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Photographs by Ross Galbraith and Ronan O’Donnell.

For further reading on Ranelagh: ‘Four Roads to Dublin’ by Deirdre Kelly (The O’Brien Press) and ‘Ranelagh in Pictures’ by Susan Roundtree (A. & A. Farmer Ltd).

For details on Dublin City Council’s programme of walking tours and weekly walking groups, log on to www.letswalkandtalk.ie.

For details on Ranelagh Arts Centre & Festival, log on to www.ranelagharts.org.

Design & Production: Kaelleon Design (01 835 3881 / www.kaelleondesign.ie)
Welcome to Ranelagh! This trail starts in the heart of Ranelagh Village and takes you through back streets, parks and along the canal before finishing at the Ranelagh Arts Centre which is located just across the road from Ranelagh Luas Station. At a leisurely pace, the trail should take under 90 minutes to complete. So let’s walk and talk as we explore one of our city’s most prolific and charming villages.

**The Triangle**

This site was originally called The Angle as the road from Rathminnes approached Ranelagh at an angle to avoid the Methodist Church (since demolished) which jutted out at the end of Oakley Road.

It later became known as The Triangle which may have been due to the configuration of the path or to the fact that three roads converged there. Located on the Angle, Triangle is a memorial to conservationist and local historian, Darid日夜 Kitty who wrote the definitive local history of the area in her book, ‘Four Roads to Dublin’.

**Cullenswood House**

Cullenswood House is steeped in scholarship and history. It is associated with the childhood of well known historian, William Lecky and also has a connection to Bartholomew Mosse, surgeon and founder of the Rotunda Lying-in hospital who died there in 1799. The house was later bought by Patrick Pearse to establish his first Irish language school, St. Enda’s in 1908. When the school was relocated to Rathfarnham two years later, Cullenswood House became a bilingual school for girls, St. Itain, until 1912. Today the tradition of bilingual education is continued with Scoil Bhríde and Gaelscoil Lios na nGól. Oakley Road was also home to some of the signatories of the 1916 Proclamation of Independence including Patrick and Willie Pearse and Thomas MacDonagh. Along with Con Colbert, who also sat at St. Enda’s, they were executed after the Easter Rising of 1916.

**Harcourt Street Railway Line**

The Harcourt Street Railway Line opened in 1854 and ran from Harcourt Street to Bray. The Rathminnes and Ranelagh station opened in 1886 but the line closed in 1958. It is now open for viewing.

**Church of the Holy Name**

The Church of the Holy Name on Beechwood Avenue Upper was designed by Dublin architects, William H. Byrne & Son, and opened in 1914. With its dramatic tower and belfry, the church is a striking local landmark.

**Anna Villa**

Anna Villa is an attractive street of mixed housing with some dating back to the 18th century. It is said that Major Henry Charles Sirr, who was responsible for the arrest of Irish revolutionaries, Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Robert Emmet, owned a house half way down the street on the left hand side. Sirr was detained by the citizens of Dublin for his heavy-handed approach to law enforcement and had come to live in Ranelagh for safety. At the end of the street on the left, a Lutheran Minister performed ‘Geanta Green’ style marriages in the 18th century and the famous street singer, Zizimus (Michael Moran) is reputed to have performed at these ceremonies. The last residence of former Taoiseach, Dr. Garrett Fitzgerald was on Anna Villa.

**Sandford Parish Church**

Sandford Parish Church was designed by Robert Nisbeton who lived at nearby Morton House. The land for the church was provided by George Baron Mountsandel. The original church opened in 1826 but was given a new façade, designed by architects, Lanyon, Lynn and Lanyon, when Sandford became a parish in its own right. The church has a remarkable stained glass Harry Clarke window dating back to 1921. Just beyond the church at 45 Sandford Terrace is the internationally renowned Dillon Garden which is often open for viewing.

**Ranelagh**

There are numerous restaurants and pubs along Ranelagh which is a reminder that in the medieval period, Cullenswood (the old name for upper Ranelagh) was famous for the quality of its ale. There are also a variety of shops catering for a wide range of tastes. Former world snooker champion, Ken Doherty grew up on nearby Ranelagh Avenue.

Ranelagh Gardens is a hidden gem located behind the houses and shops of Ranelagh. The original estate was called Willbrook and was the seat of the Bishops of Derry in the 18th century. The current name was coined by the 1st Viscount Ranelagh, Sirr, who rented the lease and opened the Ranelagh Pleasure Gardens as a place of entertain- ment for the well-to-do of Dublin. In 1785 Ireland’s first aviator, Richard Crosbie made the first ascent by balloon from Ranelagh Gardens, crossing Dublin to Clontarf. In 1787 a Carmelite convent was established on the site. This was closed in 1975, the land was subsequently sold and the house was demolished.

Today’s park is located in the southern part of the original estate where you’ll find a plaque to commemorate the convent and a statue of the young Crosbie.

Ranelagh Arts Centre is the headquarters of the Ranelagh Arts Festival and has become an important permanent feature in the village in recent years. The centre hosts exhibitions, lectures, classes and is a key information centre for the promotion of the arts locally.

**Leeson Park**

Leeson Park is a street of fine Victorian houses with two churches located at the Dartmouth Square end. The small Methodist Church, Litten Hall, is particularly charming and possible to view on request.

**Dartmouth Square**

Dartmouth Square is one of a series of formal Victorian residential squares which were laid out in Dublin in the 19th century. The landscaped central area, with its mature planting, provides a setting for the surrounding terraces of Victorian houses.

The Grand Canal was complete to Tullamore by 1790 but the stretch from Portobello Harbour to Ranelagh was not finished until 1796. It was a major means of transport for goods and passengers before the railways were built and traditionally it has defined the southern boundary of the city centre.

Today the canal and its banks are an important habitat for wildlife and used for pleasure boating, walking and cycling in the Ranelagh area.