

An Óige Hillwalkers Club

February 2009

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

THE HILLWALKER



Hillwalkers enjoying the Christmas break

Above: Christmas Party in Knockree Hostel (Annemarie Keoghan)

Right: Lugnaquilla on New Year's Day (Leo Oman)



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HIKE PROGRAMME February 2009

MEET: Burgh Quay

DEPART: Sundays at 10.00 am

TRANSPORT: Private Bus

COST: €12.00 (unless stated otherwise)

2nd pick-up point: *The bus picks up walkers who are already at the designated point. It won't be waiting and places cannot be guaranteed as the bus may be full at Burgh Quay.*

2nd drop-off point: *Where indicated in the programme below, the bus will drop off hikers at the 2nd pick-up point on the return journey, unless circumstances dictate otherwise. We regret that this is not possible on all routes.*

8 February 2009 ---Glendalough Circuit

Leader: Brian Flynn

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

Route: Glendalough * Tracks and Ragman's Path to Shay Elliott * Drumgoff * Coolalingo Bridge * Cullentragh * Derrybawn Forrest * Glendalough.

Distance: 17km **Ascent:** 550m

Map: OS 56, Harvey

15 February 2009 ---Ballynatona to Ballyknockan

Leader: Brendan Magee

2nd pick-up & return drop-off point: Pond at Sean Moore Park on Tallaght By-Pass.

Route: Forest Entrance Ballynatona (GR 055 138) * Forest Tracks * Sorrel Hill * Ballynultagh Gap * Forest Tracks * SH 541m * Billy Byrne's Gap * Moanbane * Silsean * Ballyknockan Car Park.

Distance: 18km **Ascent:** 780m

Map: OS 56, Harvey

22 February 2009 ---Glendalough Alternative Circuit

Leader: Deirdre Muldowney

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

Route: Glendalough Visitor Centre * St. Kevin's Way * Forest Track * Camaderry Mtn * Turlough Hill * Glenealo River * Miners Track * Glendalough Visitor Centre.

Distance: 16km **Ascent:** 700m

Map: OS 56, Harvey

Sunday, 1 March 2009

---Introductory Hillwalkers Hike Sally Gap to Ballynultagh Gap

Leader: Brian Madigan

2nd pick-up point: Bus stop at Rathfarnham Castle, before the Yellow House.

Route: Sally Gap * Carrigvole * Gravale * Duff Hill * Mullaghcleevaun East Top * Mullaghcleevaun * Black Hill * Ballynultagh Gap.

Distance: 15km **Ascent:** 700m

Map: OS 56, Harvey

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.

INTRODUCTORY HIKES An Introductory Hike is organised once per month for aspirant members. Any participant on these hikes must be a member of An Óige.

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, hat, gloves, etc).

Don't forget your torch, spare batteries & bulb!

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.

Any club member interested in leading a hike,
please contact *Gerry Walsh*:
hillwalking@hotmail.com

WALKING IN WICKLOW

New Year's Day above the clouds



Lunch on top of Lugnaquilla. Photo: Leo Oman

What a day for a hike! A lucky 13 turned up and were well rewarded.

When I drove from Tallaght at 9.45 am, my car was reading 5°C; at Donard it was minus 1°C. As we departed the car park at 11.10 am to start our walk, it was 3°C with the sun shining.

We reached the summit at 1.10 pm having walked over frozen ground which we found hard to pierce with our walking poles. The place was crowded with people coming and going as we ate our lunch. We sat in 8°C, in brilliant sunshine, but at the same time feeling very cold with a clear sky over us, and surrounded by a low cloud ceiling covering all the mountain tops around us. It was as if we were in a plane above the cloud line, and everybody was talking about the view.

We started back down at 1.40 pm and were glad to be on the move again. We then proceed to climb Sliabh Mean and Sliabh Bhuaile an Fheadáin in temperatures ranging from 5°C to 9°C. We arrived back in the car park at 4.10 pm where we retired to Fenton's for one for the road.

