

Sunday Hikes February 2003

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 **€10.00**.

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
2nd February	Route: Track Gate (G.R.T 082 858 O.S. Map 62) - Farbreaga - Aghavannagh Mtn - Lybagh - Slievemaan - Lugnaquilla - Camara Mtn - Banana Road - Fentons.	Noel Kerley
	[15km/800m Ascent]	
9th February	<u>Introductory Hard Hike</u> Route: Oasis (G.R. 101 051) - Carrigshouk Mtn - East Top - Mullaghcleevaun (Optional) - Duffhill - Gravale - Carrigvore - Military Road Carpark (G.R. 138 088).	Jimmy McCullagh
	[14km/800m Ascent]	
16th February	Route: Ballinagee Bridge (G.R.036 024) - Oakwood - Glenreemore Brook - Art's Cross (G.R.038 990) - Three Lakes - Table Mtn - Wexford Gap - Roundhill - Forest Edge (G.R.000 002) - Forest Track - Kings River - Granabeg School House.	Philip Hayden
	[16km/550m Ascent]	
23rd February	Route: Forest Entrance (G.R.130 922) - Cullentragh Mtn - Mullacor - Lugduffs - Conavalla Mtn - Table Track - Barravore Carpark.	Don Reilly
	[17km/550m Ascent]	
2nd March	<u>Introductory Hard Hike</u> Route: Forest Corner (G.R.210 107) - Wicklow Way Track - Djouce - Coffin Stone - Sheepbank Bridge - Clohoge River - Luggala Mtn - Clohoge Brook - Knocknaclohoge - Green Road - Pier Gates.	Mark Champion
	[17km/850m Ascent]	

Winter Season Notice

The hike co-ordinator has asked that we take note of the following points of safety for the late Autumn & Winter walks, especially hike leaders:

All hike participants should carry suitable waterproof torches, reflective armbands or strips and adequate winter attire from the end of October until the end of the winter period. Leaders should insist that all participants are suitably attired and using torches when required. Leaders should plan to finish all hikes between 1700 and 1730hrs (earlier if severe adverse weather conditions prevail). Every effort should be made (without dragging or hurrying the group) to reach a recognised safe track or road way before the onset of darkness. Leaders should slow the pace down when encountering any type of awkward or difficult terrain, steep or slippery inclines etc. Extra vigilance should be exercised during the periods of dusk, darkness, dense fog or mist, snow and icy conditions etc. Walks should be altered or shortened to take account of adverse weather conditions e.g. possible flooding or icy roads.

Baby's First Steps

An ABC to Walking for Beginners

As we all know, the hill tracks are under a lot of pressure from hill-walkers and other users. Long-term users will have noticed a seriously decline in the quality of a wide number of trails, that have been broadened beyond recognition or made into muddy ruts (e.g. Raven's Rock, Fairy Castle to Two Rock, Maulin to Dargle). Some of this is seasonal, but a lot is due to people's bad habits.

I know its hard to avoid picking the easiest way, when time and effort are involved, but remember as hillwalkers we have a duty to preserve and protect the countryside. Please take note of the following approaches to trail-walking:

- A. What most of us do instinctively. Walk on the fringes of the track, wearing away at the foilage and widening the track (4 Penalty Points).
- B. What we should be doing. Try and walk through the middle of the Original track. "Uuugh, its all muddy and squelchy", you say, but that's why you have your Meindl boots on.
- C. Alternatively, walk parallel to the trail, but well in amid the heather and grass. This is harder than walking on the trail, but lessens the pressure on the original track or its fringes. Note: care must be taken not to end up creating a new track through the heather.

Another good practise is to avoid using or creating new 'short-cut' trails that carve up the heather covering. Stick to what is (as best as you can tell) the original trail. See *Irish Mountain Log* No. 64 for more on this issue.

Club A.G.M.

The An Óige Hillwalkers held their AGM on January 28th upstairs in the Palace Bar. The attendance was around 32 people. Ger Walsh stepped down as Membership Secretary. We wish to thank Ger for his many years service to the club in this role. The rest of the Committee were willing to continue in their roles and were reappointed. We also welcome Barbara Sudrow to the Committee as the new Membership Secretary. Jimmy McCullagh and Tom Kenny also joined the Committee as: to help with the club's training programme and to help with co-ordination with Sunday hikes, respectively.

The proposed club constitution was adopted. The change to our membership year was also adopted, whereby we will align our membership year with the MCI (through whom we are insured). Membership will therefore run from Oct 1st to Sept 30th and this years membership will end at the start of October.

The Club was judged to be on good footing based on the variety of Sunday hikes held, the success of the weekends away, and the good take-up on the Map & Compass course; the club finances were also in healthy shape.

It was announced that the cost of the Sunday bus would have to rise to €10.00. The future cost of annual membership is also looking set to rise as the cost of MCI insurance per member will be doubling.

