



Hillwalkers Club

June 2016 - Sept 2016

<http://www.hillwalkersclub.com/>

# THE HILLWALKER



*Damien, Gavin, Soren, Maria, John, Brian & Udo in Kerry Photo -Tess Buckley*

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## Committee 2015/16

Chairman	Russell Mills
Treasurer	Ita O'Hanlon
Secretary	Mel O'Hara
Sunday Hikes Coordinator	Simon More
Environmental Officer	Adriana Alvarez Sanchez
Membership Secretary	Jim Barry
Club Promoter	Eugene Dudley
Administrator	Ita O'Hanlon
Club Social Coordinator	Eugene Dudley
Training Officer	Russell Mills
Newsletter Editor	Mel O'Hara

### Special thanks to:

Webmaster

Matt Geraghty

## HIKE PROGRAMME June 2016 – Sept 2016

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**MEET:** Corner of Burgh Quay and Hawkins St

**DEPART:** Sundays at 10.00 am (*unless stated otherwise*), or earlier if it is full.

**TRANSPORT:** Private bus (*unless stated otherwise*)

**COST:** €12.00 (*unless stated otherwise*)

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**2nd pick-up point:** *On the outward journey, the bus will stop briefly to collect walkers at the pick-up point. Should the bus be full on departure from Burgh Quay, this facility cannot be offered.*

**Return drop-off point:** *On the return journey, where indicated, the bus will stop near the outward pick-up point to drop off any hikers. We regret this is not possible on all hikes.*

*If you wish to avail of the 2<sup>nd</sup> pick-up point, it advisable to contact the hike leader or someone else who will definitely be on the hike, to let them know.*

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## GENERAL HIKE NOTES

**PARTICIPATION** Mountaineering is an activity with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants should be aware of and accept these risks. People who take part in our club activities do so at their own risk and are responsible for their own actions and involvement.

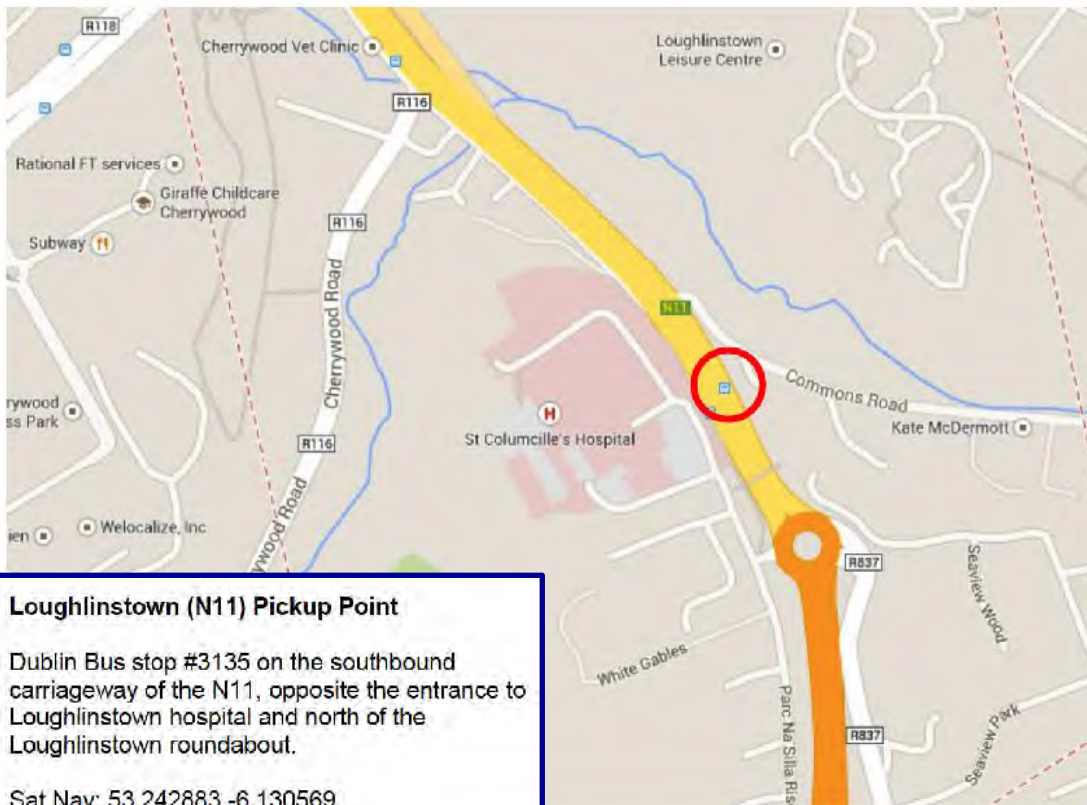
**CO-ORDINATION** If necessary, tickets are given out on Sundays to ensure that participants reserve a bus place as they arrive.

