

The Hillwalker

<http://homepage.tinet.ie/~thehillwalker>

July/August 2005

Tom Kenny led a capacity crowd on June 25th

photo.: *Eamonn Coyle Studio*

Inside: Garry's Hike
Warren waxes lyrical
August Trip to Sligo
Un petit goût de la GR36

JULY HIKE PROGRAMME			
MEET: Burgh Quay		DEPART: Sundays 10.00 am	COST: Private bus. €10
Date	Route Description	Distance	Leader
July 3rd	Introductory Hike Road Junction (GR159 996) - Wicklow Way Track – Paddock Hill-Scarr- Glenmacnass - Lough Ouler - Spot Height 668 - Tonelagee - Spot Height 546- Brockagh Mountain - Lead Works Carpark.	17km/ 875m	Jimmy McCullagh
July 10th	Start:.gr087876, - SlieveMaan., Carrawaystick, - Corrigasleggaun, - LugnaCoille, - Cannow, - Benleagh, - Fraughan Rock Glen, - .Barravore	16km./ Asc. 620m.	Mark Campion
July 17th	Stranahely Wood - Old Pack Horse Track - Wexford Gap - Cavanaghs Gap- Lobawn Mountain - Corriebracks - Church Mountain - Wooden Boley -Hollywood Glen.	18km./ A. 750m	Philip Roche
July 24th	Croghan - Kinsella Circuit (O.S. Map 62)		Frank Rooney
July 29 th Aug. 1st	Club Trip to Sligo Hikes in North Sligo, North Leitrim/ South Donegal	assorted	Philip Hayden

Have you packed your sun-block/ high factor suncream??

What about insect repellent?

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.

SUNDAY HIKES Participants on Sunday Hikes must be a member of An Óige Hillwalkers Club. If you are not a member of the Club, but are considering joining, we invite you to participate on our monthly Introductory Hikes.

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

CO-ORDINATION 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.

TORCH During winter months it is essential to bring a (head) torch on all Sunday hikes. Check your batteries / bulb.

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 meters into the scruff where the ground is untrodden, walking parallel to but not on the track.

LITTER 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.

August Hikes

August 7th and 14th

Take 'Pot-Luck'! Meet at the usual place for a local hike starting from Enniskerry, route 44 bus.

August 21st

Hike led by Garry Byrne 44 Dublin bus, leaving from **Screen Cinema @9.30AM** and **@ 10.20AM at the Monument in Enniskerry**. While southside Darts are not operating on Sundays, people on the line can still take feeder busses to Enniskerry or indeed take car to Enniskerry and get bus back from Dundrum..

August 28th

Day Trip to the Cooleys

Leader: Tom Kenny

Bus leaves at earlier time of **9.30a.m.**

Cost E15

Meal in Carlingford at the end of the hike.

(Not included in cost!!)

September 4th

Introductory Hike

Leader: Philip Roche

Route: Killybeg (GR945 909) - Keadeen - Ballinfoyle - Ballineaddan Mountain

- Slievemaan - Lybagh - Farbrega - Track - Aghavannagh Bridge. **Distance**18km **Ascent** 950m

Hike Competition An Óige Hillwalkers

Start: at the monument in centre of Enniskerry Village. This has the advantage of catering for anyone on the Dart line, they can take feeder bus. Buses can also be taken from town, ideally the 9.30AM bus for a Sunday hike.

From Enniskerry, head north on road parallel to main road to cross over river. Turn left into sports ground, keep to left of football pitch perimeter and follow path to river. Ignore first path just inside football grounds, it leads to river but simply loops back up. Good views here of a fine bridge over the river bringing the main road into Enniskerry. It goes completely unnoticed if travelling on this road.

Follow path up to main road and go left on footpath as far as boundary wall of church property on far side of road. There is a somewhat muddy bridle track here high up over the river. Care is needed in parts where the path has collapsed, however, there is generally no great difficulty getting through. Path eventually take you to the old stepping stones, currently being replaced by a wooden bridge. Alternatively, when reaching the road, go right to walk through Knocksink Wood on paved road to information signs and wood. Follow track to new wooden bridge. This option involves more walking on tarmac but can be used in wet weather or if you want to read information signs at the interpretive centre.

From the new wooden bridge, tracks lead through the woods to the Glencullen Enniskerry road, near the quarries at Ballybrew. The trick is to navigate your way successfully through the woods without going astray. I know of two Hillwalker members who tried, but turned back!. In practice it is not hard and largely involves following your instinct. Mostly there is a clear track either along the river or higher

up on the left. Bonfires and empty bottles and cans are unfortunately other signs you are on the right track. About half way through the wood there is a very steep track up through a thick pine forest. At the top go straight ahead along some stone markers for drainage works, these markers are met again on the route. At the very end of the track through the woods, there is a fork at which you turn left, houses can be seen in the distance through the right fork.

