

An Óige Hillwalkers Club

July & August 2009

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

THE HILLWALKER



*Lillian Grandfield and her friend Gretta walking along the Camino in Northern Spain.
Photo: Matt Geraghty*

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HIKE PROGRAMME

July & August 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.*

19 July 2009

---Lugnaquilla

Leader: Paul Smith & Deirdre Corrigan

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

Route: Glenmalure Zig Zag Track (GR 088 219) * Carrawaystick Brook * Kelly's Lough * Carrawaystick Mtn * Corriganleggaun Mtn * Lugnaquilla Mtn * Cloghernagh Mtn * Zig Zag Track to finish (GR 088 219).

Distance: 16km **Ascent:** 850m

Map: OS 56, Harvey

26 July 2009

---Luggala to Laragh

Leader: Tom Kenny

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

Route: Carpark GR 137 087 * Luggala * Cloghoge Brook * Knocknacloghoge * Inchavore River * Kanturk * Scarr * Paddock Hill * Laragh.

Distance: 16km **Ascent:** 900m

Maps: OS 56, Harvey

02 August 2009 NO SUNDAY HIKE

09 August 2009 NO SUNDAY HIKE

16 August 2009 NO SUNDAY HIKE

23 August 2009

---Djouce to Pier Gates

Leader: Bill Fine

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

Route: Forest Corner (GR 210 107) * Wicklow Way Track * Djouce * Coffin Stone * Sheepbank Bridge * Cloghoge River * Luggala Mtn * Cloghoge Brook * Knocknacloghoge * Green Road * Pier Gates.

Distance: 17km **Ascent:** 800m

Maps: OS 56, Harvey

30 August 2009

---The Cooley Mountains

Leader: Martin Fagan

Route: NW of Ravensdale (Tain Way GR 083 145) * Black Mountain * Spot Height 475 * The Windy Gap * Ravens Rock * Eagles Rock * Carlingford Mountain * Slieve Foye * Tain Way * Carlingford.

Distance: 13km **Ascent:** 1300m

Map: OS 36

NOTE: The bus cost will be **€15** for this trip and the bus will depart at **9.30am**.

6 September 2009

---Scarr Excursion

Introductory Hillwalkers Hike

Leader: Philip Hayden

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

Route: Glenmacnass Waterfall * Spot Height 668 * Mall Hill * Ford (GR 134 991) * Spot Height 418 * Scarr * Kanturk * GR 149 031 (Lough Dan).

Distance: 17km **Ascent:** 800m

Maps: 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.

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.

LEADER The leader has the right to refuse anyone who is not adequately equipped. 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.

Club members interested in leading a hike, please contact Gerry Walsh:
hillwalking@hotmail.com

FURTHER AFIELD

Spirit of the Camino de Santiago



Lillian and Matt set out from St Jean on the first day of their trek. Photo: Matt Geraghty

For some time we've been intrigued with the Camino de Santiago. So rather than thinking about it for much longer we decided to embark on a section of it ourselves.

The Camino de Santiago, or The Way of St. James, is a 780 km walk along the north of Spain and takes at least 6-7 weeks or so to complete in total.

We wanted a taste of the pilgrimage and in May 2009, my husband Matt, my friend Gretta and I set out to walk from St. Jean Pied de Port to Pamplona over three days.

From Pamplona I arranged (with some effort I might add as I don't have a word of Spanish) a taxi to take us to the town of St. Jean some 70kms away. We bundled ourselves into the taxi and set off on a 1 hour 20 minute scenic drive over the mountains. Our utter lack of the Spanish tongue did not hinder our driver from chatting the entire way giving us what I believed to be heights and distances of important features on the trail as we drove past them. The three of us could only nod

with expressions of both bewilderment and appreciation. On reaching the top of one particular pass he pulled over and ushered us out to admire the view of the verdant and undulating Basque countryside.



The path from St Jean leads up through the Pyrenees from France into Spain. Photo: Matt Geraghty

St. Jean Pied de Port is a quaint and historic French town which oozes character and atmosphere. It has a striking age-old stone bridge, a fourteenth century church, cobble stone streets and lots of interesting shops selling jewellery, pottery, textiles, chocolates and many other nice things.

In the town we registered for our pilgrim's pass and received our very own scallop shell. The pass would be stamped every evening in the pilgrims' hostel as a record of the journey.

