

“Down by the Liffeside”

Series of walks and outings in the Liffey Valley

‘Down By The Liffeside’ is the start of a new series for you, our readers and friends. Its aim is to put suggestions as to where you might go and give an idea of what you might expect to see in each of the locations; walking, cycling, enjoying nature or simply strolling about sight-seeing on a day’s outing in one of the villages or towns on the banks of the Liffey.

Thousands of people cross and re-cross the many bridges over the Liffey each day going about their business but regretfully most are unaware what more access can be had to the Liffey. This series, therefore, is an attempt to take the mystery out of it, so that the citizens of Dublin and Kildare, north and south, as well as visitors from other parts of Ireland and abroad can benefit from, and enjoy themselves in, the surroundings of this wonderful and natural amenity that is the Liffey Valley.

Walks are described from Islandbridge, Dublin and extending as far as Straffan in County Kildare. Each walk will be accompanied by a sketch map and photographs. Availability of car parks, buses (and their numbers), train stations and their locations are given. Path surfaces are noted and type of landscape to be encountered and also near access to hotels, cafes, restaurants and pubs.

The Liffey Valley is a treasure trove of the weird and the wonderful. It is a life giving and life enhancing green lung preserving that unique element of the countryside within our towns and suburbs. We recommend that you discover it for yourselves and be gladdened by it. Words cannot do it justice, you simply have to see and experience it with your own eyes and ears. The walks described here are accounts of the authors’ own experiences on one specific day of the year, which leaves 364, at least, still remaining to be discovered and enjoyed by you, the Reader.

Patricia Goff, LVPA.

SPRING 2010

“Down by the Liffeside” Route



Map by: Richard Toomey, Mapflow

MarTone 01 628 1809



Series of Walks “Down by the Liffeside”



Gazebo, War Memorial Gardens

Walk No. 3 Islandbridge to Chapelizod, through the Memorial Park and the Phoenix Park.

Liffey Valley Park Alliance
www.lvpa.ie

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Liffey Walk No. 3



Pic by: M Ó Riordáin

This walk takes in both sides of the river, which are very different. Starting in the Irish National War Memorial Park, beside Trinity Boat House, there is a view across the top of the very wide weir, with many ducks, a few swans and lots of black-headed gulls being fed by some children on a recent visit. At the river's edge, there are picnic tables and seats, and on the river there are often boats being launched or rowed. Follow the path by the water's edge through a gateway, where the area changes from a public park to a riverside walk. It is a quiet path, through gentle sloping land where vegetation is left in a natural state, with gorse and shade loving plants. A few families of moorhens live at the river's edge, and you may see a heron or two.

At the end of this path, you exit via a gateway onto St Laurence's Road, turn right and then right again across the Liffey Bridge to the pretty village of Chapelizod. Several pubs and shops here can provide refreshment. At the north side of the bridge, turn left at the school and then take the first right beside the Post office into Park Lane. There is access through a pedestrian gate to the Phoenix Park; turn right and keeping to the high ground, follow the path in front of St. Mary's Hospital and continue straight through the cross-roads. In early April, the trees were just starting to have a shimmer of green leaves and the chestnut trees were covered with sticky buds. At all times of the year, there is something to see on the

trees; in early spring, the new buds appear, followed by the seeds and flowers of summer, autumn colour later in the year and in winter the bare branches against the sky. Here on the Military Road, or as Dubliners call it, the Corkscrew Road you are on a wide-open hillside, in contrast to the enclosed area on the other side of the river. On the highest point stands the Magazine fort and nearby the Wellington Testimonial [1871, the tallest Obelisk in Europe] can be seen.

It was quite surprising to notice how little of the south city is visible, because of the trees, but on a clear day the Dublin mountains can be seen in the far distance. The elegant, many chimneyed Royal Hospital, now the Irish Museum of Modern Art, is across the river, surrounded by high-rise modern apartment blocks. The boundary of the park has a line of Scots Pine trees and the ground falls away steeply down to Chapelizod road and the Liffey, which can be glimpsed here and there. Leave the Phoenix Park by the next gate, which has a rather unusual pedestrian exit. Turn left; then cross at the traffic lights, and continue over the Liffey Bridge and you are back at the starting point.



Pic by: P Goff

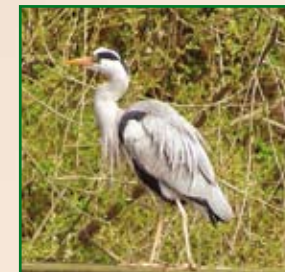
Time taken about an hour and a half at a leisurely pace. The path has a smooth surface for walking or cycling, and the 3 gates are buggy, but not wheel chair accessible.

Access

The entrance to the Islandbridge Park from the South Circular Road has a partially hidden brown signpost to the Memorial Gardens.

Buses 68 & 69 from city centre to South Circular Road or take the 25, 26, or one of the 66's or 67's, to Chapelizod Road, near the Liffey Bridge. It is a short walk from Heuston Station and the Luas.

The main car park is inside the Gardens beside the Trinity Boat House. Opening hours: 8 am weekdays: 10 am Sat & Sun. Closing times vary.



Pic by: F. Ó Riordáin

Irish National War Memorial Gardens

The formal Memorial Gardens was designed by Lutyens and built by equal numbers of ex-servicemen of the British and Irish armies. The great selection of flowers and particularly roses are best seen in summer. It is now a memorial to the all Irish men and women killed in war, and lists of the war dead can be inspected in the Book Room.

Report by Roisin O'Riordain LVPA.
Illustration by F. and S. Ó Riordáin.

Walk No 1. Lucan through the Demesne and St Catherine's Park to Leixlip.

Walk No 2. Waterstown Park, Palmerstown. Dublin 20

LVPA Walks Team: Roisin O'Riordain and Patricia Goff.

(Copies of the walks available on www.LVPA.ie)