

Stop 4

Aviemore House

Teach na hAghaidhe Móire

Aviemore House is one of the most imposing residences in Monaghan both from an architectural point of view and as a result of its positioning on Hill Street. It was formerly the Townhouse of Dacre Hamilton, a land agent for several land-owners around Monaghan Town. At one time this site was proposed for the Cathedral.

Stop 5

Monaghan County Museum

Iarsmalann an Chontae

Monaghan County Museum opened its doors to the public in 1974 becoming the first local authority funded museum in the Republic of Ireland. The Museum has been widely acclaimed for its commitment in displaying Monaghan's rich culture and heritage and there are over 70,000 artefacts in the collection - the most famous of which is possibly the Cross of Clogher. The Museum was originally housed in the Courthouse in the centre of town. However, following a fire which gutted the building in 1981 the collection was rescued and moved to the Christian Brothers Secondary School where it was temporarily stored and a limited display was continued until the move to Hill Street in August 1986. The Gallery held temporary displays until the fully refurbished museum was opened in June 1990 by Dr Patrick Hillery, then President of Ireland. The building was originally two large town houses built around 1860 and is unusual in that it has two front doors. However, it underwent extensive reconstruction and now offers a unique experience to all visitors as they explore the history of the county in the permanent exhibition galleries.

Stop 6

Market House

Teach an Mhargaidh

The Market House was built in 1792 from designs by Samuel Hayes. It is one of the most delicate and elegant buildings of Ulster with fine carving and stonework and is built of local grey limestone. At the western end, the pediment contains a carved Cunningham (later Rossmore) coat of arms. The building has recently been renovated and is now a dedicated arts space which hosts exhibitions, musical performances, readings and workshops.

Stop 7

Canal Walk

Síúlán na Canálach

This lovely walkway along the disused Ulster Canal is an ideal place from which to view the old Canal Stores which are located in the grounds of the St Louis Convent complex. The Ulster Canal reached Monaghan in 1838 and the Ulster Railway (later GNR) two decades later. However, the canal was never a success. A poor water supply, inappropriately sized locks and the arrival of rail and road transport meant that the anticipated traffic failed to develop and it was eventually abandoned in 1931.

Stop 8

Old Cross Square

Cearnóg na Croise Airde

Old Cross Square is named after the Old Cross which stands there, but which originally stood in the Diamond. It is the oldest monument in the town, but was moved from the Diamond to its present location c.1870 to be replaced by the Rossmore monument. The origins of the Old Cross are unclear - speculation suggests that it may have been a seventeenth century sundial. From here, you can see the spire of St Macartan's Cathedral. Designed by the architect JJ McCarthy in the late 14th century style, the entire work took some 30 years to complete and the Cathedral was dedicated on 21st August 1892. The Presbyterian Church in Old Cross Square dates from 1824 and was extended in 1901. It was intended to have a tall slender spire and so it is really incomplete. There was a previous church on the site and this was retained as a lower level Church Hall. In making your way up Dublin Street to the next stop, please take note of no. 10 Dublin Street which was the birthplace of one of Monaghan's most famous sons, Charles Gavan Duffy, in 1816. He was one of the founders of the Young Ireland Movement.

Stop 9

Peter's Lake

Loch Pheadair

This wonderful amenity which faces towards old town, is a much loved local landmark. An old superstition in Monaghan warned that the town would be destroyed by an earthquake whenever St Patrick's Day would fall on a Monday and that the town would be submerged between the two lakes, Peter's Lake and the Convent Lake. The last occasion on which people were reported to have been frightened by this superstitious prophesy, and didn't come to the town market which always occurred on a Monday, was on 17th March 1862.

Stop 10

Old Railway Station

An Sean-Stáisiún Traenach

The old railway station on the North Road was built in 1860. It was probably designed by Sir John McNeill with some later adaptations by William Murray. It is a long building of 23 bays, the central 5 of which are broken forward with the centre 3 acting as the entrance. These are surmounted by a shallow pediment. A famed station-master, posted here during the 1920's, was reprimanded on one occasion for not making 'financial returns' from the public toilets at the station. He wrote back to the authorities stating 'that the inhabitants of Monaghan had been afflicted by a severe outbreak of constipation'. The branch line closed down in 1957 and this had a devastating impact on the town. The building is now used for a mixture of commercial activities.



