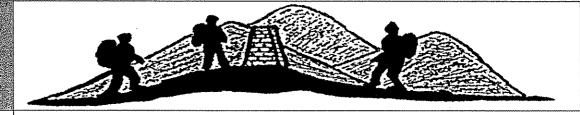
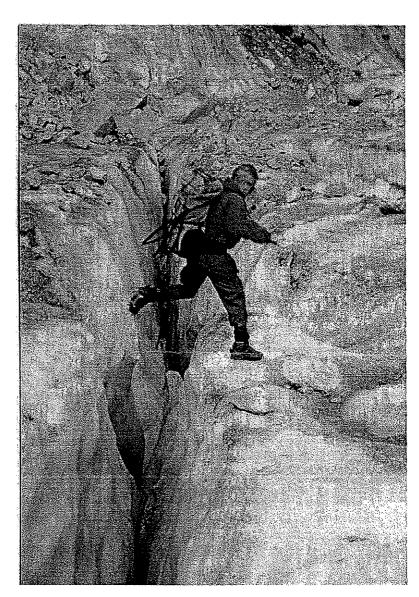
THE HILLWALKER September 2002



Óige Hillwalkers Club An the o f 0 The magazin



Mont Blanc, July 2002
Picture by Nellie Cullen



Sunday Hikes September

MEET:

Outside old Irish Press Offices, Burgh Quay, down from Spar shop.

DEPART

Sundays 10.00 A.M. (or when the bus is full)

COST:

Private bus. Cost €9.00.

NOTE: The leader has the right to refuse anyone who is not adequately equipped (i.e. without adequate rainwear, spare clothes, food, torch and hiking boots). The leader has the right to extend, curtail or alter the route from that described in the program. The leader sets the pace of the hike and walkers are expected to obey his/her instructions at all times.



During winter months it is essential to bring a (head) torch on all Sunday hikes and weekends away. Don't forget to check your batteries and bulb.

Your club membership card **MUST** be carried and produced, if requested on all Sunday hikes. Numbered tickets will be given out on the quays by a committee member. People with a valid membership card and ticket will be given preference on the bus.

MOUNTAIN SAFETY NOTE

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. The Committee requests that anyone who is on medication or with a medical condition inform the leader before the start of the hike.

ENVIRONMENT

Try to reduce the erosion and widening of trails, e.g. do not walk on the edge of worn tracks; walk through the centre of the original track or go several feet into the scruff where the ground is untrodden, walking parallel to but not on the track.

Litter is unsightly and dangerous to animals. Even bio-degradable items like orange peels and banana skins take years to disappear. Bring all your litter home and try to include at least one extra item from each day out. Do not bury litter – animals will dig it up.

WALKING STICKS

In the interest of safety and comfort please keep the pointed end of your walking stick covered, especially when travelling on the bus.

HIKE LEADERS

Jim has asked us to include his email for queries regarding the walking schedule including offers to lead and weekend away queries.

Hike co-ordinator email address: jamesab@gofree.indigo.ie



Date	Route Description	Leader
1 st Sept	Zig Zag Track to finish (G.R.088 921).	Warren Lawles
8 th Sept	[16km/850 Ascent] Croghan Kinsella	
	Aughrim Area, South Wicklow	Frank Rooney
	[10km/500m Ascent]	÷
15 th Sept	Introductory Hard Hike Circuit of Glenbride	Donal Finn
	[14km/75mAscent]	
22 nd Sept	Mourne Mountains Co. Down Route: Road Junction (G.R.310 320) – Trassey Bridge – Cloncullion Hill – Brandy Pad – Hare's Gap – Slievebearnagh– Slieve Melmore – Slieve Melbeg – Slieve Loughshannagh – Carn Mtn – Ott Mtn – Ulster Way – Trassey Bridge. Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland Discovery Map Series 1:50 000 Sheet 29 2 Hikes arranged to cater for both hard and moderate walkers. Hard Version [18km/1100m Ascent] Moderate Version [13km/700m Ascent] Please note early departure time of 0930hrs sharp from Burgh Quay Special Bus Fare 14 Euros	Philip Hayden
29 th Sept	Route: Road Start (G.R.978 010) – Douglas River – Leagh Brook Track – Round Hill – Table Mtn – Table Track – Wexford Gap – Cavanagh's Gap – Lobawn – Corriebracks – Forest Track – Captain Bolton's Yard – Donard. [20km/550m Ascent]	Noel Kerley
6 th October	Route: Ballinagee Bridge – Kings River – Glenreemore – Oakwood – Lough Firrib – Arts Cross – Conavalla Mtn – Lugduff Ridge – The Spink – Glendalough . [20km /650m Ascent]	Ita O'Hanlon



