

Locations to visit over European heritage weekend

European Heritage Open Days (EHOD) (Saturday 9 September to Sunday 10 September) offers the opportunity to visit historic buildings and places of interest, free of charge – some of which aren't usually open to the public. With events kicking off tomorrow, below are some final ideas of where to visit over the weekend.

Kilwaughter Castle, Co Antrim

Visit the ruins of a 400-year-old castle, later remodelled by architect John Nash, with an original tower house.

There'll be a talk and guided walk from the castle towards the large artificial lake created for the Agnew family who lived here and were the tax collectors for Co Antrim.

Poyntzpass, Co Armagh

The village of Poyntzpass, Co Armagh is steeped in history and there is lots to do in the village on Saturday 9 September.

There will be a guided walk taking in some of the village's interesting sites – the 100-year-old stone 'Face in the Wall', the Newry Canal, and the Red Hand Inn, scene of a gruesome murder in days of yore.

Visit Poyntzpass railway station – the Victorian signal-man's cabin is the only one of its kind on its original site in Northern Ireland with all of its equipment intact.

There'll be an exhibition at the Credit Union, and refreshments are available at the former village courthouse where a variety of petty misdemeanours were dealt with in this building for over 100 years.

Belfast City Hall – adults' cryptic challenge and children's puzzle challenge

Are you and your family partial to puzzles? Kids crazy for conundrums? Test your brain power and explore the grounds of Belfast City Hall for a cryptic challenge. Discover the secret symbols and hidden heritage to be entered into a prize draw.

There's also a special children's challenge – they can explore the City Hall grounds and gardens and to discover Belfast's past to be entered into a prize draw.

Mountains of Mourne Country Cottages – Hanna’s Close, Co Down

These eight cottages, dating back to the 1600s, are now restored and maintained. Most of them have granite open fireplaces and granite floors.

There will be talk on the history of the ‘Clachan’, an Irish settlement, and insight into the daily lives of the people and how they lived.

Waterways Ireland Archives open day, Co Fermanagh

Waterways Ireland headquarters will be open for guided tours of its archive and building in Enniskillen.

Housing a collection of original engineering drawings, maps, and toll books from the 1800s, the archive offers a unique insight into Ireland’s industrial past.

More information on the [Waterways Ireland website](#).

Creggan Country Park, Co Londonderry

This self-led nature trail is perfect for families looking to explore nature on their doorstep. Work together to find 10 hidden tiles along the trail showing mammals, birds, and invertebrates on the site. Solve the clues and write down your answers to claim a prize at the activity centre.

Knockmany Passage Tomb, Co Tyrone

Discover the remains of a passage tomb situated on the summit of Knockmany in the forest park with archaeologist Edith Logue.

The cairn and the passage are no longer present, but the stones of the chamber are visible and are decorated with characteristic passage tomb art, including spirals, zigzags, and circles.

European Heritage Open Days

If you want to find out more about what and when properties are opening, what events are on, and if you need to book, you can get information and download the brochure at the following link:

Keep up-to-date with European Heritage Open Days on [Facebook](#) and on [Twitter \(@ehodni\)](#).

The weekend promises to have something for everyone so why not come along and enjoy a little bit of history right on your doorstep?

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[New places to explore as part of heritage event](#)

This year properties and locations are opening to the public for the first time during European Heritage Open Days weekend (Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 September). Almost 400 buildings are part of the event.

Carnfunnock Country Park

Among the highlights of the new locations is Carnfunnock Country Park. It offers over 191 hectares of mixed woodland and colourful gardens against a backdrop of spectacular coastline, with panoramic views of the Antrim coast and North Channel.

Cornmarket Yard, Enniskillen

In Enniskillen, visit the Cornmarket Yard, open this year for the first time. This was the site of fairs in the olden days and the local volunteers will help visitors discover the history of the area.

The Market Cross in the centre of the yard has a history of its own to tell. There'll also be a local history fair and a demonstration of crochet-work on Saturday 9 September.

Ennish Scutch Mill, Dungannon

Why not take the opportunity to visit a property not normally open to the public, such as Ennish Scutch Mill in Dungannon. A small family-owned 18th Century mill complex, it was originally a corn mill and later converted to a flax scutch mill.

