

AskAboutIreland.ie and the Cultural Heritage Project is an initiative of public libraries, local museums and archives and is managed by Libraries Development (LGMA). See further details at [askaboutireland.ie](http://askaboutireland.ie). It involves the digitisation and online publication of original, unusual and unique material from local studies' collections around the country. This cultural resource is constantly growing but it is also just a sample of what is available. The flier highlights some of the material relating to Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, selected by dlr Local Studies Librarian Nigel Curtin.

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Photo of Ribwortth taken by Paula O'Regan, included in section on Selected Wild Flowers of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown.

The Library service of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown has contributed to the AskAboutIreland website over many years. It is a resource on the history of the locality aimed at both primary students and the general interest historian. Subjects for primary students come in five broad categories: Aspects of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Baths and Bathing, Larkin's Forge, Martello Towers and Rathdown Slabs.

## 1. Aspects of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown is located between the Dublin/Wicklow mountains on the East coast of Ireland. Its motto is, appropriately, *Ó Chuan go Sliabh* which means 'From the Harbour to the Mountain'. It is an area rich in history and in geographical features. In this section, the reader will find out more about the Great Outdoors in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown with its many parks at Killiney, Cabinteely and the People's Park. It also gives an introduction to amenities such as playgrounds, Booterstown Salt Marsh and popular sculptures in the area.

<https://bit.ly/2WpFXPe>



## 2. Baths and Bathing

Bathing, or swimming is an important part of the enjoyment of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown because of its coastal situation and records exist from the middle of the 18th century in this area. Many special bathing areas were developed in the past at Blackrock, Dún Laoghaire, Salthill and Seapoint. Some beaches still retain popular natural bathing areas such as at Seapoint, Killiney and Sandycove. Blackrock became well known as a centre for competitions in diving and swimming featuring national diving champions such as Eddie Heron, Danno O'Brien and Val Demery.

<https://bit.ly/38c69SL>



## 3. Larkin's Forge, at Baker's Corner, Deansgrange

A forge at Baker's Corner was an important landmark in times gone by. The Larkin family lived and worked there for more than six generations from 1847 to 1997. The first documented evidence of the Larkin family is found in the Post Office Directory of 1847. In this, Michael Larkin is registered as 'smith and farrier, Kill'. The forge had a distinctive horseshoe-shaped doorway like many forges around the country. This advertised its business to everyone when people used horses to travel around and to farm their fields. Find out more about life at the forge and the work of the local blacksmith.

<https://bit.ly/37swDAA>



Swimmers at Blackrock Baths, see section on Baths and Bathing.



#### 4. Martello Towers

Strong stone forts were built in 1804 along the coast near Dublin as people expected a French invasion by Napoleon. Designed along the lines of a fortress in Corsica, these Martello Towers have stood the test of time and still stand out as distinctive features in our landscape. They were important in the development of the area as the construction of the Towers opened up the coastal area with a network of military roads. The Martello Towers were built with granite, as was the harbour at Kingstown/ Dún Laoghaire from 1817. The granite was widely available and quarried chiefly from Dalkey but also local quarries in the town and the People's Park. This section highlights the design of the Martello Towers and gives a brief history of each of the towers in the area, including the James Joyce Tower at Sandycove.

<https://bit.ly/37tg4UZ>



#### 5. Rathdown Slabs

At certain church grounds in Rathdown you will find mysteriously carved stones on display on the walls of the old buildings. Their decoration is distinctive to the area and as they are found beside churches, they are believed to have been used as grave markers for local Vikings in Christian burials. Each one is different but has a strong element of Viking styles of art with use of cup marks, concentric circles, herringbone designs and crosses. Twenty-eight slabs have been found across the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown area: at Ballyman, Dalkey, Kilbobbin, Killegar, Kiltiernan, Rathfarnham, Tully and Whitechurch, with the biggest group of nine slabs located at Rathmichael.

<https://bit.ly/3p5ioY8>



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**The website also includes more in-depth entries on the following areas of local interest: The Big Houses of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Man and the Landscape in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Selected Wild Flowers of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown and Postcards of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown.**

#### 1. The Big Houses of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

The countryside and coastal stretch south of the city had always been a draw for successful merchants, businessmen and landlords who needed easy access to Dublin. Many fine houses were built there in the eighteenth century. However it was the opening of the railway to Kingstown (now Dún Laoghaire) in 1834 which facilitated the creation of coastal suburbs at picturesque locations in Blackrock, Dalkey, Killiney and Monkstown. Many fine villas were built there in the nineteenth century. This section examines some of the historic houses and villas of the area including marine villas such as Frascati and Maretimo, Glenageary Hall and other Big Houses such as Shanganagh Castle and Ballygihen House.

<https://bit.ly/3mw3jNR>



Engraving of Killiney Castle, included in section on The Big Houses of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

## 2. Man and the Landscape in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

There are many historic antiquities, structures, buildings and man-made features to be found in the County. They range from ancient monuments, early Christian churches, crosses, cemeteries, and medieval castles to modern sculptures, harbours and bridges. All appear as features in our modern landscape. This extensive section includes discussion of churches at Tully, Kiltarnan, Kilgobbin, Killiney and Rathmichael, castles at Dalkey and Dundrum, graveyards at St Nahi's, Deansgrange and Carrickbrennan and memorials such as the Boyd Memorial, Victoria Fountain and Usher Monument.

<https://bit.ly/2KCIC5g>



## 3. Selected Wild Flowers of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

The origin of this contribution was an exhibition of photographs taken by Paula O'Regan, based on her publication *Healing herbs in Ireland*. The Irish names, medicinal properties and traditional uses of thirteen examples are explored. Photographs were taken in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown in the spring to late autumn of 2002. It includes precautions and advice on herbal remedies and details about plants such as Lesser Celandine, Chickweed, Foxglove, Water Mint, Lords-and-Ladies, Ribwort, Yarrow and many more.

<https://bit.ly/340Jimo>



## 4. Postcards of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

This section provides a history of postcards produced for the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown locality. It outlines a discussion of the publishers involved in the market, the postmarks and design, as well as exploring a number of themes evident in the examples. These show different landmark buildings, antiquities, people and events important to the county. Many locations are still recognisable today. The use of novelty and humorous postcards show the attitudes and interests of the time. They can provide valuable insights into continuity and change, informing our understanding of social and cultural preoccupations of earlier times.

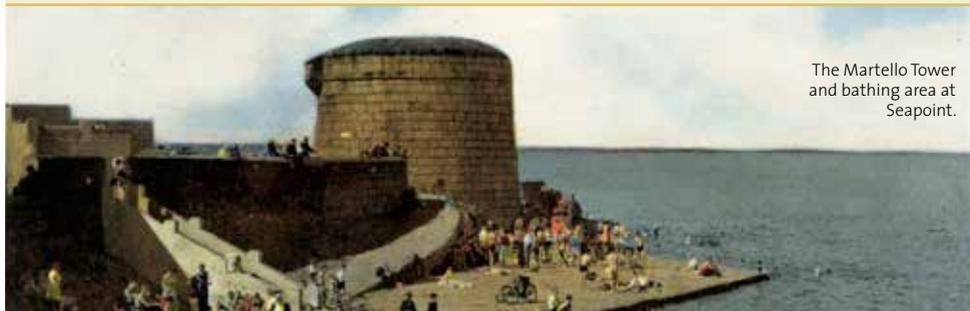
<https://bit.ly/38jqwgS>



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The Martello Tower  
and bathing area at  
Seapoint.