Club Notes

- Thanks are expressed to those members who helped out at the check-points on the Circuit of Imaal Walk on June 22nd.
- Several EMAIL ADDRESSES supplied to me are raising errors. If you have not received your email copy of the newsletter then check your email account is still active and mail me your correct address at warrenl@gofree.indigo.ie. Also if you have joined the Hillwalkers and have email but have not been added to the email list, then drop us a mail if you like.
- Those of you on email will have been appraised on the walks that were organised for late August but apologies for those of you who camped by your letter boxes in anticipation of receiving the August postal edition of the newsletter. I was a bit slow getting things together, there was a lack of scandal to print, aliens ate my keyboard, et cetera, and it (the August edition) never happened.
- The ever popular Mountain Skills course is been run again this year by Joe and Donal, starting in October. This is a great opportunity for individuals to learn skills that will enhance their appreciation and exploration of the hills. See full details elsewhere in this newsletter.
- The club has bid farewell to our Romanian ambassador, Simona Bucsa, who has departed for home. Her departure is a big loss to the set-dancing, hill-walking and Guinness drinking fraternity of Ireland.

Club Travels

Prionsias Mac an Bheatha, our club treasurer, leads a quiet existence as a school teacher...except when he is off in the warzones of Central Asia or other exotic locations. Read on for his latest 'danger man' exploits:

The Volcanoes and Jungles of Guatemala.

Aer Lingus managed to upset our departure for Central America with their pilots dispute. Instead we left a day early with Ryan Air. We flew with American Airlines via London and Miami to Guatemala City.

We headed straight for the town of **Antigua**, an hour by taxi from the capital, as we had heard that **Guatemala City** can be a dangerous place. Antigua was a nice place to start ones trip as it is full of character and laid back. It is in the highlands so the climate is mild for the tropics. Every church and old building in Antigua is a ruin having been destroyed by earthquakes. They have just left the ruin and built a new church behind it. The town is full of Spanish language schools with great value to be had. For \$120 you can attend one to one classes and get full board with a local family for a whole week.

While in Antigua we climbed **Pacaya Volcano**. It is still active and when torrential rain started near the top, the acid in the smoke mixed with the rain and started to sting our eyes. As we retreated lightening started just above our heads. The thunder brought you to a halt with its explosive crash. Our bus had to be pushed and lifted along the track down as the road was being washed away. In one place half the road was gone down a gully and we all stood and watched as the driver edged the bus slowly past the narrow remaining section of road.

After that we headed for **Panajachel** beside **Lake Atitlan**. There are hippies still living here from the sixties. They believed that the lake which is surrounded by volcanoes had an energy force and a spirituality about it. Well they are still there trying to sell tourists ganga and cocaine. I declined there offers, explaining that I was energised enough after Pacaya Volcano.



We climbed San Pedro volcano but lost the track and did not make it to the top. Maybe it was just as well, because as we plodded through fields of coffee and maize, the farmers kept warning us about the thieves with machetes who were waiting on top to rob us. The views were spectacular overlooking the lake.

We went on a day trip to the market in **Chichicastenango**. The Maya Indians were dressed in their traditional woven clothes, which were very colourful. The Catholic church also holds Maya Gods and the Maya were offering them food and alcohol in the church. It was wonderful to see that the church had not managed to wipe out the Maya religion but had accepted it as part of their own.

Next we headed to **Quetzaltenango** which is the starting point for **Tajumulco** 4210m, which is Guatemala's and Central America's highest mountain. It took two days so we camped overnight before ascending to the summit. We arose at five in the morning in order to see the sunrise from the summit. As the sky turned from red to yellow we could see a line of volcanoes on the horizon, with smoke coming out of some. The Pacific Ocean could also be seen from Guatemala's border with Mexico to its border with El Salvador.

