

HIKE PROGRAMME

April 2006

MEET: Burgh Quay

DEPART: Sundays 10.00 am

COST: Private bus. €10

9 April: Annamoe Delight

Leader: Tom Milligan

Route: Derrylossory Church(O:183013) * Ballinacorbeg * Avonmore River * Oldbridge * Scarr * Wicklow Way * Annamoe * Ballinacorbeg * Derrylossory Church.

Distance: 19km **Ascent:** 760m

16 April: **Easter Trip to Wales**

23 April: Ballinabarney Gap

Leader: Philip Hayden

Route: Rathdangan * Carrig Mt * Keadeen * Ballinabarney Gap * Ballineddan * Slievemaan * Camara Hill * Fentons.

Distance: 19km **Ascent:** 980m

30 April: **MOUNTAINS OF MOURNE**

Introductory Hard Hike

Cost: € 15.00

Leaders: Garry Byrne & Mark Campion

Route: Car Park(J234278) * Hen Mt * Cock Mt * Pigeon Rock * Slieve Moughanmore * Eagle Mt * Shanlieve * Pierces Castle * Rocky Mt * River * Car Park.

NB: *This walk will be split: the shorter walk will avoid Eagle Mt and Shanlieve.*

Distance: 17km **Ascent:** 1200m

Distance: 15km **Ascent:** 950m

There will be an opportunity to stop for a meal on the return journey

7 May: Jacksons Falls

Leader: Brian Madden

Route: Ballylusk (GR 245960) * Carrick Mountain * Ballinastraw * Cronybyrne * Glenwood * Jacksons Falls * Laragh (Lynams).

Distance: 17km **Ascent:** 600m

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. 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 untrampled, 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.

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 If any member is interested in leading a hike, please contact:
Garry Byrne
Mark Campion

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

We would like to hear from you!

Whether you ...

- wish to contribute an article ...
- have read an interesting book you'd like to recommend to club members ...
- would like to share your favourite hikes ...
- want to comment on any club matters ...

Why not get in touch? Write or email to:

Barbara Sudrow, 24 Glenmalure Park, S.C.R., Dublin 8

EMAIL ALERT: in cases where the electronic newsletter bounces back, we will send the paper version by post. We would therefore ask any members who currently do not receive this newsletter in ELECTRONIC FORMAT but wish to do so in future, to send a short message to the above email address from a VALID EMAIL ACCOUNT.

CLUB NEWS

FOR SALE: Light-Weight Boots,
HI-TEC Apex Women's, size 40 (UK 7)
Nubuck leather and mesh with breathable waterproof membrane and vibram soles.
Worn about 4 times. Original price €110. Selling price €45. Contact: Deirdre.

FOR SALE: Brand new camcorder, (Sansui) bought in Singapore for a friend. Unfortunately, it is not what he wanted. It cost 550 Euro, which is two thirds of the price here. If anyone is interested, phone Steve Buckney.

Membership 2005-2006

So far, 107 members have renewed their membership for the current year (Oct 1st 2005 to Sept 30th 2006). Remember that ...

- ... you have to be a member of the Hillwalkers' Club to avail of the special bus for Sunday Hikes.
- ... only paid-up members will receive the newsletter by post, email or both.
- ... the renewal form is located at the end of the printed newsletter and on the website.

An Óige Ring of Imaal : Marathon Walk 2006

This event has been scheduled for Saturday, 24th June 2006.

Base Venue: Donard National School

Volunteers needed to help run the event. Anyone interested, please contact Jim Barry.

SUNDAY HIKES – SUNDAY BUS

Over the past few months, there has been some concern regarding the relatively low number of club members who come out on Sunday Hikes. Despite the obvious cost to the club, the committee has decided not to raise the bus fare; we may have to do so later in the year.

Instead, we would like to invite all members to support the club by taking part in Sunday Hikes. Over the next few weeks, we will send Sunday Hike details by text message to members, on a trial basis.

