

SOUTH SHORE IRISH HERITAGE TRAIL

Hugging the Atlantic Coast from Weymouth to Plymouth



Everyone associates Plymouth with the Pilgrims who arrived in 1620, but did you know that this part of Massachusetts has extraordinary Irish history too? Here are a few of the fascinating stories you'll discover along the South Shore Irish Heritage Trail.

- The first Irish in Massachusetts arrived in 1626 as indentured servants. Surviving a Cape Cod shipwreck with the help of a local Native American named Sparrow Hawk, these Irish remained with the Pilgrims in Plymouth for several months before continuing to their original destination of Jamestown, Virginia Colony.
- During the 19th century, so many Irish settled in one of Plymouth's oldest neighborhoods that it was nicknamed Dublin. The Ancient Order of Hibernians in Plymouth has sought permission to erect a memorial sign acknowledging the Irish presence here.
- Esteemed Irish poet and rebel John Boyle O'Reilly wrote and recited the official poem at the 1889 dedication of the National Monument to the Forefathers, which stands today atop Allerton Street hill and is often referred to as Plymouth's Statue of Liberty.

The Irish have been story tellers for millennia, and the South Shore Irish Heritage Trail continues that tradition by sharing stories- from the 17th century to the present- about Irish immigrants and their challenges, setbacks and successes. Many of these stories are

well known, while some are not, but all of them highlight the enormous contributions of the Irish in Plymouth County and in America.

Modeled after the Wild Atlantic Way in Ireland and the Boston Irish Heritage Trail, the trail meanders through nine seaside communities known collectively as the South Shore, recognized by the U.S. Census Bureau as one of the most Irish-American geographical regions in the United States.

Along the South Shore Irish Heritage Trail, there are so many enjoyable things for visitors, such as bird watching, hiking, swimming, public beaches, family-friendly parks and cultural venues, Irish pubs and restaurants and much more. Brochures can be downloaded for each town on the trail: Weymouth, Hingham, Hull, Cohasset, Scituate, Marshfield, Duxbury, Kingston and Plymouth as well as a 9-town trail brochure from the website.

Each year the South Shore Irish Heritage Trail acknowledges *Trail Blazers* who contribute to the South Shore Irish Community. Last year noted historian, Catherine Shannon, Ph.D., and State Senator Patrick O'Connor were the recipients of the First Annual South Shore Irish Trail "Trail Blazer Awards."

The 2024 award recipients have not been announced yet, but they continue the high standard set last year. Contact ssirishtrail.org to nominate a person for this award and share any ideas about the Trail.

Proudly known as America's Hometown, Plymouth County is a place where history and heritage are always close by, along with arts and culture, hospitality and natural beauty. Find out more about visiting Plymouth at seeplymouth.com