We were to dream of that cool night on the mountain as we hit the humidity and heat of the Caribbean. We stayed in **Livingston** which is a colony of the descendants of ex-slaves. They live by fishing from their dug-out canoes. They like to play Bob Marley music a lot and the place had a real laid back feel about it. We swam and visited some **Caya** (coral islands) in nearby **Belize**. The village is surrounded with tropical forest, and although I always wanted to walk through one, it became very claustrophobic after a while. The humidity and heat in the jungle is intense, and the mosquitoes are very aggressive. One did not have time to think about snakes or tarantulas!

In the north of Guatemala is the country's most important historical site. At **Tikal** about 1,500 years ago, the Maya Indians built a vast city with many huge pyramids in the jungle. There are carvings showing humans being sacrificed and they seem to have worshipped the sun. The Maya mysteriously abandoned the site about 900 years ago, it is thought, because of the depletion of the environment. The site was subsequently rediscovered by the Spanish and is now a national monument. We were prevented from getting to Tikal for three days as ex-fighters for the government in the country's civil war were blockading the roads and airports, with machetes and batons, demanding payment. They ran after us at one stage so we headed for **Belize** for a few days until they called off their protest.

Tikal was the highlight of our trip and I just had to climb most of the pyramids. They stand above the jungle canopy, and all around you could hear Howler Monkeys, Parrots and even Toucans calling. Tikal National Park is vast with an area of 900km² and it was great to see giant Mahogany trees in their natural environment.

We had a great time in Guatemala. Accommodation cost us \$4 or \$5 a night. One could live easily on \$20 a day. The food was fine as long as you stayed away from salads. We spent three weeks in the country and spent some days in neighbouring Belize, an ex-British colony. In **Belize** they were only interested in money, whereas in Guatemala the people were friendlier and had time to talk to you. Now to start planning my next trip.

Proinsias Mac an Bheatha.

[Ed. Note: our teacher passed his spelling test (only one blooper) but his maths are a bit weak as he exceeded the 500-word article guideline by 438 words. Better recheck the club accounts Proinsias!!!]

Wales Weekends Away

Details can be found at the back of the newsletter of the club's trip to the beautiful mountain landscape of Snowdonia.

This will be led by Donal Finn and take place on the October Holiday Weekend 2002 Friday, from October 25th to Monday October 28th, 2002. Booking is now open at Head Office (01-8304555).



Young Hillwalkers

Saturday Hike – 7th September Knocksink Woods

Meet at Messrs Maguire Bar, O'Connell Bridge, Dublin at 8.45 a.m.

Bring: Packed lunch, wet weather gear and torch

Wear: Boots, tracksuit bottoms (no jeans), hat and gloves

Weekend Away 1st to 3rd November Knockree Ring An Óige office for details (01-8304555).

Walkers Survive Weekend of Hell in the West

Westport June 2002

Extra locks had been added to the Editorial Office to safeguard the notes and pictures taken on the June weekend-away, in anticipation of persons who might want to prevent a full exposé of the weekend's shenanigans.

"We're all part of Philip's Army
We're all off to Westport
And we're never going to stop
'till we reach the mountain top
Oh! Philip has the greatest walking team"

Yes, it was back in the heady days of World Cup fever and this was the chant as the bold adventurers set off for Westport on the June bank holiday weekend, the first to be led by our own Philip Hayden.

An odd addition to the group was a gang of Irish World Cup supporters who were obviously suffering from the self-imposed delusion that they were in fact going to the Far East. "Is this Hayden's World Cup Tour bus to Niigata?" they asked on the quays before boarding. Unwilling to be dissuaded, they draped their flags along the bus and joined our expedition. Whilst climbing Croagh Patrick they were still holding conversations along the lines of "The locals speak really funny here, don't they? We can hardly understand them, but the Guinness here is better than I expected this far east. Jeepers, this Mount Fuji is really misty. You know, I think we're going to win this group" We left them to their little fantasy world...