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Monaghan TOWN TRAIL

Turas Mhuineacháin

The earliest map of Monaghan, the county town, dates from 1590 and shows only 'the abbie of Mounachin' and the 'McMahons House in the Loughe of Mounachin'. The Franciscan Abbey, erected c.1462, was in the centre of what is the present town, while McMahon's crannóg was on the Convent Lake. From 1513 to 1589 it was the headquarters of chiefs of the McMahons, whose power was eventually broken by the English in the late 16th/early 17th century.

For the next two centuries Monaghan was basically a Presbyterian town and a colonial centre of commerce and local government with the Blayneys and Rossmores as the main ruling classes during all that period. Many of Monaghan's finest buildings date from the 18th and 19th centuries and some of these feature in the Monaghan Town Trail. Today, Monaghan is a busy market town with a rich architectural heritage.

A Podcast of the tour can be downloaded from
www.monaghantourism.com

Monaghan

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Stop 1

Rossmore Monument

Leacht Rossmore

The first stop is the beautiful Victorian fountain located in the Diamond which is known locally as the Rossmore Memorial. There are eight columns around the fountain, each with a letter on top which together spell the name Rossmore. The Memorial commemorates Henry Robert Westenra, fourth Baron Rossmore who died as a result of a hunting accident in Windsor Castle in 1874 aged 23.

Stop 2

St Patrick's Church of Ireland

Eaglais Naomh Pádraig (Eaglais na hÉireann)

This church was built in 1831 by the diocesan architect, William Farrell. It is in the regency gothic style and is a fine building with a needle spire, tall lancet windows and pinnacles along its length. The interior of the church, which can be viewed by appointment only, is very ornate and is galleried on three sides. There are over forty memorial tablets and inscriptions to local families like the Rossmores and the Lloyds. The Telford Organ is also worth seeing and an interesting story attached to the church is that Bram Stoker, the author of Dracula, got inspiration for his famous novel after seeing the carved tablet 'The Parting Glance' on a visit to Monaghan.

Stop 3

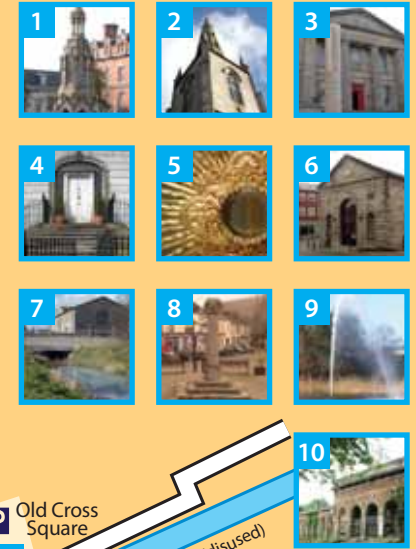
The Courthouse

Teach na Cúirte

The Courthouse was built in the classical style in 1830 to designs by Joseph Welland. Distinctive features of the building include the very large stone blocks which were taken from a local quarry and the Hannoverian Royal Arms on the pediment. The Court House was actually built on the site of an old jail. The old jail had been nicknamed "Johnny Short's Hotel" by the novelist William Carleton in his novel "The Fair of Emyvale". Short was the prison governor and had a unique arrangement with his inmates - he would let out the thieves and pick-pockets on fair days when the rich farmers were all in town, on condition that they shared the spoils with him on their return - an arrangement which apparently worked quite well. Directly in front of the Court House is a memorial to the victims of the 1973 Monaghan bombings. It bears the names of the people killed that day. Looking out into the square to the left of the beautiful Bank of Ireland you will see an obelisk. This is a memorial to Colonel Dawson, a local landowner killed in the Crimean War at the Battle of Inkerman. The obelisk was designed by WJ Barre of Newry.



Visual Key to Town Trail



Beech Hill Collage