



5. ST. FINIAN'S MEDIEVAL CHURCH AND GRAVEYARD, KING JOHN'S BRIDGE & ESKER MANOR

GPS: 53.34946, -6.43824

Walk up from the village to the once thriving medieval village of Esker, home to two 12th century National Monuments: King John's Bridge and St. Finian's church and graveyard. Esker was one of the four royal manors of Dublin. King John's Bridge still spans the river Griffeen and was once a three-arch bridge; only one arch remains. It is reputed to be the oldest bridge in Ireland, built between 1199 and 1216⁶, during the

administration of King John. Nearby, on higher ground, explore the medieval St. Finian's church and graveyard.

See stop #1 for information on Fr. James McCartan's broken gravestone. Transcriptions of St Finian's historical gravestones can be viewed here: <https://bit.ly/2uuAk7g>

6. ST. CATHERINE'S AND LUCAN DEMESNE

GPS 53.35913, -6.45727

Some of Lucan Demesne is now open to the public as a park, running between Leixlip and Lucan. It includes riverside and woodland walks, car parking, toilets, a playground, and a dog park (Clonee-Lucan road entrance). Follow the unspoilt riverside and woodland trails in the demesne, with the wildflowers and birds all around. Halfway along the demesne walk, you'll pass the 18th century Lucan Demesne lodge and ruined church. Follow the Black Avenue uphill to find the beautifully restored, whitewashed St. Catherine's holy well, reputed to hold a cure for diseases of the eyes and ears⁷.



TRAVELLING TO LUCAN

Lucan is 12km from Dublin city centre.

By bus:

Lucan village is well serviced by Dublin Bus, with departures from various stops in the city centre: 25, 66, 66a, 66b, 67.

By car:

Travel west along the N4 from Dublin. Take Exit 3 off the N4 at the former Foxhunter pub and follow the signs for Lucan village.

SOCIETY FOR OLD LUCAN (SOL)

The Society for Old Lucan (SOL) was founded by a group of local history enthusiasts in May 2017. SOL works to "conserve, research and promote Lucan's local history, heritage, archaeology and folklore", and is open to all.

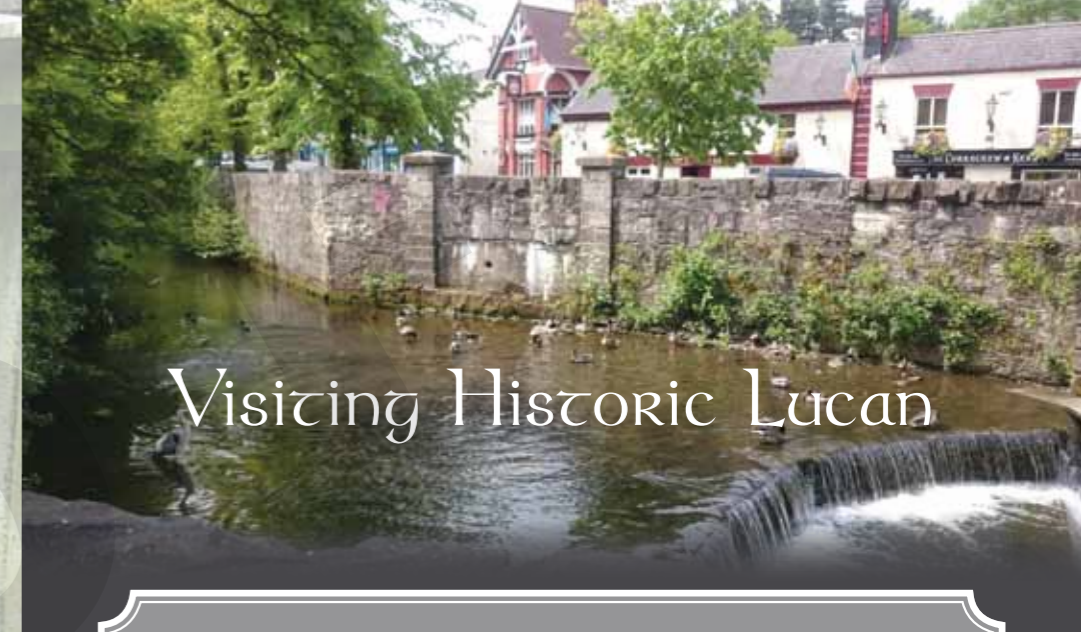
Join our Facebook group (search for "Society for Old Lucan (SOL)"), or take a look at our website: <https://societyforoldlucan.wordpress.com/> for details on events and membership. Email: OldLucan@gmail.com.