**LEADER** The leader has the right to refuse anyone who is not adequately equipped (e.g., without appropriate boots, rainwear, food, torch, hat, gloves, etc.). The leader may alter the route from that described in the program. The leader sets the pace of the hike and walkers are expected to obey the leader's instructions at all times.

**EQUIPMENT** It is essential to bring good rain gear (both jacket and over-trousers) and to leave cotton t-shirts and jeans at home! Boots must be sturdy with proper ankle support and a rigid non-slip sole such as Vibram.

**WALKING STICKS AND RUCKSACKS** Remember that walking sticks and rucksacks cannot be brought onto the bus and must be stowed away in the boot during the journey.

# The pick-up points



**Loughlinstown (N11) Pickup Point**

Dublin Bus stop #3135 on the southbound carriageway of the N11, opposite the entrance to Loughlinstown hospital and north of the Loughlinstown roundabout.

Sat Nav: 53.242883,-6.130569



**Rathfarnham Castle (R115) Pickup Point**

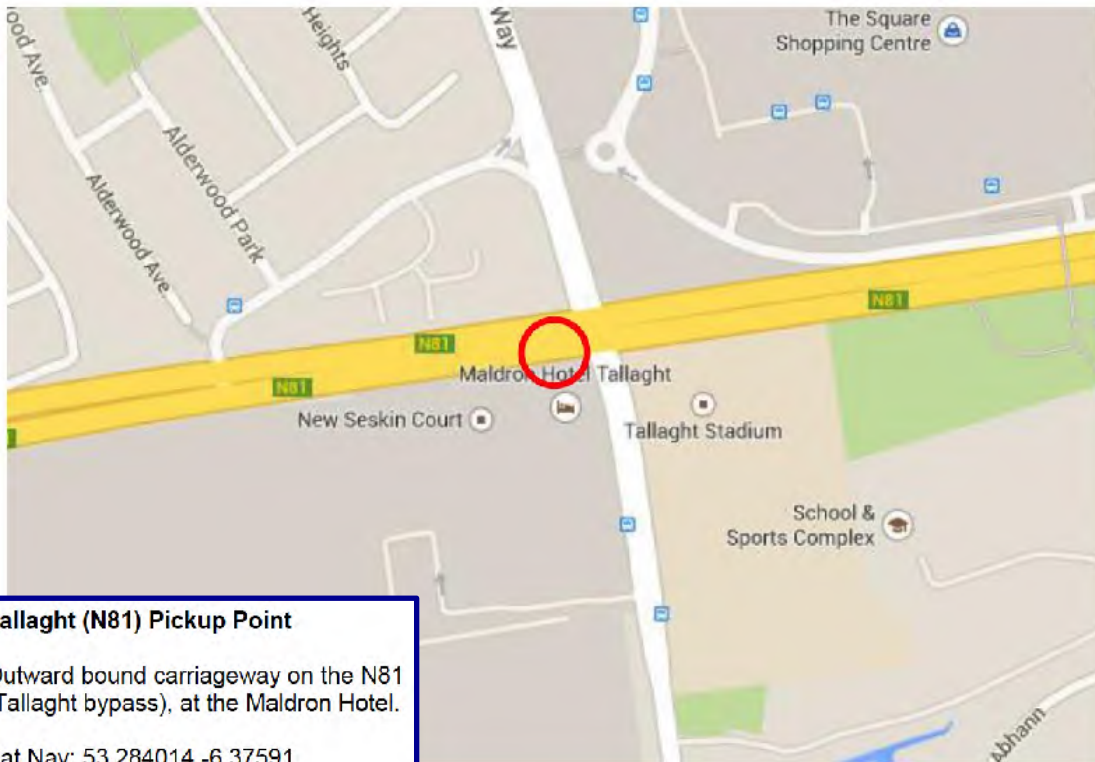
Dublin Bus stop #1304 on the southbound carriageway of the R115, close to Rathfarnham Castle and opposite Butterfield Ave.

Sat Nav: 53.29935,-6.283815

**Swords (R132) Pickup Point**

Dublin Bus stop #5074 on the northbound carriageway of the R132 (Swords bypass), south of the Swords Road - Malahide Road roundabout, adjacent to a footbridge and close to Pavillion Shopping Centre.

Sat Nav: 53.453170, -6.215920.



**Tallaght (N81) Pickup Point**

Outward bound carriageway on the N81 (Tallaght bypass), at the Maldron Hotel.

Sat Nav: 53.284014, -6.37591

## ★★ **Introductory hard hike** ★★

The Hillwalkers Club offers an Introductory Hike, usually on one Sunday per month. Guests are welcome to join us on this hike, as long as they provide their name, address and contact details for our records, which will be taken on the day of the hike. Unless guests have their own personal hiking insurance, they are not insured. There is no need to book a place in advance, just turn up on the relevant Sunday morning. Guests can come on one hike without becoming a member of the club, but after that they must join the club.