Philip was assisted by numerous individuals in official and unofficial roles over the course of the weekend. Among those mentioned in dispatches were:

Chief Entertainment Officer for the weekend *Brian O'Grainne*, who kept us all in stitches with his bus broadcasts and his verbal encouragements on top of Croabh Patrick. With co-host *Brendan O'Toole*, we were treated to interviews with Roy Keane, RTE and the German football team manager.

Amor Sarasola was Chief Chef and cooked up a feast for his fellow walkers on Sunday night. Reports that most of them were in bed next morning with food poisoning are a gross slander [p.s Amor, you still owe the Editor that recipe!].

Philip also hired the finest of musicians to entertain the group at night. Myles, Joe Kavanagh, Joan McDonald and the irrepressible (and ever irresponsible) Ron Cartin.



For the purposes of walking he was assisted by *Jimmy McCullagh*, *Frank Rooney*, and *Warren Lawless* (the fact that Philip gave the latter a lengthy cliff walk to do and greeted his safe return with surprise is been treated dubiously by the Editor).

Amid the spectacular wilderness of west Mayo the club enjoyed, or rather experienced, hikes up Ben Gorm and Mweelrea on Saturday. But our gallant bands were both defeated by mist and time. Next day gave better weather as we explored Achill Island. The weather turned on us again but the three 'flying columns' (mod, hard and mad) had the bulk of their walking done and were able to take welcome rest in The Pub. The final day saw good weather as we stormed up the holy mountain, Croagh Patrick.

Much transpired apart from the walking, but tragically the generous amount of free drink that was directed at the Editor has served to erase his memory of many of the amusing antics and outrageous comments of the weekend...but that's okay as most of it was unprintable anyway.

A noticeable feature of the weekend was the number of couples among the group. Some of these only seemed to emerge on the weekend itself but we will shelter these new blooms from the glare of publicity, the better for them to prosper. Anyone needing an update can of course ask the Don Reilly Information Bureau on a need-to-know-the-gossip basis.

Slideshows Return

Slideshows are planned for the following dates: Oct 1st, Oct 22nd. To start us off, we have:

Guatamela: Mud, Fire and Mist

Presented by Proinsias Mac an Bheatha

Tuesday, October 1st 8.30pm, Upstairs Lounge, Palace Bar

Meanwhile, if anyone would like to present a slide show, please contact Donal Finn (01-4530617). Dates presently available are Nov 12th and Dec 3rd

More Club Travel

Tour of Mont Blanc, July 2002

The entire Tour Du Mont Blanc provides a classic walking circuit around this massif, passing through three countries. The whole tour covers a little over 100 miles altogether with about 10,000 metres of climbs and descents.

Having thought of going to Mont Blanc for a holiday, I booked a tour. It started on the 6th July and lasted for a week. It cost £529 Sterling and you fly from Dublin to London, and from London to Geneva. It is a five day walking trip, with vehicle support, plus one free day. There was 10 girls and 6 guys [Ed: *Fellas, take note*]; two were from Dublin, and the rest were from England.

We reached maximum altitudes of 2525m and this would have been grade B walking. Each day we would get up at 7.30 am, have our breakfast and leave to go walking at 8.30 am. We reached the mountain top we would have a picnic on top. This is the way we did it each day.

We stayed in Chalet Savoy, situated in the quiet hamlet of Les Chavants, near Les Hoches, in the Chamonix Valley. One day we were in France, the next day in Italy and the next day in Switzerland.

The weather was beautiful and the scenery was priceless. Because this was skiing resort area, some people would decide to get the cable car back down, but I decided that was not for me. Each day was



wonderful for walking, you never knew what was ahead. The food too was beautiful and a lot of wine was drunk.

On our free day off, we all went to a town called Annecy and in the afternoon we went on the cable car. This went up to 3842m, which was a magic moment not to be forgotten.

To me, this was a beautiful trip, the walking was easy, with not many people around and well worth the money.

