



Moynalty is in County Meath, just a one hour drive from Dublin, and close to the heritage towns of Trim and Kells. It is also within easy driving distance of the major historical sites of Newgrange, Tara and Oldcastle.

If you are interested in further information regarding heritage sites and tourist attractions in Meath, please contact Meath Tourism. The staff will also be delighted to assist you in reserving accommodation should you wish to spend a night or two in the area.

Tourist Information Centre  
 Railway Street, Navan, County Meath  
 Telephone + 353 (0)46 73426

You may also wish to visit Meath Tourism's website: [www.meathtourism.ie](http://www.meathtourism.ie)

## Magh n'Ealta On the Plain of the Birds Moynalty Heritage Trail

# Meath

This Heritage Trail is an application of the Meath Brand Identity, financed by LEADER II, the EU Initiative for Rural Development, 1995-1999.



## Meath Heritage

Always a visit to treasure



## All to One Side Like Moynalty

The Moynalty village of today has replaced a village of much humbler origins. A mud hut type of house characterised the village until 1825/6 when the Farrell Estate replanned the town according to what is considered to be a "Swiss" design. This type of plan called for the entire town to be built on only one side of the street – hence coining the phrase "All to one side like Moynalty". It would be another hundred years before houses were built on the other side of the street.

The town's actual origins are unclear but date at least to the times of the Norman conquests of Ireland. Moynalty was considered to be a typical Norman manorial village – a primarily agricultural habitation with some strategic importance and possibly a fair or market. The ancient village of Moynalty lay in a position somewhere between the the present Church of Ireland, Crochawella and Clooney's Field.

In more recent times, Moynalty has had the distinction of being named the *Tidiest Town in County Meath* for five consecutive years from 1995–1999.

Perhaps the highlight of modern day Moynalty is the annual Steam Threshing Festival. The event, a celebration of traditional life in rural Ireland, is held on the second Sunday in August each year and attracts as many as thirty thousand visitors. All aspects of rural life can be experienced first-hand: from traditional farming methods to Irish music song and dance.

Follow us along the Moynalty heritage trail and experience first-hand the traditions and history which make the town so special.





### Moynalty

1. Stone Cross
2. Roman Catholic Church and Mass Stone
3. Donore Hoard
4. Moynalty House Gatelodge
5. National Boys School (Upper Floor)
6. Old Forge
7. Police Barrack's (Deignan's Shop)
8. Milestone
9. Girl's National School (Upper Floor)
10. Midwife's Home (Post Office)
11. Muintir na Tire Hall
12. Church of Ireland (Credit Union)
13. Battle of Salford Bridge
14. Garryard Wood
15. Protestant School
16. Crochawella (Hill of Homes)

# The Stations of the Moynalty Heritage Trail



**The inscription on the glass reads:**  
To the greater honour and glory of God of your charity pray for the souls of James Farrell of Moynalty and Robertstowne in the county of Meath and of Eleanor his wife, in whose memory this window is erected 1865

## 1 Stone Cross

This large stone cross in the Catholic graveyard was originally situated on top of the Catholic church. It was eventually felt to be too heavy for the church roof and subsequently removed to this graveyard in 1916.

## 2 Roman Catholic Church

The Catholic Church was built in the early 1820s on grounds donated by the Farrell family. The Farrells also donated the stained glass window, a very high quality piece of artistic craftsmanship by a French artisan. In 1976 an extension was added to the main aisle of the church.

### Mass Stone

This stone would have been used as an altar for Masses held surreptitiously during penal times. The stone was only recently moved to the church grounds from its original location in the townland of Curraghtown. It was kindly donated to the parish by the Rowntree family.

## 3 Donore Hoard

The Donore Hoard – bronze artifacts, a bronze chain, plates, and a door knocker, were discovered on this site during an excavation in 1984. The items are now housed in the National Museum.



### Swiss Origins

The intricate woodwork trim of the gatelodge hints at its swiss inspiration.

## 4 Moynalty House Gatelodge

This much admired building was once the gatelodge to the Farrell Family Estate, the focal point of which was Moynalty House. The gatelodge is said to be as Swiss in its design as the town itself. It would have been used as a gatelodge from 1825 to 1929. At that time there were two separate dwellings in the building.

**The Farrell Family**  
Ever since the Dublin brewer James Farrell purchased lands in and adjacent to Moynalty in 1790, the Farrell family has been closely associated with the history of the village.

It was James's son John who carried out the building of the present village of Moynalty in 1826.

## 5 Boys National School Upper floor

The upper floor of this building was formerly the Boys Primary School. It was purpose-built with the rest of the village in 1826 and was provided rent free by the Farrell Estate. It was predominantly a two teacher school with a playground, which was located in a meadow on the opposite side of the street. The school was closed in 1938.

