WONDER WANDER DUNBOYNE

NATIONAL INVENTORY of ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

INSTRUCTIONS

TAKE A 'WONDER WANDER' THROUGH DUNBOYNE:

- Wander through our streets, find the picture clues and delve into the stories our village tells through its rich architectural heritage.
- Pause to discover often-overlooked architectural details in our scavenger hunt, or simply relax and enjoy a carefully curated self-guided tour of Dunboyne.
- Always remember to glance up, peer down, and never cease to WONDER!

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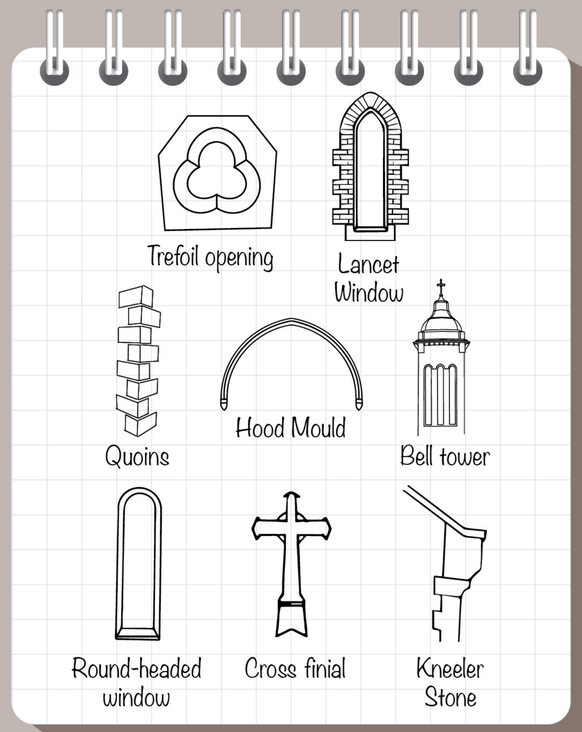
SCAVENGER HUNT

HOW MANY OF THESE FEATURES CAN YOU SPOT IN OUR TWO CHURCHES?



THE STORY OF DUNBOYNE

Although the origins of the place name are uncertain, the story of Dunboyne, or 'Dún Búinne' in Irish, is thought to date from the time when the area was under the control of the Gaelic O'Ceallaigh clan. The Anglo-Norman invasion transformed the political and physical landscape of Ireland, and by the 13th century Dunboyne had developed as a manorial village.

The 15th century was marked by the building of the medieval parish church of St. Peter's, of which the ruined tower stands within the Church of Ireland graveyard. It is also during this period that a stone castle was built. Now lost to time, the medieval castle is thought to have stood on the site of the present Dunboyne Castle Hotel which was enlarged and remodeled in the late 1760's.

The 1798 Rebellion saw significant unrest across parts of the county, including Dunboyne, where buildings were set alight during disturbances which also claimed a number of local lives. By the early 19th century construction of a Roman Catholic church and the laying out of a village green to the east, shifted focus away from the old medieval core. The arrival of the railway in 1862 spurred further expansion during the latter half of the 19th century, which saw the construction of terraced housing and a new national school.

Continued growth during the 20th century included the construction of a new Catholic Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, replacing the earlier building, to cater for an expanding population. Today Dunboyne is a lively community with a thriving village centre.

In recognition of the special character of Dunboyne, Meath County Council has designated an Architectural Conservation Area. Together with the diligent efforts of the local community, this designation helps in the management and enhancement of its unique social history and wealth of architectural treasures. It is hoped that this much loved village will continue to be cherished and enjoyed by future generations.

Want to learn more about Dunboyne Architectural Conservation Area and other Architectural Conservation Areas in the county? Contact Meath County Council's Conservation Officer.

With special thanks to the local community for their assistance in developing the trail.

