



Limavady
Heritage Trail

Limavady Workhouse

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Newtownlimavady Workhouse opened on 15th March 1842 and admitted its first inmate on the same day.

Workhouses were built all over Ireland in response to the Irish Poor Law Act of 1838. The workhouse system aimed to force the lazy and idle into work, even when there was no work to be found. Help was only given to people who entered the workhouse, where conditions were deliberately hard so people were not encouraged to stay.

Irish workhouses were built to standard plans by architect George Wilkinson, who had designed several English workhouses. Limavady is one of the best preserved workhouses in Ireland and is a good example of a medium sized workhouse, designed to hold 600 inmates (though this almost doubled during the height of the Famine).

Limavady Workhouse closed its doors to the poor in 1930, and the last twenty healthy inmates were transferred to the Coleraine Workhouse. Thirty patients remained in the old Infirmary until 1932 while the workhouse was converted into a District Hospital. Roe Valley District Hospital opened in 1937 and continued to serve the local community until 1997.

The building has now been restored by Limavady Community Development Initiative (LCDI). Visitors can see the original gatehouse and one of the dormitories, and can access some of the fascinating archive salvaged by LCDI.

PERIOD
C19th/C20th

GRID REFERENCE
C6765 2278

TOWNLAND
Rathbrady More

ACCESS
Guided tours of the Workhouse are available by appointment

Please telephone LCDI on (028) 7776 9160



The Pauper's Graveyard

A long thin plot of land adjacent to the workhouse served as its third graveyard between 1841 and 1931. It was placed as far as possible from the main workhouse buildings for fear of cholera and other infectious diseases spreading to the other inmates.

Many of those buried in this plot were victims of the Famine. A memorial plaque has been erected in the centre of the graveyard and each year holds a memorial service for those who died in the workhouse and were buried here.

PERIOD
C19th/C20th

GRID REFERENCE
C6774 2299

TOWNLAND
Rathbrady More

ACCESS
Public access from Scroggy Road



The Blind Fiddler

The most renowned resident of Limavady Workhouse was Blind Jimmy McCurry, also known as 'The Blind Fiddler from Myroe'.

Born in 1830, Jimmy often played his fiddle outside the Burns and Laird Shipping Offices in Limavady on market days. It is said that one day in 1851, Jane Ross, who lived opposite the Shipping Offices heard Jimmy playing. Taken by the haunting melody, Jane asked him to play it over and over until she had written down every note.

This tune is recognised the world over as *The Londonderry Air*.

Sadly, Jimmy's health deteriorated and he spent his last days at Limavady Workhouse. He was buried in an unmarked grave at Tamlaghtfinlagan Parish Church, Ballykelly.

In 1910 an English lawyer by the name of Fred Weatherly put words to the tune that Jimmy McCurry had played for Jane Ross. The song was called *Danny Boy*.

Jimmy received one florin for his tune.

Limavady's Path Through History

Below is a timeline showing Limavady Heritage Trail sites in their historical context. Those featured in this guide are highlighted.

BC	C1st	C5th	C7/8th	C12th	C13th	C17th
CARNABANE TOMB 4500-2500BC	DRUMCEATT ASSEMBLY SITE C1st	BLACK FORT C5th/C12th WHITE FORT C5th/C12th KING'S FORT C5th/C12th	TANDRAGEE FORT C5th/C12th ROUGH FORT C5th/C12th TAMMARIN FORT C7th/C8th	BANAGHER OLD CHURCH C12th BOVEVAGH CHURCH C12th DUNGIVEN PRIORY C12th	ST AIDAN'S CHURCH C13th	DUNGIVEN CASTLE C17th/C19th
AUGHLISH STONE CIRCLE 2500BC						
BROUGHTER HOARD FIND SPOT C1st/BC						
C18th	C19th					
DRUMSURN OLD CHAPEL C18th BALLYDONEGAN SWEATHOUSE C18th DRUMCOVITT HOUSE C18th TANNYPANNY CHURCH C18th	THE RHELICK, KILLEEN C19th LARGY BRIDGE C19th LIMAVADY WORKHOUSE C19th PAUPER'S GRAVEYARD C19th BALLYKELLY OS BASE TOWER C19th MAGILLIGAN MARTELLO TOWER C19th SAMPSON'S TOWER C19th LOUGHERY'S SCUTCHING MILL C19th KILHOYLE LIME WORKS C19th GALVIN SCHOOL C19th RITTER'S GENERATOR C19th CARRICK MILLS C19th					
C19th	C20th	WW2				
LARGY SCHOOL C19th LARGY POET'S HOUSE C19th LARGY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH C19th LIMAVADY JUNCTION C19th DRUMSURN RAILWAY STATION C19th MAGILLIGAN RAILWAY STATION C19th BELLARENA RAILWAY STATION C19th OS MARK MAGILLIGAN C19th OS MARK BENBRADAGH C19th ST MATTHEW'S GRAVEYARD DRUMSURN C20th LARGY ORANGE HALL C20th LARGY PILLARS C20th AGHANLOO AIRFIELD WW2 BALLYKELLY AIRFIELD WW2						

For more information please contact:

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The Causeway Museum Service represents a partnership between the four local authorities of Coleraine, Ballymoney, Limavady and Moylis. This project is part of a three year community outreach programme supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.



Causeway
Museum Service



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