

Tubaiste

Kirkintilloch

Kirkintilloch Tragedy 1937

Of the various disasters that have occurred in Scotland over the years, few have left such a haunting legacy as the Kirkintilloch tragedy of 1937. The circumstances of the fatal fire, including the apparent helplessness of the Irish victims, their youthfulness, and the anguish of the young women who witnessed the terrible fate of brothers and other relatives, all gave it special poignancy.

When all this is set against a background of enforced seasonal migration to find work, harsh working conditions, and communities in conflict, it is not difficult to appreciate why the memory of the event has endured for so long. In fact it is now firmly embedded in the culture of both Kirkintilloch and Achill, and even in the wider historical culture of Scotland and Ireland.

Acknowledgements and Sources

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Permission for use of archive photos has been readily granted by the *Daily Record*, *The Irish Times*, *The Kirkintilloch Herald*, *Fáilte Ireland* and the National Archives of Scotland.

The following works have been consulted:

Coughlin, Brian *Achill Island tattie-hokers and the Kirkintilloch tragedy, 1937* (2006)
Holmes, Heather 'The Kirkintilloch Bothy Fire Tragedy of September 16, 1937: an examination of the incident and the resulting legislation', *Review of Scottish Culture*, Vol.9 (1995-6)
Holmes, Heather *Tattie hawkers: Irish potato workers in Ayrshire* (2005)
O'Dowd, Anne *Spalpeens and tattie hokers: history and folklore of the Irish migratory agricultural worker in Ireland and Britain* (1991)

Extensive use has been made of material in the East Dunbartonshire Archives and Local Collection at the William Patrick Library, Kirkintilloch, and of newspaper files at the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, and Mayo County Library, Castlebar; also files of the Fatal Accident Enquiry at the National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh.

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