We would also like to survey our members to get your feedback on club activities. If you have any suggestions for questions to be included in the survey, please email them to Barbara Sudrow before 21st April.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

2006 IRISH MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL

The Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour is presented in Ireland by Summit Sports with the support of sponsors Lowe Alpine and MSR. Films in this year's tour bring the spirit of adventure to life on the screen. A wide variety of stories - from mountain and water sports, mountain culture and the environment - will entice and inspire viewers. The tour's line-up includes films from Canada, the United States, Poland, Norway, Slovakia, the United Kingdom, Europe and Australia.

Venue: Astra Hall, Students building, UCD

Date & Time: 5th and 6th April. Start: 7.30pm

Tickets: €15 from Great Outdoors, Chatham St., Dublin 2, telephone: 01-6794293

Films range from 3 minutes to 52 minutes in length. For programme details go to:

<http://www.irishmountainfilmfestival.com>

SOCIAL CORNER

INDIAN FOOD NIGHT

21 people came together on Friday night at the Shan Restaurant. It was a nice crowd, able to be accommodated by the restaurant. The food was good and as far as I know, everyone was happy. We finished the night at the Forum pub.

Steve Buckney

The next event will be a night out at the IFC, probably in early May. Other suggestions welcome! Please contact our Social Organiser Steve Buckney. Text to: 086-1591842

EXHIBITION: An Óige Photographic Group

Annual Exhibition 27th June 2006 – 2nd July 2006

Members of An Óige are invited to submit photographs and/or slides in the Hostelling Section of the above Exhibition.

The rules for entry are as follows:

Photographs: Black & White and/or colour

1. Maximum number of photographs which may be entered by each member is 8.
2. Minimum photograph size is 10" x 7"; maximum size including mount is 16" x 12". Entries which do not comply with these sizes will not be accepted.
3. Black and white photographs must be mounted on white board. Coloured photographs must be mounted on black board.
4. Name and An Óige Membership Number should appear on the back of the mount.
5. Each photograph should be given a title which should also appear on the back of the mount.
6. No lettering of any kind is permitted on the front of the photograph or the front of the mount.

Slides

1. Maximum number which may be entered by each member is 6.
2. Slides must be "spotted" on the top right hand corner when ready for projection.
3. Name and An Óige Membership Number should appear on the slide mount.
4. Each slide must be given a title which should also appear on the slide mount.

The closing date for the receipt of entries is Wednesday 3rd May 2006.

Entries should be sent to the An Óige Photographic Group, 61 Mountjoy Street, Dublin 7 by post, or handed into the An Óige Head Office at the same address.

For further information contact Marie McDonald on 01-8377411 (H) or 01 8822560 (An Óige afternoons).

NO ENTRY FEE

WORKSHOP: Photographing Irish Landscapes

A weekend seminar/workshop concentrating on photographing Irish landscapes will take place in Dublin and Wicklow on Sat 22nd/Sun 23rd April. The project is spearheaded by MountainViews.ie and will be held in association with the Dublin Camera Club. The content for the weekend will be given by capable photography enthusiasts in an informal environment, allowing for a great social occasion. With availability on the course limited to 50 participants, a non-refundable deposit of €10 is required upon booking. This booking deposit also fully covers the cost of the course, i.e., no further payment will be required.

For more information on the weekend, please check the following address:

<http://www.mountainviews.ie/features/photocourses.htm>

TRIP UPDATE (1) Scottish Highlands

Dates: Sat, 22 July – Sun, 30 July 2006

Leader: Mark Campion

Area: Glencoe / Fort William / Cairngorms

Cost: In the region of €400, excluding food.

Accommodation: Hostels and Glasgow hotel on the last night.

Transport: Private cars or minibus, depending again on people involved.

Numbers: Only 6 places available;
cut-off date is 19th April.

Possible hikes in Scotland:

Meall Chuaidh (short hike for day 1 off the A9) / Ben Macdui / Easains / Creag Meagaidh /

Ben Nevis via Carn Mor Dearg / Ring of Steall / Bidean Nam Bian / Ben Lomond / The Cobbler

These hikes may change. It is likely that we will do seven hikes weather permitting, with a rest day or two in the middle. There will obviously be scope for those who want extra rest days. Also, there may be scope to do two grades of hikes depending on the make-up of the party.