Now restored to full working order by its current owner, there will be 'scutching' (beating the flax) demonstrations showing how flax plants become linen threads at this traditional stoned building in a beautiful riverside location.

Killymoon Castle, Cookstown

Killymoon Castle in Cookstown (pictured) was built for James Stewart in 1671 and has recently had extensive restoration. Designed by the famous London

architect John Nash, the castle was Nash's first Irish design and cost £80,000.

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[European Heritage Open Days bringing history to life](#)

European Heritage Open Days (EHOD) (Saturday 9 to Sunday 10 September) offers the opportunity to visit historic buildings and places of interest, free of charge – some of which aren't usually open to the public. This year's event will see a cast of characters at many of the sites, bringing history to life.

County Antrim

Pogue's Entry, Antrim

Childhood home of author Dr Alexander Irvine, the cottage gives a rare insight into how many Irish working class families lived in the latter half of the nineteenth century. There will be living history, storytelling, and traditional craft activities on offer and gardeners will be on hand to answer your questions.

Carrickfergus Town walls

Carrickfergus Town walls are the oldest stone town walls in Northern Ireland, building started in 1608. Although parts of them have been removed over the years, the circuit can still be traced around the town centre. Meet the man-at-arms on Saturday 9 September as he patrols the walls.

County Armagh

Navan Centre and fort

Enjoy a flavour of the historic Navan Centre and fort. Be welcomed to Navan by the Celtic characters, learn of the myths and legends of the Ulster Celts in a short tour.

Belfast

GI's Jitterbug NI War Memorial Museum

Visit the museum to learn about Northern Ireland's role in WWII and the 75th anniversary of the arrival of US Forces. An American Red Cross Club dance will be recreated, sample American candy, listen to 1940s music played on a gramophone, and take part in swing dances with the Ballroom Blitz Formation Team.

Discover Ulster Scots Centre

Come and discover Ulster Scots music, dance, history, and heritage in Belfast's Cathedral Quarter. Visit the spacious exhibition gallery with live folk music performances, Highland and Scottish ceilidh dance workshops, or try on some period costumes from the early 1600s.

County Down

Ballycopeland Windmill

Meet the miller who will explain how the daily grind was done for the farmers of the Ards peninsula and filled the breadbaskets of County Down – 18th century high-tech engineering requires skill and hard work.

Dundrum Castle

Meet the Norman man-at-arms and survey his armoury of weapons, perhaps try on some chain mail, and feel the weight of a sword.

Greyabbey

Come and meet the Cistercian monk who walks the cloister and tends the herbs, vow of silence temporarily suspended..

Bangor Castle

Experience a behind-the-scenes escorted tour with a costumed guide to see the main rooms originally used for entertaining on the ground floor level, as well as a chance to see 'downstairs' as a comparison.

Visitors will also have the chance to see some of the local council's painting collection, some of which are original to the castle.

County Fermanagh

Devenish Island

This island community was founded in the sixth century, burned in 1157 by vikings, and in the Middle Ages it flourished as the parish church and St Mary's Augustinian Priory.

Best known for its intact round tower, there is lots to see and explore. Meet the early Christian monk and saint, and see how you would have fared as a scriptor monk copying holy texts with a goose quill pen, inks and pigments.

Tully Castle

A fortified house and bawn built in 1619 for the Scottish planter Sir John Hume. He occupied the house until 1641 when it was captured and burned on Christmas Eve by Rory Maguire. A place of beauty with a tragic history, you can meet living history re-enactors who will bring this castle to life once again.

County Londonderry

School master's treasure hunt

The year 1617 saw a Free School built within Derry Walls. Follow a trail of hidden clues and help the school master find his salary. Seek help from living history performers along the way and discover another story connected with the building of the Walls. You could win great prizes too. Part of Derry Walls Day 2017.

Martello Tower

Meet the 19th century artilleryman as he patrols the tower and explains the importance of this strategic lookout post, and his role in keeping the big guns ready. See uniforms, field kit, and hand weapons of the Napoleonic soldier.

