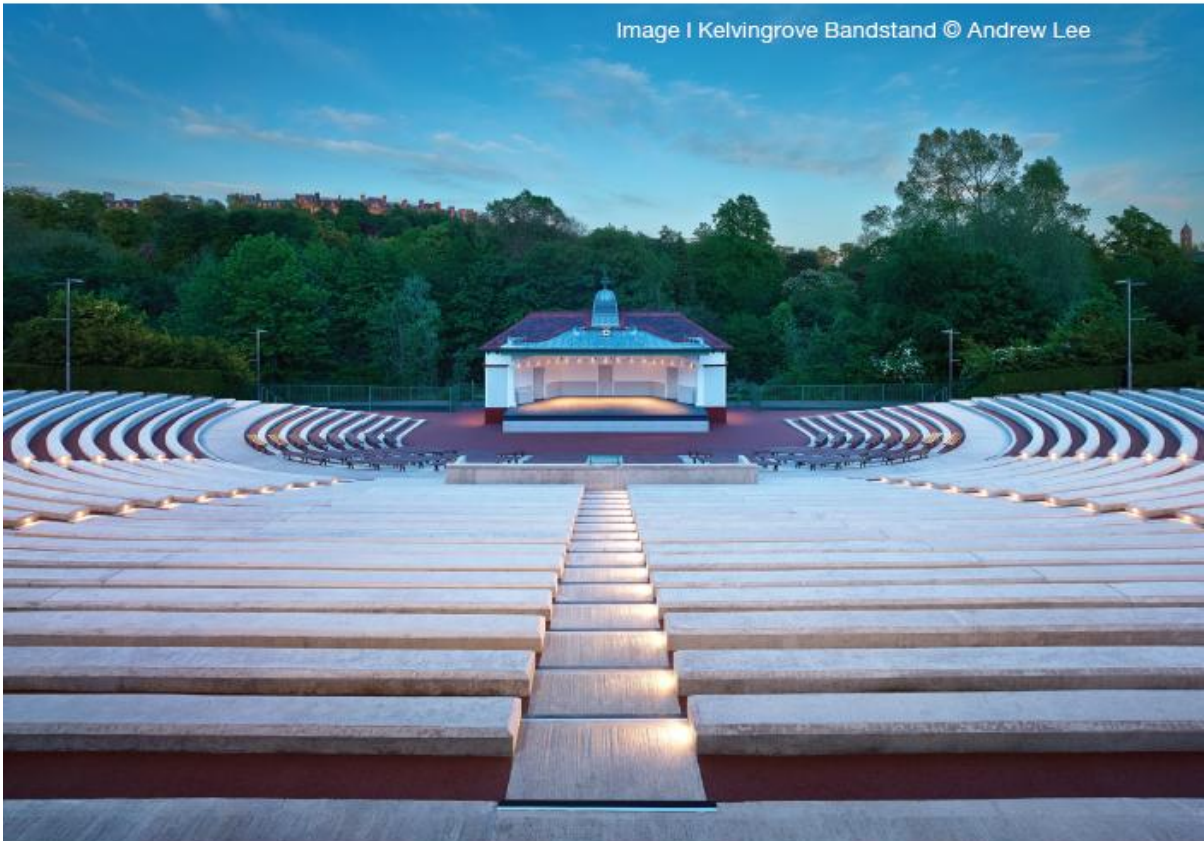


Image | Kelvingrove Bandstand © Andrew Lee



keys to the city



No one knows what goes on behind closed doors. Not true this September finds Tracy Mukherjee as Glasgow, once again, invites you to take a peek behind those curtains in the annual Glasgow Doors Open Days Festival.

I love nothing more than walking around the West End. My home now of 17 years and, coming from a little village in North Lanarkshire, the sheer scale and architecture of the buildings has always mesmerised me. And that's before you take a step inside.

So what a gift it is that Glasgow throws the doors of these historical buildings open for one week from 11th – 17th September. The festival, 'a celebration of Glasgow's

architecture, culture and heritage', is brought to you by the Glasgow Building Preservation Trust, who have been raising funds to organise and coordinate the event since the city of culture celebrations in 1990.

With 116 venues to visit Glasgow-wide, how do you choose? Form an orderly line, dear friends and follow me, as we take a tour of our own little treasures here in the wonderful West End. ▶

Buchanan Bridge Club

We start a tour of our glorious heritage, past and present at the pristinely perfect Buchanan Bridge Club, Clairmont Gardens, Park District. This A-listed Victorian townhouse was formerly owned by the founder of Calmac, David Hutcheson. The townhouse retains a huge amount of original features and one can imagine that Hutcheson wanted to reflect the affluence his success had bestowed upon him as his fleet of steamers expanded. In 1960 the Buchanan Bridge Club bought the property. The club take pride in this stunning villa and on the Doors Open Days will be delighted to give you a tour of their club. There will also be the chance to take some sample bridge lessons into the bargain!
Open Sat & Sun 10-4pm, tours on request.
Sample lessons 2pm Sat & Sun.

