



The Oldtown Art & History Trail by ReImagine Cork aims to reveal the heart of the city in a fun and engaging way.

We're not historians, we're mostly not even artists, but we're passionate about our city and believe it's time to mix the old with the new.

We believe in celebrating the 3 H's of Cork City – its history, heroes and humour.

We sincerely hope this light-hearted stroll around our 'medieval' centre will leave you agreeing - it's not pretty, it's a little bit gritty, but it's Cork like!

*Did you know?*

THE BOYS OF FAIRHILL...

THE BOYS OF FAIRHILL IS AN IRISH BALLAD POPULARISED BY JIMMY CROWLEY IN THE MID 1970'S. FAIRHILL, ON THE NORTHSIDE, IS A HILLSIDE ROAD THAT ALLOWS THE 'BOYS' TO OBSERVE AND COMMENT ON ALL THINGS CORK CITY.



## OLDTOWN Art & History TRAIL

www.reimaginecork.com

### 1 ST. PETERS CHURCH EAGLAIS NAOMH PEADAR

The original church of St Peter dates back to 1270AD. It is said to be the burial place of many of the old families of Cork.

This historic building is now a cultural centre for art and music events and can even be rented out for weddings!

“ THE SMELL FROM PATRICK'S BRIDGE IS WICKED. HOW DOES FATHER MATTHEW STICK IT? HERE'S UP THEM ALL SAYS THE BOYS OF FAIRHILL ”

THE BOYS OF FAIRHILL...

### 2 TERENCE MACSWINEY MURAL TRAOLACH MAC SUIBHNE

An author, playwright and politician, MacSwiney grew up on 23 North Main Street across from St Peters.

He was a founding member of the Irish Volunteers Cork Brigade and was elected Lord Mayor of Cork in 1920. He was immediately arrested and died after 74 days on hunger strike. His sense of purpose unwavering till the end when he confided 'I am confident that my death will do more to smash the British Empire than my release'.

Check out our 'homage to Catalonia' for another of his famous quotes; 'It is not those who inflict the most, but those who suffer the most who prevail'

### 3 SHEARE'S ST VOLUNTEER HALL HALLA NA NÓGLACH AR SHRÁID NA SÍORACH

The Standoff on Sheare's St would haunt Terence MacSwiney to his dying days.

1000 Irish Volunteers gathered on Easter Sunday 1916 awaiting instructions to go to war with British occupying forces. However, conflicting orders from Dublin Tomás MacCurtain (future Lord Mayor and leader of the Cork Brigade), deciding to stand his forces down.

An agreement to temporarily hand over arms to the British was agreed but the terms were infamously breached, weapons confiscated, and Republican leaders rounded up and sent to prison.

It was to lead to the start of a bitter war for Irish independence.

### 4 GEORGE BOOLE HOUSE

The famous mathematician arrived in Cork in 1849 to take up his position in UCC. During his six year tenure he resided on the banks of the Lee at 5 Grenville Place.

It was here that he penned the now famous An Investigation of the Laws of Thought where he revealed Boolean Algebra for the first time.

Today Boolean logic is credited with laying the foundations for the 'information age'.

#### LOCAL MYTH OR LEGEND ?

It is claimed that Boole conceived the Theory of Relativity whilst on a night out on the Coalquay in 1857. The famous equation was written out on a beermat and resides in Dennehy's pub to this very day.



“ KATHY BARRY SELLS DRISHEENS, PINTS OF MURPHY AND PIGS CRUBEENS. HERE'S UP THEM ALL SAYS THE BOYS OF FAIRHILL ”

THE BOYS OF FAIRHILL...

## Kathy Barry

Kathy Barry was a legendary Cork character who ran an eating house on Dalton's Avenue. The menu was robust peasant fare and the atmosphere was raucous and convivial. The clientele was said to range from peers to paupers; all joined in the nightly stories and songs, and all were treated alike.

Although people relied on getting a late night drink at Kathy's, she had no licence, and was often charged for breaches of the licensing laws. On her frequent appearances in court she recognised many of her customers among the barristers and judges.