## 6 Old Forge

The west end of the building to the left was once the village blacksmith's forge. The proprietor was a man named Jack Reilly. The forge was vacated sometime in the 1940s and was sometime after converted into a drapier's shop by Patrick Ward, later of Garlow Cross.



**Early Road Signs**  
In the 18th and 19th centuries milestones such as this were the only markings found on Ireland's roads.

## 7 Police Barracks Deignans Shop

This used to be the local police barracks. On the 12th of May 1920, it was burned down by Sinn Fein during what is now known as the Troubles. During this time the bridges in Moynalty, Carlanstown, and Mahonstown were also blown up. The chief officer's private house is still in existence in the yard area of Deignans shop.

## 8 Milestone

The stone to the left is a very old milestone stating that it is 33 Irish miles to Dublin via Carlanstown.

## 9 Girls National School Upper Floor

The upper floor of this building formerly housed the Girls Primary School, which, as with the Boys Primary School, was purpose-built with the rest of the village in 1826. Access to the playground and dry closet was via an overhead balcony and walkway at the rear of the building. It was vacated as a school in 1938.

## 10 Midwife's Home Post Office

This building was the residence of the local midwife, Mrs. Ellen Gogarty. It was also the local doctor's clinic and dispensary until it was closed in 1952. The clinic's original wall sign still exists today. The building later became the post office.



**Muintir na Tire's Crest**  
proudly displays its agricultural heritage. Donated and crafted by Michael Ryan.

## 11 Muintir na Tire Hall

This hall was originally a small cottage. Its history as village hall first began with the removal of the interior wall in the 1960's. Some years later, it was greatly enlarged thanks to the efforts of a voluntary labour force, and particularly the efforts of the local families Sheridan, Lynch, and Govern. The hall owes its current state of excellent condition largely to the commitment of local organisations and lottery funding.



**The Church of Ireland Graveyard**  
is gradually being reclaimed by the landscape.

## 12 Church of Ireland Credit Union

This building was the Church of Ireland from 1819 to 1994, when it was deconsecrated by the Bishop of Meath and Kildare, the Most Reverend Walter Empey. It is now a very successful credit union. The original church bell is still operational and was rung together with the Roman Catholic Church's bell to bring in the new millennium.

Behind the building are the Church of Ireland burial grounds. The grounds boast at least two tombs which are still quite visible and were used in the 1800s for the internment of some members of the Chaloner Family. These burial grounds were used by both Church of Ireland and Roman Catholics for a while.

**The Chaloners** were a prominent family whose association with Moynalty dates back to 1704 when Rev. John Chaloner acquired a nearby estate. The family took a prominent part in the civil, legal, and social life of the area during the 18th and 19th centuries.

**The Black and Tans**, special constables of the Royal Irish Constabulary, were made up of many WWI veterans and were known to be particularly brutal combatants.

### 13 Battle of Salford Bridge

On the 23rd of January 1921, this bridge was the scene of the Battle of Salford, which saw the local branch of the IRA under the command of Pat Reilly fight a gun battle with the Black and Tans. The IRA unit won the battle and prevented the Tans from seizing a cache of gelignite which was hidden in a house down the lane alongside the Salford River.

### 14 Garryard Wood

A castle once stood on top of the hill to your right where there is currently a wooded area. The castle was called Garryard – in Irish, Cathar Ard – or High Seat. It was home to the Betagh Family, a well known historical family in County Meath with some descendants still alive in France today.

### 15 Protestant School

This building was once the Protestant school and was known locally as the Westland school. It was a single teacher school and served the community from 1906 until it was closed in 1967.

### 16 Crochawella Hill of Homes

This field, known as Crochawella or *Hill of Homes*, displays evidence of medieval dwellings and a medieval roadway. Here stood a Norman tower house, with a bawn, cabins, and a mill, all of which were already in a state of ruins at the time of the Civil Survey in 1654.

In recent times, the remains of the fort here in Crochawella have been used as the dancing place at Moynalty's annual threshing day.



#### The Last Remnants

The mound formation on this photo is all that is left of the Norman tower house once found at Crochawella.

## Also in the area

If you have enjoyed this heritage trail and are interested in seeing more in the area, you certainly will not be disappointed. The following heritage attractions are all within easy driving distance of Moynalty:

### The Heritage Town of Kells

Kells, one of Ireland's officially designated heritage towns, is a premier example of a monastic settlement. The town also boasts an abundance of shops, pubs and restaurants to suit a variety of budgets and tastes.

### Burial Cairns at Loughcrew

The burial cairns at Loughcrew are believed to be even older than their more famous cousins at Brú na Bóinne/Newgrange. Located in the virtually undisturbed area of the Loughcrew hills, the cairns offer an unrivalled opportunity to marvel at the achievements of past cultures without the crowds of the present.

### Lakeview Gardens

Lakeview Gardens is located in a mature setting overlooking Mullagh Lake. The gardens boast a large variety of rare and unusual plants all located according to a specific planting theme.