Central Gurdwara Singh Sabha

With its glorious golden domes and stunning pink sandstone facade, it's difficult to miss the new Central Gurdwara on Berkeley Street. On the boundary between Charing Cross and Finnieston and on the site of the old Eye Infirmary, phase one of the new Gurdwara was completed in 2016. The size of this huge building is second only to the enormous generosity of the Glasgow Sikh community. Everyone is welcome to the Gurdwara, regardless of colour, creed or religion. And who would miss out on a delicious meal from the kitchen, free to all visitors throughout the year. In keeping with the Sikh belief of 'share and consume together', one of the missions of the Central Gurdwara is to help those in need and to provide space for the community to gather.
Open Thurs-Sat 10-4pm tours on request.

Kelvingrove Bandstand

A wander through Finnieston sees us arrive at our next stop. Following its restoration in 2013, the Kelvingrove Bandstand is now a vibrant outdoor music venue once again. This summer it's played host to the likes of Texas, The Shires and Niles Rodgers and Chic. Come along and find out about the restoration and history of this unique music venue. On Saturday, take a seat in the amphitheatre, relax in the shadow of the art galleries and mark National Chamber Music Day with live chamber music, courtesy of Enterprise Music Scotland. This really has become an eclectic outdoor venue.
Open Sat 10-4pm, tours 11am and 3.30pm must be booked. Chamber music 2-3pm.

The Hidden House

Take a wander down a normal tenement close in West End Park St, Woodlands and enter the back court... into another era. Once only surrounded by fields of kale, the Woodlands cottage is now completely hidden from public view. The oldest house in the area, dating from 1800, this was once the studio of Thomas Annan, a celebrated photographer. Take tours throughout the festival and experience the area's last remaining dwelling house. The West End never ceases to amaze. Who knew that behind the vast tenements inhabiting Woodlands there stood a little cottage, predating its sandstone neighbours? **Tours Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun.**

Arlington Baths Club

Around the corner from West End Park Street to Arlington Street, Charing Cross where we can 'dip' into the hidden gem that is Arlington Baths Club. Founded in 1870, the Baths Club is the oldest Victorian baths still surviving – worldwide. It was designed initially by John Burnett but over the years has had many sympathetic additions by various architects. Still, the baths maintain the original Victorian splendour and remains the only private members club of its type in Europe. Why not take a tour during the festival and marvel at those brave enough to use the trapeze equipment over the pool?
Tours Sat and Sun 9am-4pm.

Mackintosh Queens Cross Church

Time to jump in a cab if your little legs won't quite manage it, as we travel to our final venue. And what a venue to finish on. Here on Maryhill Road, one can never have overlooked the stunning Mackintosh Queens Cross Church whilst sitting at the traffic lights. This is the only church in the world to have been designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh. It was commissioned in 1896 by the Free Church of Scotland and unlike many of the churches of the era, whose designs were cold and austere, the Queen's Cross Church wholly reflects the warmth and charm of the Mackintosh movement. The external and internal architecture, as well as the stained glass windows and decorative motifs of the woodwork, leave you in no doubt of which great designer we are to thank for this perfect little treasure in Maryhill.
Open Sat 10am -2pm, Sun 10am-4pm.



Image | Arlington Baths. © Gregor Reid

A few select picks of the historic buildings that simply litter the streets of Glasgow; is it any wonder that the theme of this year's festival is history, heritage and archaeology? A plethora of which, I am sure you will agree, abounds here in the west.

The Festival also has an incredible programme of 50 heritage walks and tours as well as 33 talks and events throughout the week. Check out the website for some unique days out including artist Toby Paterson's tour of locations influential to the skateboarding community in Kelvingrove and beyond.

Join local historians for walks around our local districts, Hyndland and Maryhill. Or for something a little more exotic and if you are willing to travel (yes, there is life beyond the boundary of Anniesland Cross), why not enjoy the Clydebank Synchronised Swimming Team's demonstration at Drumchapel Pool?

A leisurely walk, a reminder of our history, visually stunning architecture and reflections of our Glaswegian culture. Now that's a good day out. ■

For full details of all venues, heritage walks and events visit – glasgowdoorsopendaysfestival.com or follow the event on Facebook – GlasgowDoorsOpenDays.

Doors Open Days is coordinated nationally by the Scottish Civic Trust and runs throughout Scotland every September as part of European Heritage Days.

For more information visit doorsopendays.org.uk, or scottishcivictrust.org.uk.



Image | Macintosh Queens Cross Church