At Ballybrew, turn left to take wide track by houses about 1km later on your right. Follow this through gates, always open, to reach grassy mound with forks left and right. Good place for a stop and admire the views over Dublin bay. Turn left to reach awkward gate and barrier at forestry entrance. Follow track to take first right and, at a distinct left turn, head right up a barely discernable track which takes you uphill through forestry to reach a wide track. Follow this right to Wicklow Way or follow tracks up by Raven's Rock to Wicklow Way. Boranarltry bridge is an excellent place for lunch.

At the grassy mound it is possible to take the right and eventually turn left up tracks through the bracken around the wood at the head of the valley. Follow the wood by the track to reach barbed wire. Take a right here over the wire to the clear sandy area in the wood which you can see over the stream. This is a gully which you follow west to eventually reach the Wicklow Way. It is hard going here, either you wade along the gully or walk the bank high above you. There are many saplings on the bank and it is tough going and unfortunately not recommended for a group. This is a pity as the tracks are excellent right up to the barbed wire fence.

From Boranarltry Bridge follow road to main road and take Wicklow Way route. Alternatively and much more interesting is go right at the main road. Turn left at a gate which leads to small cottage, recently renovated but apparently unoccupied. Cross over wire fence to head north-east to forest track at the side on Two Rock Mountain. This can be done visually, or using a compass bearing in bad weather. Break at Two Rock for wonderful views. An alternative here is to visit the dolmen marked on the maps in the trees at the foot of the mountain.

From Two Rock either follow Wicklow Way direct or go by Three Rock Mountain. You have a choice here of going to Stepaside or Dundrum or following the Wicklow all the way to Marley. At Marley don't follow Wicklow Way signs all the way to Marley House but follow park boundary walls anti-clockwise around to one of the side entrances. Cross the main road and go through the cul de sac to Ballinteer village. This saves quite a lot of time.

All in all, a great walk which can be done with public transport, ideal for when Jim Dowling's bus is not available. I led the Hillwalkers twice on it, once in August and once just before Christmas, so it can be done all times of year. A good option for a group is to finish at the Ballinteer House, which we did at Christmas. The walk is perhaps unique in finishing in Dublin city, having walked through two counties.

Knocksink Woods are very interesting with a mix of acid and lime soils giving a great variety of trees, plants and animals. Deer can also occasionally be seen. It is a real living wood, which you may find out to your cost if you hold onto a branch for support, only to find it rotten! Conditions underfoot are generally good, but it can be a bit damp and mucky at times especially in the early stages of Knockwood and on the side of Two Rock.

I would estimate the walk at around 18KM, but it can be lengthened as mentioned above. The wooden bridge at Knocksink is probably finished by now, but if not, river is probably impassable. Much of the walk, except that through Knocksink can be followed on the Harvey's Wicklow map. Thanks to Tom McCarthy for showing me this walk many years ago.

Garry Byrne

February, 2005.

Next Social Event:

Evening Horse Racing and Barbeque Dinner At Fairy House Race Track

Organised by Enid Gallagher

Saturday , 9 July

Pain in the Palace

Or
A Hair-raising Experience

Blood-curdling screams echoed off the walls of the Palace on Sunday 26th, disturbing regulars in their enjoyment of their pints. Intrigued patrons who followed the sound of sobbing into the back of the pub were greeted with the shocking sight of two men being tortured in a cruel and Medieval manner. But no police were called as this was all part of a Charity Leg Waxing organised by hillwalkers in aid of Zambian children orphaned by HIV/AIDS.



Enid Gallagher and *Ali McSorley* were the masters of ceremony (or mistresses of pain) and made no secret of the pleasure they derived from their evil task. Armed with Veet waxing-strips and Bic razors they attacked their first sacrificial victim, *Mark Campion*. The brave lad Mark had (amazingly!) volunteered for this rôle. However, soon his face was a wonder of colour and expression as the ladies busied themselves over him.

Not content that he should suffer alone, and because misery loves company, Mark roped *Warren Lawless* into his ordeal. Oh how the mighty have fallen! Back in his reign of terror, no one would have dared laid hands on the ex-Editor. Now he was reduced to providing laughs for the rabble, like a common thief locked in the stockades! Warren's participation was totally willing and there is no truth in the story that he hid in the Palace snug and only joined in when threatened with having his arms waxed.

Patricia Furey was recruited to assist and launched into her task with relish, quickly taking huge chunks of hair off her boyfriend's legs, and thus adding a whole new meaning to the song "Patricia the Stripper":

*And with a lick of her lips she started to rip,
To tremendous applause she took off his curls,
Threw it all in the air and everybody stared.
And as the last piece of hair fall to the floor
Warren was screaming aloud,*

On a Sunday night, Two-oooh Thousand and Five.