TICK THE BOX ✓ AS YOU WONDER

1. ST. PETER'S CHURCH OF IRELAND CHURCH ☐

Step through the iron gates and follow the tree-lined path to St. Peter's Church. Built in 1866, the lancet windows and trefoil openings are typical features of the Gothic Revival style. Popular for church design during the 19th century, the Gothic Revival movement was based on the great medieval cathedrals such as Christ Church and St. Patrick's in Dublin. *Pause here to identify some of the features in our church architecture Scavenger Hunt.*

The ruins of the medieval church tower stand within the graveyard. Can you spot the tower?

2. HAMILTON MAUSOLEUM AND GRAVEYARD ☐

The Hamilton mausoleum stands to the south-west of the church. This miniature building was designed as the final resting place for Charles Hamilton, who lived in Hamwood House, just outside Dunboyne, during the 18th century. The mausoleum is classically inspired with decorative columns and a stone urn on the top.

Charles Hamilton was the father of the well-known painters Letitia and Eva Hamilton. Letitia won bronze medal for her painting of the Meath Hunt at the Olympic Games of 1948, the last to feature fine art as an Olympic competition.

The graveyard includes many fine headstones and monuments spanning generations. While most graves mark the burials of families who are local to Dunboyne a number of people from Dublin were interred here during the 19th century, due to the high level of 'body-snatching' that was rife in the Dublin graveyards at the time.

Why not take a detour on leaving the graveyard to visit Dunboyne Castle, the ancestral home of the Butlers, Lords of Dunboyne. Located just a short distance to the south-west of the trail, the castle boasts decorative plasterwork ceilings thought to be by the Francini brothers, Italian master plasterers, who were working in Ireland during the 18th century.

3. WATER HYDRANT ☐

Cast-iron water hydrants such as this provided clean, publically available water to communities during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Although designed as a functional item, the use of decoration and ornament adds to its appeal. This hydrant has a fluted shaft, based on the design of a classical column, and a domed cap complete with an acorn on top!

Close to the water hydrant is the site of a blacksmith's forge, recorded on early mapping as a 'Smithy'. Working in wrought-iron, blacksmiths provided vital services by manufacturing many key items, from tools and agricultural implements, to horse shoes and nails. Though no longer operating from this site, the business is continued today by the Reilly family, who are said to have crafted pikes for the 1798 rebellion.

Why not take a detour to visit the cast-iron bridge that spans the Castle Stream in the adjacent public park. The bridge is by William Turner, son of Richard Turner, a notable 19th century ironmaster, who was responsible for the Curvilinear Glasshouse Range at the National Botanic Gardens in Dublin. The bridge is just a short distance from the trail near Castleview Estate.

4. AVONDALE TERRACE ☐

Built around 1910, this short terrace of four houses is said to be named after Avondale House, the County Wicklow home of Charles Stewart Parnell. A notable resident was Giolla Chríost O'Broin, who lived at No.1. O'Broin was a lifelong member of the Gaelic League and close friend of some of the 1916 leaders.

5. KELLY'S CORNER ☐

In the late 1950s Dunboyne Village was host to a major event in the Irish motor racing calendar. The annual circuit, a four-mile stretch around Dunboyne, featured humpback bridges, straights, hairpin bends, and the hazardous Kelly's Corner. The challenging track witnessed legendary drivers and tragic accidents, leading to its closure in 1967. The plaque on the wall at Kelly's Corner commemorates all those who lost their lives racing in Dunboyne.

6. THE COURTHOUSE ☐

This gate pier is all that remains of Dunboyne Courthouse. The court sat as a Court of Petty Sessions, where Justices of the Peace presided over lesser legal cases. Legal records from Dunboyne Courthouse dating from the early 1800s document cases relating to money, domestic disputes and public order offences.

7. DUNBOYNE NATIONAL SCHOOL ☐

Dunboyne National School was built in 1908 to designs by the architectural practice of W.H Bryne & Son. It replaced a smaller school of 1836 which had stood to the north-east of the present building. The new school originally opened six days a week and had improved facilities such as several spacious classrooms. The building's large windows, rooftop ventilator and cast-iron wall vents were designed to promote health and wellbeing.