### 5 RIVER OF TIME MURAL A CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF CORK

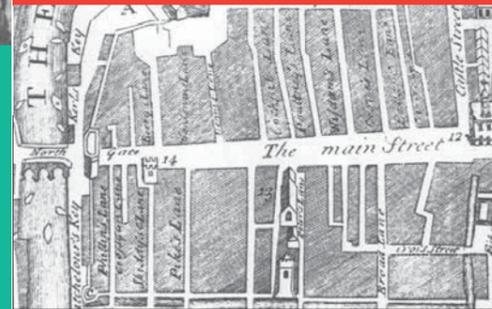
St. Finbarr himself housed the monastic settlement at the site of today's cathedral in the 7th century.

The Vikings came and went before the Normans, in the 12th century, created a limestone walled town, Civitas, centred on what's now South Main Street.

In the following century the second part of the city, Dungarvan, was fortified with sandstone around the northern island centred on what's now known as North Main Street.

Cork became an important trading hub and home to the famous Merchant Prince families of Cork City. Many streets we now walk on are still waterway channels, covered up over time to house a bigger city.

This mural charts our city's wonderful journey as interpreted by the pupils of the Cork Educate Together National School housed on Grattan Street.



### 6 COLEMAN'S LANE & THE STORY OF THE LANEWAYS LÁNA UÍ CHOLMÁIN AGUS SCÉAL NA LÁNAÍ

In its halcyon days Medieval Cork had up to 75 laneways off the North & South Main streets. Today only 7 survive as public passageways with another 7 modified to serve as relatively broad streets such as Kyle Street & Adelaide St.

Many laneways have been eradicated and others have attracted anti-social behaviour leading to a restriction of access. We stumbled upon Coleman's Lane in 2015 amid murmurs that it too would suffer the ill fate of closure. A regeneration project started in haste and today it is a haven for artists and locals alike.

Look out for the many footpath plaques that reveal the location of the old laneways of the city.

### 7 SIEGE OF CORK MURAL MÚRPHICTIÚR LEÍGEAR CHORCAÍ

Cork's allegiance to the Crown flip flopped over the centuries. However, in 1690 its citizens sided with the deposed King James' Jacobite army. The wonderful William of Orange was undeterred, and after a significant victory at the Battle of the Boyne he headed south for Cork and Kinsale.

Williamite forces settled in the South Parish's Red Abbey and soon captured Elizabeth Fort, bombarding Cork's walls in the process. A breach was soon to follow and James was on the run again to the annoyance of Commander Marlborough.

Our mural is a colourful depiction of this battle and was expertly conceived by artist Peter Martin.

“ BLACKPOOL GIRLS ARE VERY RUDE. THEY GO SWIMMING IN THE NUDE ”

THE BOYS OF FAIRHILL...

### 8 PATRIOTS OF IRISH FREEDOM MURALS TÍRTHRATHOIRÍ SHAOIRSE NA HEIREANN

These four proud Corkmen are forever etched in history for sacrificing their lives for the greater cause of Irish freedom between the years of 1916 to 1921.

Terence MacSwiney's life is described in greater detail in Number 2 above.

In March 1920, Tomás MacCurtain, Lord Mayor of Cork, was shot dead at his home in front of his family. His last words to his wife being 'Remember... It's for Ireland'.

Michael Collins, commander-in-chief of the Irish independence movement, was instrumental in securing the Irish Free State in 1920-1921 but was tragically shot and killed by opposing Irish forces in 1922.

Thomas Kent was court martialled and executed by firing squad in Cork 1916 following a gunfight whilst defending his home.



### 9 KYLE STREET & 'THE SHAWLIES' SRÁID KYLE AGUS MNÁ NA SEÁLTA

Kyle Street is the spiritual home to much of the city's colour and character. The street lies at the centre of the ReImagine Cork movement for mixing the old with the new.

