As you approach the Museum, you can see the surviving frontage of the Chapel Works, once an important flax spinning mill, on the other side the Dean’s Park. The date of 1795 above the gate commemorates the date of the business partnership of John & George Paton, twin brothers, who began a spinning business here about 1816. The building you see dates from about 1840-50.

Dean’s Park also houses a statue of Robert Burns, largely financed by Dunfermline born millionaire Andrew Carnegie who attended the unveiling ceremony on 7 August 1912. Burns had family connections in Montrose and he was known to have visited them at least once. Opposite the statue is the modern interpretation of the original bandstand.

Montrose Museum opened in 1842 and is one of the first purpose-built museums in Scotland. It was designed by John Henderson. The art gallery extension was added in 1889. The museum is open throughout the year (Tues-Sat) and explores the story of this vibrant town and its people. The museum houses a collection of Pictish stones, maritime and local history and changing exhibitions.

Montrose Academy, with its distinctive dome, was designed in 1815 by David Logan junr. It has been the main place of education for generations since. The gliding of the copper dome was a gift from former pupil Blanche Mearns after World War II.

George Street was once a narrow street known as School Wynd. At the top of the street, on the site of the old tolbooth, stands the monument to Robert Peel, Corn Law reformer, which was erected on his death in 1852. The last public execution at this site was that of Margaret Shuttleworth, executed for murdering her husband in 1822.

Across the street is the Public Library built in 1905, funded by Andrew Carnegie, on the site of the old cruciform house where botanist Dr Robert Brown was born. He discovered the scientific principle of Brownian Motion. A bust of him is displayed in the foyer.

Looking across from the library door is Castlestead, an old castellated house with an 1820s frontage. This was the site of the old stone castle of Montrose where King Edward I of England stayed in July 1296 and which was razed to the ground by William Wallace. A tower house was built on the site about 1500 and, according to tradition, it was the birthplace of James Graham, Marquis of Montrose in October 1612. A statue of the Marquis now stands in front of Castlestead.

Continue on to Bridge Street, which was opened up about 1800 to give access to the first bridge over the River South Esk, constructed in 1795. Previously, Castle Street and Seagate to the east were the main routes into the town.

There are some very fine Georgian and Victorian houses in Bridge Street, the town’s first relief road. Further down, on the west side, is a large Georgian building topped by a pair of urns. This was once the town’s theatre. Opposite is an old coaching inn, now converted to housing, which has still retained the old gate for the coach and horses.

Near the foot of the street is the classically-designed Montrose Infirmary, built in 1835 and still in use today. Reaching the river you see the fourth bridge to be constructed over the South Esk. A ferry served the crossing from the 12th century.

Before you reach the left turn into Wharf Street, look up the narrow street known as Seagate. This was the entrance into the town before the construction of Bridge Street. There was once a small Viking trading settlement in the vicinity known as Stromay, also reflected in the Norse word ‘gate’ meaning ‘street’.

Wharf Street offers a pleasant area from which to view the busy working harbour. On the south side of the river is Roosie Island, a true island before the Inch Burn was drained and in-filled in 1973. There are statues of Seafarers by William Lamb and of Barne, a brave dog who came to Montrose as crewmember of the Norwegian minesweeper Thorodd during World War II. He became a mascot for the Free Norwegian Forces and a symbol of freedom. He was buried on the banks of the River South Esk and his grave is marked by a cross and by tokens left by visitors.

The RNLI lifeboat station was relocated here in 2013. Wharf Street provides the perfect place to finish the walk. Take a seat and enjoy the view of the busy harbour.
The church spire situated in the High Street is one of the tallest in Scotland.