

Band Hall

The new Band Hall was built in 2000 and replaced an older 1906 building. The Hall is home to the Wolfe Tone Brass and Reed Band established in 1875. In the past the Hall was used as a concert hall, cinema, etc and the present Hall is also put to many varied uses.

Barrack Street

The Royal Irish Constabulary Barracks was built c. 1880 and set back from the line of the street. It is one of the earliest civic buildings in Ballymore Eustace and is now in use as a Garda Siochana Station. Up to the 1950's Ballymore Eustace had four full time Gardai and a Sergeant. Behind the Barrack is Close Hill, another contender for the site of the 12th century Ballymore Castle. Legend has it that it is connected to Garrison Hill by an underground tunnel. An octogenarian ex-teacher writing in 1923 places the Castle "1/4 mile up the Hollywood road and a few perches west of the road, the site marked by two Yew trees." Jacinta Byrne's house (Corner Barrack Street/Truce Road) was once the R.I.C. Barracks and Courthouse.

The Market Square

As a thriving Market Square in the past, the centre of the Square contained a large weighing scales and office building. It is now the site of the internationally renowned artist and sculptress Imogen Stuart's depiction of the upper Liffey with its fast flowing waters smoothing out to a quieter pace at Ballymore Eustace as it enters the plains of Kildare. Kay Headon's house (protected structure) dominates the Square and was Lawlors's Hotel prior to being an abattoir, butchers shop and thriving pub. Grace's bakery was at the rear of Gallery/Gifts and Sean Fogarty's is a protected traditional shop front.

Miscellaneous

On Truce Road off the Square is the old Dispensary, which was replaced by the new Health Centre in 1956. An even older Dispensary was located beside the Anvil Bar. The Anvil Bar (new office development) was formerly a Hotel. As you leave the Square and walk to Scoil Mhuire (Naas Road) you pass the former Post Office (Culmor) and old Bakery (PCP Group). The Smith family were Blacksmiths at the Forge (post office and shop 100 years ago) until 1992 and lived in the long cottage at the entrance to the Riverside Walk. Down the Walk can be seen a 'wheelstone' used when placing the metal band on wooden cart wheels. Patrick Kelly's new house is on the site of two former cottages (Kelly & Pollard). The Season's stream passes under the Pinkeen Bridge at the Naas road and was once a water supply to the village and to the Brewery, which was located near the end of the Riverside Walk/Dennison's.

River Liffey/Liffey Bridge

Our first stop is the Liffey Bridge from where much of the heritage of Ballymore Eustace can be seen.

The Liffey rises at Kippure in the Wicklow Mountains and is about 80 miles long from source to sea. It is perhaps our greatest natural heritage and down through the years has added greatly to the wealth of Ballymore Eustace. The Liffey Reservoir Act 1936 allowed the river to be harnessed about a mile upstream of Ballymore Eustace at Poulaphouca and Golden Falls by the ESB and Dublin Corporation to generate electricity and to provide a public water supply mainly to Dublin City. Golden Falls Hydro Power Station first generated electricity on the 10th December 1943 and Poulaphouca in December 1944. The flow of the Liffey is now controlled to allow one and a half tonnes of water per second flow under the Bridge when the ESB are not generating and 30 tonnes per second when the ESB are generating electricity at Golden Falls Hydro Station. A siren is sounded to alert the public when the ESB are about to generate electricity at Golden Falls Hydro Station.

After many years of serious pollution (1960's - 1980's) the Liffey is again an excellent brown trout fishery and day permits are available to fish. It still has a small stock of salmon which can be seen spawning at the Bridge in early December. Salmon angling is now prohibited by law until stocks built up to their conservation limit of 4000 salmon. The Liffey Bridge was constructed by an Act of Parliament in 1784. It is a "six-arch rubble stone hump back road bridge with cut-stone quoins to piers to south-west, triangular cut-waters to north east, cut-stone voussoirs and cut-stone coping to parapet walls." "The construction of the arches that have retained their original shape is of technical and engineering merit. The bridge exhibits good quality stone masonry and fine, crisp joints. The bridge is of considerable historical and social significance as a reminder of the road network development in Ireland in the mid nineteenth century." (National Inventory of Architectural Heritage).