Today's Kyle St gardens stand on the site of the first Theatre in Cork. A spacious malt-house situated on a cobblestone passage called Dingle Lane was purchased in 1713 and Cork's first dedicated theatre was born. (see pic below)



Shawlies were typically working class women who wore black cloaks across their shoulders. Ever present on the market streets of Cork, they were renowned for having the skill of being able to sell you scarfs in the summer and sunglasses in the winter!

“ SHANDON STEEPLE STANDS UP STRAIGHT AND THE RIVER LEE FLOWS UNDERNEATH. HERE'S UP THEM ALL SAYS THE BOYS OF FAIRHILL ”

THE BOYS OF FAIRHILL...



THE BOYS OF FAIRHILL...

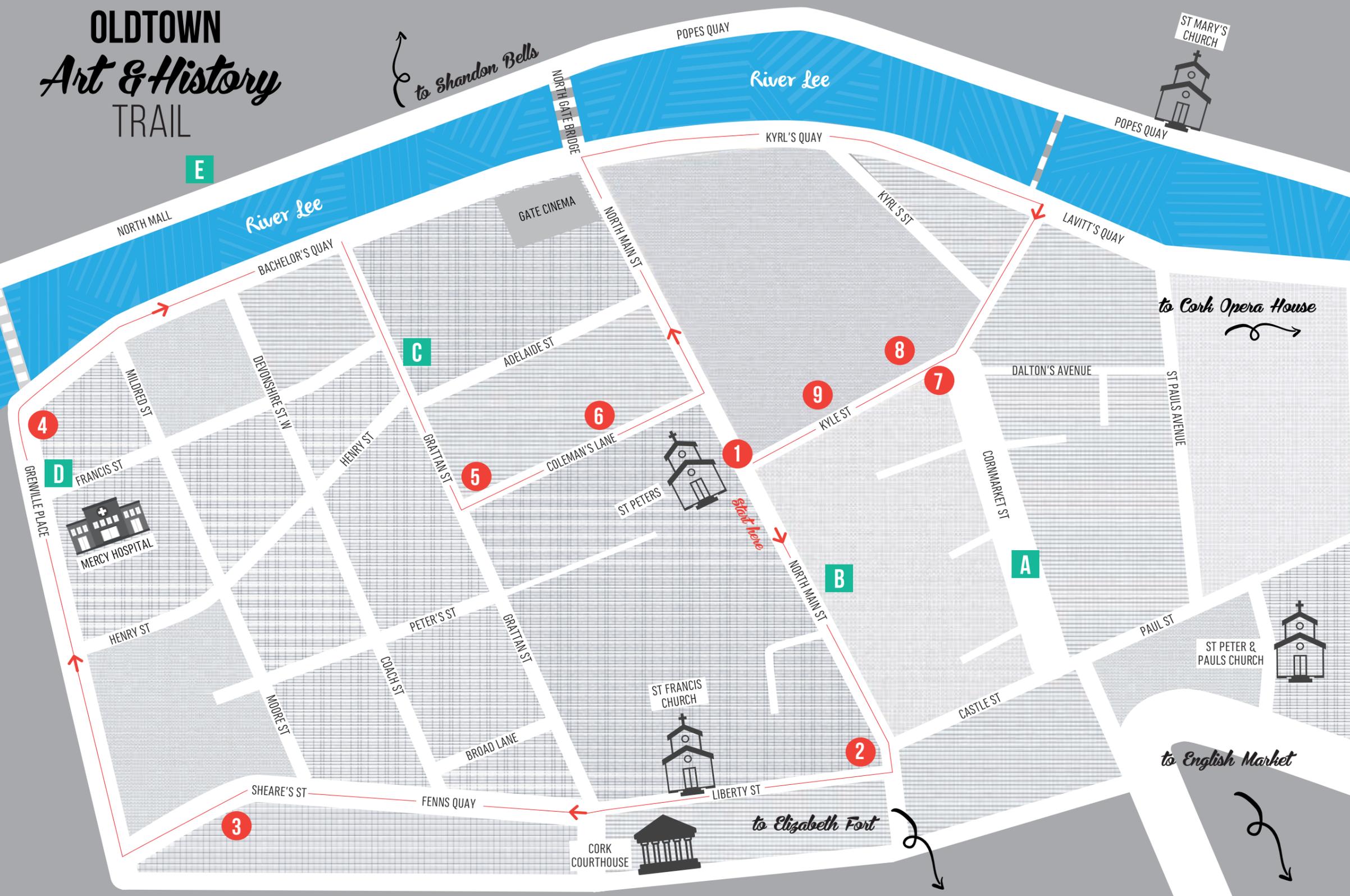


A community effort focused on transforming Corks laneways, urban green spaces & derelict buildings.  
**your city, your canvas**  
Follow us on social media for news, updates & more.  
#reimaginecork  
www.reimaginecork.com



ART TRAIL FUNDED BY CORK CITY COUNCIL

# OLDTOWN Art & History TRAIL



- LEGEND**
- 1 ST. PETERS CHURCH
  - 2 TERENCE MAGSWINEY MURAL
  - 3 SHEARE'S ST VOLUNTEER HALL
  - 4 GEORGE BOOLE HOUSE
  - 5 RIVER OF TIME MURAL
  - 6 COLEMAN'S LANE & THE STORY OF THE LANEWAYS
  - 7 SIEGE OF CORK MURAL
  - 8 PATRIOTS OF IRISH FREEDOM MURALS
  - 9 KYLE STREET & 'THE SHAWLIES'
- RED LINE = TRAIL WALKING ROUTE**

**NORTHSIDE**

SHANDON BELLS, ALSO KNOWN AS THE FOUR FACED LIAR (DUE TO ITS 4 CLOCK'S RARELY TELLING THE SAME TIME!), IS CLAD IN RED SANDSTONE ON ITS NORTHERN AND EASTERN FACADES AND LIMESTONE ON ITS SOUTHERN AND WESTERN FACADES, SO THEY FACE THE PARTS OF THE CITY WHERE MOST BUILDINGS ARE CONSTRUCTED OF THE PARTICULAR STONE.