Even though the name of these hikes is 'Introductory Hike', they should not be considered to be an introduction to hiking, but rather as an introduction to the Hillwalkers Club and its hillwalking activities. Therefore, participants need to have a good level of personal fitness and, ideally, have some prior experience of hillwalking.

All intending participants should be aware that hillwalking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or even death. By walking with the club, they are aware of and shall accept these risks. Moreover, they acknowledge that they wish to participate in club activities in a voluntary capacity and that they shall be responsible for their own actions and involvement. Please note that as guests of the club, they do not enjoy personal accident insurance, which is otherwise offered to club members through Mountaineering Ireland. Further details are available from Mountaineering Ireland ([www.mountaineering.ie/membersandclubs/Insurance/default.aspx](http://www.mountaineering.ie/membersandclubs/Insurance/default.aspx))

*For further enquiries contact 086 356 3843*

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For Sunday hike leaders, the contact people for Mullally's Coaches are:

- Austin O'Hagan, 086 466 4680 - James Mullally, 086 383 7495 Micheál Martin, 085 102 2204

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**SATURDAY 4<sup>th</sup> June**

**\*\*Saturday Hike\*\***

**\*\*09.00 am departure\*\***

**from**

**Burgh Quay**

**Late return to Dublin**

**Galtee Mountains Walk**

**\*\*Special bus price of €20\*\***

**Stop for evening meal**

**Back in Dublin about 10.30 pm.**

**It's a Bank Holiday weekend!**

**Leader:** Søren Stuhr Mandrup

**No 2nd pick-up point**

**Route:**

Clydagh Bridge \* Cush \* Galtybeg \*  
Galtymore \* Slievecushnabinnia \* Farm  
road\* Clydagh Bridge

**Distance:** 14 km

**Ascent:** 940 m

**Map:** OSI 74

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**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June**

**Leader:** Eddie Redmond

**2nd pick-up & return drop-off point:**

Bus stop before roundabout at Loughlinstown

**Route:** Laragh \* Brockagh East \* Brockagh  
Mountain \* Tonelagee \* Glenmacnass \*  
Kanturk \* Brown Mountain \* Lough Dan \*  
Oldbridge

**Distance:** 18 km **Ascent:** 870 m

**Maps:** OSI 56,

East West Mapping (Lugnaquilla &

Glendalough also Wicklow Mountains West)

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**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

**\*\*Visit to the**

**Bog of Allen Nature Centre**

**& walk along the Grand Canal\*\***

**Special price of €22 includes**

**€12 bus fare &**

**€10 for entry to Nature Centre**

**Leader :** Adriana Alvarez Sanchez

**Route:** Visit to Bog of Allen Nature Centre

Lullymore House, Lullymore West,

Rathangan, Co. Kildare followed by walk

along the grand canal in Robertstown area

**Distance:** 14 – 16 kms **Ascent:** 50 m

**Map:** OSI 45

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**SATURDAY 25<sup>th</sup> June**

**Ring of Imaal  
Challenge Walk**

**No Sunday Hike**

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**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> July**

**Leader:** Steve Buckney

**2nd pick-up & set down stop:** bus stop near Rathfarnham Castle, Rathfarnham Road

**Route:** Sally Gap \* Carrigvore \* Gravale \* Duff Hill \* East Top \* Mullaghcleevaun \* Black Hill \* road to Zellers pub via Lacken

**Distance:** 16 km **Ascent:** 710 m

**Maps:** OSI 56 & East West Mapping (Dublin & North Wicklow Mountains)

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**SATURDAY 9<sup>th</sup> July**

**\*\* Saturday hike \*\***

**10 am departure  
from Burgh Quay**

**\*\* Finishing at the Glencree Centre  
for the Club BBQ \*\***

**\*\* Back in Dublin about 9.30 pm \*\***

**Leader:** Patricia Ging

**2nd pick-up & set down stop:** bus stop near Rathfarnham Castle, Rathfarnham Road

**Route:** Glencree Centre car park \* road \* McQuirke's Cottage \* Lough Bray Lower \* Eagle's Crag (530m) \* Kippure Mt (757m) \* Old Bog Road \* Featherbeds \* Glendoo Mt (590m) \* Knocknagun (555m) \* Mass Rock, Quarry, Oldboleys \* Forest \* Glencree Centre car park

**Distance:** 18 km **Ascent:** 630 m

**Maps:** OSI 50 & 56 East West Mapping (Dublin & North Wicklow Mountains)

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**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July**

**\*\*Introductory Hard Hike\*\***

**Leader:** Tom Hennessy

**2nd pick-up & return drop-off point:**  
Bus stop before roundabout at Loughlinstown

**Route:**

Glendalough visitor's carpark \* Ragman's Path \* Mullacor \* Lugduff \* Glendalough visitor's carpark

**Distance:** 19 km **Ascent:** 720 m

**Map:** OSI 56,  
East West Mapping (Lugnaquilla & Glendalough )

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**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> July**

**\*\*Travelling by Dublin Bus\*\***

Meeting at 9.45am at D'Olier Street, catching the 44 bus (leaving at 9.50am) to Enniskerry, or pick up on the way (Exact Fare €3.30, or Leap Card)

Travelling back either from Shop River on the 185 bus or from Enniskerry on the 44 bus.

