



# BALLYMONEY HERITAGE TRAIL



A SELF-GUIDED  
WALKING TOUR  
OF BALLYMONEY

FOR FURTHER DETAILS on accommodation and facilities in the Ballymoney area, please contact:

**Visitor Information Centre**

Ballymoney Town Hall  
Townhead Street  
Ballymoney BT53 6BE

Tel 028 2766 0230

Email [Ballymoney.vic@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk](mailto:Ballymoney.vic@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk)

**Visit the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council websites at**

[causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk](http://causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk)  
[ballymoneyancestry.com](http://ballymoneyancestry.com)  
[niarchive.org](http://niarchive.org)

CAUSEWAY COAST AND GLENS BOROUGH COUNCIL WOULD LIKE TO THANK

The late Jack Wilkinson for providing the artwork for this brochure, some of which can also be seen in the book "Ballymoney - An Illustrated History and Companion" published by Cottage Publications, 1995.

The late S Alex Blair for his assistance in editing this guide.



**Causeway  
Coast & Glens  
Borough Council**

# WALKING TRAIL

of Ballymoney Town

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## BALLYMONEY TOWN HALL

Visitor Information Centre, Ballymoney Museum and Family History Resource Area, Townhead Street

The Town Hall was erected through public subscription in 1866. It was renovated and enlarged in 1934, and again in 2005. Inside are rooms which commemorate some of Ballymoney's most celebrated historical figures - George Shiels, the playwright, KK McArthur, Olympic gold medallist and James Cramsie. Cramsie helped to establish the town's first museum and subscribed over £400 to the building of the Town Hall. A stained glass window at the front of the building depicts the former Ballymoney Coat of Arms.

The Town Hall is the home of Ballymoney Drama Festival, the oldest festival of its kind in Ireland. It first began on 28th February 1934, and with the exception of the War Years 1941-46, it has proved a huge success with theatre companies from across Ireland travelling to take part every February or March.

Performances have been judged by many respected theatrical figures, including Lennox Robinson, Sir Tyrone Guthrie, Hilton Edwards, Rose Bruford, Tomás Mac Anna, Harold Goldblatt and Christopher Fitz-Simon.

Audiences have also been privileged to enjoy famous actors such as RH McCandless, Ronald Mason, Olivia Nash and, most celebrated of all, the early performances of Liam Neeson and Jamie Dornan.



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## BALLYMONEY MUSEUM



Ballymoney Town Hall, Townhead Street

Ballymoney Museum is part of Ballymoney Town Hall and offers visitors the opportunity to explore the vibrant history of the town, with a particular focus on North West 200 and local road racing heroes. This permanent Accredited museum also explores the story of the area since early times through its Victorian collection and includes the enigmatic Derrykeighan Stone from which the museum takes its logo.

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## BALLYMONEY WAR MEMORIAL

High Street

Situated on the front wall of the local Royal British Legion hall, in a small enclosure. It was not until November 2000 after the dedicated work of local historian Robert Thompson that the names of those who died during WWI, WWII and the Korean Conflict were added to black marble panels.

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## ST. JAMES'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

St. James Road

When the famous Rev Dr Henry Cooke opened this church on 20 March 1836, it was on the road to Coleraine and regarded as a very fine, well proportioned basalt 'barn' church. The road was closed a few years later and after initial difficulties, the congregation grew and is now a very strong and prosperous one, as may be seen from the fine halls adjacent to the church.

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## DANSKE BANK BUILDING

High Street

This grand building with its imposing 'Italianate' façade was originally a ballroom built by the 5th Earl of Antrim at his own expense. It was completed c. 1760 and hosted the Earl's grand Antrim Hunt Balls, to which local aristocrats and all their guests were invited. Later it was used as barracks for Government troops during the 1798 Rebellion and the Napoleonic Wars. Danske Bank, (formerly The Northern Bank Ltd. and before that the Belfast Bank) has used these premises since 1863.