THANKS

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REFERENCES:

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- ² Curran, L., 2008. 'The manor of Lucan in Medieval Ireland', in P. Donohoe (ed.), Aspects of Lucan, Dublin, LPSV Publishers, pp.1-27.
- ³ Mulhall, Mary & O'Flynn, Joan, 2007. Treasures of Lucan.
- ⁴ Southdublinhistory.ie. (2018). Lucan - Walking Tour. [online] Available at: <http://www.southdublinhistory.ie/content.aspx?area=lucan&type=walkingtour> [Accessed 29 Mar. 2018].
- ⁵ Mulhall, Mary & O'Flynn, Joan, 2007. Treasures of Lucan.
- ⁶ South Dublin Libraries Local Studies Blog. (2018). The Bridges of Lucan. [online] Available at: <https://localstudies.wordpress.com/2012/09/19/the-bridges-of-lucan/>.
- ⁷ Mulhall, Mary & O'Flynn, Joan, 2007. Treasures of Lucan.



Visiting Historic Lucan

Lucan's history stretches back to ancient times. Lucan, the Anglicised version of the Irish "Leamhcán", translates as "the land abounding in marshmallows", as recorded in the 1837 Ainmleabhar Paróiste¹. One of the main roads of medieval times, the Slí Mhór, passed through Esker, Lucan, along the glacial gravel-ridges. A medieval Irish lord's prestigious ringfort stands on a hilltop, close to the village, and the Vikings are recorded as passing through on their way to Leixlip². The Anglo-Normans settled in Lucan in the 12th century. Great estates such as Lucan House, St. Edmundsbury's, and Finnstown House are situated in the rich farmland. With the rivers Liffey and Griffeen running through Lucan, and with the former medieval royal manor of Esker nearby, many mills (cotton, linen, and woollen) were located here over the years. The many sulfur springs around Lucan meant it became a popular spa destination in the 18th century. Up to the mid-20th century, day-trippers from Dublin travelled by tram and bus to the village to enjoy the rolling countryside, cafés, and the "Strawberry Beds" area on the banks of the Liffey.

TOOLS FOR EXPLORING LUCAN

Explore our Heritage Trail on Google Maps with detailed historical information: <https://bit.ly/2HeU3JV>

Also available:

Lucan audio tour: South Dublin Heritage Walks - <http://heritagewalks.sdcc.ie/tours/lucan/route-map>

Lucan walking tour: South Dublin County History - <https://bit.ly/2HsYXXh>



1. THE SHOCKING MURDER OF Fr. McCARTAN

GPS: 53.36003, -6.43949

A memorial stone set into the wall at the top of Chapel Hill marks the spot of a brutal murder in 1807. Fr. McCartan was the Catholic curate of the joint parishes of Lucan, Clondalkin, and Palmerstown. When returning from a dinner on 3rd June of that year, he had the misfortune to meet a gang returning to Dublin city, following a failed robbery. He was robbed of his watch and ten shillings, and shot dead. Two of the gang, Thomas Weir and Christopher Walsh, were later apprehended and publicly hung a few yards away from the spot on 27th June, 1807. Father McCartan was buried in the graveyard of St Finian's Church (12th century) in Esker, Lucan (see #5). His gravestone was reportedly destroyed when the church belfry collapsed on it in the 19th century, but you can still see fragments of it in the graveyard.