We were staying at the L'Esprit de Chemin, a pilgrims' hostel run by volunteers Ruberta and Arno, a Dutch couple who would head back home for the winter. The whole ethos of the pilgrim hostel is to take time out to recover from the day's walking, eat dinner together with other pilgrims and get a good rest for the following day.

Ruberta cooked up a storm of home made mushroom soup followed by beetroot and goat's cheese tart served with couscous and vegetables. It was surprisingly filling. Two of the guests had already walked some distance from Le Puy in France and were licking their wounds for a few days before setting off again.

Day 1

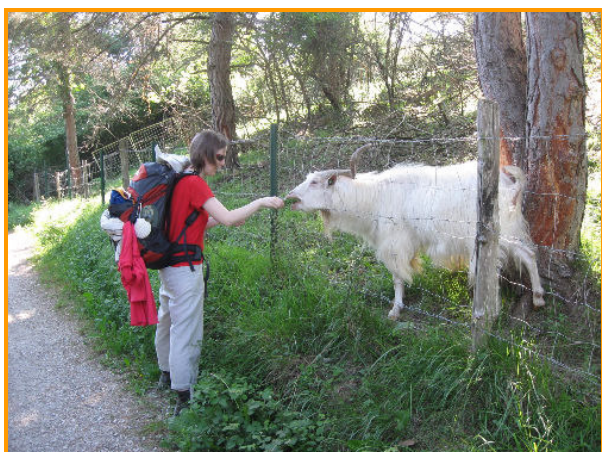
We, however, were full of energy the following day and set off at full steam at 8am. In 15 minutes the beautiful town was behind us and we were surrounded by shimmering trees, hayfields and the sunlit Camino stretched out in front of us. It certainly felt like setting out on an adventure. The path

was quiet enough as we had started out late by most other pilgrim's standards.

The road was not dissimilar to that leading up to the Gap of Dunloe in Kerry and there was a good steady pull. Above us soared numerous buzzards and vultures but these were outdone by the graceful swoops of the eagles whose wing span was breathtaking.



*One of the many birds of prey soars overhead.
Photo: Matt Geraghty*



Lillian feeds a local goat. Photo: Matt Geraghty

The paved track soon turned to gravel though it was still well-marked. We had brought maps of the Camino with us so the route was easy to follow. Having said that, there were many warnings against taking our chosen route, namely the Route de Napoleon, in adverse weather conditions.

We walked a long day to arrive in Roncesvalles at about 5.30 pm. Now we felt like pilgrims. We turned into the first building we reached, an imposing monastery where our passes were stamped and we were led into a compact room with at least 18 bunks. There was a "healthy" smell of walking boots and the anticipation of those waiting in line for the one and only shower was palpable. After another hearty pilgrims meal needless to say we fell fast asleep despite the cramped conditions.

Day 2

The next morning the sun shone down on us as we headed off down a tree-lined path towards Burgette, a pretty little town of shuttered windows where Hemingway liked to do a spot of trout fishing. This day was easier as the terrain was relatively flat and the walk was made more interesting by the little towns along the way. The day was hot and we filled the water bottles at the many potable water fountains that were to be found along the route. After 7 hours or so of walking, made slower due to the heat, we arrived late into Zubiri to find the bunks in the hostel were already full. However, being the Camino there was more room at the inn. For €4 we got to choose a foam mattress and sleep in a large hall which used to be a gym in a former life. It too filled up quickly, some pilgrims settling to sleep on their thin camping mats for the night.

Day 3

The next day, our third and final day, we set off a little weary despite another uninterrupted sleep. The temperature easily reached 30 degrees Celsius and there was some climbing to be done. Zubiri to Pamplona was the shortest distance to cover of the three days, but the heat and the previous two days were taking their toll. We were now walking with three other pilgrims that we had befriended the previous day and this by all means made the tough journey more enjoyable. We carried ourselves along with laughter and conversation.

It was 5.00pm when we arrived in Pamplona, back to where we had eagerly started three days earlier. We made for the comfort of our hotel with a mixture of feelings. We were indeed exhausted after the walk, reflective of all our experiences and a touch sad to say farewell to our new and amicable friends and happy that we had immersed ourselves, though only for a little while, in the Spirit of the Camino.