The average length of the hikes will be 20km with plenty of ascent, so a good level of mountain fitness and stamina will be required.

Interested? Please contact:

Mark Campion

TRIP UPDATE (2)

Spain: Camino de Santiago

"It's hard to imagine a better way to enjoy Spain".

Eoin Moroney is planning a small walking trip to the old pilgrim route of the Camino de Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain some time in August this year. The group will be at most ten people. This trip will last approx. ten days, and is intended to cover the first stages of the Camino from Saint-Jean-de-Port to Logroño.

This walk on a dedicated walking trail will cross the beautiful mountain scenery at the north of Spain.

However, conditions on this walk will be quite difficult. Walkers will have to carry all their supplies including clothes for ten days. Temperatures may be quite warm (in the high 20's to low 30's). We will not have prearranged accommodation although there are refuges along the way offering accommodation to Pilgrims.

Cost of the flights to Biarritz, and returning from northern Spain, i.e. Bilbao, is approximately €180-200. Participants will be responsible for booking their own flights, and for all expenses (including accommodation) on the trip.

Anyone interested, please contact Eoin Moroney by Monday, 10th April.

CLUB TRAVEL

EASTER TRIP 2006

REMINDER

Meeting Place: Thursday, 13th April,

Stena Line Departure Terminal, Dun Laoghaire at 10.15am, for departure at 11am sharp

NEW: JUNE BANK HOLIDAY

Weekend Trip to Killarney

Details of hike itinerary, cost, booking arrangements, etc. on page 8!

INSIDE THE COMMITTEE

Secretary

I have been a member of the Hillwalkers since it started, in January 1993. Since then I have seen many members come and go, but a good many of the original members are still around, perhaps not as active as before. As Secretary to the Hillwalkers, I do the minutes and general correspondence for the Club. I also organise the Sunday walks on alternate months, together with Mark Campion. I am making a conscious effort to use new routes or routes which have not been used for some time. This should add interest to the Club's activities and increase numbers attending. In doing this I am greatly assisted by my knowledge of routes built up over the years and by advice from other Club members, some of whom also help out in reekies I do in the hills.

Garry Byrne

TRAVEL ABROAD

Himalayan Trek A Rewarding Climb

I had made it! I was on top of the world. It was cold and windy but I felt so exhilarated by the view that I didn't even care. I was at the top of Kala Patthar. I was sitting on a steeply sloping rock with a sheer drop on each side. I was terrified. However, the superb close-up views of Mount Everest with a 360 degree panorama of the world's highest mountains distracted me from my precarious position. For me this was the climax of the expedition into the Himalayas. Kala Patthar is renowned to afford the best views of Mount Everest. I could also see the colourful tents of Everest Base Camp nestling below in the valley of the mighty Khumbu Icefall. At 18,208 feet Kala Patthar is 600 feet higher than Base Camp. I was nearly 2,000 feet higher than Mont Blanc in the Alps – or five times higher than Carrantuohill!

So what was I doing here?

In October 2003, I signed up to become part of an expedition to climb to Mount Everest Base Camp in April 2004 in aid of Refugee Trust International. To participate in the expedition I had to raise €4,500 for the 'Trust's Rwanda Street Children Appeal. Refugee Trust is a registered Irish Aid Organisation and Charity which specialises in providing emergency relief and long-term assistance to the people of the third world.

Having raised and paid all the money into the Refugee Trust account I joined a wonderful group of 16 like-minded strangers (15 men and 1 other woman!) at Dublin Airport for the long journey to Kathmandu.

The trip was full of new and, for me, wonderful experiences. Kathmandu was a shock to all the senses: smell, sight and imagination. It was exotic, colourful, noisy, dirty, full of squalor and beauty at the same time.

