

HIKE PROGRAMME

December 2006 / January 2007

MEET: Burgh Quay

DEPART: Sundays 10.00 am

COST: Private bus. €12

Tuesday, 26 December 2006

- - - **Christmas Hike**

Leader: Frank Rooney

Route: Meet outside Howth Dart railway station at 11.00 o'clock for a walk around the Hill of Howth.

Public/Own Transport

Monday, 1 January 2007

- - - **New Year Hike**

Leader: Jim Barry

Route: Meet outside Fenton's Public House, Glen of Imaal at 11.00 o'clock for the traditional New Year Hike up Lugnaquilla.

Own Transport

Sunday, 7 January 2007

- - - **Introductory Hillwalkers Hike**

Leader: Garry Byrne

Route: Scalp * Barrnaslingan * Ballycorus * Carrigollogan * Killegar * Knocksink * Enniskerry * Lover's Leap * Enniskerry.

Public Transport: Dublin-Enniskerry bus number 44, leaves from Screen Cinema at **9.30am** sharp, or pick up en route.

Sunday, 14 January 2007

- - - **Circuit of Derrylossery**

Leader: Tom Milligan

Route: Derrylossery Church * Ballinacorbeg * Avonmore River * Oldbridge * Scarr * Wicklow Way * Annamoe * Derrylossery Church.

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

Sunday, 21 January 2007

- - - **Ballinastoe to Oldbridge**

Leader: Eoin Moroney

Route: Ballinastoe (GR 202 091) * White Hill * Wicklow Way * Cloghoge River * Inchavore River * Kanturk * Lough Dan * Oldbridge.

Distance: 18km **Ascent:** 700m

Sunday, 28 January 2007

- - - **Glenmacnass to Glendalough**

Leader: Stephen James

Route: Glenmacnass Car Park * Lough Oular * Tonelagee * Wicklow Gap * St. Kevin's Way * Glendalough.

Distance: 17km **Ascent:** 500m

Sunday, 4 February 2007

- - - **Introductory Hillwalkers Hike**

Leader: Chris Byrne

Route: Forest Entrance Ballinatona (GR 055 138) * Forest Tracks * Sorrel Hill * Ballynultagh Gap * Forest Tracks * SH 541m * Billy Byrne's Gap * Moanbane * Silsean * Ballyknockan Car Park.

Distance: 18km **Ascent:** 780m

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. Any participant on these hikes must be a member of An Óige.

EQUIPMENT The leader has the right to refuse anyone who is not adequately equipped (e.g., without appropriate boots, rainwear, food, hat, gloves, etc). During the winter months, a torch plus spare batteries and bulb are essential.

LEADER 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.

WALKING STICKS AND RUCKSACKS Remember that walking sticks and rucksacks cannot be brought onto the bus and must be stowed away in the boot during the journey.

PROSPECTIVE HIKE LEADERS Any club member interested in leading a hike, please contact Garry Byrne, Tel. 01-8388812

HILLWALKERS AWAY: Derry Weekend 2006

THIRD TIME, LUCKY AGAIN!

The third successive trip to Derry and surrounds for the Hallowe'en weekend proved hugely popular again, being fully supported. There is always a gamble with the weather, but fortune favoured us, being remarkably mild and with very little rain. Frank Rooney and Brian Flynn organised a fine variety of walks with a choice of three each day.

Saturday, October 28

The "Hard" Walkers, led by Frank, tackled Urris Hills, Mamore etc. – quite a task, reminiscent of the Maamturks with so many steep ascents and descents. The Moderates, a large group of 34 under Brian Flynn's guidance, took on Slieve Snaght (Inishowen) and its adjacent hills. Over 300m the cloud didn't clear until quite late so it was a navigational feat for Brian and his aide, Philip Roche, with their compasses and GPS to plot their way through trackless terrain. The emergence of the sun near the end at Tullymore Hill was an unexpected bonus.

Sunday, October 29

The Hard Walkers, again under Frank, took on the bulk of the Joey Glover Walk, starting near Dunlewy and taking in Aghla More and Aghla Beg en route to Muckish Gap. Quite a number of lakes along the way and some punishing climbs, too. Muckish is a very steep mountain, resembling an upturned ship as one book has observed, the descent being particularly so.

Brian brought the Mods up Muckish from the north side, across the plateau to the cross and descended north-east, finishing at Creeslough. Jim Barry led the third group up from the Gap, across the entire plateau and back down to the Gap again. A most satisfactory day, as everyone managed to conquer this difficult mountain.