For the record lads, the hairier you are the more it hurts, and the back is worst than the front. Just thought I'd share that. Next time club members are in the Palace, they are invited to spot the chairs wherein the victims were placed (the blood and hair has been washed off, but the finger grip-marks should still be on the handles). Just make sure you don't get a pint in the glass they used to wash the razor blades.

The winner of the Lovely Legs Competition afterwards was...Warren! In tests, 7/10 women expressed a preference for the smoothness of his newly waxed legs over Mark's. In fact, Mark said he liked the feel of them too, at which point Warren quickly covered up.

Since their experience, both hikers have reported numerous benefits of their more stream-lined appearance: a deeper empathy with women, better tanning, more success hitch-hiking and faster walking speeds (due to reduced wind-drag). In short, they have signed up for regular sessions at their local beauticians.

A photo gallery of the event has been placed on the web at the address below for your amusement. Just type in the link or Google it under "pain inhuman unmanly suffering humiliation Palace"....

<http://homepage.eircom.net/~wlawless/wax>

If you have derived any pleasure from this article or sniggered gleefully at the thought of the agony of your friends, then please pass on a euro or two for the charity collection to Ali or Mark when next you meet. 0.07% of any funds raised will go toward surgical hair-replacement for the guinea pigs so that they have their winter- coats back in time for colder weather.



anon.ex-editor

Two brave men ***one braver lady!

An Óige Hillwalkers Club

August Weekend 2005

Friday 29th July - Monday 1st August 2005

Visit to the Yeats Country of Co. Sligo
Yeats Village Hostel, Co Sligo

Moderate/Hard Walkers Welcome

Two grades of walk each day on Saturday, Sunday and Monday

Leader: Philip Hayden

Strictly Bus Only Trip

Walking Itinerary to include:

- ✓ **Benbulbin Plateau (North of Glencar Lake)**
 - ✓ Castlegal - Cope's Mountain, Crockauns, Keelogyboy
- ✓ **Castledargan Forest Walk (South of Lough Gill)**
 - ✓ Social Events

(Less strenuous route variations for moderate walkers)

Ordnance Survey Maps: 1:50.000 Discovery Series Sheets 16,25

Notes

Hostel accommodation: **Small private rooms/limited to 53 persons**

Booking: EUR 60 NON REFUNDABLE deposit to An Óige Head Office by credit card or cash deposit (8304555).

Booking facilities available from 13th June 2005.

Balance of Money must be paid by Friday 22nd July 2005.

Cost: EUR 120 (includes 3 bednights and Transport costs only)

Eating Arrangements: Self-Catering Weekend - Bring sufficient food for Saturday breakfast and lunch - otherwise ample supermarket and eating out facilities locally.

Bring: Rain wear/change of warm clothing/ sheet bag/towels/toilet gear/ flask/torch/ first aid kit/camera/binoculars/ valid An Óige membership card.

Departure: Friday evening from George's Quay (Tara St.) at 4pm/ 1600hrs sharp.

Return: Monday evening /arriving Dublin City centre at 8pm (2000hrs) approx.

Please note that the walking programme may be altered or curtailed at the discretion of the leader to take account of adverse weather conditions and walkers capabilities.

Taking French Leave!

Though we had made a couple of afternoon forays into the hills, the daily morning jog into the village for the regulation croissants and baguette jogged the conscience of this escaped hillwalker. Perhaps it was the calorie laden (nay energy giving) nature of the provisions, which spurred us into action that morning but I like to think it was the little man.

We had had a week where the only navigation was that of the minor roads into Andorra, climbing through col after col and negotiating bends hairpinny enough to keep even my hair in order. I thanked God for the internal combustion engine and good brakes as we climbed above the snow line and ran the gamut of weather from sun to heavy snowfall and sleety mists. Weather-protected by the walls of the car we admired the stamina of those who make such journeys on two wheels or even better on two feet!

This particular morning we had no weather fears as the sun shone down and the temperature rose steadily as we prepared for our little adventure.

Our little man hung on the wall of a corner building on the village square exhorting all to venture in the direction he pointed, upwards and onwards towards upland forest with the mountains rising behind. Earlier in the week Cathy had pointed vaguely towards the mountains and mentioned a wonderful walk she had done the previous year through the Gorge de Jaume. She was uncertain that she could remember it. Our maps covered only the hills on the other side of the house. I had no doubts however. "The little man will show us," I assured her, confidently pointing out the letters beside him. "GR36! That's one of the big hiking routes," I assured her, already planning the light picnic we would take with us.

