

Welcome to Newtownmountkennedy! We hope you will enjoy using this map and heritage guide.

**Information used:** School Folklore Collection of Dúchas, record of stories from 80 years ago, written by children of the town from that time and interpreted by our modern children from their perspective as 10-year olds. Many of the people in these stories still have connections to the town today.

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## 1 NEWTOWNMOUNTKENNEDY

Newtownmountkennedy (Baile an Chinnéidigh: meaning 'Kennedy's village') is a small town in Co. Wicklow.

It developed within the townland of Ballygarny (Baile Ó gCearnaigh, Kearny's village), although all that remains of the original settlement is a motte on the Mt. Kennedy demesne. Some say there's a ghost on this motte.

## 2 MOUNT KENNEDY

In the 1620s, Robert Kennedy, a legal officer in the Court of the Exchequer, bought up much of the land in Upper Newcastle parish. In 1665, he was created a baronet, and his land became the Manor of Mount Kennedy, with its own court, market, and a twice yearly fair.

# Newtownmountkennedy

## MAP & HERITAGE GUIDE



## 3 COILLTE

Coillte means 'woods' in Irish. It is a commercial forestry business that is owned by the state. The headquarters are located just outside Newtownmountkennedy to the north, set in a woodland area. It was set up in 1988 and manages over 50% of forested land in Ireland. It employs over 800 people.

## 4 THE 'MIGHTY' OAK TREE

The mighty oak tree is located in the Mountkennedy Wood. It is a deciduous tree and its fruit is the acorn. The tree's girth is 6.2m, making it one of the more impressive trees in this forest. It has inspired many students in Newtownmountkennedy to explore the natural world.

## 5 THE RIVER

The Altidore river/stream flows down through the Coillte woodlands at Mount Kennedy and the valley east of the village. In days gone by it was important for the village as it provided water for washing, watering livestock, powering mills, and sometimes even drinking. For swimming in the summer, children would dam it in Shortt's field.

## 6 POST OFFICE

Long ago the Post Office was known as the 'Stop and Pop Inn' Public House. In the 19th century the post service was called the Royal Mail. Newtownmountkennedy was a post town on the mail road between Dublin and Wexford. It had a Post Office from about 1800.

## 7 FISHERS BUILDING

Around 1840 a thatched school to accommodate 120 children was built. It was for the education of Protestant children. Roman Catholics were allowed if approved by the school governors. Rebuilding in 1900 saw a slate roof replace the thatch. It closed in 1940, amalgamated with Newcastle school. Now it is known as Fishers shop.

## 8 ST MATTHEWS CHURCH

St Matthews Church was originally built as a chapel of ease for Newcastle parishioners living in Newtownmountkennedy, completed in 1835. Although made a separate parish in 1844, the building wasn't consecrated until September 1895, dedicated to St Matthew. The land was donated by Robt. Gun Cunningham then owner of Mount Kennedy.

## 9 OLD RIC BARRACKS

The RIC (Royal Irish Constabulary) was the police force in Ireland from 1836 till it was disbanded in 1922. Ordnance survey maps show that the Constabulary barracks were located in two other houses in the village before moving to the location at the bottom of Church Hill.

## 10 MILESTONE

The milestone, a 4ft tall, square granite stone, originally 5m south of its present location, is probably about 240 years old. It has also been used as a seat and a meeting place by local people. One side reads 'From Dublin 17 miles' and the other side reads 'From Bray 5 miles'.

## 11 THE SADDLERY AND LIVERY STABLE

Long ago this saddlery sold saddles and harnesses as travel was by horseback or carriage. There were no footpaths and only the well-off had shoes. A livery stable flourished on the other side of the street. Now the new shops and apartments occupy that space. There the horses pulling the coaches were changed. The event of the day was the arrival and departure of the coach. On this side besides a saddlery there was another livery stable. The old gateway attracts notice. You can see it was a place of importance and is now a doctors surgery.

## 12 THE PARKVIEW HOTEL

The Parkview Hotel was built in 2006 on the site of Synnott's house, butcher shop, yard and out buildings. The park was created in an area known as Butler's Field. Previously there was a small lane inside the wall of the bridge leading down to the river called 'Hell's Lane'.

## 13 'CARISBROOK', MAIN STREET

**1773:** Was 'Logherdies Orchard and Garden' Owned by John Armstrong (brewer).The centre of the terrace had two cottages on street level with stables underneath, and river drinking point for coach horses. (still preserved)

**1840s:** Post office location.

**1910:** 'Gahan and Duffy' confectionery bakery and yard.

**1932-1970:** Country guest house, known locally as 'The Hotel', run by Babs Byrne. Popular with post war visitors from UK, as well as with more local people. Medical pioneer, Dr Noel Browne, stayed here when he first came to Newcastle Hospital, to ultimately clear the scourge of TB from Ireland.

## 14 MILLS

200 years ago there were two water-turned mills on the river that runs through the valley east of Main Street: a threshing mill about 300m from the bridge at the Parkview hotel, used to separate the grain from the stalks, and a much larger grinding mill south of the bridge on the Kilcoole road at 'The Mill House'.