I knew how exceptional the day was when Pearse Foley told me that, in all the times he has climbed Lug he never experienced anything like it and will remember it for the rest of his life.

Go raibh maith agat to our leader Jim Barry who carried out his duty despite a back injury.

Leo Oman

Tom Milligan's Annual Ballinacorbeg Hike

In the early 1990's I helped out with the An Óige Newcomers hikes. The most committed and hardworking of leaders at that time was a veteran An Óige man named Liam Cunningham. Liam led the hikes while I assisted him in filling the bus by organising a harder hike on the same day. Liam spent a huge amount of time in studying maps for possibly new and interesting routes, while I accompanied him on his many reconnaissances.

One of his favourite 'discoveries' was Ballinacorbeg Mountain a few kilometres south of Roundwood. It was he who organised the first ramble up and around that hill on the way to Lough Dan during the series of 'Old An Óige Hostels' walks he was organising at that time. The walk commenced at Derrylossery churchyard, the burial place of President Erskine Childers, and made its way upwards through well-tended fields to the trig pillar at the top. Heading downwards to the Avonmore River, it meandered through ancient fields and scenes of agricultural times past as it visited old deserted dwellings, making progress through pleasant forestry and down through Oldbridge, Lough Dan, and out onto the Military Road where the trusty and ancient bus awaited. I produced two further variations from Oldbridge. One of these (19km) rose from the Oldbridge Road to Scarr and down to the Wicklow Way, out again onto the Oldbridge road, down to Annamoe and up again onto Ballinacorbeg before returning to Derrylossery. The other (32km) diverted at Scarr towards Glenmacnass, upwards towards Tonelegee but turning leftwards towards Mall Hill and down the long forestry road out onto the Military Road near Laragh. The Wicklow Way was then followed up to Paddock Hill and out onto the Oldbridge road. From there it was Annamoe, Ballinacorbeg and Derrylossery.

Over the years it has become more difficult to do this walk. The extra sensitivity of rural folk to people walking on their property now requires a list of permissions for access to be sought. The increase in housing in fields we used to walk through, the growth of trees planted in the late 1980's making our passage through them

more difficult each year, all make our early treks along this route now seem like a memory from a lost time before the Celtic Tiger.

On our Hillwalkers Introductory Hike last Sunday (1st February) we had a full complement of thirty-three walkers. The weather was dry but very cold. A tributary of the Avonmore River was in flood, requiring a re-route through higher farmers fields. Later, at a place where we normally access a field and a forest through which we must pass in order to reach Oldbridge, we now encountered a 'No Trespassing. Private Property' sign. Yes, indeed, the times they are a-changing, and I wonder how long, if at all, we can continue to do this excellent trek in its present form. Maybe we should call that old An Óige war-horse, Liam Cunningham, out of his comfortable retirement in Coolock to look into his crystal ball and divine a new route for us!

Tom Milligan

NB: The owners of the lands of Ballinacorbeg, beside Derrylossery, don't wish to have hikers walking up and around Ballinacorbeg Mountain. These fields and pastures are actively farmed and have livestock thereon, and while the owners are the most pleasant of people they ask that their wishes be respected. Tom Milligan obtained prior permission for the hike he describes above but stresses that this is a once per year concession only.

CLUB NEWS

Congratulations to club member

Frances Gibney

who reached 6,400m on the ascent of Aconcagua (6,962m) before strong winds forced her party to turn back.



Well done, Frances, and we look forward to hearing all about the trek!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Easter Weekend 2009

9 – 13 April 2009

Ambleside Youth Hostel

Leader: Jim Barry

**THIS TRIP IS NOW FULLY BOOKED.
WAITING LIST ONLY.**

Full details on page 7



JUNE BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND

29 May – 1 June 2009

ERRIGAL HOSTEL



Positioned at the foot of Donegal's highest mountain, Errigal, and close to the edge of Dunlewey Lough, the Errigal Hostel has brand new and state-of-the-art facilities.