Monday, October 30

The leaders found a new set of hills for us in the Sperrins near Plumbridge in Co. Tyrone for the half-day walk on the return journey to Dublin. Some wag described it as "Mullagh" country; it is true that the name of each of the five hills began with "Mullagh...". The gradients were not too serious so all walkers enjoyed the 3 to 4 hours on the rolling hills. Some fun developed at the end of the Mods walk, finding ourselves at Glenroan Bridge, some 4 km from the bus (near Cranagh). Efforts to contact the bus to pick us up were unavailing as all the mobile phones proved ineffective. Carina used her feminine charms to flag down an ambulance for a lift, only to find it was on call to collect a patient! Eventually she cajoled a lorry driver to stop and bring us to Cranagh – so, a happy ending!

The Derry location caters for every taste. Non-walkers can enjoy the shops and do guided tours, particularly on the historic city walls. The night-life is lively; Derry is famous for its music. The cooked breakfasts and fine choice at the evening dinners added to the comforts of the hotel itself: central heating, showers, bath etc. and the luxury of just two sharing each room.

Finally, congrats to Frank and Brian for organising everything so successfully, not forgetting their extra weekend away doing the many reccies. We are in their debt once again.

Pearse Foley

NAVIGATION TRAINING

Map & Compass Course 2006/2007

The annual Map and Compass Course commenced on 31st October 2006 with 16 participants. Feedback from participants after the three Tuesday evening sessions, held in An Óige Headquarters, and the two weekend training sessions in the Glendalough area was very positive, as in these emails from two of the participants:

Many thanks to the Hillwalkers and its leaders and instructors for a great course. It was such fun as well as informative, and hopefully will inspire me to be a bit more adventurous in my walking. Looking forward to the Comeraghs. C.B.

... just a note to say many thanks for the most enjoyable 3 weeks I really felt I learnt something useful and look forward to putting it into practice. Many thanks also to all the leaders (Jimmy, Donal, Ita, Joe, Mark, Phillip and Tom for their patience and good nature it can't have been easy at times. Hope that you have a great Christmas and New Year. Looking forward to Waterford at the end of January. Once again many thanks. D.O'N.

Training Weekend in the Comeraghs/Knockmealdowns

OPEN TO HILLWALKER MEMBERS

Background: Would you like to renew or strengthen your Mountain Skills? Then the Comeragh and Knockmealdown Consolidation Weekend might be for you! There will be a small number of spaces available on the weekend for existing Hillwalker members who want to refresh their navigation skills. The weekend is designed to meet the requirements of members who have taken a Map and Compass course in previous years and who wish to revise skills learned previously or to strengthen existing skills.

Dates: Fri, Jan 26th to Sun 28th 2007 (travel down Friday evening).

Accommodation: Rathgormack Mountaineering Hostel, Rathgormack, Co. Waterford. The accommodation consists of bunk beds similar to Glendalough Hostel in two 12 bed dorms. Bed clothes are provided but a sheet bag or a sleeping bag might be useful.

Transport: To be arranged by participants. If pooled, transport cost should be shared among car occupants. Take the Dungarvan road (R676) from Carrick-on-Suir. Anyone without transport should contact Jimmy McCullagh for assistance with car pooling.

Cost: Training and accommodation is €85 per person, payable to An Óige HQ (Tel: 8304555). Booking opens Mon 15 January 2007.

Map: Laminated sheet 75, Silva 4 compass.

Food: No meals are provided at hostel. Bring breakfasts and packed lunches for Saturday & Sunday. The hostel is about a 15-min. drive from Carrick-on-Suir/Clonmel/Dungarvan where there are a number of recommended restaurants (traditional destination on Saturday evening). Otherwise bring your own food for Saturday evening.

Queries? Email Jimmy Mccullagh or Donal Finn

Committee 2006/2007

Chairman	Frank Rooney
Secretary	Garry Byrne
Treasurer	Jim Barry
Membership	Donal Finn
Sunday Hikes	Garry Byrne
Social Events	Steve Buckney
Weekends	Mark Champion
Officer-at-large	Eoin Moroney
Newsletter	Barbara Sudrow

Special thanks to:

Webmaster	Matt Geraghty
Distribution	Pearse Foley & Cyril McFeeney

Art O'Neill Walk 2007

The Art O'Neill Walk will take place at midnight on Friday, 5 January, 2007, outside Dublin Castle, beside City Hall. The year 2007 will mark (exactly) the four hundred and fifteenth anniversary of the escape of Red Hugh O'Donnell and Henry and Art O'Neill from that fortress. This walk, which usually happens in the first week of January each year, does not have an organiser as yet, but some individuals will be heading out at midnight from Dublin Castle to commemorate the event. This year the walk will be extended by 11k from the former finishing place at Baravore in Glenmalure to Greenane, just below Ballinacor, where the Irish chieftain Fiach Mac Hugh O'Byrne had his fortress.

