



3 Swan Park



From the Castle Bridge the riverbank trail follows the Crana River into Swan Park and on to Wilson's Bridge at Westbrook.

For over 70 years from 1800, Swan Park was a prosperous milling centre for flax, linen and cotton. Local industrialist, historian and writer, Harry Percival Swan, bequeathed the parkland to the town in 1965.

2 Early Settlement



The early 15th century "Keep" of Cahir O'Doherty's castle stands on the Crana River's west bank near to the earliest settlement of Buncrana. Buncrana Castle, an early Georgian manor house, is located close by. The castle is approached via the six-arched Castle Bridge. Both structures date from 1718.

(Note: The optional walk to Ned's Point begins here. See map.)

4 The West End



The town's West End, where the present Castle Avenue joins Upper Main Street, marks the beginning of Col. George Vaughan's urban development of the "new" Buncrana, away from the "old Town" on the western bank of the Crana River (c.1718). The cinema (St. Mary's Hall) with its distinctive, pastiche Baroque facade, dominates the junction.

5 Upper & Lower Main Streets



Once William Street and Townsend Street respectively, the main thoroughfares, have retained their basic original layout for almost 300 years. Notable architecture includes the Market Square and Christ Church at the centre of the town. Now derelict, Swan's Corn Mills at the foot of the Mill Brae milled flour and porridge oats from the mid 19th century and provided electricity to the town from 1905 to 1954.

6 A Seaside Resort



The arrival of the railway (1864) opened Buncrana to visitors, particularly from Derry and the northern counties. The town developed as a popular tourist resort with new facilities - Buncrana Pier (1874); Buncrana Golf Club (1890) and the North West Golf Club (1891). The rail link was terminated in 1953. The former station is now the popular Drift Inn.

7 Ned's Point Fort



The half-mile detour north along the shore of Lough Swilly leads to Ned's Point Fort.

Built in 1812 to counter the threat of a French invasion the fort is one of six such structures built on both shores of the Lough to provide artillery crossfire on enemy vessels. The fort immediately opposite Ned's Point is a Martello Tower.

Buncrana Heritage Trail



West Inishowen History & Heritage Society

www.buncranahistory.com

Buncrana

Buncrana’s built origins date to the 16th century with a small harbour on the Crana River and O’Doherty’s castle on its west bank. It is likely that there was significant settlement (possibly monastic) here since prehistoric times.

The O’Dohertys were the Gaelic lords of late medieval Inishowen. An early settlement known as Buncrana became established at their castle known locally as ‘The Keep’.

This was on the small promontory between the Crana River estuary and Lough Swilly.

Welcome to the two and a quarter mile (3.6km) BUNCRANA HERITAGE TRAIL (with an optional half mile coastal walk to Ned’s Point fort).

Each panel corresponds to the numbered sites on the map. You will find more detailed interpretive boards at each way-mark.

There are no hazardous stretches on the trail but please take care when crossing roads. Enjoy your walk!



1 The Stone Jug



The trail begins in Castle Avenue at the small building known locally as “The Stone Jug”. The origin of the name is unknown; some say it was once a prison (“Jug” slang for jail).

Along the path to Castle Bridge are memorials to Theobald Wolfe Tone, a leader of the “United Irishmen”, John Doherty, a pioneering trade union activist and other prominent local figures.



For Further Information:
www.buncranahistory.com

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We would also like to extend our thanks to all those who have allowed plaques to be placed on their properties. Please bear in mind these properties are all private and trespassing is prohibited.

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