► www.errigalhostel.com.

Further details of the trip will be published in the next edition of the newsletter.



Pyrenean Haute Route

Early August 2009

Leader: Mark Campion

Hiking 6-8 hours per day for approx. 7 days; high level of fitness required; steep rocky sections and some exposure; overnights in mountain refuges.

Enquiries: campion@ireland.com

Membership 2008/2009

Club membership currently stands at 105. Our thanks go to all members who have re-subscribed for the current year, as well as to all newcomers who recently joined the club.

ART O'NEILL 2009



There was a time in the past when as little as four people turned up to do the annual Art O'Neill Walk in commemoration of the escape of Red Hugh O'Donnell and Art and Henry O'Neill in January 1592. On the night of Friday, 9th January 2009, the scene was entirely different. Organised in support of Stuart Mangan, a young lad of twenty-six from Fermoy, Co. Cork, who had suffered a permanently disabling injury during a game of rugby, the event had much of the razzmatazz associated with great sporting occasions. In this instance 196 participants and their friends turned up in the courtyard of Dublin Castle as early as two hours before the starting time of midnight. The first thing they heard was the music provided by the Red Bull music wagon as their disc jockeys played a continuous stream of upbeat sounds to entertain everyone present. Free refreshments from the same enterprise were available also to everyone. Organised mainly by Gearóid Towey, Olympian and cross-Atlantic rower, a personal friend of Stuart Mangan, and mountain runner Paul Mahon, great efforts had been made to make the event a success. As the time for departure approached, Gearóid gave a rousing speech to explain the reason for the event and afterwards Paul spoke about some safety matters concerning the forthcoming trek. Immediately after these niceties there was a surge of people out of Dublin Castle courtyard past the Tower from which Art, Hugh and Henry, escaped as they made their way out onto Ship Street and on their way to the Dublin Hills.

The first drop-out was at the Old Mill crossroads in Tallaght at 10km. At Stone Cross, 5km later, another person withdrew. At the end of this road section of the Walk at Kippure Estate, the first checkpoint at 25km, twelve more people withdrew. This was the place where the participants generally separated into groups led by experienced hillwalkers as they headed up Ballinabrocky Mountain, the start of the open mountains. Ballynultagh Gap at 33km saw a further twelve people withdraw

before the ascent of Black Hill, still in darkness. The second checkpoint at 43km, Ballinagee Bridge, not far from the Wicklow Gap, gave a welcome break to the walkers as they partook of the porridge provided by Odlums. Unfortunately, 30 more walkers called it a day here after a very difficult passage through rough terrain from Ballynultagh Gap. It should be mentioned that 11 ultra mountain runners had started from Dublin Castle at 2am and had caught up with the fastest walkers around here. The fastest runner, Eoin Keith, had passed everyone long before this!

The final section was a mere 12km in length, up to Art's Memorial at the top of the Glenreemore Brook, on to Art's Cross and, passing Three Lakes, down to the finish at Baravore car park in Glenmalure. However, this was the most tiring part for many as they dug deep into their reserves of stamina. Eoin Keith, the runner, completed the 55km distance in 6hrs 40 mins, while the first group of walkers arrived in 12 hours, the second and third in 15 hours/15hrs 15mins and the last one in 16hrs 15mins. Other individuals arrived at varying times between the groups.

As with all successful events, the importance of volunteers in making things run smoothly and safely is vital. This event was no different. There were countless people helping out with registration at Dublin Castle, many more providing food, drink and heating at Kippure Estate and likewise at Ballinagee Bridge and at the finish in Glenmalure. There were also several hiking leaders who brought groups safely through the mountains to accomplish their goal. Thanks to them, and especially Gearóid and Paul who organised everything, for making the occasion a memorable and worthwhile happening for everyone. A special 'thank you' to Red Bull for providing refreshments and entertainment, Odlums for the porridge, and all those who generously provided lighting, cameras, tables and generators when required throughout the trek. Media partners on this occasion were the personnel of 'The Outsider' magazine. Many thanks to everyone for helping to make the event a great success, not only for the participants, but chiefly for Stuart Mangan.

