

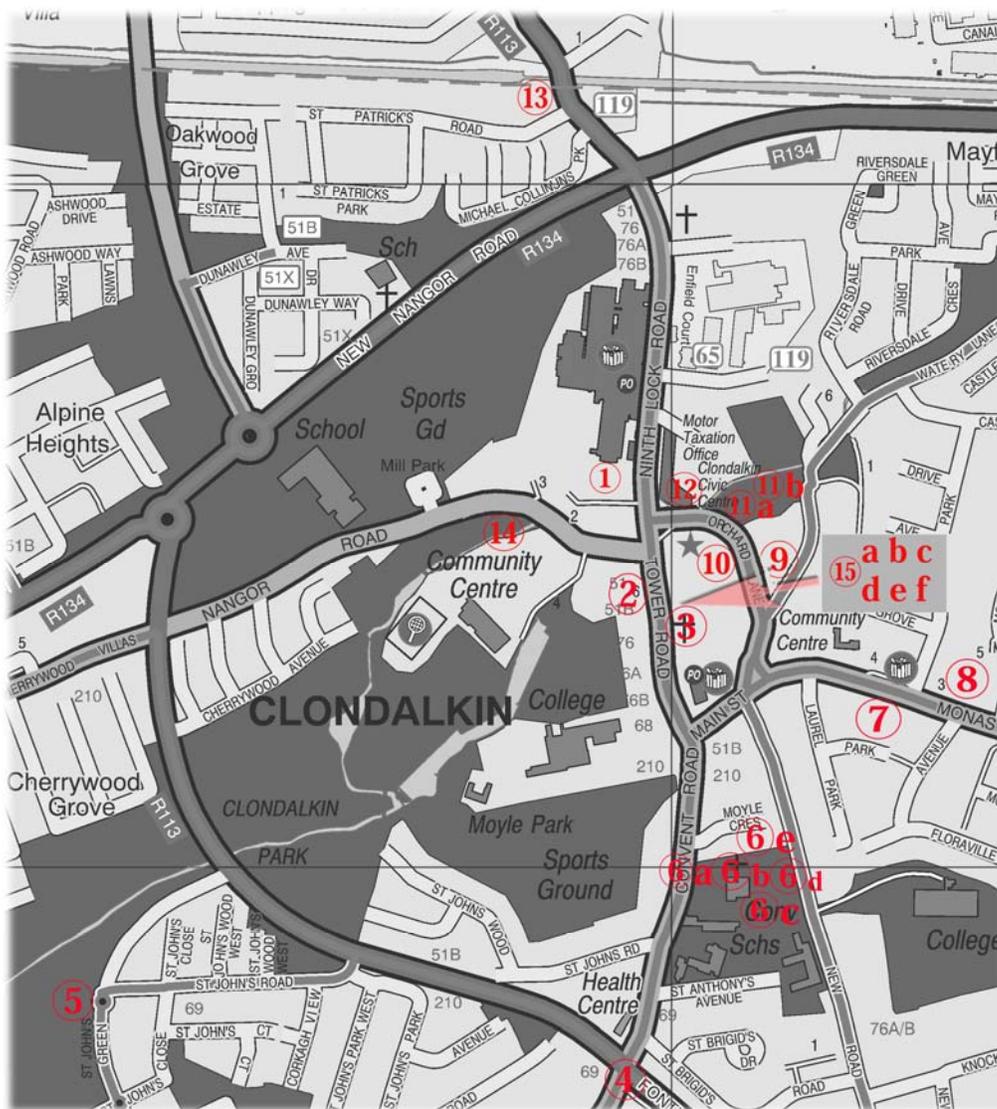
## Walking Tour:

This walk commences at the Mill Centre shopping centre. Please use pedestrian crossings and apply the Safe Cross code when crossing roads.

Distance: Approximately 4km (Long version) 1 km (Short version)

Duration: Stops 13 and 5 may be omitted if you wish to concentrate on the village The walk can be completed in approximately 30 minutes (short walk) or 1.5 hours (long walk).

Taking in the Mill Centre, round tower, village churches, St. Brigid's well, Tully's Castle and the Presentation Convent among other sites of interest.



## Getting There

### Dublin Bus:

- 210 (Tallaght - Liffey Valley Centre)
- 51D Hawkins St./Waterloo Rd. - Clondalkin
- 68 (Hawkins St. - Newcastle)
- 69 (Hawkins St. - Rathcoole)
- 76 Blanchardstown / Ballyfermot - Fettercairn
- 76B Blanchardstown / Ballyfermot - Tallaght (The Square)

Infrequent Services have been omitted from this listing.

### By Car:

Clondalkin is signposted from the M50 and N7 and N4 roads. There is ample free parking in the Mill Centre which has a well-stocked supermarket and many smaller shops. It is also conveniently located for the start of this walk.