**Leader:** Dave Jackson

**Route:** Stepside \* Three Rock-Fairy Castle \* Two Rock \* Boranaraltry-Wicklow Way \* Knocknagun \* Ravens Rock \* Shop River/Enniskerry

**Distance:** 15 km **Ascent:** 690 m

**Maps:** OSI 50 & 56 East West Mapping (Dublin & North Wicklow Mountains)

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**SATURDAY 30th July**

**\*\*Saturday Hike\*\***

**\*\*09.00 a.m. departure\*\***

**from Burgh Quay**

**Mourne Mountains Walk**

**Special price of €40 includes**

**€20 bus fare &**

**€20 for a four-course meal in**

**Newcastle, Co. Down after the walk**

**Late (~10.30 p.m.) return to Dublin**

**It's a Bank Holiday weekend**

**Leader :** Chris Byrne

**Route:** Moyad Rd \* Slieve Meelmore \* Slieve Bearnagh \* Hares Gap \* Brandy Pad \* Slieve Commedagh \* Slieve Donard \* Glen River \* Donard Forest \* Newcastle

**Distance:** 14 kms **Ascent:** 1400 m

**Map:** OSNI 29 or OSNI Activity Map "The Mournes including Slieve Croob"

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**Sunday August 7<sup>th</sup>**

**No Sunday Hike**

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**Sunday August 14<sup>th</sup>**

**No Sunday Hike**

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**Sunday August 21st**

**No Sunday Hike**

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**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> August**

**\*\*Introductory Hard Hike\*\***

**Leader:** James Cooke

**2nd pick-up & return drop-off point:**  
Bus stop at Loughlinstown roundabout

**Route:**

Enniskerry \* Knocksink Woods \* Prince  
William Seat \* Knocknagun \* Glendoo \*  
Massey's estate

**Distance:** 18 km **Ascent:** 630 m

**Map:** OSI 50 & 56, Harvey,  
East West Mapping (Dublin and North  
Wicklow)

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**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September**

**\*\* A Carlingford Walk \*\***

**\*\* Special bus price of €15 \*\***

**Leader :** Frank Rooney

**NO SECOND PICKUP / DROP OFF  
POINT**

**Route:** Ravensdale \* Cairnawaddy \* Windy  
Gap \* Ravens Rock \* The Split Rock \*  
Eagles Rock \* Slieve Foye \* Carlingford

**Distance:** 14 kms **Ascent:** 1400 m

**Map:** OSI 36 or OSNI 29

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## Club news and events

### Annual Club Barbeque

Eugene has organised the annual club barbeque at Glencree on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July. Patricia Ging has planned a nice hike for you beforehand should you wish to enjoy the barbeque treats totally guilt free.

As in previous years, all members and previous members, walking or not, are very welcome to attend. Please e-mail Eugene to let him know if you will be there for the barbeque and how you intend travelling, by club bus or by private transport, so he will know how many to cater for.

Eugene's e-mail address is [dudleye@hotmail.com](mailto:dudleye@hotmail.com)

### Ring of Imaal walk

The biennial Ring of Imaal walk will be held on Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> June  
see pages 17, 18 & 19

There will not be a club hike on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> because of this

### Day Trips away 2016

Simon has organised a very interesting calendar of day trips away through the Summer. This starts with a day trip to The Galtees led by Søren next Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, with the bus leaving Dublin at 09.00 rather than the usual 10.00 departure time.

Adriana is leading a trip to the Bog of Allen Nature Centre near Allenwood on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June followed by a walk along the canal.

On Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July Chris Byrne is leading a hike to the Mourne while on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September Frank Rooney is leading a hike in The Cooleys. See Hike Programme for additional details on these hikes.

The bus fares for the away days had to be increased as the bus company charges for the away days are considerably higher than for the usual Sunday Hikes

### Summer Trip away 2016

Inés and José have organised a great trip to Picos de Europa, a beautiful area of Northern Spain, during July. Members were informed of this trip by e-mail and the trip is now full with a waiting list in operation

## Club news and events continued

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### 2016 AGM Date

The AGM will be held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October  
at 20.00 in  
The Teacher's Club,  
36, Parnell Square West,  
Dublin 1

### Training Opportunities

Club Training officer Russell Mills is arranging Mountain Skills / Map & Compass training for club members on weekends in August and November. As the initial dates filled up quickly additional dates are now available, they are August 27/28 and November 19/20.