Tom Milligan

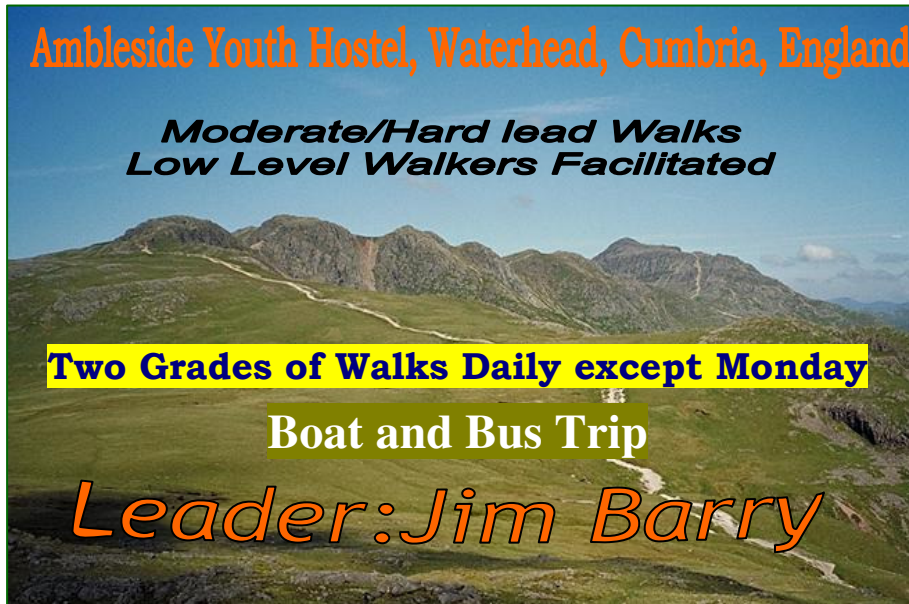
- ▶ www.artoneillchallenge.com
- ▶ www.stuartmangan.org

An Óige Hillwalkers Club

Easter Weekend 2009

Thursday 9th - Monday 13th April 2009

Visit to the Beautiful Scenic Lake District County of Cumbria, Northwest England



Proposed Weekend Itinerary

- ✓ North Western Fells: Cat Bells (GR 244 199) Dale Head (GR 223 153)
- ✓ Western Fells: Great Gable (GR 211 103)
- ✓ Southern Fells: Bow Fell (GR 245 064) / Crinkle Crag (GR 249 049)
- ✓ Low level walkers facilitated at each of the above locations
- ✓ Social Events

British Ordnance Survey Maps 1:50.000 Landranger Series, Sheet 90

Notes

- Accommodation:** Ambleside Youth Hostel, Waterhead, Ambleside, Cumbria
- Cost:** € 330 (Includes Bed Nights, Meals, Transport)
- Booking:** € 150 **NON REFUNDABLE deposit** to An Óige Head Office (01-8304555) by credit card or cash deposit. **Balance of € 180** to be paid before Friday 13th March, as hostel has to be paid in full at this time.
- Meals:** Hostel Breakfast, Dinner and Packed Lunch included in the price.
- Food:** As above - stopping at local shops for extras etc.
- Bring:** **Sterling Currency**, Suitable Walking Boots/Rainwear/Change of Warm Clothing/Towels/Toilet Gear/Flask/Torch/First Aid Kit/Camera/Binoculars etc.
- Meeting Place/Time:** Stena Line Departure Terminal, Dun Laoghaire at **10.15am**
- Departure:** Holy Thursday from **Dun Laoghaire to Holyhead at 11am sharp on HSS Stena Line**. *Please note: Ferry times are subject to alteration at short notice.*
- Return:** Monday evening from **Holyhead on 3.30pm Ferry** after bus journey from Lake District to arrive back in **Dun Laoghaire at 5.30pm** approx.

Welcome Aboard!