

Walking Tour of Carlow Town

Discover the history of Carlow in a one hour self-guided tour assisted by identifiable finger signposts and large map boards

1 The Liberty Tree commemorates those who were killed in the 1798 insurrection in Carlow and who lie interred in the nearby Croppies Grave. It was designed by John Behan who has skilfully created a fine memorial and an ambience around which people gather to relax. **Continue along Kennedy Avenue.**

2 Deighton Hall Up until the early 1830s this building functioned as the County Courthouse and seat of the Grand Jury (forerunner of the County Council). The prisoner holding cells were located in the basement with direct access to the courtroom. In 1909 businessman Joseph C. Deighton handed this building over to St. Mary's Parish to use as the Parochial Hall. **Continue along Kennedy Street to Carlow Castle.**

3 Carlow Castle, now a ruin stands on the eastern bank of the River Barrow. It is thought to have been built by William de Marshal, Earl of Pembroke and Lord of Leinster between 1207 and 1213. Originally the castle was a rectangular block, containing the castle's principle rooms protected by cylindrical towers at its corners. Today, two battered towers and part of an intervening wall are all that remain after a local physician tried to remodel it as an asylum in 1814. In an effort to demolish the interior he placed explosive charges at its base and knocked all but the west wall and towers. **Continue westwards to the River Barrow.**

4 Graiguecullen/Wellington Bridge There is much speculation of when and how many bridges were built before this present bridge was constructed in 1815. The four arched bridge was named in honour of the Irishman, the Duke of Wellington who had defeated Napoleon's army at the famous Battle of Waterloo. The bridge is more commonly referred to by the local population as Graiguecullen bridge, which incidentally, for

boats, is the lowest bridge on the River Barrow. **Continue straight through the traffic lights at Graiguecullen/Wellington Bridge.**

5 St. Clare's Roman Catholic Church (on the left hand side) was originally built in 1852 as St. Anne's Church of Ireland Church on the Athy Road in Carlow Town. In 1927 after a period of disuse, the church was sold to the Catholic Parish of Graiguecullen and stone by stone was brought across the River Barrow and rebuilt by local company Thomas Thompson. **Turn left at the traffic lights into Chapel Street. Turn right at the end of the street, into 98th Street. The Croppies Grave is on the left hand side.**

6 The Croppies Grave A handsome monument rises above the site of an old sand pit where in the aftermath of the disastrous rising of the United Irishmen in 1798, the bodies of slaughtered Carlow insurgents were thrown and covered in quicklime in a mass grave. The Croppies was the name given to the United Irishmen after the habit of cropping their hair to mark their allegiance. **Proceed to the Town Park.**

7 Carlow Town Park A fine attraction for all the family, this 12.8 acre site on the banks of the River Barrow has been completed to the highest standards with a safe and secure children's playground. The children's play area is open daily 8 a.m. – 8.30 p.m. during the summer months and 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. daily for the rest of the year. **Cross the Millennium (Jimmy Murnane) Bridge over the River Barrow in the Town Park, go through the car park into Haymarket.**

8 On the north side of the Haymarket is the Town Hall designed by the Church architect William Hague in 1884 and opened in March 1886 by Carlow Town Commissioners. **Cross the Haymarket area to St. Mary's Church.**

9 St. Mary's Church of Ireland is located in an area of long standing religious importance. In the sixth century St. Croneybeg had her religious cell located in this general area. This church dates from 1727, though the tower and spire, reaching 195 feet were added in 1834. The interior retains its traditional galleries. There are also several monuments including some by Sir Richard Morrison, the important neo-classical architect. **Turn right at gate, left into Castle Hill and left into Dublin Street in the direction of the Courthouse.**

10 The Assembly Rooms In 1899 well known literary figure George Bernard Shaw inherited this property from his uncle, Walter Gurl. It is thought that the Assembly Rooms were built in 1794 and were used by the nobility and gentry of the county to host dinners, balls and musical performances. In 1918 George Bernard Shaw offered Dr. Foley, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin and Chairman of the County Carlow Technical Institute Committee, the building as a school, which opened in 1923. The building is now owned by Carlow County Council and re-opened in 2005 after renovation. **Continue straight on to the Courthouse from Dublin Street.**

11 Carlow Courthouse Noted architect William Morrison designed this building in the late 1820s. It is one of Ireland's finest examples of ancient Greek revivalist architecture. The Courthouse, based on the Temple of Lissus in Athens, gives the impression of a temple set on a high plinth, but this obscures the fact that the basement is a maze of cells and dungeons. A cannon from the Crimean War stands on the steps. **Walk south-east down College Street to Carlow College.**

12 Carlow College. Built before the French Revolution, Carlow College is one of Ireland's oldest educational institutions. The college first opened its doors to students five years before the Irish rebellion of 1798. Originally founded as a lay college, Carlow functioned as a college of the humanities and a seminary from 1793 to 1892. From 1892 until 1989 it was principally a seminary for the education of priests. During its 200 year old history Carlow College has educated generations of politicians, priests, poets and leaders in the public life of their day. **The new VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art and George Bernard Shaw Theatre is situated in the grounds of Carlow College.**

13 Carlow Cathedral – located immediately beside Carlow College. The Cathedral, started in 1828 and completed in 1833, at a cost of £9,000, was the brainchild of the energetic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, James Doyle – J.K.L., the prominent champion of Catholic emancipation. The design of the Cathedral is attributed largely to Thomas Cobden, who drew his inspiration for the Carlow building from European models, particularly the Belfroi tower in Bruges, Belgium. This is the cathedral for the Catholic Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin and is known officially as the Cathedral of the Assumption.

14 Tourist Office. Visit our state-of-the-art tourist office located beside the Cathedral where you will receive information on all local attractions and events, as well as a copy of our county promotional brochure and a comprehensive range of guidebooks. Local amenities include
15. Tullow Street
16. Oak Park Forest Park
17. Railway Station
18. Garda Station
19. Post Office
20. Carlow Bus Park