There will be a maximum of 6 people participating on the training weekends. Note that the course extends over both weekends, ( 4 days).

Please contact Russell at [mountaintrails.ie@gmail.com](mailto:mountaintrails.ie@gmail.com) for additional information

### Club membership

A current ( **GREEN** ) Hillwalkers Club membership card is a requirement for participation in the Sunday hikes **NO CARD – NO HIKE**

Membership cards are checked before boarding the bus.

Thank you for your co-operation and support with the membership card checking.

*Guests may sample only one hike before taking out membership*

**Club membership can be taken out and renewed on the club website see**

<http://www.hillwalkersclub.com/membership-application-form.php>

**and membership for 2015 – 2016 has been open from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015**

**If you have any difficulty using this facility please contact**

**Membership Secretary, Jim Barry, [barryja@eircom.net](mailto:barryja@eircom.net)**



# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Hi Hillwalkers,

As you probably already know, I am organizing a visit to the Bog of Allen, co. Kildare, in June. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the history and formation of the bogs in Ireland, and as we are always covered in their mud.... why not to learn How or Why? and, I am not questioning here our wild tendency to willingly go and get soaked, but the science of it :).

Now, more on the vegetation you will be familiar with from your Sunday hikes. Did you know that lichens are excellent indicators of Air Pollution? Lichens are very sensitive to pollutants in the air, especially to Sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), and have been used as monitors of relative air quality for over 100 years. They can be classified into three following major groups:



*Lecanora muralis*

Crustose lichens- are the most diverse group of lichens and often look like a thin crust. They attach themselves to surfaces almost like paint, and even thrive on concrete in towns.



The foliose group is also common, and you might encounter some on the hills. These are leafy, typically green or grey lichens, that can be abundant on trees. They are closely attached to the bark but unlike the crustose lichens, they are easily removed.

*Parmelia caperata*



The fruticose lichens, are shrubby lichens which resemble tangled beards and are loosely attached to the substrate.

*Usnea subfloridana*

Generally speaking, Crustose lichens (crusty in appearance) are more tolerant to pollution, while fruticose and foliose groups (shrubby and leafy) lichens are more sensitive to it, and so this response changes to different air pollutants, will help to assess the air quality in an area. Another indicator of air quality in an area is the lichen's size. As lichens grow really slowly, their size, along their type could indicate an improvement of air quality in the area of concern. Very good identification skills and statistics will be required if one wanted to carry out a proper assessment of air quality in an area. Above are just some tips for the lichen lover!

Adriana Alvarez Sanchez  
Environmental Officer

# HILLWALKERS CLUB ANNUAL SUMMER BBQ

**SATURDAY 9<sup>th</sup> July AT THE GLENCREE  
RECONCILIATION CENTRE.**



**BUS FROM BURGH QUAY AT 10AM,  
HIKE FIRST & BBQ LATER. (5.30PM)**

**To book your place please e-mail Eugene at  
[dudleye@hotmail.com](mailto:dudleye@hotmail.com)  
and let him know if you intend taking the club  
bus or are using private transport**

## Easter Trip to Kerry

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*Text Eugene Dudley*

### WATCH OUT HEALY RAES, HERE WE COME

The visit of President Barack Obama on Monday May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011 was the most memorable day in the history of the small midlands town of Moneygall, that is until, Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup> 2016 when the alternative leader of the free world, Commander in Chief, Jim Barry swept into town with his loyal and committed entourage of cheering hillwalkers

“

YES WE CAN, YES WE CAN” was the unison response from the ecstatic coach load of hillwalkers when Jim asked them could they be back on the bus in twenty minutes. We had arrived at the globally renowned Barack Obama Plaza and this was the first stop on our own Easter 2016 epic centenary event. Despite the understandable high level security and inevitable crowd crushes associated with such high profile visits, the hillwalkers, with the legendary discipline for which they are universally admired, had reboarded the bus in about half an hour and set off for their ultimate destination of Killarney in the Kingdom of Kerry.