The great southern road to Athy, Carlow & Kilkenny formerly passed over this Bridge but was later diverted when a new road and bridge were constructed at Kilcullen. The Alexander Nimmo designed bridge constructed in 1830 at a cost of £4074-15s over the waterfalls at Poulaphouca also reduced the importance of the Ballymore Bridge. Immediately downstream of Ballymore Bridge is the abutment of a former stone bridge mentioned in Wm. Petty's Down Survey 1655-1656 which in turn replaced the Bridge of Planks mentioned by the Earl of Essex in 1599.

Ballymore Eustace Heritage Trail



Church of the Immaculate Conception: Parish Hall

The Catholic Church was built shortly before Catholic Emancipation in 1829. Rev. Patrick Stafford PP who died on the 19th November 1845 is interred inside the Church and Canon Joseph Horgan (d. 1890), Canon Thomas Curran (d.1917), and Rev. Charles Ross Murphy (d. 1943) are interred in the Church Yard. An Oratory was attached to the Church in 1865. The last major remedial work to the Church took place from 1987-1990 but following a fire in the rear of the Church on 26th September 1990 another revamp was necessary in 1991. The Oratory has been used over the years as a CYMS Hall, Dance Hall, Cinema, Parish Hall and following major reconstruction ending in 2002 it is now the Resource Centre. A new Presbytery was built in 2001 beside the Resource Centre replacing an older Curate's House.

This heritage trail has been designed by the Ballymore Eustace Tidy Towns Committee for the enjoyment of all. Please see the above map for some of the places and spaces that enrich our heritage. We would ask that you respect private property, stay on paths and of course take great care when going near water. We would welcome your comments and when you are finished with this trail guide why not return it or give it to someone else for use.

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County Kildare
LEADER PARTNERSHIP

Old National School (Country Kitchens)

Looking south from Ballymore Bridge in the triangle between the R411 and R413 is the former Ballymore Eustace National School. The School was built in 1835 at a cost of £400 and holds bitter/sweet memories for many of the older citizens of Ballymore Eustace. After its closure in 1956 the school building became a family residence before becoming the showrooms for Country Kitchens. The old school was replaced by a new school, Scoil Mhuire, at the opposite side of the village.

Ball Alleys

Still looking south, on the left hand side of the road are the handball alleys. The larger 60 x 30 yards alley was built in 1910 but wasn't officially opened until 1912 after the walls were plastered and a new cement floor laid. The Gallery and roof were added in 1928 and in 1953 the walls were raised. Lights were installed in 1962 and upgraded in 1978. As it was then considered a man's sport only, no dressing room was built until 1975. The newer American style 40 x 20 yards wooden floor, glass back wall complete with dressing rooms, shop and all mod cons was opened on St. Patrick's Day 1988. Ballymore Eustace has a handball tradition second to none with numerous All Ireland title holders amongst its population. Perhaps its finest hour was achieved in 1984 when two of its sons won World Titles.

Water Purification Plant, Bishopsland

Still on the Liffey Bridge, if you look at the sky-line to the left of the Ball Alleys you will see the huge Dublin City Council Water Purification Plant. The plant was first commissioned in 1943 as part of the afore mentioned Liffey Scheme to treat 5 million gallons of water per day but has expanded enormously since then and is now the largest water purification plant in Ireland treating 318 million litres of water per day or 3.68 tonnes per second. It is incredible that two and a half times more water flows to Dublin by pipeline than the normal flow of water under Ballymore Eustace Bridge. A sludge treatment plant to prevent pollution of the Liffey by aluminium hydroxide sludge was not built until 1987.

At the entrance gate to the Waterworks is the remnants of the Pale ditch and near the proposed new Sludge Plant is a Bowl Barrow (burial site). Pre-development archaeological testing must be carried out to ensure that objects of archaeological interest are preserved. A third national monument is located inside the Waterworks boundary. The Bishopsland Hoard of precious metal and woodwork tools found here in 1942 (during construction of Liffey Scheme) dates back to the Bronze Age (c1200-600BC).

A Heritage Trail Guide for Ballymore Eustace

Welcome to Ballymore Eustace (Baile Mor na n-Iustasach) and our first heritage trail guide. This guide has been created to help you enjoy some of the best of the heritage of Ballymore Eustace.