**SOUTHSIDE**

**Did you know?...**

During the middle ages the North Mall was the site of a Franciscan friary. The friary was known variously as Shandon Abbey, North Abbey, St Mary's Shandon and St Francis's Abbey. The friary was almost certainly founded by Diarmaid MacCarthy Mór, King of Desmond, in 1229. It was suppressed during the Reformation but the ruins of the friary survived until 1836 when they were demolished. A well, whose waters were popularly supposed to have healing properties, still remains today at the rear of the Franciscan Well brewpub. Some say a pint of Rebel Red possesses similar transformative qualities and heal many's the ailment.

**Did you know?...**

Cornmarket Street was once called Coal Quay. Yes you guessed it, what is now a bustling street was once a quay where ships delivered goods and supplies for the merchants of old Cork City. The 'Coal-K' is still affectionately used by locals to describe this popular market area.

**Did you know?...**

NOT SO LONG AGO ON WISDOM LANE, AN OLD MAN WOULD SET UP HIS SHOP FOR THE DAY AS A KNIFE SHARPENER!!

**Did you know?...**

THE WINDOWS ON THE CORNER OF ADELAIDE STREET & GRATTAN STREET ARE VISIBLY BRICKED UP. THIS IS BECAUSE OF THE INFAMOUS WINDOW TAX BROUGHT INTO EFFECT IN THE 1800'S WHICH QUICKLY COINED THE PHRASE - DAYLIGHT ROBBERY

**Did you know?...**

The Grenville Place Turkish baths were built in 1859. At the time, disease of all types was rife in the city given the atrocious sanitary and housing conditions in the Old Town area. Piped water supply was not yet available.

During their first ten years, an average of over 360 bathers per week used the baths.

It is thought that the baths were closed towards the end of the 19th century. The building, which still stands on the site today, externally retains only the front facade at the ground floor.

The photo below shows two separate doors, which were, according to the Cork Examiner of 1 July 1859, for males (on the left) and females (on the right).