*No stopping us now*

*Photo - Eugene Dudley*

The next stop was Lidl on the outskirts of Killarney. Here, in anticipation of Good Friday, when the state becomes a theocracy for a day and is as dry as Iran on any other Friday, the foresighted stocked up on a wide variety of relaxing and socialising beverages. From here we took the Tralee road until we came to the Ring of Kerry Road and went in the direction of Killorglin until we saw the Golden Nugget Pub in the village of Fossa, turn to the left and 200 metres later we were at our destination, Aghadoe House, an 18<sup>th</sup> century mansion set in 75 acres of gardens and forest, otherwise known as Killarney International Hostel. The original house was built in 1828 and probably redesigned in the 1860s. By 1894 it was the seat of Lord Headley and was burnt in 1922 but re-built to the same plan. This would be our home for Easter 2016 where we would be looked after by the manager John Claffey and his friendly and helpful staff. For four days they supplied us with breakfasts, packed lunches and dinners that consisted of nourishing starters followed by main courses that varied from pork chops to lasagne, fish, chicken, fresh vegetables, baby potatoes, chips and always followed by a weight watcher challenging desert. That evening the majority of the group made their way down to the Golden Nugget pub which is the social hub of the community and had a relaxing social evening over some nice pints and looked forward to the weekend ahead.



*On the Hydro Road heading for Caher and Carrauntoohil Photo – Tess Buckley*

On the morning of Good Friday the mood on the bus seemed somewhat contemplative and reflective, perhaps people were anticipating their own personal Via Dolorosa . However, while I wasn't counting, I heard no reports of anybody falling three times.

The original objectives were to climb to the summits of Carrauntoohil and Caher however we were about to experience an enactment of Aesop's classic fable about the tortoise and the hare. The starting point was from the Breanlee Hydro road and the first group started at a pace that indicated they were determined to make and break a land speed record several times over. They were followed shortly by the second group of walkers at a steadier pace. The walkers ascended steadily passed Lough Eighter onto Lyreboy and moving towards Caher but from the very start, to echo the words of Demis Roussos, our friend the wind was coming from the west, and it was extremely strong, obstructing progress and blowing some of their feet. All the way up the second group was meeting people descending, experienced climbers and local guides, they said it was not safe and turning back was recommended. The group continued onwards and upwards until the erstwhile tortoises encountered the early morning hares waiting as the wild winds had no respect for their strength and speed. From that point the group travelled as one and quite sensibly the leaders decided to re-route. The remainder was an extremely rewarding hike with beautiful views. It followed sheep tracks and access roads towards the Lack road and Kerry Way to Lough Acoose and on to the coffee pot café beside Kate Kearney's cottage for refreshments and then through the Gap of Dunloe to our hostel.



*Retreat from Caher*

*Photo – Tess Buckley*

Following showers and dinner many hillwalkers retired to the spacious and comfortable adjoining reception rooms with the welcoming warmth of a roaring log fire. There then followed an enjoyable evening of song, laughter and conversation lubricated by the supplies purchased the evening before and ably helped along by the unbelievable virtuoso guitar playing of Udo "Name that Tune" Sap who kept us well entertained with his large repertoire of classic songs and music.



*Jim keeps tabs on the flock with Caher in the distance Photo = Tess Buckley*

On Easter Saturday, despite persistent hail, rain and wind, there was a very rewarding walk on the Dingle peninsula. The walk commenced, in full rain gear, from Ballyduff. We walked up the hauntingly beautiful and isolated Glennahoo valley along the Maghanaboe (milking field of the cow) track and waterfall. Negotiating the crossing of the waterfall in the difficult weather conditions presented some challenges but these were overcome through the calm assistance from four volunteers who ensured that the rest of their comrades crossed safely. From there the Hillwalkers followed the plateau path to Anascaul Glen down the track to Lake Anascaul for a quick lunch break.

Following lunch we wound our way towards the home of an unsung Irish hero. In this year of celebrated centenary the hillwalkers in Kerry this Easter acknowledged the centenary of another heroic event. One hundred years ago on Easter Monday, April 24th 1916 that humble son of Anascaul, Tom Crean began his historic and heroic sea and land voyage of 800 miles, from Elephant Island to South Georgia in a 22 foot boat named the James Caird and got the help that saved the lives of his 22 fellow seamen. In a world where there are many fakes he was a genuine hero who didn't have to die to become one and indeed saved lives rather than take them. As we made our way down these narrow country roads and lanes part of our group made their way to Ballynacourty Graveyard, the last resting place of Tom Crean who died seven days after his 61<sup>st</sup> birthday in 1938. He lies there together with his wife Ellen, who survived him by thirty years and one of their daughters, Katie, who had predeceased them both and the epitaph on his grave are the appropriate words from Robert Louis Stevenson "*Home is the sailor, home from the sea*".



*Crossing Abhainn Macha na mBó with a little manhandling Photo Tess Buckley*



*The Garrivagh River*

*Photo – Tess Buckley*

The remainder of the group made their way to Anascaul Village to prepare the way in the South Pole Inn, the pub that Tom Crean owned and ran following his retirement from Antarctic exploration. Here there was welcoming open roaring fire to warm a multitude if access to it had not been hogged by a particular anti-social element and you know who you are (Fiona). It was not long before the entire group was united again in the South Pole Inn with rounds of hot ports, hot whiskeys and creamy pints to ward off the cold and drive out the damp.