Nellie Cullen

The 2002 Committee

Chairperson:

Secretary:

Treasurer

Editor

Sunday Hikes:

Membership Secretary: Training Officer:

Young Hillwalkers:

Distribution: Webmaster: Donal Finn (01-4530617 h)

Frank Rooney (01-8038102 h)

Prionsias Mac an Bheatha (01-8379897 h)

Warren Lawless (01-8786901 h)

Jim Barry (01-4556455 h)

Gerry Walshe (01-8225818 h)

Joe Kellegher (01-8381973 h)

Dave Rooney (01-8344811)

Cyril McFeeney & Pearse Foley

Matt Geraghty

2002 Membership Fees

The Hillwalkers Club annual membership fee is €19.

The club intends giving preference to members for places on the Sunday bus, so please be sure to renew your membership now. An application form is enclosed and should be sent to the membership secretary at the following address: Mr. Ger Walsh, 15 Summerfield Avenue, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15.

Queries regarding change of address or non-receipt the Hillwalker should be directed to Mr Ger Walsh (membership secretary).

Note from the Editor

Walking holiday articles and pictures must be in electronic form where possible or at least typed, and should be a maximum of 500 words. A stamped addressed envelope should accompany any photographs or printed articles to ensure their return. Articles will generally be published in order of receipt. A prize will be awarded for the best article and best cover photo featured in the newsletter at the annual club Christmas party.

Articles for inclusion in the newsletter should be sent to Warren Lawless Email: warrenl@gofree.indigo.ie

Post: 19 Jervis Place, Upper Abbey Street, Dublin 1

Current and back issues of the Hillwalker available at online at: http://homepage.eircom.net/~thehillwalker/index.htm



Mountain Skills ~ Club Busaries

Since its founding in 1993, the Hillwalker's Club has organised a popular *Map and Compass* programme each year. The course aims to provide a comprehensive grounding in *Mountain Skills* and it typically involves three indoor evening sessions followed by three outdoor training weekends. The syllabus covered in the course is similar to the Mountain Skills courses (MS1 and MS2) prescribed by *Bord Oiliunt Sleibhe - Irish Mountain Training Board* and offered by the various Irish outdoor adventure centres (eg, Tiglin, Delphi, etc).

In order to further promote and develop mountain skills amongst club members, financial support in the form of bursaries will be made available to members who successfully complete a *Mountain Skills Assessment* in 2002.

The Mountain Skills Assessment (MSA) is based on a skills evaluation programme and is held over a weekend. It involves a number of stages as follows:

- A written (multiple choice type) assessment on general navigation issues.
- Practical assessment of day navigation skills.
- · Practical assessment of night navigation skills.
- Near and far feature recognition.
- · Steep ground awareness.

To undertake the Mountain Skills Assessment (MSA), it is necessary to fulfil the following requirements:

- to have completed at least 30 hill walks in Ireland or Britain over a period of 24 months,
- to present a Mountain Skills log book detailing the above walks,
- to hold a valid Rescue and Emergency Care (REC2) certificate or its equivalent (Basic First Aid Certificate).

The National Adventure Centre at Tiglin, Wicklow (www.tiglin.com) amongst others, organises the MSA at a current cost of £125.

In 2002, the Hillwalker's Club plans to make available at least five bursaries each of £125 to members of at least 24 months standing who successfully complete the MSA.

The financial resources to support these bursaries will be made available from the surplus associated with the Club's annual *Map and Compass* training programme. Support in future years is contingent on sufficient funds being available from this source.

Further enquiries from Donal Finn or Joseph Kellegher.



MOUNTAIN SKILLS COURSE 2002/2003

The Club will be running its annual Mountain Skills course commencing in October 2002. The course will include three Tuesday evening introductory sessions, each of duration of 2 hours, to be held in the An Óige Headquarters, Mountjoy Street. In addition, there will be two weekend training sessions as well as one night navigation session, all based in Wicklow. Accommodation for the two Wicklow weekends will be provided in the Glendalough Hostel. A separate consolidation session will be organised in the Commeragh Mountains, Co. Waterford, for the weekend of Jan 31st to Feb 2nd 2003.