Thanks was expressed to all the Committee for the wonderful work they do and a presentation made to them of Brown Thomas vouchers and bottles of whiskey. Well, that didn't happen exactly, but no harm dropping a hint for next year...

Club Slideshows

Cycling in Slovenia

Presented by Maggie Greaney

Tuesday, Feb 11th, 8.30pm, The Palace Lounge (Upstairs)

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Walking the GR 20 Corsica

Presented by Donal Finn

Tuesday, Mar 11th, 8.30pm, The Palace Lounge (Upstairs)

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Cuba

Presented by Barbara Sudrow

Tuesday, Apr 8th, 8.30pm, The Palace Lounge (Upstairs)

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Meanwhile, if anyone would like to present a slide show, please contact Donal Finn (01-4530617).

Mail Bag

Time to look in the Editors Mail Bag and see what goodies we have got this month:

"Dear Editor, Your newsletter stinks!!!"

Hmmph, I'll just add that one to the others in my recycling bin.

"Dear Editor Is it just a coincidence that after years of existence, the club felt it necessary to adopt a constitution just soon after you joined the Committee?"

A good point reader. All this democratic posturing was merely an attempt to protect the club from my declared aims of dictatorship. Don't worry, section 5.3 of the constitution will give me ample time to implement my Five Year Plan.

Just a €50 note in the next envelope. I'll just file that away under 'B' for Bribery & Blackmail.

"Dear Sir, my client demands an apology for the calumnious content of your recent article..."

Oops, another happy customer. Better send this one to my solicitor.

Still no walking articles. I'll just have to dig up some dirt on the new committee members for next month.

The Name's Hayden, Philip Hayden

Report has reached the editorial ears that Mr. Hayden has forsaken his walking credentials to go skiing in Andorra. It would take a better man than me to resist the chance of slugging off my nemesis. One can only imagine his exploits...

Agent Philip dug his ski-sticks in with all his strength, glancing nervously over his shoulder at the avalanche that threatened to engulf him. If only Joe had not insisted on playing the mandolin on the mountains! At least he and Steve had got out of the way in time, but it looked like a curtains for Philip. Suddenly a chasm loomed ahead. It was too wide for any but a champion skier to attempt, but Philip swept toward it as his only chance of escaping the white flood that was upon him...

Later on, Philip watched the light of the roaring fire dance across his brandy glass, as he leaned against the fire-place of the chalet surrounded by his admirers. Over in the corner, Joe and Steve were getting the sing-song going. This reminds me of The Palace, he thought, but just a little more sophisticated. "Monsieur Philippe, tell us again how you escaped the avalanche", fawned one of several foreign ladies. "Well, its all down to my years of experience on the Irish mountains. Did I tell you I'm a leader in an elite walking group at home? We don't get much snow, but I'm use to outrunning everything...".

An Óige Volunteer Evening

Various members of the Club were treated to a lavish food & wine reception in An Óige headquarters on Friday 7th February. They joined various other members of other branches of An Óige in this 'Thank You' night for all the voluntary effort that goes into running the organisation. Plans for the expansion of Glenmalure hostel were on display. Details of a fund raising sponsored walk to raise funds for this work were announced. Details of the Three Glens summer walking weekend will be given in the next newsletter (as I must have left the leaflet I got down with my wine glass).

Club Notes

There has been a phenomenal uptake on both the St. Patrick and Easter weekends away (to Clare & the Lake District) and I think there are only places left on the cancellation lists. Ring Head Office for details.

Note must be made of the excellent food prepared by the Dublin hostel's own catering chef & staff at the recent An Óige Volunteer reception. They provide a tasty range of food, including soup & sandwiches, packed lunches, and 3-course meals at very reasonable prices. So, lay off the mushy peas in Beshoffs or dry bacon in Bewleys and check out this option some day. Tel. 8301766 for more details..

The 2003 Committee

Chairperson: Donal Finn
Secretary: Frank Rooney
Treasurer: Prionsias Mac an Bheatha
Editor: Warren Lawless
Sunday Hikes: Jim Barry
Sunday Hikes Assistant: Tom Kenny
Membership Secretary: Barbara Sudrow
Training Officer: Joe Kellegher
Training Assistant: Jimmy McCullagh
Young Hillwalkers: Dave Rooney

Distribution: *Cyril McFeeney & Pearse Foley*
Webmaster: *Matt Geraghty*

2003 Membership Fees

The 2003 An Óige Hillwalkers Club membership fee is €17.

The membership 2003 year will only run from January to September, so the cost is reduced accordingly. 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: Barbara Sudrow, 24 Glenmalure Park, South Circular Road, Dublin 8.

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

Photos & Articles

Walking holiday articles 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 Bursaries

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 2003.

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 2003, 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.