Contact: Tom Milligan

STOCKING FILLERS

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This competition is open to all current paid-up members of An Óige Hillwalkers Club. To enter, please send the completed crossword grid, together with your name and address to: Barbara Sudrow, 24 Glenmalure Park, South Circular Road, Dublin 8. Closing date: Monday, 22 January 2007

Name:

Address:

OUT ON THE TRAILS: El Camino de Santiago

There I was on Raglan Road looking for a solicitor's office which would give out a passport to do a walk. This may sound strange but a pilgrim passport is needed as evidence that you have walked the Way of Saint James.

THE FRENCH WAY OF SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

My first use of the passport was in a beautiful town on the French side of the Pyrenees called St. Jean Pied de Port; a rampart town that reminded me of the walls of Derry but without murals. The official in the office was a bit taken aback as I handed him my pilgrim passport. It was the first time for him to see an Irish passport stamped Cumann Cáirde San Séamus in nEireann. Later I was to understand his surprise. In an Albergue (Hostel) run by a Dutch evangelical group, in a village in the mountains called Villamayor de Monjardin, they keep details of the different nationalities that had stayed and used their facilities during the previous year. Over three thousand people stayed in this particular Albergue. The most numerous were the Spanish, no surprise, second the French and after that came the Dutch, English and Germans. Many more countries were listed. There were twenty Irish that had stayed. We were near the bottom of the league along with other notable luminaries like Belarus and Saudi Arabia. Surprisingly, there was one person from Afghanistan.

It seems now that Irish people's preference is for a pilgrimage to New York to do their shopping. But this was not always the case. The Irish along with the English had their own route to Northern Spain and on to Santiago de Compostela. The ship to Spain was docked on the Liffey opposite St. James' Gate. It would start there and head for the Spanish port of El Ferrol. From there it was a five to six day walk to Santiago de Compostela.

The route which Claire and I had chosen was the French way. This starts on the French side of the Pyrenees in St. Jean Pied de Port, a total walk of 765km to Santiago de Compostela. Our walk was to take seven days and would finish in Logroño, an average walking distance of 24km a day. There are many designated walking ways to Compostela. Near the Templar Church at Eunáte we met a German couple who had started their walk in their

own village in Germany. They had walked for two weeks for each of the last six years, first Germany, France and now the last leg through Spain.

The logistics to the start of the Way were straightforward: flight to Biarritz - bus to Bayonne train station - train to St. Jean Pied de Port.

St. Jean Pied de Port is a very attractive town with a 17th century citadel and narrow cobbled streets. We stayed in a very nice Albergue in Rue de la Citadella. The house was full for that evening with walkers intending to start the Camino. Many of the people we met that evening we would continually meet along the walk each day. It was like a community on the move, each one ready and open to talk to the next person they met.

Day 1- St. Jean Pied de Port to Roncevaux

This route through the Basque country goes over Col de Lepoeder with a total distance of 27km and a climb of 4500 ft - not recommended in bad weather. Historically, it was the easiest route over the Pyrenees on the way to Paris. This route is named after Napoleon after his crossing into Spain. There is also a connection with Charlemagne and Roland who had a number of battles with the Moors. It is an attractive walk with lovely views over the Pyrenees. As we ascended on to the higher mountain passes, we saw griffon vultures as they gracefully soared overhead with the occasional flap of the wings. As their diet is carrion, I wondered if they did they see us as their next meal? Near the French-Spanish border we found a welcome water tap. Further on we walked through a beech forest with a lovely valley below. In total, there is a 5km drop from the top of the Col de Lepoeder down to Roncevaux.

Day 2- Roncesvalles to Larrasoña, 21km

An imposing abbey dominates Roncesvalles. In the evening a religious service is organised for the pilgrims with the nationality of each pilgrim being read out. A Dutch religious group ran this Albergue. Their sense of fun was to wake everyone in the morning with a loud blast of the March of the Hebrew Slaves at 6 o'clock in the morning with the purpose of having everyone gone by 8 o'clock. This was to become a feature of the walk - up early in the morning and early to bed in the evening.

That morning we started the walk in the mist and headed for the first town of Burguete which is 4km away and went straight into a coffee shop for gorgeous Spanish coffee and hot rolls with cheese. The route then wanders along various surfaces and narrow paths. We stopped in Zubiri for lunch. There is a lovely Gothic bridge before the town. In the afternoon we walked on to Larrasoña with the sun high in the sky. This village dates back to the 12th century. The Mayor runs the Albergue; she will greet you with a gentle caring officiousness.

