

# Interpretive Connections: New Harmony & New Lanark – Scotland’s Living Legacy

*A Companion to the Historic New Harmony–Scotland Tour 2026*

## Brief Summary: The New Harmony–New Lanark Connection

This tour celebrates two visionary communities united by ideals of education, social reform, and spiritual renewal. Established in the late 18th century by **David Dale** in Scotland and expanded in the early 19th century by his son-in-law **Robert Owen**, New Lanark became a model of enlightened industrialism. Owen later carried these ideas across the Atlantic to found **New Harmony, Indiana**, to found a “Community of Equality,” a bold social experiment in cooperative living. This journey follows that transatlantic thread—from the mills of the Clyde to the banks of the Wabash—exploring how faith, art, and human ingenuity shaped both places.

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## New Lanark – The Genesis of the Dream

The birthplace of Robert Owen’s model community, New Lanark represents the dawn of social reform through industry. David Dale, a Glasgow merchant and philanthropist, established the mills on the River Clyde, where he combined industrial efficiency with humane working and living conditions. When his son-in-law, Robert Owen, took over management, he transformed New Lanark into an early utopian experiment, promoting education, fair labor, and child welfare. The New Lanark School was among the first to adopt Pestalozzian methods, inspiring later models such as the Jane Dale Owen Fauntleroy School in New Harmony.

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## University Partnership & Exchange

The connection between New Lanark and New Harmony has extended into modern times. For many years, the **University of Southern Indiana** and the **New Lanark World Heritage Site** collaborated through an internship and study-abroad program. Students from Indiana gained firsthand experience in heritage management, museum interpretation, and conservation, while Scottish interns learned about community-based preservation in New Harmony. This partnership exemplified the living continuation of Owenite ideals in education and cultural stewardship.

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## Glasgow – Enlightenment & Industrial Humanism

Glasgow’s prosperity in the 18th and 19th centuries underpinned David Dale’s textile empire and Robert Owen’s vision of social reform. Its civic architecture, cathedrals, and museums reflect the moral imagination of Scotland’s Enlightenment. The city embodies the harmony between commerce, compassion, and creativity—a balance that New Harmony also sought to achieve.

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## The Govan Stones

George MacLeod's ministry at Govan Old Parish Church placed him among the early-medieval **Govan Stones**, a remarkable collection of Celtic and Viking-age carved monuments. Their blend of Christian symbolism and Norse history deepened his sense of a faith rooted in both struggle and resilience. That insight shaped his founding of the modern Iona Community and his decision to rebuild **Iona Abbey** beginning in 1938. On Iona, MacLeod united spiritual renewal, communal labor, and a profound respect for the ancient Christian tradition that the Govan Stones so powerfully represent.

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## David Livingstone Centre, Blantyre

Born in a cotton mill community similar to New Lanark, David Livingstone's early education reflected Owenite ideals of self-improvement through labor and learning. His later missionary and humanitarian work carried forward the belief that moral and social progress were inseparable.

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## Inveraray Castle – Clan Campbell & Moral Stewardship

Inveraray Castle, ancestral home of the Dukes of Argyll and seat of the Chief of Clan Campbell, represents the intersection of aristocratic responsibility and moral leadership. The family's historic ties to the Dales and Owens reflect a long-standing bond between these lineages and their shared commitment to education, philanthropy, and stewardship. Today, the current Duke of Argyll's integrated vision for Inveraray and the surrounding estate has fostered a vibrant community that mirrors the ideals of New Harmony. Through initiatives supporting local enterprise, heritage conservation, and environmental sustainability, the Argyll estate has become a dynamic force for cultural, social, and ecological renewal in the region.

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## Iona Abbey – Sacred Renewal & Ecumenism

Iona Abbey stands as a symbol of faith and renewal. Jane Blaffer Owen's friendship with Reverend George MacLeod, founder of the modern Iona Community, led to her gift of Jacques Lipchitz's sculpture *Descent of the Spirit* to the Abbey. Later, Celtic spiritual leader **John Philip Newell**, who served as Prior of Iona Abbey, deepened this connection. He wrote part of his book *A New Harmony* while staying in New Harmony as the guest of Jane Blaffer Owen, further intertwining the spiritual legacies of Iona and New Harmony. The **Robert Lee Blaffer Foundation's MacLeod Barn Abbey** in New Harmony was dedicated to Reverend George MacLeod, who visited the town and inspired Jane Blaffer Owen's vision of spiritual renewal. The gesture created a lasting bridge between the two communities, both centers for interfaith reflection and artistic devotion.

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## Loch of the Lowes & Birnam Arts Centre

At Loch of the Lowes, conservation meets community. Former New Lanark naturalist and novelist Cherry Bowen's work at the Scottish Wildlife Trust site reflects an ongoing

dialogue between ecology and education. Nearby, the Birnam Arts Centre honors Beatrix Potter's creative legacy, echoing New Harmony's fusion of art, nature, and learning.

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## St. Andrews, Dundee & Glamis Castle

St. Andrews represents Scotland's intellectual heart, where learning and reform converged. Dundee's Verdant Works and its labor history recall New Lanark's humane industrialism, while Glamis Castle's royal connections evoke the enduring theme of stewardship through heritage.

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## Edinburgh – Rational Reform & Aesthetic Idealism

The Enlightenment spirit of Edinburgh—its Royal Mile, castle, and academic institutions—embodies the rational reformism that shaped Owen's cooperative ideals. Its cultural heritage mirrors New Harmony's own synthesis of education, reason, and artistic aspiration.

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## About the Tour Guide

Our tour will be led by **David Campbell**, a Glasgow native known for his warmth, humor, and gift for storytelling. Trained in design before becoming a full-time tour leader, David brings history vividly to life with deep knowledge of Scotland's culture, architecture, and people. He is a highly rated guide with **Overseas Adventure Travel (O.A.T.)** and runs the *Amazing Glasgow* YouTube channel, which includes a short film on **David Dale**, father-in-law of Robert Owen. His wife, **Jo Timoney**, is a historian and jeweler with Glasgow Museums.

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## About the Tour Organizer

This tour is organized by **Caroline "Docey" Dale Lewis**, a descendant of **Robert Owen** and member of the **Advisory Committee of Historic New Harmony**, a program of the **University of Southern Indiana**. She and her family share enduring connections with Scotland through the **Campbell–Dale–Owen lineage** and long-standing ties to **Inveraray Castle**. Docey has lived in **New Harmony** for more than two decades and works internationally in weaving, textile design, and sustainable artisan collaborations. She has visited Scotland several times since moving to New Harmony, deepening her connection to the landscapes and communities that inspired this journey.

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## Conclusion

This journey through Scotland unites centuries of reform, education, and artistic vision. From David Dale's mills on the River Clyde to Robert Owen's experiments in social harmony and Jane Blaffer Owen's spiritual legacy, the thread of idealism remains unbroken. Participants in this tour retrace the steps of visionaries who believed that beauty, education, and compassion could reshape the world. These ties between Scotland and New Harmony remind us that utopia is not a dream deferred—it is a living practice sustained by generations of builders, thinkers, and believers.