

Harold's Cross Walking Trail

Map & Guide



This Map & Guide was produced by Dublin City Council in partnership with the Harold's Cross Community Festival.

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Photographs by Pat Liddy and Ronan O'Donnell.

For details on the Harold's Cross Village Community Council and its annual May Festival, log on to www.haroldscross.org.

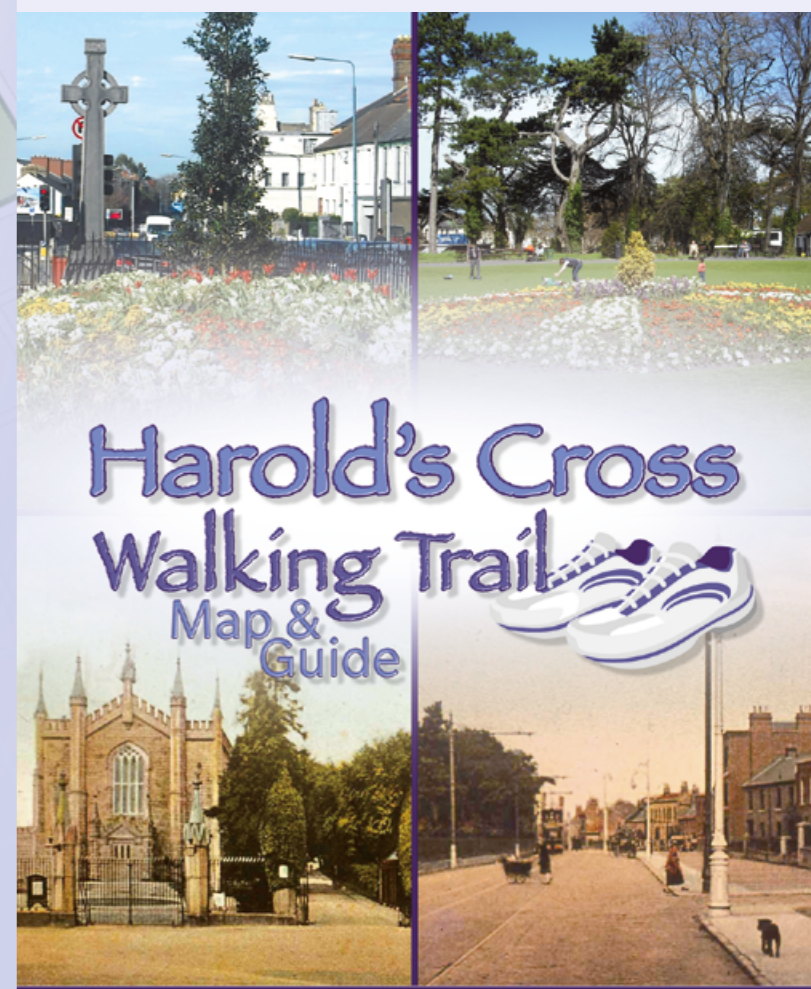
For details on Dublin City Council's programme of walking tours and weekly walking groups, log on to www.letswalkandtalk.ie.

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The name Harold's Cross may be derived from a cross erected in the area in medieval times to mark the boundary between land owned by the Archbishop of Dublin and the Harold family of Rathfarnham, warning each not to encroach on the territory of the other. The Archbishop maintained a gallows there in the 14th century where harsh justice was administered, often for menial crimes or perceived acts of insurrection, and it would remain as an execution ground for the city of Dublin until the 18th century.

The presence of the River Poddle encouraged milling and by 1801, there were eight mills in the area. Initially, mainly poorer people had settled in the area; the rich didn't want to live beside industrial mills and a gallows. However due to its slightly elevated position relative to the city, the area became regarded as very healthy place to live in and during the 18th century, many wealthy families began moving to Harold's Cross, building big houses such as Mount Argus,



Mount Drummond, Mount Jerome, Greenmount and Mount Harold. These titles live on today in the names of institutions, streets or neighbourhoods in Harold's Cross.