Lillian Grandfield

Tom Milligan sent in a number of photos from the **Introductory Hillwalkers Hike** on 5 July. The photos will be available on our website www.hillwalkersclub.com.

Our thanks to Tom for the photos, and thanks to Matt for uploading them!

WALK HARD III Lost in the Wild

Mark Campion surveyed the group of exhausted hikers: "It's getting dark now, but you know the An Óige motto: leave no one behind. Our friend's out there and we've got to find him. Who's with me?" Philip Hayden is the first to stand-up. Pushing back his blonde hair, he says: "Count me in!" Next Brian Murphy throws his cigarette into the fire, spits on the ground and says, "I'm going too."

AND CUT!!! Welcome to the set of Walk Hard III: Lost in the Wild, telling the dramatic tale of An Óige's 2008 trip to the Scottish Highlands. An all-star cast has been assembled to play the lead-roles, with Matt Damon (as Mark Campion), Brad Pitt (as Philip Hayden) and Christian Bale (as Don Gleeson), in what promises to be the smash-hit of the summer. Exposed, the club's entertainment news team, is here with its famous director James Cameron.



Exposed: So Mr. Cameron, what attracted you to this film?

James Cameron: Well, we got this amazing script from three guys in Dublin. I couldn't believe I had missed the real event on CNN but I just knew I had to be involved in bringing it to a wider audience.

Exposed: And what is happening on set today?

James Cameron: Well, the next scene is the big one: the dramatic cliff-face rescue. Philip flies the rescue helicopter through the avalanche of falling rocks, whilst Don abseils down Ben Nevis with tooth-floss and jumps clear at the last minute, to be grabbed in mid-air by Mark, swinging out by the helicopter on a rope.

Mr Cameron suddenly grabbed his loudhailer and screamed "Has anyone found our 'Mr. Gleeson' yet?" - "Not lost again!" I thought to myself.

James Cameron: Damn these method-actors. Bale's got it into his head that the best way to prepare himself for the role is to go lose himself in the wild, literally! He's been out there four days, without food, drugs or yoga-classes. We've got Scottish Mountain Rescue searching for him. Okay, we're going to have to do the hostel scene now instead.

I excused myself and went in search of the real-life 'heroes' of this tale. I found them sitting on their film-set chairs, complete with 'Walk Hard III' caps.

Exposed: I see your chairs say 'Technical Advisors'. So you are, ahem, helping keep things accurate here?

Mark dismissed his masseuse and put down his cocktail: "Listen Warren, we're on a nice little earner here, and we don't need your snooping muck-raking journalism to spoil things. Okay, so we've inflated one of two events, but that's Hollywood, man!"

Exposed: Yes, but flicking through the script, I could not help notice the scene where Don is forced to flee from savage cannibalistic natives wearing grass dresses. Don't you mean Scottish Highlanders? They're a bit wild but hardly that uncouth. Also, I don't recall a volcano on Ben Nevis when I was there...

Philip pretended a yawn: "Look, Warren YOU'RE the master of altering facts. What was it you always preached as Editor? Never let the truth get in the way of a good story. Now I have to go to the make-up trailer and get my hair done."

"Yeah," added **Don**, barely looking up from his copy of 'Hollywood Gossip', "Bug off and investigate somewhere else, there's big money to be made in this movie lark."

Exposed: Really? Hmm, that gives me an idea.

Minutes later I was banging on Mr. Cameron's trailer and making my sales pitch.

Exposed: So basically James, the script revolves around our hero infiltrating a secret corrupt Committee and waging a battle of truth and justice from the inside. All based on fairly-real-life events. I was thinking Pitt could play the hero when he's

finished up here, or maybe Depp. Anyway, there's great villains, led by the sinister Mr. Barry and his henchmen the grizzly 'Killer' Kenny and mad 'Shotgun' Rooney. We could probably flesh the scenes out: move the key meetings from the Palace Bar and An Óige Head-quarters to oh, lets say, a Las Vegas casino or a Russian gangster mansion?

James Cameron: Sounds pure Hollywood, Warren. I like it! Have your guys call my guys in L.A!

Exposed: Ex-cel-lent, Mr. Cameron!

As I walked off set, contemplating my future life in Hollywood, I heard the very realistic sound of BARFING coming from the hostel set. "Well," I thought, "at least that's one scene that's accurate..."