The Mill Shopping Centre (1) is located on the site of the former Clondalkin Paper Mills. The first paper mill on this site was erected in the early 1800s. By 1982 it was the last

remaining paper mill in the State. For decades, the mill was beset by industrial disputes between the workforce (which principally consisted of local residents) and the management. It culminated in a workers' occupation to stop its closure. This lasted a year, followed by a hunger strike by two workers, Dáil debates and marches in the City Centre. The mills reopened temporarily as Leinster Paper Mills, and in 1987 they closed for good after a long and protracted struggle to stay open. The Round Tower is visible from the Mill Centre car park. Head in the direction of the tower.



## 2. Round Tower

The outstanding ancient feature of Clondalkin village is its Round Tower. Built around 790 A.D. It is constructed of rough calp limestone with door and window openings framed with granite erratics. The tower may have been built to house the relics of St. Mochua or Crónán, who founded the monastery of Clondalkin in the late 5th Century. It is now accepted that one of the the main functions of a round tower was the safety and veneration of the relics of the monastery's founder.

The height of the tower is calculated at 27.5m and the circumference immediately above the buttress is 12.7m. This makes it the most slender of the remaining measurable examples. The circumference ranges between 15 and 17 metres . The

door is 4.20m above the pavement. An unusual feature is the offset around the base of the tower which is 1m thick and up which a flight of stone steps ascends to the door. This appears on all known views of the tower and dates back to at least 1727. This combined with the fact that it is almost cylindrical gives it the appearance of a rocket about to take off.

## 3. Church Terrace and the old Schoolhouse

On the opposite side of the road from the round tower are the old schoolhouse and Church Terrace. The schoolhouse was built in 1870. The houses were built in 1879 in memory of a former incumbent, Rev. David John Reade. The houses were also known as



the Alms Houses. The Alms Houses were opened and in partial use by 1880 and contained four houses with eleven rooms together with one large room to be used as a classroom. Proceed along Tower Road and Convent Road until you reach a crossroads. Here will be seen St. Brigid's Well.

#### 4. St. Brigid's Well



Legend has it that St. Brigid came to the site of the monastery at Clondalkin and baptised pagans at the well on Boot Road. The structure around it dates from 1761. The original railings were donated by the workers in the Paper Mills in the 1940s and the statue was given by Mary O'Toole. About this time there were processions to

the well on the 1st February each year, the feast day of St. Bridget. The well is believed to have curative powers. A piece of rag dipped in the water and used to wipe the face, particularly of young girls, was said to cure eye complaints. After use the rag would be hung on an adjoining tree. The well was restored by South Dublin County Council in 1995. Facing back down the road you've just walked, it is possible to reach Corkagh Park by heading left at this point and taking the first left down St. John's Road. Corkagh Park merits a walk all of its own which is available on Source as an audio walk.

#### 5. Corkagh Park

Dublin County Council purchased the lands at Corkagh from Sir John Galvin in 1983 and designated it as a Regional Park which was officially opened to the public on Sunday 15th June 1986. Since the division of the County, the Parks Department of South Dublin County Council has continued to develop the Park. In particular they have improved the water features which now include "Put and Take" fishing lakes (fish are stocked regularly



and must be released when caught), and a large wetland area.

South Dublin County Council has also opened the Camac Valley Tourist Camping and Caravan Park on the grounds of Corkagh. Camac Valley has won many Business and Caravanning Awards.

Proceed back to St. Brigid's Well and left back towards the round tower. On your right-hand side you will see the grounds of the Church of the Immaculate Conception.

#### 6a. Church of the Immaculate Conception



On Sunday 8th March 1857 the Parish Priest Fr. Moore held a parochial meeting in the Chapel House. He proposed the erection of a new church. It is recorded that his suggestion was responded to "in a manner unprecedented in the Annals of Chapel building in Ireland". Certainly a large sum of

money was pledged with many parishioners subscribing £50 to £100 each.

The church was designed by F. W. Caldbeck in the Gothic style and the foundation stone was laid on Sunday 5th July 1857 by His Grace the Most Rev. Paul Cullen, Archbishop of Dublin. In a container placed under the stone were coins of Pope Pius IX and of Queen Victoria, along with an inscribed parchment. Enter the church if possible...

## 6b. Stained Glass Windows



An unusual feature of this church is the beautiful stained glass window over the High Altar. This window was designed by Thomas Early and installed in 1857. Rather than depict a biblical scene, Early decided to honour the Patron Saints of the Parish and of the Catholic Church. Starting from the left we see St. Laurence O' Toole, Patron of the Dublin Diocese; the Immaculate Conception, patron of the parish; St. Joseph, patron of the universal church and St. Patrick, patron of Ireland.

## 6c. Presentation Convent

Exit the church and you will see the Presentation Convent.

