



Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath **Dublin City Council** 

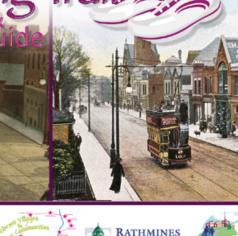


















O'Dea from Rathmines College of Further Education. This Map & Guide was produced by Dublin City Council in partnership with Michael

Angela O'Connell and Michael Foley. Dublin City Library & Archive, National Library of Ireland, Historical Picture Archive, Rathmines, Ranelagh and Rathgar Historical Society, The Rathmines Initiative, Thank you to the following for their contribution to the Rathmines Walking Trail:

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Rathmines and the Rising: People and Places by The Rathmines Initiative. For Jurther reading: Four Roads to Dublin by Deirdre Kelly (The O'Brien Press) and

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

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Rathmines is an anglicisation of the Irish *Ráth Maonais*, meaning the 'fort of Maonas' and most likely derives its name from the Norman de Meones family who settled there in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century this area was part of the ecclesiastical lands called Cualann; there is evidence of a settlement existing here around 1350.

The highly significant Battle of Rathmines was fought on 2nd August 1649 between Colonel Jones' Parliamentarian forces, who held the city, and the Marquis of Ormond and Lord Inchiquin's Royalist coalition army who laid siege to the city. Estimates of lives lost range from 600 to 4,000 and victory for the Parliamentarians was key in allowing Cromwell's invasion force to land unopposed in Dublin two weeks later.

Rathmines remained a rural hinterland until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century when many wealthy families, seeking refuge from the poor living conditions in the city, began to move there. The Rathmines Township was formed by an Act of Parliament in 1847 (later renamed the Rathmines and Rathgar Township as its area expanded) and over the next century, Rathmines developed into one of the most attractive areas in Dublin.

Although the area was strongly Unionist in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Rathmines was the home of many activists - republican, pacifist, suffragist and socialist - and the location of various events during the 1916 Rising, the War of Independence and Irish Civil War.



In 1930, the district of Rathmines and Rathgar became part of the City of Dublin, with its functions taken over by Dublin Corporation. Also around that time, many of the grand townhouses became divided into flats, providing accommodation for vast numbers of workers and students who came to Dublin; this gave rise to the area's national reputation as 'Flatland'. Today, Rathmines is a very cosmopolitan area with a choice of colourful shops, pubs and restaurants. Its many amenities include parks, sports grounds, shopping centre, cinema, library and leisure centre with a swimming pool; these along with a host of local clubs and societies give Rathmines a genuine community feel. All of this contributed to Rathmines being voted '*Ireland's best suburb to live in*' by The Irish Times in 2012.

Over the years Rathmines has been home to a remarkable range of people including painter, Walter Osborne; Hollywood director, Rex Ingram; writer, Lafcadio Hearn; revolutionary, Constance Markiewicz; politician and doctor, Kathleen Lynn; writer, James Joyce and playwright John Milington Synge. In fact, the list is endless as Rathmines has been home to college students from all over Ireland throughout most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Poet, Pearse Hutchinson, who lived most of his life on Rathgar Road would occasionally comment on the attractiveness of the view from Portobello Bridge down Rathmines Road. It is a view that has remained largely unchanged for over a hundred years. The Dublin Hills are a most attractive backdrop to the impressive green dome of Rathmines Parish Church, the distinctive Town Hall clock tower and the imposing Library building directly opposite it.

Rathmines is located south of Dublin city centre and the Grand Canal, between Harold's Cross to the west and Ranelagh to the east. It is served by a number of Dublin Bus routes with Charlemont, Ranelagh and Beechwood LUAS stops all within walking distance. It is about a 20 minute walk from Grafton Street. Welcome to Rathmines! This walking trail takes you from the Grand Canal, through the heart of Rathmines, along elegant streets and past beautiful parks. The trail is about 6.8km in length and walking at a leisurely pace, should take between 90-120 minutes to complete.

#### 1 PORTOBELLO HARBOUR

Portobello Harbour was opened in 1801, becoming an important terminus for barges travelling along the Grand Canal. It was particularly busy during the famine when many people were leaving the midlands to emigrate. The canal and its banks are rich in wildlife and offer wonderful opportunities for boating, walking and cycling. Portobello House, originally the Grand Canal Hotel, was built in 1807. It was later used as an asylum for the blind and also as a hospital.

## 2 ST. MARY'S COLLEGE

St. Mary's College was opened in 1890 by the Holy Ghost Fathers (Spiritans) in a 19<sup>th</sup> century house called 'Larkhill'. This house and several other large houses and their grounds formed the western side of Lower Rathmines Road, contrasting with the terraced houses that formed the eastern side. The college's distinguished association with rugby continues unabated.

## 3 CATHAL BRUGHA BARRACKS

Cathal Brugha Barracks was opened in 1815 and originally named Portobello Barracks. Following the War of Independence, Irish troops took it over on 17<sup>th</sup> May 1922 and it became the National Army's Headquarters under General Michael Collins. In 1952 it was renamed after one of the leaders of the 1916 Rising, Cathal Brugha. Today, it is home to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Eastern Brigade, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion, the Defence Forces School of Music and the Military Archives. Its visitor centre is dedicated to the memory of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, Thomas Dickson and Patrick McIntyre, who were arrested and executed without trial in the adjoining yard in 1916.

## 4 RATHMINES LIBRARY

Rathmines Library was built in 1913 with a grant from Scottish businessman Andrew Carnegie. An example of neo-Georgian Architecture, noteworthy features include a William Morris stained glass window and a teak double staircase. Its lecture hall once hosted talks by W.B. Yeats, Douglas Hyde and F.E. Stephens.