Ballymore was a border town of the 'Pale'. The 'Pale' (so named in the late 14th Century) was established at the time of King Henry 11's expedition (1171-72) and consisted of territories conquered by England, where English settlements and rule were most secure. The Pale existed until the entire county was subjugated under Queen Elizabeth 1 (1558-1603). The Pale included parts of counties Dublin, Louth, Meath and Kildare.

In 1244 Ballymore, as it was then known, a sizeable town with a castle, was granted an eight day fair by King Henry 111 (1216-1272) of England. In 1373 the upkeep of the castle and protection of the town was given to Thomas Fitzoliver FitzEustace when he was appointed Constable.

The town afterwards became known as Baile Mor na n-Iustasach, which translates from Irish as 'the great or large town of Eustace' and hence Ballymore Eustace. The importance of the town can be seen from the fact that Parliament was held here in 1389.

Being inside The Pale, Ballymore was frequently subjected to raids and plundering from 'local Irish' clans such as the O'Tooles and O'Brynes. In 1419 O'Toole took 400 cows belonging to Ballymore and in 1578 Rory Oge O'Moore burned the town.

Ballymore Eustace was in times past a market town in the County of Dublin. The market was granted by King James 1 (1603-1625) of England to the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin. Ireland at that time was part of the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. These times are still recalled by the townlands in our parish, Bishopsland, Bishopshill and Bishopslane. The village square was known as the Market Square, with its large weighing scales and office. The village is now part of County Kildare since 1836 and parts of the parish also extend into County Wicklow.

The village has a population of 725 and the parish 1528 (Census 2006). That it has a great sense of community can be seen from the number of facilities it has to offer its residents and visitors. We hope you enjoy your stroll around our village.

Please keep Ballymore Eustace as you would wish to find it and remember, for many people it is home.

Old Woollen Mills

Looking upstream from the Bridge can be seen the ruins of the old Woollen Mills, built in 1802 by Christopher Drumgolle. The Mill when in full swing employed 700 people. The mill was powered by water taken from the Liffey at Golden Falls. By the time of Mr. Drumgolle's death practically everybody in Ballymore Eustace was employed in the Mill and it was one of the most prosperous towns in Ireland. The Mills passed on to Mr. H. L. Copeland and on his death in 1903 to his sister who drew up an agreement in June 1905 to allow the Manager Mr. P. McGrath keep the Mill operating. However, despite having won awards for the quality of goods produced at Ballymore Eustace, the Mill was forced to close down.

If you look north from the Bridge you can see the row of 24 well preserved cottages on the right hand side of the street known as Weavers Row which was built to house some of the workers at the Mill. Also, if you look downstream you can see the ruins of Mountcashel Lodge, once the property of Stephen Moore, 2nd Earl of Mountcashel (1770-1823), and who presumably gave his name to the area. It is also where Christopher Drumgolle lived.

St. John's Church and Graveyard

On the way to St. Johns you can see Garrison Hill, the site of a Military Barracks and Fortifications and some believe of Ballymore Castle. You will also pass Cnoc Avon, a Victorian Residence built in 1873 and the former Parochial House until it was sold in 1991. It was home to Monsignor Maurice Brown (1891-1979) author of The Big Sycamore, Monavalla and Through a Presbytery Window, under the pen name of Joseph Brady.

The first mention of a Church at St John's dates back to 1192. The present St. John's Church is a plain building with embattled tower, surmounted in pinnacles and built in 1820 by the Board of First Fruits at a cost of £900 and extended in 1894. Its exterior belies its beautiful interior with its 16th century effigy of a FitzEustace knight on the aisle floor and 10th century large circular granite font. The graveyard, divided by denomination, is quite large and contains the partial ruins of a much older church, which prior to the Reformation (1536) was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and subsequently dedicated to St. John. There are numerous ancient tombstones and two 10th century High Crosses. St Johns is an immensely historic site, a place of worship and burial place of departed families and friends. "But I, being poor, have only my dreams; I have spread my dreams under your feet; Tread carefully because you tread on my dreams." (W.B. Yeats)