With A legacy left to him by Ann Francis Caldbeck, the local Priest, Fr. John Moore built a convent in the Gothic style. On 8th September 1857, Presentation Nuns arrived in Clondalkin and opened a school for girls. In 1863 the Church of the Immaculate Conception was opened beside the convent.



## 6d. Archway over entrance to Church



In 1891 this ornamental archway was erected at the New Road entrance to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Fr. John Moore, the Parish Priest responsible for the building of the church.

Head back towards the Round Tower and veer right along Main Street. On the right-hand side will be seen Tully's Castle (7).

This is a small 16th Century tower house, possibly one of the outposts of the Pale. Its origins are mostly undocumented, however the "Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland 1899" gives the following information:



*The name "Castle of Clondalkin" is applied to Tully's Castle in a number of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century leases, which deal with a place called "The Sheepus". The Castle was occupied for many years by a family named Tully. [...] Since 1761 there has been no great change in [its] appearance. The Sheepus in these leases is referred to as ... "nearly adjoining the Castle of Clondalkin".*

Look across the road, and a handsome redbrick and granite building, Clondalkin Library (8), will be seen.

The library was built in 1912, to a design by TJ Byrne, with the assistance of the Carnegie Trust. As well as being a library it served as a meeting venue for the Clondalkin area. In 1970 Dublin County Council refurbished the building opened it as a fulltime library.



Head back now towards the tower, past the small shopping centre and turn right down Orchard Lane. On the right, behind a row of trees is Áras Chrónáin (9) formerly known as Orchard House, from which the road you're on derives its name. In May 1989 Muintir Chrónáin purchased Orchard House, renaming it Áras Cronáin and opened it as a cultural and heritage centre.

Orchard Lane itself (10) is worthy of mention here as the layout of the street is a remnant of the outline of the original monastic enclosure. On Orchard Road the level of the gardens is above the level of the road reflecting the fosse or protective bank and ditch which surrounded the monastery site.

Continuing towards the Mill Centre again, on the right is a large steel monolith in front of the redbrick Civic Centre called Blip (11a), by Corban Walker. Blip is a sculpture consisting of four upright stainless steel elements. Its composition relates successfully to the adjacent river Camac, and the LED lights incorporated in the top panel of two of its elements add an interesting

optical play to the work. The work was carried out under South Dublin County Council's successful public art programme, IN CONTEXT.

## 11b. The Camac River

The Camac River flows past the Civic Centre in Clondalkin. This little river was the source of power for Clondalkin's industrialisation in the 18th and 19th centuries. Over the years the river has powered many mills including gunpowder mills at Kilmatead near Corkagh and at Moyle Park and the original Clondalkin paper mill. One element of Blip is incorporated into the bed of the river.

## 12. The Civic Centre

In 1994, South Dublin County Council was formed from Dublin County Council. One aim of this local government reorganisation was to bring local democracy and local authority services closer to the people. The Clondalkin



area has benefited from this change with the opening of the Civic Centre which provides access to the services of South Dublin County Council. Nearby are the motor tax office and the office of the Department of the Department of Social and Family Affairs.

From the civic centre you can proceed right for the longer walk (about 15 minutes extra) and see the Grand Canal (13) as it (slowly) flows through the outskirts of Clondalkin.

Construction of the Grand Canal commenced in 1756 at the 11th lock in Clondalkin. In 1779, twelve miles of the canal were officially opened to traffic. The first barge was owned by Thomas Digby Brooks and plied the route

between Dublin, Clondalkin, Gollierstown and Ballyhealy. The Clondalkin stretch of the canal was the scene of a tragedy in December 1792 when eleven people drowned following the sinking of an overcrowded barge. Passenger traffic was carried until 1847 when the railway was introduced. Cargo traffic was carried until 1960 when the last barge made its final journey with a cargo of Guinness destined for Limerick.



Head back past the Mill Centre and turn right at the Nangor Road. An unassuming grey building to your left is a former R.I.C. Barracks (14). It is now in private ownership.

About turn here, exiting Nangor Road and turn right. Across the road is St. John's Church (15a)

The present St. John's Church was opened in 1789 and was refurbished in 1834 to give the form we see today. The medieval church which was most likely built in the 13th Century was demolished in 1787 to allow work to commence on the building of the new church.



The site contains many interesting artefacts:

15b. Remains of an earlier church



15c. Large Stone Cross

This large granite cross may be a boundary marker for the Barony of Uppercross where Clondalkin is located or it may possibly have been erected as a grave marker.



#### 15d. Small Stone Cross



This small cross is decorated with a ringed cross in relief on one face and a Latin cross in relief on the other. There is a square tenon at the bottom to secure it in a base.

#### 15e. Tombstones of Catholic Priests

An interesting feature of the graveyard is the tombstones of two Catholic priests located along the back wall. St. John's graveyard was the village graveyard where burials from all denominations occurred over a long period.



#### 15f. Baptismal Font

This large font is carved from a granite erratic.



