

Directions

The trail starts at the **Hills of Dunipace** which are 2 miles east of Denny Cross on the north side of the Dunipace Bridge. Car parking can be had at the New Cemetery. The first five places to visit on the trail are within a few hundred metres of the New Cemetery. The two hills of Dunipace are very obvious from the car park even though one eminent local historian seems to think there is only one. Immediately to the north of the car park a track runs to the east, and 200 metres along this track can be seen an old doocot which is all that remains of **Dunipace House**. Return to the car park. **The Chapel of St. Ninian** was also very close to the Hills of Dunipace. From the car park, walk through the cemetery and at the east end you will find the remains of the **Old Cemetery** which is well worth a visit. From the car park walk back out to the main road which leads to Larbert. Turn right at the main road and after 100 metres the **Dunipace Bridge** is on your left. Do not cross over the bridge but carry on until you see a road sign for Dunipace veering off to your left under the motorway. Follow this road for approximately 1 kilometre to the entrance to Kirkland Farm, which is on the right. On the left, near the old Headswood Paper Mill, was the site of **St Alexander's Chapel and Spa**. Carry on along the same road to **Denovan Church** which is on a series of bends so it is advisable to watch for traffic on hidden corners. On the opposite side of the road from the Church there are two entrances. The right hand entrance leads to the King's Well and the left hand one leads to **Denovan House** in 200 metres. Return to the Denovan Road and turn right. After you pass Denovan Church, **Denovan Mains** can be seen on the small hill to your left. Carry on the same road for another kilometre and you will find **The Old Dunipace Primary School** on your right. Return along the road for about 100 metres to where a road turns down to your right. Go down the fairly steep hill to where it turns right at a farm. Carry on along the road for another 100 metres to where the road takes a sharp turn left and then right over the Anchor Burn (*also called the Avon*). The road then leads on to Milton Row. After passing two modern houses on your left you will see the **Fireplaces** on the long wall which extends most of the way up Milton Row. At the top of Milton Row is Stirling Street where you turn right and after about 50 metres cross this main road at a zebra crossing to the Dunipace Parish Church. Immediately to the left of the Church is Barnego Road. Walk up Barnego Road for about 200 metres to where Chestnut Crescent goes off to the left. Carry on up Chestnut Crescent to where it veers to the right and you will find **The Old Spanish Chestnut Tree** on your left.

Map



Tip

This walk is over 3 miles long so it could be worthwhile leaving a car at both ends of the walk. There is normally enough space for parking in the Milton Row area. Also, except for the Hills of Dunipace area, this trail can be covered by car.

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The Society meets on the second Monday of each month in the Heritage Rooms at 13 Milton Row, Dunipace, at 7.15pm

The society is indebted to Ann Bourne for her drawing of the map.

The George Skelton Heritage Trail No.4

The Dunipace History Trail



The easterly hill at the Hills of Dunipace

1. The Hills of Dunipace
2. Dunipace House
3. The Chapel of St. Ninian
4. The Hills of Dunipace Old Cemetery
5. The Dunipace Bridge
6. St Alexander's Chapel and Spa
7. Denovan Church
8. Denovan House
9. Denovan Mains
10. The Old Dunipace Primary School
11. Fireplaces in Milton Row
12. The Spanish Chestnut
13. The Dunipace Brooch

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1. Hills of Dunipace

Dunipace takes its name from these very famous hills. The name comes from the Scottish word dun, meaning hill with pace meaning peace, death, or pass. It was once thought that the hills were burial mounds for the Roman and Caledonian warriors who fell in a great battle here in the third century. The more mundane truth is that the hills are glacial deposits left over from the last ice age. It gives a very tranquil setting for the New Cemetery.

2. Dunipace House

The semi-ruined doocot, in the field to the north east of the New Cemetery, is all that is left of the original Dunipace House, built in the 15th century. The most recent house on this site was built in 1792 and converted the original octagonal stair tower into the doocot which at one time held over 400 pigeons. It was the grandest mansion in the area but was demolished in the 1940s. Sir Archibald Primrose owned the house when Bonnie Prince Charlie attempted to gain the British throne in 1745. Primrose was beheaded in Carlisle for showing the fords in the River Carron to Charlie's army the day before the second battle of Falkirk.



3. The Chapel of St Ninian

This was the name for the church that was built in the Hills of Dunipace area in the 12th century. Near the end of the 13th and at the beginning of the 14th centuries William Wallace's uncle was the priest in the chapel. William stayed here with his uncle and legend has it that it was his uncle's teachings that gave the young Wallace his patriotism. His uncle's favourite saying was "Freedom is best, I tell thee of all things to be one. Then never live within the bond of slavery my son".

4. The Old Hills of Dunipace Cemetery

The Cemetery with its mausoleum has a serene feel to it and is worth a visit. The gravestones date back to the 17th century.



5. The Dunipace Bridge

The bridge was erected in 1825 and the laying of the keystone was attended by the great and the good of the area. The occasion was given great ceremony and a glass bottle containing all the coins of the realm that were in use at the time were put in a compartment in the stonework of the bridge. Unfortunately someone thought that they had more need of the coins than the bridge and stole the bottle. A tollhouse once stood on the Bonnybridge side of the bridge.

6. St Alexander's Chapel and Spa

The church was situated on the north side of the River Carron. Its situation is thought to be approximately between the Carron and the entrance to Kirkland Farm. It was built to replace the Chapel of St Ninian at the Hills of Dunipace near the beginning of the 17th century. It is recorded that the new chapel was built nine tenths of a mile west of the old Chapel of St Ninian and that is the exact distance from the entrance to Kirkland Farm to the entrance to the Hills of Dunipace Cemetery.

7. Denovan Church

The church was built in 1834 to replace St Alexander's Chapel and Spa as the population of the area had grown to such an extent that a larger church was required.

For more information see Heritage Trail No 2 (The Denovan Heritage Trail).

8. Denovan House

This grand mansion dates from the mid 18th century and was bought in 1843 by James Graham Adam who owned the print works and Bleach Fields in the area which together employed one thousand workers. He made substantial alterations to the house between 1843 and 1845. The water feature in front of the house must have been an impressive sight before it fell into disrepair. The conservatory at one time was described as "gleaming white". Sadly this is no longer the case.



9. Denovan Mains

This farmhouse dates from the 17th century and is in a very beautiful situation above the River Carron with Denovan Church to the east. In the 1940s and 50s the Baptist Church held Sunday School picnics on the fields to the north of the farmhouse.

10. The Old Dunipace Primary

The school was established in 1875 and closed in 1993.

For more information see Heritage Trail No 2 (The Denovan Heritage Trail).

11. Fireplaces in Milton Row

These are the remains of the houses that were built onto the wall by the owner of the Calico Works which were sited on the other side of the wall.

For more information see Heritage Trail No 1 (Through the Centre of Denny).

12. The Spanish Chestnut

Although this tree is over 400 years old it is still very healthy as is abundantly clear in the summer months. In winter it has a very eerie appearance.

For more information about the tree and Herbertshire Castle which was sited close by, see *Heritage Trail No 1 (Through the Centre of Denny)*.

13. The Dunipace Brooch

The brooch is one of the most famous artefacts found in the area. It is a Celtic pin which was made around the 9th century and is extremely rare. The fact that it has silver in its content identifies it as Scottish in origin. It was found in the immediate vicinity of the Hills of Dunipace circa 1860 and was gifted to the Scottish National Museum in Edinburgh where it is now kept. The brooch was adopted as the symbol of the Falkirk Local History Society.