Evening Sessions (3): 7.30 pm, October 15th & 22th, November 5th (Tuesday nights)

Evening Venue: An Óige Headquarters, 61 Mountjoy Street, Dublin 3

Requirements: (1) Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 56 - Wicklow (Scale 1:50,000) Laminated version is recommended (€15)

(2) Compass, Silva Expedition 4 graduated into 360 degrees (€40)

NB: A 10% discount is available on all outdoor equipment in either *The Great Outdoors*, Chatham Street, off Grafton

Street, or

The Outdoor Adventure Centre, Liffey St. (opposite Arnotts) on production of a valid An Óige or MCI membership card.

<u>First Weekend:</u> October 19th & 20th, Wicklow Mountains

Accommodation in the Glendalough International Hostel (Saturday overnight) is included in the course cost.

Second Weekend: November 9th & 10th, Wicklow Mountains

Accommodation in the Glendalough International Hostel (Saturday overnight) is included in the course cost.

Night Hike: December 8th, meet outside Lynam's Pub, Laragh at 5.00 pm

Course Cost: €70

Cost includes

Course + 2 overnights in the Glendalough Hostel

Cost excludes

Transport costs to/from Wicklow for both weekends

Commeragh weekend Feb 2003

Booking: It is essential that interested persons book in advance

through the An Óige Head Office, Tel (01) 830 4555.

Consolidation Weekend: January 31st – February 2nd, 2003, Commeragh Mtns., Co. Waterford.

(Costs associated with this weekend are not included in course cost)

Course Organisers: Joseph Kellegher and Donal Finn



Snowdonia WALES OCTOBER HOLIDAY WEEKEND 2002

Friday, October 25th to Monday October 28th, 2002

Background

An extended walking weekend in some of the following Snowdonia ranges (Carnedds, Tryfan/Glyders, Snowdon, Cnicht/Moelwyns). Three grades of walk will be provided each day to cater for all interests (long, moderate and short).

Hostel

Accommodation will be in Capel Curig YHA hostel. Capel Curig is located at the meeting of the Ogwev, Llugwy and Mymbyr valleys and is ideally situated with easy access from Holyhead (1 hour). The village also houses *Plas-y-Brenin: The National Mountaineering Centre*, two village hotels and a Joe Brown adventure store. Betws-y-Coed (10 km away) with its numerous outdoor retail outlets and museums, is accessible by a low level walking track or local bus for anyone wishing to take a rest day.

Transport

Transport will be provided by Stena HSS ferry on the Dun Laoghaire/Holyhead route and by a Welsh bus company over the weekend.

Cost

Total cost for the weekend is €170 per person which includes:

- Stena HSS ferry to/from Dun Laoghaire /Holyhead.
- Bus connection between Holyhead and Capel Curig hostel.
- Bus to/from walks on Saturday, Sunday and Monday.
- All catering will be provided by Capel Curig hostel to include, (i) breakfast, packed lunch and dinner on Saturday and Sunday and (ii) breakfast and packed lunch on Monday.

Not included are dinner outward on Friday, returning on Monday and transport to and from Dun Laoghaire.

Weekend Organiser

Donal Finn

Walk Leaders

Jim Barry, Donal Finn, Tom Kenny, Jimmy McCullagh.

Itinerary

Friday October 25th

Meet at the entrance to the Stena Ferry Terminal, Dun Laoghaire by 15:30hrs, Friday, October 25th for the 16:05hrs HSS fast ferry departure to Holyhead. Arrive Holyhead 18:00hrs. Local bus transfer to Capel Curig hostel arriving approximately 19:30hrs.

Saturday October 26th

Two/Three grades of walk in one of the following ranges: Carnedds, Glyders, Snowdon, Cnicht/Moelwyns.

Sunday October 27th

Two/Three grades of walk in one of the following ranges: Carnedds, Glyders, Snowdon, Cnicht/Moelwyns.

Monday October 287th

Two/Three grades of walk in one of the following ranges: Carnedds, Glyders, Snowdon, Cnicht/Moelwyns.

Return Journey: Depart Snowdonia by 16:30hrs to arrive in Holyhead by 18:00hrs for Stena HSS fast ferry 18:30 hrs service to Dun Laoghaire. Arrive Dun Laoghaire 20:30 hrs. **Booking**

Please book through Head Office. Deposit €70. Balance €100 to be paid to Head Office before departure.



An Óige Hillwalker Application Form