#### 5 LEINSTER ROAD

Originally gated at the Rathmines end, Leinster Road dates from around 1840. Revolutionary, Countess Markiewicz lived at No.49b. The adjoining Leinster Square was once home to author, James Stephens (No.2); nationalist, Charles Gavin Duffy (No.4); telescope manufacturers, Thomas and Howard Grubb (No's.21 and 23); and writer, Lafcadio Hearne, who was also known as Koizumi Yakumo (No.30).

#### 6 ST. LOUIS CONVENT & HIGH SCHOOL

St. Louis Convent School, founded by the Sisters of St. Louis, was opened in 1913 in 'Charleville House', originally the residence of Sir John Grey, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Charleville remains as a convent today whilst a new school was built next door, opening in 1982.



## 7 THE CHAINS & THE SWAN RIVER

Up until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Rathmines village comprised a group of thatched cottages, fenced off from the Swan River by chains on bollards. One of these bollards still remains on the path, a short distance south of the Wynnefield Road/Rathmines Road Lower junction. The cottages were demolished in 1888 and with them went, what is believed to have been, an Irish-speaking community that lived there. Below ground, the Swan River flows parallel to today's main street before turning eastwards at St. Mary's College towards Mount Pleasant Square.

## 8 UPPER RATHMINES ROAD

Rathmines District Post Office and Telephone Exchange was opened in 1935. It was designed by Howard Cooke and is noted for its striking Art Deco design. Rathmines



and Rathgar Musical Society are based at 67-69 Upper Rathmines Road, once a Church of Ireland national school. The site of Wynne's Castle (the 'new' Rathmines Castle, built in 1820) has been occupied by The Church of Ireland Teacher Training College since 1969. Tranquilla Park is a small park, named after the convent founded by the Carmelite Sisters in 1833 which was once located nearby.

# 9 TRINITY HALL

The present Trinity Hall came into Trinity College's ownership in 1908 and accommodates over 1,000 students. The Trinity College Botanic Gardens relocated here from Ballsbridge in the 1960s and is used for research projects and plant conservation. A tram route linking O'Connell Street and Palmerston Park existed from 1879 to 1939; the tramway sheds can still be seen further along on Darty Road, at the junction with Orwell Park.

## 10 PALMERSTON PARK

An oasis of tranquility, the crescent-shaped Palmerston Park was designed by William Sheppard in 1892. It still retains many of its original late Victorian features. It was, allegedly, the site of 'Old Rathmines Castle', although no trace of it survives today. Physicist, George Johnstone Stoney, who is best remembered in science for introducing the term 'electron', once lived at both No.3 and No.9 Palmerston Park.

#### (11) PALMERSTON ROAD

Palmerston Road was named after Henry John Temple, 3<sup>rd</sup> Viscount Palmerston, who served twice as British Prime Minister in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. This elegant road has been home to many famous residents including writer, Donagh McDonagh; author, Mervyn Wall; nine times Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alfie Byrne; former Taoiseach, Sean

Lemass; another former Taoiseach, Garret Fitzgerald and Florence Stoker, wife of Bram Stoker. The Battle of Rathmines is thought to have taken place at an area known as the 'Bloody Fields', situated on the land surrounding the Mageough Home on Cowper Road. No.'s 6-13 Belgrave Road were once residences for many revolutionaries including Madeleine ffrench-Mullen, Dr. Kathleen Lynn, Helena Molony and Thomas Dillon who were all involved in the 1916 Easter Rising.

## 12 BELGRAVE SQUARE

The development of Belgrave Square dates largely from the 1860's. The park was privately owned until the 1970s when it was acquired by Dublin Corporation and today it is a wonderful amenity to be enjoyed by all. William Osborne, the great painter of animals, lived at No.5 Castlewood Avenue. His son, Walter Osborne was born there in 1859 and he would become a wellknown impressionist painter. James Joyce spent some of his childhood years at No.23 Castlewood Avenue.

## 13 RATHMINES TOWN HALL

Designed by the Irish architect Sir Thomas Drew, Rathmines Town Hall was completed in 1896/97. Its most striking feature, the clock, was made by Chancellor and Son. Prior to electrification, its four faces often disagreed with each other, giving it the nickname, 'the four-faced liar'. Its hall has hosted many events over the years. Those who have graced its stage include Percy French, W.B. Yeats, Lennox Robinson, Liam O'Flaherty, Hanna Sheehy Skeffington and Marconi. It now houses Rathmines College of Further Education.

#### 14 OBSERVATORY LANE

In the 1860's the Grubb Telescope Company was built at Observatory Lane by Thomas Grubb. World famous, it produced, what was then the largest refracting telescope in the world for the Imperial and Royal Observatory in Vienna. Grubb telescopes are still in use around the world, including those at Armagh

and Dunsink Observatories. The nearby Leinster Sports Complex is home to Leinster Cricket Club which was founded in 1852.



The Church of Mary Immaculate, Refuge of Sinners, Rathmines Parish Church, was completed in 1856 with the magnificent portico added in 1878. In 1920, a fire in the electrical system engulfed the church and the dome collapsed. The outstanding feature of the reconstructed church is the new copper dome built in Glasgow and originally destined for an orthodox church in Russia prior to the Revolution of 1917. Another notable feature is the number 77 cut into the stonework of the external wall on the eastern side of the church by a bricklayer in 1923. It was put there in protest at the 77 executions authorised by the Government during the Civil War.