Having flown from Kathmandu to Lukla our hike began in earnest and the first day or two were typical of the 13 days' walking. We traversed into the well known Dudh Kosi Valley. The trekking was difficult because of the heat, dry air, hard dusty surface and steep rocky pathways. The trail was busy with trekkers, porters, yaks and sherpas carrying huge loads of provisions such as food and building materials on their backs. We were at all times impressed by the grandeur of the landscape - a profusion of lush rhododendron with beautiful pink flowers, magnolia and giant firs. Out beyond the greenery were the huge vistas of deep valleys and gorges, and the tumbling waters of the Dudh Kosi River over giant boulders. The majestic scale of the landscape was impossible to capture in a photograph. It is only by being there and walking through it that one realizes the enormity of it all.

We ascended steeply to Namche Bazaar (3,440m or 11,286 feet) a little traditional Sherpa town built into the side of the mountains. At this stage the thinning air, strong sunshine, heat, dry air and tracks clouded with choking dust (we breathed in mouthfuls of dust) made climbing conditions difficult. Some of the group began to feel unwell. We spent two nights in Namche (for acclimatisation). During our stay we climbed steeply out of the town to Shyangboche (3,720m or 12,205 feet). As we trekked along the cliff edge we saw an eagle gliding over the deep and dark valley. Then suddenly we saw it - Mount Everest. It was so exciting – our first glimpse - we didn't say much, we just looked, there was an understandable silence, lots of photographs were taken. It was a special moment.

On the morning of day four we left Namche to join the main trail emerging onto a precipitous canyon wall 610m above the Dudh Kosi. After Namche the vegetation began to thin out as altitude was gained. Above the tree line the scenery changed to stark glacial moraine, beautiful lakes and snow-covered Himalayan giants. We arrived at Thyangboche, a tiny village at 3860m or 12,664 feet with its spectacular views of Everest, Nuptse, Lhotse, Ama Dablam, Kangtega, Thamserku and Tobuche. We visited the famous monastery there, a most sacred place for Buddhists, built in an idyllic setting and dominated by impressive peaks such as Kantega (6,685m) and Ama Dablam (6,856m). During the first few days of trekking I had at all time been fascinated by the extraordinary beauty of the country, everywhere I looked, every corner I turned revealed the most wondrous view. But I was not prepared for the dramatic effect of the scene which confronted me in Thyangboche when I went outside the lodging house at 3 a.m. It was as bright as day by the light of the moon and the sky was covered with stars. There was an absolute stillness. I glanced all around me and massive snow covered mountain peaks stared back at me and surrounded me. The ground had been touched with frost which sparkled in the moonlight. It was the most amazing scene and one I shall always remember.

It was a beautiful sunny day as we arrived at Base Camp and the sun-covered Himalayan giants towering above us looked exquisite. Yet, standing there on the rocky bed of base camp, one could not but be reminded of the danger element attached to this incredible landscape. I heard five avalanches on the way in and saw the wreckage of a crashed helicopter strewn across the Khumbu Glacier. I thought about the lure of Everest, how it has consumed so many lives and how climbers continue to risk their lives because of their fascination with the world's highest mountain. I thought of Odell (Mallory's friend and fellow climber in 1924) and his sentiments outlined in Breashears and Salkeld's 'Last Climb' in which he confessed to feeling the allure of its towering presence and how no mountaineer could but be fascinated. I quote: "He who approaches close must ever be led on, and oblivious of all obstacles seek to reach that most sacred and highest place of all."

Base Camp was a scene of colourful tents and prayer flags, a climber shaving, the sound of a radio playing music, people looking very fit, different languages and nationalities, porters, trekkers and real climbers. We had achieved what we had set out to do – climb to Base Camp. It was no mean achievement. We gathered around the Irish tent and had hoped to meet the members of another Irish expedition – Pat Falvey and Dr. Clare O'Leary - but they had already gone off up into the mountains to make history!

The trekking at high altitude was much tougher than I had ever expected. Kala Patthar came at the end of 8 days of climbing. It was considered a very strenuous climb. Only 8 of the group attempted the climb. The prospect of a 12 hour round trip to Base Camp - scheduled to take place the following day - prompted the remainder to conserve their energy. However, some of us were gluttons for punishment!

Up to then the trekking was tough but always rewarding. Apart from the incredible beauty of the scenery, eight days trekking/climbing was time well spent. It was very good training because acclimatisation was sufficiently gradual. Too sudden a gain in height can lead to altitude sickness.