8. THE PAROCHIAL HOUSE ☐

Built to provide accommodation for the parish priests, the parochial house was constructed in 1878. The building boasts a fine entrance with a fanlight and paired pilasters, as well as a Gothic-style window to the side elevation. This window echoed the Gothic-revival architecture of the former 19th century church which had originally stood to the east.

9. BARRACK LANE ☐

This laneway ran around the side and back of properties until it reached the Navan Road, close to the old Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) barracks. The RIC was Ireland's first regular police service.

Dunboyne was known for its thriving straw hat manufacturing industry in the early 1800s, and local people recall that there was once a straw hat factory accessed from this laneway.

The section of rubble wall running parallel to the side of the parochial house formed the boundary to the old 19th century Roman Catholic church. It is finished with a traditional 'cow and calf' capping detail, where alternating tall and short stones are placed vertically along the top of the wall.

10. ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH ☐

Constructed in 1956 to designs by the architect Simon Aloysius Leonard, this church replaced an earlier 19th century church which stood to the east of Barrack Lane. The church boasts a striking bell tower which is a landmark in the village. Renovated in 2009, new stained glass, designed by George Walsh, was commissioned for the baptismal chapel. This complements the existing Stations of the Cross which had been designed in glass mosaic by his father, Stephen Walsh. *Pause at St. Peter and St. Paul's to identify some of the features in our church architecture Scavenger Hunt.*

11. VILLAGE GREEN ☐

The tree-lined triangular green dates to the early 19th century and gives Dunboyne the air of an estate village. Take note of the pretty terrace of six houses on the south side of the green. Their brick detailing around the door and window openings is typical of the early 20th century.

12. MOUNTING STONE ☐

What function did this stone serve? Locals remember it being used as a stepping stone to mount horses. Mounting blocks were usually made from stone or wood and were common prior to the era of the motor car. They were often located outside inns and public houses, like here at the side of Brady's, to assist people in mounting a horse or cart.

13. BRADY'S ☐

Originally built as two separate properties, Brady's once combined a public house, grocery, hotel, and stabling for horses. Check out the traditional hand painted signage on the historic shopfront.

14. VICTUALLER SIGNAGE ☐

A term for a butcher, Macken's Victuallers has been a fixture in this location since 1935. Though the original building has been refurbished in recent years, the business proudly retains its original early 20th century wall-mounted signage.

15. THE GROTTO ☐

A symbol of faith since 1932, the grotto contains a prayer blessed by Pope John Paul II. Until recently a lime tree, fondly known as 'the Big Tree', stood beside it. A cornerstone of the village, pieces of the tree, now lost to disease, were distributed throughout the community as keepsakes, ensuring its place in local memory.

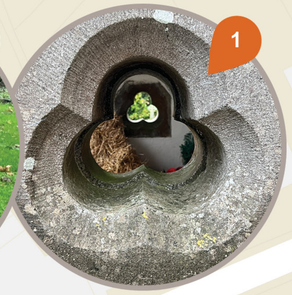
DUNBOYNE

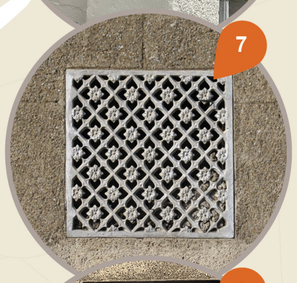
ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREA

WALKING TRAIL

DÚN BÚINNE

WANDER THE ROUTE USING THE PICTURE CLUES OR BREAK IT UP AND WONDER...





Where do the streets and roads get their names from?

Have a look around and try to find the more unusual street and road names

START

Summerhill Road

Main St

Maynooth Road

Barrack Lane

Station Road

L228

To Dunboyne Castle

To Richard Turner Bridge

MAP LEGEND

- Architectural Conservation Area
- Walking Route, 1km
- Trail number
- Picture Clue Number
- Parking

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