) Right for loch-side

(57.44157; -2.38940) <https://w3w.co/charm.barstool.rails>  
In 300 m, go right off the estate road onto a path heading towards the top end of Fyvie Loch\*. At the upcoming x-roads of paths, go left to follow the path around the eastern side of Fyvie Loch. (4.0 km)

*\*Note: Fyvie Loch is an artificial lake created during the 19th Century landscaping of the estate. It supports large numbers of wildfowl. Swans, coots, mallards and moorhens are joined in the winter by greylag geese, tufted ducks and goldeneyes. Ospreys occasionally visit to fish in the loch. [National Trust for Scotland]*



## (14) Carry on - ignoring arrow to right

(57.43527; -2.39650) <https://w3w.co/emphasis.streaks.shifters>  
In 900 m, as you reach the bottom of the loch-side, keep going straight ahead, ignoring the path and yellow arrowed signpost on the right. Very soon, the path crosses the estate road you left earlier at Waypoint 12 to take a less well-defined path through a belt of trees with the castle access road on your right side now. Before too long the path through the trees joins the access road, where you turn left in the direction of Fyvie village. (4.9 km)



## (15) Left up Main Street

(57.43130; -2.39482) <https://w3w.co/regarding.brings.sleeper>  
In 500 m, at the outskirts of Fyvie village, turn left off the castle access road onto Main Street. (5.4 km)



## (16) Right along School Road for church

(57.43242; -2.39214) <https://w3w.co/imitate.leaky.fracture>  
In 300 m, turn right off Main Street onto School Road. Follow School Road to the end, veering left and slightly uphill towards Fyvie Church which is across the B9005 road ahead of you on your right. (5.7 km)



## (17) Fyvie Kirk

(57.42965; -2.38760) <https://w3w.co/brightens.markets.junction>  
In 400 m you will have arrived at the gates of Fyvie Parish Church where you will take some time to look around the old kirk-yard. There is a very useful information board on the right side of the steps up to the church. Go left around the church to the back of the building. (6.1 km)



## (18) Celtic symbol stones and Tiffany Stained Glass window

(57.42965; -2.38684) <https://w3w.co/reception.important.overt>  
At the back of the church building, you will find a set of ancient Celtic symbol stones\* from the Pictish period built into the wall underneath an unusual and valuable stained glass window\*\* (best seen from the interior of the church). After viewing, go left into the kirk-yard looking for a prominent vertical stone monument topped by a Maltese Cross surrounded by an iron railings enclosure. (6.1 km)

\* Note: set of 4 Pictish symbol stones built into the east gable of the church.  
[see: <https://canmore.org.uk/site/19034/fyvie>]

\*\* Note: "This striking and dramatic stained glass window depicts St Michael, his archangel's wings spread out against glowing blue skies and gleaming white clouds. The warrior angel, adversary of Satan and patron of knights during the Middle Ages, stands on the wheel of time, representing victory over evil. St Michael's face is very finely done and the whole window, with its jewel-bright colours, has that unmistakable Tiffany look. This is a stunning example of the artistry of Louis Comfort Tiffany and the craftsmanship of the Tiffany Glass Company (later the Tiffany Studios.)"

[see: <http://www.morningglass.co.uk/news/2013/2/6/stained-glass-image-of-the-day-tiffany-window-fyvie-parish-church>]



## (19) Tifty Annie's grave

(57.42948; -2.38696) <https://w3w.co/shelters.magical.overheat>

On the southern slope of the old kirk-yard you will find a prominent vertical stone monument topped by a Maltese Cross surrounded by an iron railings enclosure. Within the enclosure is a flat stone which is understood to be a 19th C facsimile of the original 17th C gravestone of "Tifty Annie"\*. When you are ready, continue around the kirk-yard and out the main gate. Go left and along the grassy verge of the B9005 road back in the direction of the pavement that will bring you back to your walk start-point. (6.1 km)



*\*Note: Annie's fate was the subject of a haunting traditional ballad entitled "Mill o' Tifty's Annie" or "Andrew Lammie". There are various versions of the lyrics, but, in summary - the song tells of "...the love between Andrew Lammie and Annie of the Mill of Tifty. Annie's father disapproves and complains to Lord Fyvie, as Andrew Lammie is his trumpeter. Fyvie sends Andrew to Edinburgh, and Annie predicts she will die before he returns. Her father offers to marry her to a man of higher degree, but she refuses. Her parents strike her out of shame, and she is scorned by her sister; her brother is the most severe, breaking her back and killing her. Annie's father and Lord Fyvie then regret not allowing her to marry as she wanted. When Andrew returns, he is grief-stricken and dies of sorrow. The singer warns parents not to forbid their childrens' true love, lest they meet the fate of Annie and Andrew."*

[See: <http://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/en/fullrecord/93232/3> and, to listen to a fine rendition: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nAliesQpnUQ>]

## (20) Finish walk back at car-park opposite Co-op

(57.42924; -2.39532) <https://w3w.co/upwards.unrated.happier>

In 800 m you will have arrived back at the car-park where you started the walk, across the road from the Co-op shop buildings. (6.9 km)



## Route Map



### Links:

[Photos from walk](#)

[Download Route Guide](#) (PDF with illustrated Waypoints)

[Download GPX file](#) (GPS Exchange Format)

[Access Walk on OutdoorActive](#)

[Access Walk on OSMaps](#)

[Access Walk on AllTrails](#)

[Access Walk on Wikiloc](#)