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## BALLYMONEY REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Charlotte Street

Reformed Presbyterians, or Covenanters as they are often called, are the followers of those Presbyterians who signed the Covenants of 1638 and 1643. In the 18th century there were local societies of Covenanters at Kilraughts, Dervock and Ballymoney. They secured a minister, the Rev Dr WJ Stavely, in 1804 and in 1831 this church was built. It has been refurbished many times. Services here retain the old Presbyterian traditions of singing only metrical psalms, unaccompanied, led by a precentor.

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## OLD COURT HOUSE

Charlotte Street

The Court House is believed to be an early example of the work of Sir Charles Lanyon. He was appointed County Surveyor in 1836, shortly before work began on this building. Lanyon is famous for such spectacular architecture as Queen's University, Belfast. The building is impressive for its small upper storey Vitruvian doorway. It was used as a courthouse for nearly 140 years and is now used for community events.

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## CHARLOTTE STREET

This street is regarded as a fine example of Irish late Georgian terrace houses. Many of the houses still retain their beautiful door cases, windows and fan lights. Formerly called Pyper Row, in 1826 it was re-named in honour of Lady Charlotte Kerr, daughter of the 6th Earl of Antrim.

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## MASONIC HALL & TOWN CLOCK

The Diamond

Since it was erected by the 6th Earl of Antrim in c.1775, this building has served as a Market House, Court House, Town Hall, place of worship and school. It also housed the town's first library (opened in 1839) and museum (opened in 1860). In 1785 the famous Methodist Rev. John Wesley preached here.

Following the 1798 Rebellion, local United Irishmen were hanged from gallows attached to the clock tower. Their bodies were buried at the base of the tower. The Campanile (bell tower) above the clock was erected by Hugh Seymour, 9th Earl of Antrim in 1852.

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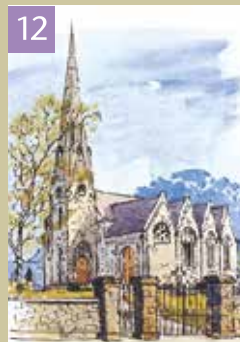


## THE OLD BANKHOUSE

Church Street

The Ulster Bank first opened a local branch at 33 Charlotte Street in 1836, before moving to these purpose-built and rather ornate premises in 1866. A listed building, it is now a commercial property containing private businesses.

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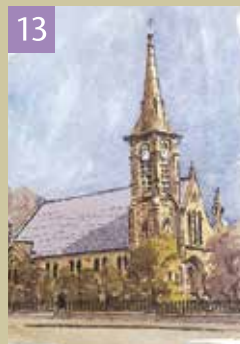


## ST. PATRICK'S PARISH CHURCH

Church Street

The Church of Ireland congregation has worshipped in this building since 1782. It was enlarged in 1868 when, among other additions, the tall spire was built and more seating provided with a south aisle. Across the road, the Old Church Tower is all that remains of the original Parish Church.

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## TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rodeing Foot or Roddenfoot

This congregation began as a Presbyterian Seceder Society in Pyper Row (now Charlotte Street) and moved to this site in the 1840s. The current building was opened in 1885, largely due to the efforts of the illustrious Rev JB Armour who was minister here from 1869-1925. The church is still known by many townspeople as "Armour's Meeting House".

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## OLD CHURCH TOWER

Church Street

The tower is the oldest surviving building in the town, with a datestone inscribed 1637. The church was re-built after it was burned during the 1641 Irish Rebellion and was used until 1782. Among those buried here is the town's ghost, George Hutchinson JP, known as "Bloody Hutchinson".

Hutchinson was a local magistrate, infamous for his summary justice following the United Irish Rebellion of 1798. Alexander Gamble, a United Irishman was also buried here in 1883, 85 years after he was executed. Recent restoration work, part-funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, has helped to preserve this important building. A leaflet guide to the Old Church Graveyard is available at the Visitor Information Centre.