Walk Hard III - Coming to a screen near you this summer!!!

Warren Lawless

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

OCTOBER HOLIDAY WEEKEND

23 - 26 October 2009

Enniskillen

Walking will be in the Cuilcagh Mountains, Leitrim and Sligo areas. Accommodation in the Bridges Hostel will include breakfast and lunch. The cost of approx. €200 pp also includes two evening meals in an Enniskillen Hotel.

Booking will open in early September; more details in the next newsletter.

AGM 2009

Date: Thursday, 8 October 2009

Time: 8 pm

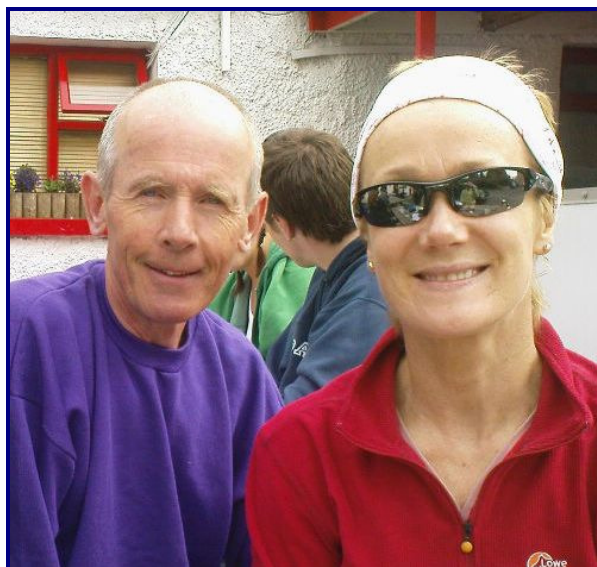
Venue: An Óige International YH, 61 Mountjoy Street, Dublin 7, Room 102.

More details in the next newsletter.

Please note that the next issue of THE HILLWALKER will be published in **September 2009.**

Deadline for submission of articles and/or photos is Friday, 28 August.

LUG WALK 2009



Hillwalkers Pam Coleman and Tom Milligan completed the course in 10 hours 5 minutes.

This year's Lug Walk commenced in very murky and difficult navigational conditions, requiring great attention and concentration from the eighty-eight starters. It wasn't until Barnacullian, a little over half way through the trek, that visibility and fair weather lifted the spirits of the participants. At Wicklow Gap ten people withdrew, while the remaining numbers struggled on to the finish at Seskin in the Glen of Imaal. The first walker to arrive finished in a little over nine hours.

Tom Milligan

* * * * *

Six members of the hillwalkers club and a few former members completed the Lug Walk 2009. Under the excellent navigation skills of Brian Flynn, Karl McGovern and Jennifer Lee completed it in 14 hours. Much thanks to Brian who was excellent in navigating us around some of the muckier sections and we stuck to the route and had no unnecessary detours as 33 miles is long enough I think!

Also separately, Oonagh Meade completed the walk also in 14 hours with some of her hiking friends from Co Wicklow, and Joe Gilvarry, last sighted at Wicklow Gap assuming made it home safe!

Again, much thanks to Brian Flynn without whom, I for one would never have left the starting blocks. No time to buy drinks for Brian after the hike as the bus was waiting to take us back, but we owe you a few next time, Brian!

Jennifer Lee

SNOWDON New Visitor Centre Open



A new £8.4m visitor centre on the summit of Snowdon is being officially opened.

The opening of Hafod Eryri marks the end of nearly three years of demolition and building work 3,560ft

(1,085m) above sea level.

Snowdonia National Park Authority chairman Caerwyn Roberts said it was one of the most important days in the history of the national park. More than half a million people walked or took the train up Snowdon last year.

The inside of the building features Welsh oak. Mr Roberts said the official opening was a "celebration" of the success of the initiative to replace the old Snowdon cafe - once labelled "Wales' highest slum" by Prince Charles. "Five years ago the authority decided to commit the equivalent of its entire annual budget to one project, a project located 3,500ft up at the top of a mountain," said Mr Roberts.

"If it wasn't for the determination and the perseverance of staff, members, and especially the builders, we wouldn't be here today and therefore I sincerely thank them," he said. The building was designed by architect Ray Hole, and is built to withstand extreme weather conditions.