## 15 THE MOUNTKENNEDY INN

From 1900 to 1920s the Newell family ran a select grocery, wine, and spirit shop. They emigrated (USA) after 1920. In the 1940s it was taken over by the Haslam family, run by Lillie Haslam in the 1970s and '80s. The Mount Kennedy Inn may be over 160 years old. Long ago it was not unusual to have a grocery shop in part of the pub.

## 16 ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH

St. Joseph's Church was built in 1865; it replaced the Kilmurry Church, located up the hill to the west, now a ruin. Although there is a bell at the top, it does not move when it rings! St. Joseph's church is made using Wicklow granite and local slate from Ballinahinch. The Holy Mary statue is outside St. Joseph's Church. It is a focal point for many in the town.

## 17 METAL SPINNERS

This industrial producer was located in the building now used by Grove Motors and other existing buildings. A former Kilquade parish priest, Fr. John Masterson, was responsible for bringing it to the village in the 1962. It made electric kettles, pots and saucepans and was a large employer in the area but it shut down in 1983.

## 18 MICHEAL NEIL

Two leading citizens arranged for the village to honor a local hero of 1798. The chosen man was Micheal Neil. The soldiers pulled out his eyes then hanged him outside the Newtownmountkennedy court-house (then across the street). He is buried in Killadreenan graveyard. Some say if you scratch his tombstone, it will shed blood.

## 19 ROBERT MONTEITH

Captain Robert Monteith, revolutionary, visionary, and poet was born on the Woodstock estate in 1878. As a captain of the Irish Volunteers, he was involved with Roger Casement in the hazardous gunrunning attempt at Banna Strand in 1916, involving a German submarine and The Aud cargo ship. He died in Michigan in 1956.

## 20 EUGENE'S

'Eugene's' is a main street family business since 1976. In its 160 years the building progressed from RIC police barracks, to the post office (1890-1911), then a grocery shop run by one of the Synnott brothers, each of whom had a shop on the street. Finally, Eugene O'Toole bought it from Joe Synnott in 1976.

## 21 1798 MEMORIAL

The battle of Newtownmountkennedy was fought on 30 May 1798, between forces of the British Crown and a force of local Irish Rebels, during one of several Irish efforts to gain independence over many centuries. Approximately 170 Irish rebel forces were killed out of 1000, and are buried in an unmarked grave down the road from the monument's site.

In the 1790s, the Wicklow Militia was formed from local Protestant yeomen to combat Irish resistance to British rule. One member, Lt Edward Hemenstall, born in Newcastle, Co Wicklow, was well over 6 ft tall, and of powerful build. He became infamous for hanging men over his shoulder until they were dead. He was known as the 'Walking Gallows'.

## 1 POTATOES

Potatoes to be used as seeds are kept in pits. When planting time comes, they are taken out, shoots broken off, and sown. Kerrs pinks and British Queens grow best in this area. When sowing the seeds in the soil they are put 9" apart.

## 2 EATING IN OLDEN TIMES

In olden times people had only two meals a day. Breakfast, at 8 AM, consisted of oat meal porridge, called stir-a-bout, and butter milk. A late supper was of potatoes and butter milk. Wheaten bread was eaten, made the same way as today. Meat, generally bacon, was used on Sundays.

## 3 CHURNING BUTTER

Long ago people used a churn to make butter. It was a wooden container into which a circle of wood on the end of a pole was pushed to agitate the cream until it became butter. It was done twice a week in the summer, once in the winter. It produced seven pounds of butter.

## 4 WEATHER OBSERVATIONS

When the evening sky is red over Ballinahinch (hill west of town), it's a sign of good weather; when red over the sea, it's a sign of rainy weather; when red over Djouce mountain, it's a sign of snow and frost.

# Newtownmountkennedy

## MAP & HERITAGE GUIDE



To read more about this heritage project visit [www.wicklowheritage.org](http://www.wicklowheritage.org) and search for Newtownmountkennedy on the County Wicklow Heritage site.

## 5 THE MAGPIE

The magpie carries the Newtownmountkennedy GAA colours since the 1960s. The mascot is touted in our chant: "We are black we are white, we are dynamite". This bird is believed to be one of the most intelligent of all non-human animals.

## 6 SHOPS

Shops were scarce in olden times. Some people had to walk miles to get goods, sometimes shopping after church on Sunday. Money was used but occasionally farmers' wives exchanged butter. Credit was known as 'kick'. There was a certain woman in this area named 'Mas Willimas'. She and her sisters ran a well-stocked shop.

## 7 LOCAL BELIEFS

These are known as 'piseoges' and are magical sayings or spells used long ago.

- If you kill a sparrow your horse will go lame.
- If you strike anyone with an elder stick three times, they will not grow bigger.
- If you kill a spider it will rain.

## 8 RIDDLES

**Q:** What goes up the chimney down but won't come down the chimney up?

**A:** An umbrella

**Q:** As round as an apple, as deep as a cup, all the men in Derry could not lift it up?

**A:** A draw well

**Q:** What room is never swept?

**A:** A mushroom



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