Bellaghy Bawn

Once used as a doctor's surgery, come and meet a barber-surgeon from the 17th century and see how his medicine compares to modern methods. Cures for the plague and the pox guaranteed!

County Tyrone

Benburb Castle

Meet the soldiers who lived here, see weapons demonstrations, and hear the history of this amazing place. A new exhibition, 'Wildlife of the Blackwater Valley', will be open; take a wildlife walk with experts, and spot some of

the creatures in the Valley Park. Something for all the family.

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[Nature and heritage focus of weekend event](#)

This year the theme for European Heritage Open Days (9 & 10 September), is 'Heritage and Nature: A Landscape of Possibilities'. Many events have been organised to show Northern Ireland's natural landscape and biodiversity.

Antrim

Greenmount campus nature trails and walled garden

Greenmount campus includes over 18 hectares of landscaped grounds. Walking tours of the nature trail will take you through woodland and past:

- the walled garden dating from 1801
- an ice house
- summer house
- stone arch
- lakes, ponds and a constructed wetland

Armagh

The Palace Demesne Public Park

Palace Demesne Park, set in 300 acres, is the creation of Archbishop Richard Robinson and includes walks that vary in distance and a play park for children. There's a restaurant and coffee shop in the picturesque Georgian

stables and courtyard.

Belfast

Carnegie Oldpark Library

The library has been recently purchased and there are exciting plans to restore this 1906 building to its former glory.

There will be a book sale, film show, refreshments, and a small tree will be given to visitors as part of the 'Heritage and Nature' theme to enhance the local environment and encourage children to plant and grow them.

Derry/ Londonderry

Seamus Heaney's HomePlace

The Seamus Heaney HomePlace features an interactive exhibition over two floors, filled with personal stories, images, and the voice of the poet himself.

His first major work, 'Death of a Naturalist', was published in 1966. Throughout his life, Heaney continued to explore the theme of nature and the landscape of his 'homeplace'.

The centre also features a recreation of Heaney's Dublin study, a gift shop, a Creative Learning Zone for children and a café.

Down

Bangor Castle walled garden

Designed by the Ward family of Castle Ward in the 1840s, the walled garden was considered a secret garden until it was restored and opened to the public in 2009.

The gardeners will be onsite providing tours of this exquisite garden and to answer questions about the restoration and the four separate horticultural personalities of the garden.

Fermanagh

Guided bus tour of Marble Arch Caves UNESCO Global Geopark

Take a guided tour of some of the major sites within the UNESCO Global Geopark, including the Cavan Burren, Cornagee Viewpoint, Blacklion, Hanging Rock, and Claddagh Glen, with optional nature walk, and guided tour of Marble Arch Caves.

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[Buildings and events open for heritage weekend](#)

European Heritage Open Days (EHOD) promises to be exciting this year, with nearly 400 properties opening their doors to visitors for free this weekend (Saturday 9 to Sunday 10 September).

20th anniversary

This year marks the 20th year of European Heritage Open Days in Northern Ireland – a special celebration of our built heritage. The event provides a great chance for the public to see behind closed doors and experience the magic of our historic environment.

To mark this milestone many buildings which were part of the original EHOD in 1997 are opening again. There are also special conservation area walks for you to enjoy. Highlights include:

Andrew Jackson Cottage and US Rangers Museum, Carrickfergus

An 18th century thatched stone cottage restored as a tribute to seventh President of the USA Andrew Jackson, whose parents lived nearby.

The Redoubt in Enniskillen

A hidden historic gem, this stoned-walled redoubt sits on Windmill Hill. It was built in 1796, with walls 142 foot long, 20 feet high, 15 feet thick, and a moat 10 foot deep as a fortification to the town's West Bridge and to Enniskillen Castle.

Armagh Observatory and Planetarium

Enjoy a guided tour of the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium's grounds and gardens – the Astropark. Enjoy a scale model of the solar system, the Hill of Infinity, the Around North exhibit, and the natural environment of our woodland walk.

Newtownstewart Guided Walk

The village, located on the River Mourne, was once a centre for the linen industry, now a focal point for agricultural hinterland. The walk and guided tour by architect Manus Deery will feature buildings of architectural and historical interest.

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