Winds can get up to 150mph, the annual rainfall is more than 5m and the temperature can get down to minus 20 degrees centigrade.

Tegwyn Williams was the man in charge of the site for contractors Carillion, and he admits that he is glad the project is coming to an end. "More than once I've thought we'd never get here," he said.

"We've had days when we could not get here. We've had to walk down to Rocky Valley (half way) at the end of a working day because the train could not get to us... and it was scary when the whole train rocked because of the wind. But it's good to see it finished and it looks good," he added.

The cafe part will open from 0800 to 2000 BST each day, and the staff who remain on-site will ensure that it will open even if the train cannot bring in the day staff. There is also a shop area, toilets, disabled lift, and the whole area in the building is used as an interpretation space. The cafe area is not yet open to the public as the building has yet to be 'signed off'.

So anyone depending on it for a cup of tea at the summit should check before starting off.

Garry Byrne

MOUNTAIN MEITHEAL Shelter on Paddock Hill



Finally, after two full days work (a total of 30 volunteer days) the hut is ready for use. We have some minor work to do over the next few weeks but it is now open for business for all who walk the Wicklow Way either as a lunch spot, shelter from rain or an over night stop. The hut is situated on Paddock Hill near Brusher gate and about a days hike north of our Glenmalure Shelter.

Thanks to all the volunteers who worked really hard last weekend - we know they enjoyed it and it makes a great addition to the recreation infrastructure of Wicklow.

The hut was paid for from Mountain Meitheal resources made possible from generous donations by our supporters.



For future programmes, go online to check out www.pathsavers.org or contact William Murphy by email at williammurphy123@gmail.com.

CHALLENGE WALKS

The Walkers Association are posting regular updates on these walks on their website. Make sure to check for important new information there or follow the contact details given for each event.

18 July 2009

The Joyce Country Challenge

There will be three routes on the day:

Finny, Maumtrasna, Devils Mother, Ail Dubh (road) Bunacunneen, Ben Beg, returning to Finny via the Southern Ridge.

Distance: 30 km. **Total Ascent:** 1,936m

Walk A: A led walk taking in Maumtrasna, The Devils Mother, and completing the circuit along the Shore line path of Lough Nafooney back to Finny.

Walk B: A led walk for the less experienced walker. Finny, circling Lough Nafooney on lowland trail and returning to Finny by road. 14.5km, 281m ascent.

Details: <http://walkersassociation.ie/node/151>

1 August 2009

Mourne Seven Sevens

Distance: 28 km **Total Ascent:** 2,495m

Climbing the seven summits above 700m by any route desired by participants

Organising Club: Spartan Red Sox Walking Club

Route information and entry form on <http://www.nireland51.freeserve.co.uk/srs.htm>

9 August 2009

Western Way

12th Annual Marathon Walk (with half-marathon option):

17mls on road - 7mls Western Way - 2mls over Mám Éan to the road

Registration from 7.00 am on the day at the Community Centre, Maum Bridge (Droichead an Mháma) Co. Galway - just south of Joe Keane's Bar (Grid Ref: L962523) on the R336 which heads south towards Galway City.

Walkers will be transported by bus departing at 8.00 am sharp to the starting point approximately 6 miles west of Leenane (An Lionán), Co. Galway at Our Lady of the Wayside Church. (Ref: L808594).

<http://walkersassociation.ie/node/248>

29 August 2009

The Burren Walk

Further information:

<http://www.geocities.com/burrenwalk/index.html>

<http://walkersassociation.ie/node/135>

30 August 2009

Mournes Coast to Coast Challenge

Rostrevor to Newcastle

Choice of distances 12m / 24m, using parts of Ulster/Mourne way.

Further details: www.northernwalking.com

Committee 2008-2009

Chairman

Frank Rooney

Secretary

Betty Kehoe

Sunday Hikes

Gerry Walsh

Treasurer

Jim Barry

Membership/Training

Donal Finn

Weekends/Training

Mark Campion

Promotion

Deirdre Muldowney

Newsletter

Barbara Sudrow

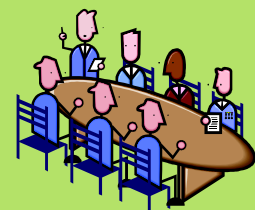
Special thanks to:

Webmaster

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NEXT NEWSLETTER: September 2009

HAVE A GOOD SUMMER!