2. LUCAN WEIR AND BRIDGE

GPS: 53.35951, -6.4461

Walking down the hill to Lucan Bridge, you'll see the longest single-span bridge in Ireland, designed by George Knowles and built in 1813. Descending the steps to your left, just before the bridge, take a walk along the promenade. The weir has been a landmark for centuries and features in paintings in the National Gallery, but in recent times it has served villagers as a summertime swimming pool. Weir View Cottages form a picturesque terrace of Victorian houses, built for the workers of Hill's Woolen Mill. You will also see an old generator house for the mill at the weir sluice, one of the office buildings of Hill's Mill (which now houses Weir Interiors), and the chimney of the mill, which stands in the retail park where the mill once stood.

At the far end of the promenade, directly behind the modern apartments, you can see the remains of one of the 18th century bridges, built by Agmondisham Vesey, the then owner of Lucan House. Following the steps at the end of the promenade, walk up the old lane. On your right is the former Parish Schoolhouse of St. Andrew's church, built in 1827. Return to the Mall and the rest of Lucan village



3. CHURCHES, OCLUSUS AND VESEY BRIDGE

GPS: 53.3573, -6.44995

Returning to Lucan main-street and taking a right, head towards the village green. You'll see the 18th century estate walls built from limestone, enclosing Lucan demesne to your right. St. Andrew's church (Church of Ireland) was built in 1823 on land donated by the famous architect and parishioner James Gandon, who designed the Custom House in Dublin city.



Continue on towards the village green and you'll pass Lucan's 19th century Presbyterian church on your left, arriving at Vesey bridge. The village green to your left is owned by Lucan's Methodist church (built 1877), and is leased to South Dublin County Council. Vesey bridge was constructed in 1773 by Agmondisham Vesey, when he built the estate walls enclosing his demesne. On the demesne side of the bridge, you can see a Coade-stone (an 18th century durable artificial stone for use in decorative features) plaque of dancing maidens. In the wall beside the Vesey bridge, right beside the pedestrian lights, is a walled-up "Oculus". This was, most likely, a viewing-point allowing the public views of idyllic Lucan House and demesne, whilst keeping the peasants out!



4. SCHOOLMASTER'S HOUSE, FORMER RIC BARRACKS, MEDIEVAL GRAVEYARD OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, AND PRIMROSE LANE.

GPS: 53.35635, -6.44975

Crossing at the lights beside the Oculus, walk towards the Methodist church. The Schoolmaster's House will be in front of the church, on the Lucan Road. Adjacent to Courtney's pub, it was originally built by the Dublin and Lucan Steam Tramway as an office. The tram line continued in use up to the 1930s. The building was donated to St. Mary's parish by the tram company and used to house the schoolmaster of the boys' village school³.

The Lucan Garda station, despite extensive renovations, still retains its handsome original façade, which dates from 1810. The building served as Lucan's Royal Irish Constabulary Barracks up to 1922⁴.

Crossing the road back to the village green, walk down the side alley of O'Neill's Inn to view the medieval and 18th century ruins of the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary through the gate. Many generations of the owners of Lucan House, the Sarsfield family and the Vesey-Colthurst families, are buried here⁵. The Norman tower house called 'Sarsfield's Castle' adjoins the church. This graveyard and Sarsfield's Castle are open to the public during the annual Lucan Festival, held in September.

If you feel like exploring the village further, retrace your steps back to the main road, and take a stroll up Primrose Lane (first left turn off the main Lucan road heading west, after the Garda station). The lane has many old properties associated with workers from Lucan House and local mills. The large house at the corner of Primrose Lane (1738) was the steward's house for the demesne. It was built in the corner of the walled garden of Lucan House. Directly across the road was the entrance to the stables and dairy of Lucan House.

You can visit the gardens of the James Gandon-designed regency villa, Primrose Hall, further up Primrose Lane, open to the public on certain dates during February, June and July, by appointment only: gayoneillart@eircom.net or tel:+353 1 628 0373.