Following the direction indicated by the signpost we left the village of Caudiès de Fenouillèdes (Pyrenées Orientales), following a bothrín out along the back gardens of some of the village houses and over the almost disused rail lines along the fields where wheat and vegetables peeked through the almost bare soil. Soon we were climbing passing a wayside shrine and an ancient pilgrimage church on our right hand side. Shortly after the church our little lane began to level off. Painted routemarkers, again the reassuring GR36 and the name of our destination Fenouillèdes, guided us into the forest. For much of the walk we followed a narrow track along the side of the river into the gorge proper. Steep parts of it were railed off but we could see down to the great deep pools which provide a shady haven in high summer. Already there were violets in bloom on the edge of the path. The running streams and higher still a waterfall provided wonderful sound effects. Our first stop was at an abandoned watermill.

Eventually we reached Fenouillèdes a tiny hamlet which no longer has even a shop, much less a café. The younger children go to the village school except when winter snow makes the roads impassable, while the 10-14 year olds are weekly boarders in the next town. There is a church though and a hostel for backpackers. There is a small estate of social housing on the approach to the village for which there is no waiting list. There are even vacancies! What a place to get away from it all, write that book, or just recharge the batteries!

The main village is tiny and picturesque with steeply ascending paths curling around the edges of the houses. Cars are parked below on the edge of the village. Windowboxes and pots of shrubs brighten up the stone. Today many of the houses are weekend retreats for people whose money is earned in towns such as Perpignan or even further afield. Some are occupied year round. The main village is beautifully maintained giving an impression of pride in its history and heritage. Above the village tower the medieval fortifications; the area has been the scene of many ancient battles including those between France and Spain. Each summer there are teams of archaeologists and volunteers researching its remains.

After giving ourselves plenty of time to admire the wonderful views we clambered down from the fortifications. Having looked at the sensible option of making the return journey by road, we declined in favour of the path less travelled and plunged our way back into the gorge again, giving ourselves views for reflection for many a day!

Checking the internet on my return, I discovered that the GR36 runs in a mainly north-south direction from Normandy to Spain. Getting better acquainted with it might be a challenge for "le troisième âge", retirement as the French put it!



The remains of 13th century fortifications tower above Fenouillèdes (photo: Deirdre McMahon)

Articles Wanted

Articles and photographs are needed for forthcoming issues of *The Hillwalker*. While articles in electronic format are easier to use, handwritten articles are also welcome. Send your contributions to:

Deirdre McMahon at 11 Aspen Rd. Kinsealy Court, Swords, Co. Dublin or mcmahond@eircom.net

Support your Hillwalkers Club!

Ideas and help are welcomed by the committee:

President:	Proinsias Mac an Bheatha
Treasurer	Jim Barry
Walks Organisers:	Tom Kenny and Philip Roche
Social Organiser	Steve Buckney
Secretary	Frank Rooney
Membership Secretary	Anne Russell
Editor	Deirdre McMahon

We are very grateful and appreciative of the work of Cyril McFeeney and Pearse Foley for the printing, production and posting of ***The Hillwalker*** each month

An Óige Hillwalkers 2004/2005 Membership Application Form

Name <i>(Applicants must be over 18 years of age)</i>
Address
Were you a member last year? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
An Óige Membership Number <i>(Applicants must be a member of An Óige, the Irish Youth Hostelling Association)</i>
Contact Telephone Numbers <i>(optional)</i> Daytime Evening Mobile
Email Address <i>(optional)</i>

Please read and sign the following PERSONAL DECLARATION

PERSONAL DECLARATION

I am over 18 years of age and wish to apply for membership of An Óige Hillwalkers Club.

I accept that mountaineering is an activity with a danger of personal injury or even death.

I am aware of and shall accept these risks and wish to participate in these activities voluntarily and shall be responsible for my own actions and involvement.

I accept that An Óige Hillwalkers Club establishes the bounds on its activities through the constitution and rules of the club and I agree to abide by these.

If you agree and accept the terms of the PERSONAL DECLARATION, please sign and date here.

Signature Date

CLUB NEWSLETTER

The club issues a monthly newsletter and distributes it by email and post. It is also made available through the webpage of the Club (<http://homepage.eircom.net/~thehillwalker/index.htm>). Please tick one of the following boxes to indicate how you wish to receive the newsletter.

By email only

By post only

By email and post

The 2004/2005 membership year runs from Oct 1st 2004 to Sept 30th 2005.

2004/2005 Membership Fee €28.00

Please send this form with the membership application fee (cheque or postal order *only*, payable to *An Óige Hillwalkers Club*) to the Membership Secretary: **Anne Russell 31 Castlecurragh Heath, Dublin 15**. Please allow two weeks for processing of the membership application.