Harold's Cross was an important rallying point for the United Irishmen in planning their rebellions of 1798 & 1803, and all the principal leaders such as Theobald Wolfe Tone, Lord Edward Fitzgerald & Robert Emmet are known to have attended meetings locally. Harold's Cross would also play a role in 1916 with the leaders attending Mount Argus church before the Rising and with the 4th Battalion of the Volunteers based in nearby Larkfield.

Today, Harold's Cross is a vibrant village with a wonderful community spirit; the winner of the cities category of the All-Island IBP Pride of Place Competition in 2013 and the winner of a Dublin City Council Community Environment Award in 2020 for the community gardening initiative, HXGrow. New coffee shops, restaurants and other businesses have been established, alongside the famous Hoover shop that featured in the Oscar-winning movie, "Once".

Harold's Cross is located south of Dublin city centre and the Grand Canal. It is served by a number of Dublin Bus routes (9, 16, 18, 49, 54A, 54 Nitelink and 83) and is about a 20 minute walk from Christchurch Cathedral.



Welcome to Harold's Cross!

Your trail starts at Robert Emmet Bridge on the Grand Canal and finishes at Harold's Cross Park.

Walking at a leisurely pace, the trail should take you under 90 minutes to complete.



1 ROBERT EMMET BRIDGE

The original bridge over the Grand Canal was built in 1790. In 1936 it was rebuilt and re-named Robert Emmet Bridge after the patriot who was captured in 1803 while hiding in a house on nearby Chicken Lane (now Mount Drummond Avenue) after his failed uprising. The bridge features a memorial to Emmet, who was executed on 20th September 1803, the day after his famous speech from the dock.

2 GREENMOUNT SPINNING MILL

Greenmount Spinning Mill was established in the 19th century by the famous Quaker Pim family who also helped establish Ireland's first railway from Dublin to Kingstown (Dún Laoghaire) in 1834. Located alongside the River Poddle, the factory's machines were initially powered by a waterwheel and later a steam engine. The nearby cottages housed some of the 150 workers from the mill. The family of artist Louis Le Brocquy owned an oil company nearby.

3 OUR LADY'S HOSPICE & THE MARY AIKENHEAD HERITAGE CENTRE

Under their foundress, Mary Aikenhead, the Religious Sisters of Charity purchased the former Quaker residence, Greenmount House, in 1845. Thousands flocked there for help during the Famine. It provided a refuge for the sick, destitute and dying. A hospice opened in 1879. Today, the Hospice continues to offer palliative care as well as a centre for treatment of rheumatism. The Mary Aikenhead Heritage Centre, where Sr. Mary died in 1858 hosts an exhibition on the history of the Religious Sisters of Charity where visitors can see Mary's bedroom and study, virtually unchanged since her death. Mary Aikenhead was granted the first step to sainthood by Pope Francis in 2015.

4 HERBERT GEORGE SIMMS

From 1932 until his death in 1948, Herbert George Simms served as Housing Architect to Dublin Corporation. He was the first Housing Architect for the capital and was responsible for much of Dublin's new 1930s suburbia - Cabra on the northside and Crumlin/Kimmage on the southside and also many of the houses on and behind Harold's Cross Road. Simms believed in the necessity to build good quality public housing and his projects in the city are immediately recognisable with beautiful curves on the buildings and decorative features showing strong Art Deco influences.

5 SISTERS OF SAINT CLARE

In 1629 a convent of the Poor Sisters of Saint Clare was founded in Cook Street. Persecution forced the nuns to leave Dublin until they returned in 1712 to North Brunswick Street. In 1804, the Sisters acquired a building in Harold's Cross and established an orphanage which operated until 1981. The nuns also provided education for those in their care and St. Clare's Convent and Primary School, the oldest existing Catholic school in the Archdiocese, remain active.

6 QUAKER HOUSE

A community of Quakers lived in Harold's Cross during the 19th century, operating cotton, paper and flour mills as well as orphanages. Richard Allen, a Quaker philanthropist and slave abolitionist, was born in 1803 at 201 Harold's Cross Road. This red brick building dates from 1750. From 1870 until the 1930s, it was used as an orphanage.