*Annascaul Lake comes into view*

*Photo – Tess Buckley*

On the Saturday evening immediately after a satisfying dinner a small, yet determined, group of committed socialisers, using the initiative and survival skills perfected through experience of numerous Hillwalker away weekends, made their way to the tourist capital of Kerry to bestow on the locals the pleasure of their wit, wisdom and engaging personalities. The evenings events started at a measured pace with a quiet warm up in O’Callaghan’s, this was complimented by a number of recces and reports back to identify other potential hostelries for our attention. The best of these was Courtneys where a number of rounds were consumed. While very busy it had a good atmosphere, a nice coal fire, good music sounds and a fine selection craft beers and whiskeys. The group settled here for a time while also engaging in outreach exercises in search of our next objective. At last in the late hours of the night we descended on Scotts night club with live music and the cream of Killarney's reveling youth (or as we say An Óige, geddit).

Somehow, at some time in a brief moment of inexplicable lucidity one of the party looked at their watch to discover that it was 1.30am only then to remember that the clocks were going forward that night and it was actually 2.30am and only five hours to breakfast. These ever responsible hillwalkers left the club immediately to head for home but first, just one more drink, in a venue that shall remain nameless ( due exclusively to a collective lack of recollection). All the members of this adventurous group returned to the hostel safely around 3.30am or thereabouts, certainly not long after this, well definitely before breakfast.



*Gavin on Drishana above the Black Valley ..... Photo – Tess Buckley*

On the sixteenth Easter Sunday of the second millennium there were many who rose however in some cases this had more of a miraculous feel to it given the activities of the previous night. The walk on this day was very scenic and began at Derrycunihy Church near Galway's Bridge. The hike followed the Kerry Way track to Lord Brandon's cottage and via the Black Valley to the Head of the Gap. Around this point those taking the hard hike variation proceeded to Drishana and onto Cnoc na Tarbh, Cnoc an Bhraca and then via Strickeen to the Turf Road track through the Gap of Dunloe to Kate Kearney's Cottage where they rejoined the larger group in the Coffee Pot Café.

In the evening following dinner and some rest and relaxation watching Father Ted in the lounge, the majority of the Hillwalkers group visited the Golden Nugget where the local GAA were celebrating a cup victory so the atmosphere was lively. The hillwalkers themselves were chatty but energy levels were low given the exertions of the last few days and nights.

All good things come to an end and on Easter Monday morning the tired but happy group packed their bags, ate their breakfasts and said their goodbyes to Aghadoe House and its friendly staff and boarded their bus. The day's ultimate destination was Dublin, but not directly. After traveling a short distance, on the outskirts of Killarney, we came to Muckross House, gardens and grounds.

Muckross House is 6 kilometres from the town of Killarney and is located on the small Muckross Peninsula between Muckross Lake and Lough Leane, two of the lakes of Killarney. Muckross House is a mansion designed by the Scottish architect, William Burn, built in 1843 for Henry Arthur Herbert and his wife, the watercolourist Mary Balfour Herbert. With sixty five rooms, it was built in the Tudor style. Extensive improvements were undertaken in the 1850s in preparation for the visit of Queen Victoria in 1861. It is said that these improvements for the Queen's visit were a contributory factor in the financial difficulties suffered by the Herbert family which resulted in the sale of the estate.

In 1899 it was bought by Arthur Guinness, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Ardilaun who wanted to preserve the dramatic landscape. In August 1911, not long before the first world war, Muckross House and its demesne were again sold to William Bowers Bourn, a wealthy Californian mining magnate. He and his wife passed it to their daughter Maud and her husband Arthur Rose Vincent as a wedding present. The couple lived there until Maud's death in 1929. In 1932 her parents and her husband decided to present Muckross House and its 11,000 acre estate to the Irish nation. Being called the "Bourne-Vincent Memorial Park", it thus became the first National Park in the state and formed the basis of present day Killarney National Park. In later years the park was substantially expanded by the acquisition of land from the former Earl of Kenmare's estate.

The weather this day was glorious and our walk was to be the 15 kilometre loop walk around Muckross Lake. The walk began in the manicured garden of Muckross House leading to a wooded area before emerging into a beautiful shore side walk finishing with the pleasure of a relaxing coffee and snack in the cafe adjacent to the Mansion. After this it was all aboard the bus and straight to Dublin.....or was it??