The effort in climbing at this altitude is extremely gruelling. Steep slopes at over 17,000 feet exhaust you very quickly. But the pressure was on us to get to the top as quickly as possible in order to avoid cloud cover. We could only do a few steps at a time and only take short shallow breaths – it was difficult to get a really deep satisfying breath. Despite the discomfort our determination and perseverance were rewarded by the sensational views of the highest mountain in the world and its neighbouring giants.

A visit to a street children school and orphanage project outside Kathmandu provided an opportunity for us to experience relief and development education at the coalface. It was indeed a very moving experience to visit

there. It was also a reminder to us of why we made this trip. This was an example of where the fundraising money goes. If ever I had entertained any notions of abandoning fundraising then this made it all worthwhile. There were 16 girls and 32 boys ranging in age from 4 to 14 years living there. The orphanage was in a secluded, peaceful and tranquil setting surrounded by greenery and the sound of a river flowing a short distance away. It was a stark contrast to the pollution and crowded conditions of Kathmandu city. The location of the orphanage in the countryside was deliberate in order to encourage the children to stay in their communities and to empower them with education and vocational skills to sustain a quality of life there.

For those of you who are wondering about the 'night life' on the Everest trail in the lodging houses we usually sat around the dining room stove (fuelled by yak dung), chatted and exchanged stories from the day's trekking, wrote diaries, read books or played cards. However, a very dim light bulb overhead (not always reliable) made reading and writing difficult. Once the sun went down in the late afternoon it got very cold and after dark it was freezing. It was at this stage that the thermals and the 'Michelin man' gear came out. We only went near our bedrooms when it was absolutely necessary! It was always a dreaded thought after dinner to leave the relatively warm ambience of the dining room for the freezing cold air of the bedroom!

On the way down we celebrated the Nepalese New Year in the lodging house in Pangboche (3,930m or 12,893 feet) with the porters, guides, locals and other tourists. It was a great impromptu session with music, sing song and dance (traditional Nepalese style - or at least we tried to). We drank the local brew 'Chang' served in mugs from flasks. It resembled milk with little lumps of rice floating on top. It was disgusting to taste at first but after a few sips (out of politeness) and several top ups we seemed to acquire a taste for it and even worried whenever the orange flask was not in view.

In conclusion, I have to say that was the most exciting trip I have ever taken in my life. I experienced things I could never imagine – whether the high mountains or the back streets of Kathmandu or the sound of distant avalanches or the looks on the faces of the little children of the orphanage or the stars on frosty nights in the clear air of high altitude or the camaraderie of a bunch of strangers who became friends or the generosity of my friends and colleagues. The downside of all of this is that it has given me an incurable wanderlust and a longing for more of the same!

Betty Kehoe

JUNE BANK HOLIDAY

An Óige Hillwalkers Club

June Bank Holiday Weekend 2006

Friday 2nd June – Monday 5th June

Visit to the Wild and Beautiful County of Kerry

Aghadoe Y.H., Killarney, Co Kerry

Moderate/Hard Walkers Welcome

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

Leader: Tom Kenny

Strictly Bus Trip Only

Weekend Walking Itinerary

- Ridge Walk to Carrauntoohil Mountain

- **Slieve Mish Mountains /Dingle Peninsula**
- **Paps of Dana**
- **Social Events**

Ordnance Survey Maps: 1:50.000 Discovery Series Sheets 71, 78 and 79

Notes

Hostel accommodation: 4 to 6 bed rooms/limited to 52 persons

Booking: €100 NON REFUNDABLE deposit to An Óige Head Office by credit card or cash deposit (8304555).

Booking facilities available now.

Total Cost: €160 (includes 3 Bednights, 2 Dinners, 3 Continental Breakfasts, Packed Lunches & Transport costs). Balance payable to Head Office by 19th May.

Extra Food etc: Large local Supermarket

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

Departure: Friday evening from George's Quay (adjacent to Tara Street Railway Station) 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.

Welcome Aboard