7 OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY CHURCH

The church was built in 1938 on the lands of Mount Harold House, replacing a temporary tin church erected earlier when the parish was first formed. The original floor tiles of the house can still be seen on the chapel floor. The ornate stained-glass window over the main altar, depicting Our Lady of the Rosary, was installed in 2000.

10 MOUNT ARGUS CHURCH

Mount Argus was purchased by the Passionist Order in 1856. By 1878, a monastery and today's church had been built. James Pearse, father of Patrick and Willie, was a stonemason for the church. Both sons came here for confession on the day of the Easter Rising 1916. Members of the 4th Battalion of the Irish Volunteers, based at Count Plunkett's estate in nearby Larkfield, also came to pray here before the Rising. The church houses the shrine of Saint Charles who lived here from 1857 until his death in 1893. Fr. Charles, who was mentioned as a miracle worker in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, was canonised in 2007. Also buried here is Fr. Cuthbert Dunne, who was summoned to Oscar Wilde's deathbed in Paris in November 1900 to convert him to Catholicism. Inside the church there is an altar dedicated to St. Charles and an exhibition on his life and the history of Mount Argus.

11 SITE OF THE GALLOWS

Harold's Cross served as an execution ground from medieval times until the 18th century. While there is some debate as to where exactly the notorious gallows stood, old maps suggest it was located opposite Mount Jerome where Flynn's flower shop and mass card centre are today.

12 RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

The former Church of Ireland church located beside the gates to Mount Jerome Cemetery was constructed in 1838. Since 2003, it serves as the Russian Orthodox Church of Holy Apostles Peter and Paul. The Russian School of Music is located at the rear.

13 MOUNT JEROME CEMETERY

Mount Jerome Cemetery, also mentioned in *Ulysses*, opened in 1836. Over 250,000 burials have taken place and among the many famous people buried here are John Millington Synge, Jack Butler Yeats, Sir William Rowan Hamilton, Thomas Davis, Walter Osborne, Máirtín Ó Cadhain, Audrey Hepburn's father Anthony, & Oscar Wilde's father William. The 47-acre cemetery has a number of Victorian memorials, vaults and crypts as well as a labyrinth of paths. A section is reserved for those of the Muslim faith. The surviving part of Mount Jerome House, mentioned in Wolfe Tone's diaries as a meeting place where the United Irishmen drafted their manifestos, is now used as a Victorian-style tearooms. Since 1984, the cemetery has been owned by the Massey family, who installed the most modern, eco-efficient crematorium in Ireland there in 2000.

14 FORMER BARRACKS & SCHOOLHOUSE

Part of the block now comprising Hall Electrical was the yeomanry barracks from the end of the 18th century and later became the first national school of Harold's Cross.

15 HAROLD'S CROSS PARK & THE CROSS

The site of the park was originally used as commonage around which the village was located. A maypole stood here in medieval times until the 19th century and was a centre for festivities every May. The green was a key meeting place for members of the United Irishmen including Robert Emmet in planning the 1798 rebellion. The green was converted into a park in the 1890s. Designed by William Sheppard (buried in Mount Jerome) who also designed St. Stephen's Green, it now includes many specimen trees, a water feature, a playground and a café. The Celtic cross at the northern end of the park, sculpted by local stonemason, Joseph Courtney, was erected in 1954 to the memory of the volunteers with the 4th Battalion, Dublin Brigade of the old I.R.A. since 1916. The ancient May Festival was revived recently and is now held annually in the park.



8 MOUNT ARGUS PARK

Mount Argus Park is a beautiful park built in the 1990s in conjunction with the nearby housing development. The park and its ponds are home to a selection of wildlife.

9 STONE BOAT

From medieval times, the River Poddle was essential for powering mills and providing drinking water for Dublin city. At Mount Argus Close, the river is divided by a stone structure resembling an upturned boat now reconstructed. The river was split by this so-called 'Tongue' or 'Stone Boat' with one third of the flow supplying the ancient City Watercourse and City Basin and two thirds continuing along the original river bed. The two streams combine to provide water for the moat of Dublin Castle.