What did we do to deserve these blessings? Can life get any better? Did we do something unbelievably good in a previous life to explain the benefits we are receiving in this life? These must have been some of the questions spinning through the minds of Moneygall natives as they pinched themselves back to reality. Some may even have mused as to whether this might be the oft foretold second coming. Just as the excitement of the previous Thursday in this small Offaly town was subsiding Commander Jim Barry, in appropriate presidential style, once again swept into the Barack Obama Plaza. Jim and his hillwalkers fanned out through the complex. Wherever they went, whether Papa Johns, Supermacs or under the tree at Spar the visitors from Dublin found a cheery smiling welcome as they mixed and conversed effortlessly with the locals while downing their chicken burger meals, carvery of the day sandwiches (toasted or plain) and a wide variety of other local delicacies.

Having satisfied their appetites the Hillwalkers once again made their farewells and hit the road. At about 7.30pm on Georges Quay, Dublin the coach decanted its group of tired but happy Hillwalkers left with their fond memories of Easter in Kerry where there was barely a Healy Rae in sight.



*Boys will be boys*

*Photo – Tess Buckley*



## Ring of Imaal Challenge Walk Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2016

The Ring of Imaal Challenge Walk, under the auspices of An Óige, the Irish Youth Hostel Association, is taking place on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2016

The walk will start and finish at Donard Primary School, Donard Village, Glen of Imaal.

**Registration Time – 07.00 to 08.15 only**

**Entry Fee - €25**

**The event, which can take from 8 to 11 hours to complete, is for experienced and fit hillwalkers with competent navigation skills**

**Route:** Donard Village, Davidstown, Keadeen, Ballinfoyle, Ballynabarney Gap, Ballincedden, Slieve Maan, Lugnaquilla, Camenabulogue, Table Track, Table Mountain, Wexford Gap, Kavanagh's Gap, Lobawn, Track to Bolton's Yard, Donard Primary School . ( 35 kms with 1800m of ascent approximately )

**PARTICIPANTS MUST REACH TABLE TRACK BEFORE 17.00**

**Checkpoints** – Donard Primary School, Base of Keadeen, Summit of Keadeen, Ballynabarney, Slieve Maan, Lugnaquilla, Table Track, Lobawn, Donard Primary School.

**PLEASE NOTE** –The walk route may be altered without advance notice at the discretion of the organising committee for safety or other reasons.

Certificates of participation will be awarded to all walkers who present their completed checkpoint card at Donard Primary School provided it has been certified by an authorised official at all checkpoints

Completed application forms with entry fee (cheque or postal order, no cash please) should be posted to

Ring of Imaal 2016, c/o An Óige Head Office, 61 Mountjoy Street, Dublin 7.

For additional information :-

Please contact James Barry, [barryja@eircom.net](mailto:barryja@eircom.net) or 087 2737 338 ( evenings only)



## An Óige Ring of Imaal Marathon Walk 2016

Saturday, 25th June, 2016

### Conditions of Entry

1. It is a condition of entry that all persons taking part do so at their own risk.
2. Participants are not to undertake this marathon walk, if they have any known serious ailment or are on any form of medication that could hinder their ability to undertake the walk safely without possible risk to health and wellbeing. If in any doubt, this matter should be raised with your doctor.
3. Participants must commence the walk between 7.00am - 8.15am.
4. Walkers who have not arrived at the Table Track Checkpoint before 5.00pm must withdraw from the walk.
5. Walkers must advise a steward of their intention to withdraw from the walk and should surrender the entry card at this point. Participants must confirm their safe return in Donard by reporting back to the Control Centre at Donard Primary School prior to leaving for home.
6. A *Certificate of Participation* will be issued to participants who complete the walk before 8.00pm on presentation of a card containing authorised signatures from each of the designated checkpoints.
7. **PARTICIPANTS ARE STRICTLY FORBIDDEN TO ENTER ARMY LANDS OTHER THAN THE APPROVED WALKING ROUTE AND DESIGNATED ESCAPE ROUTES**
8. Participants should be prepared for adverse weather conditions and be suitably equipped as follows: wear suitable walking boots, bring protective clothing/rainwear, adequate food and water, map(s), compass, whistle, mobile phone, torch, small first aid kit, survival bag, etc.
9. Proficiency in mountain navigation is an essential requirement for all participants.
10. In all matters arising in connection with the walk, the decision of the organising committee is final.
11. **As most of the walk traverses both private property and Army lands, it is important not to deviate from the designated route.**
12. The organising committee or the school authorities are not responsible for any personal belongings left at the school.



# An Óige Ring of Imaal Marathon Walk 2016

## APPLICATION FORM

PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ **Mobile** \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Age if under 18 \_\_\_\_\_

Name of next of kin \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number of next of kin \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide details if walking as part of a group or club:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

ENTRY FEE: €25.00                      PAYMENT METHOD \_\_\_\_\_

**I have read the rules and accept all the conditions of entry.**

**I accept that I am responsible for my own safety and accept that the walk organisers cannot be held responsible for any mishap or injury to myself, however caused.**

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_