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## BALLYMONEY FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Meeting House Street

This is the oldest place of worship in the town that is still in use. It is often known as "the Cathedral of Presbyterianism in the Route". It was built in 1777 to replace the first Meeting House of 1690.

The building was later extensively renovated in 1871, 1921 & 2004. The east window contains the coat of arms of the regiments in which members of the congregation fought during World War One.

## JOEY & ROBERT DUNLOP MEMORIAL GARDENS

Seymour Street

Joey Dunlop, born in Ballymoney, was affectionately known to motorcycle racing fans and competitors alike as, 'King of the Roads'. His incredible sporting career included five Formula One World Championships; 13 wins at the North West 200; 24 wins at the Ulster Grand Prix and a world record of 26 wins at the Isle of Man Tourist Trophy. He was also awarded an MBE for his sporting achievements and an OBE for his humanitarian work. Tragically Joey lost his life whilst racing in Estonia on 2nd July 2000.

Joey's brother Robert Dunlop was 19 years old when he made his debut at the Temple 100. He was soon winning races at the North West 200, Ulster Grand Prix and Isle of Man TT, riding everything from 125cc to superbikes.

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By 1991 he had won Ulster, Irish and British Championships including five wins at the Isle of Man, 15 at the North West 200 and nine at the Ulster Grand Prix. In addition, he won Grands Prix in Indonesia and Macau. Robert Dunlop was tragically killed on 15 May 2008, during a qualifying session for the 250cc race at the North West 200.

In this beautiful setting visitors have time to reflect on the unprecedented achievements of these much loved international motorcycling legends.

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## BALLYMONEY METHODIST CHURCH

Seymour Street

In 1859 the Rev William Crook opened a Methodist mission to bring practical and spiritual help to the people of Castle Street and surrounding areas.

That year also saw a great religious revival across Ulster and Mr Crook decided he had enough support to merit the building of a Methodist Church, which was opened in 1861. It had a schoolroom underneath

and both church and school functioned well until the early years of the 20th century. In 1906 the school was closed and the church was also in poor condition. Services were transferred to the Town Hall but a great renovation scheme of 1954-5 restored the building and it was re-opened for worship. Further renovations have taken place in 1987 and 1993.

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## BALLYMONEY RAILWAY STATION

Seymour Street

Since 1855, passengers and freight have passed through Ballymoney Railway Station. For many years, the main line was under the control of the Belfast & Northern Counties Railway, while the Ballycastle Railway Company also ran a narrow gauge line from here to the coast from 1880-1950. The present station building was constructed in 1901 and later renovated in 1990.

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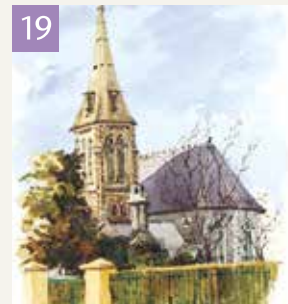


## KIRGAN MONUMENT

Graveyard of the Church of Our Lady & St. Patrick

When Christopher Kirgan died in 1931, aged 103 years old, he was one of Ireland's oldest men. Kirgan was born at Unshinagh, near Dunloy. He was a well known citizen of Belfast and first initiated the erection of this gothic mausoleum 20 years before his death. The churchyard also contains the grave of the famous playwright, George Shiels.

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## CHURCH OF OUR LADY & ST. PATRICK

Castle Street

The Church of Our Lady & St. Patrick was dedicated on 2 June 1878. The construction cost £8,870, raised through public subscription over a period of nearly 20 years. It replaced an older building of 1833, although the first church on the site was completed in 1794. The ornate interior includes a pulpit and altars made from Caen stone. The main altar was the gift of the Royal Irish Constabulary. The stained glass windows in the apse were created by the renowned Franz Meyer Studio of Munich, Germany.