Day 3 - From Larrasoña to Cizur Menor

This walk is for a total distance of 25km. The route goes through a pine and oak forest and also parallels a river called the Rio Arga. On the outskirts of Navarra's capital Pamplona is Villava, home of Spanish cyclist Miguel Indurain, several times winner of the Tour de France. Among Pamplona's highlights are the cathedral, museum, old quarter and Plaza del Castillo where the running of the bulls happens every year. We found Pamplona a friendly town and would recommend spending some time there. However, we continued on to Cizur Menor, about 5km beyond Pamplona. The Knights of St. John of Malta ran this Albergue. Cizur Menor was up on a height and at night we had a brilliant view of Pamplona.

Day 4 - Cizur Menor to Puente la Reina

From Cizur Menor it's a steep climb with stunning views to windmill-topped Alto de Perdón. These dirt lanes ascend through Zariquigui which has a fountain - very important for water refills. On top of the mountain you see the rest of the walk laid out before you in a sweeping view of the countryside. We took a diversion to Eunáte, which had a 12th century octagonal Romanesque church that was surrounded by fields of sunflowers. This church is said to have belonged to the Knights Templar. Afterwards, we walked on to Puente la Reina, a town with one long street and an 11th century bridge - a most interesting place. We stayed beyond the town in a modern Albergue.

Day 5 - Puente la Reina to Estella

This is a lovely walk that crosses four rivers and passes through fertile vineyards and several tranquil hill towns. Curauqui is one of these towns, with its narrow cobble streets and its twelfth century church. It's well worth lingering over a café con leche. A section of this walk is on a roman road, which also has a roman bridge that

was being repaired at the time. Estella is a lively town with a very attractive square. In the evening the square comes alive with people of all generations. Estella has a bull-running event similar to Pamplona.

Day 6 - Estella to Torres del Rio

The start of this walk plods through the suburbs of Estella. However, Fuente del Vino is soon reached. There is a tap of free wine provided by Bodegas de Irache. Benches are nearby for resting while enjoying the delights of the fountain.

The walk continues to ramble along fields and woodlands. It also goes through a number of small villages where coffee can be sipped as you watch the other walkers go through. Los Arcos is eventually reached; there we went into the Gothic cloisters of Iglesia de Santa Maria. We stayed a while and listened to a live musical recital. In the afternoon we had an 8km track to Torres del Rio via Sansol. It was a hot afternoon with no shelter along the route.

Torres del Rio is a small village with just one restaurant. It's a welcoming place for walkers.

Day 7 - Torres del Rio to Logroño

On our last walking day, the first part of the walk was through pleasant vineyard country to the town of Viana enclosed by high walls. The remains of the infamous Cesare Borgia are interred in the local church. The town is worth stopping for a coffee. After Viana, the walk continues on a dirt track. Eventually the track will lead over a wooden bridge crossing into the province of La Rioja. Logroño is seen in the distance and will soon be reached. Logroño is the centre of the wine industry. It is as modern city with high-class shops. It also has an old cobbled area that is centred around Iglesia de Santiago. But our walk was now complete after a total of 168km. The remaining section to Santiago de Compostela has a distance of almost 600 km.

The following morning we got a bus to Vitoria and a flight from there into the rugby scrum that was Stansted airport, and then back to Dublin.

According to legend, around the year 812, a religious hermit discovered the long forgotten tomb of the apostle James. Once the presence of his remains was confirmed, faith drove millions of pilgrims to undertake the long, arduous journey to Compostela.

The French Way of Santiago de Compostela is a World Heritage Site awarded by UNESCO. It is described as a "testimony to the power of the Christian faith among people of all social classes and from all over Europe".

Frank Rooney

BEHIND THE SCENES Newsletter Distribution

It is a happy joint venture between Cyril McFeeney and myself. And, indeed, it's the easiest job to do in connection with the magazine. The current editor and her predecessors deserve all the praise; it's a responsible and time-consuming job.

For Cyril and me, it entails a monthly visit to Mountjoy Street and sometimes, just once every two months. Barbara drops in the hard copy and also the address labels to Head Office and we then get the go-ahead.

The number of copies required is determined by the number of address labels, but we run off additional copies for display in the public office. The copier, whilst not without its troubles every so often, is an "all singing, all dancing affair", printing automatically on both sides of the sheet and stitching the pages together as well.

Cyril normally looks after that and also puts the envelopes through the franking machine. In the meantime, I have been putting labels on the envelopes, and, after they are franked, we insert the copies in the self-sealing

envelopes (no more licking of envelopes, thankfully!). A number of members receive the newsletter via email which reduces the volume of work, and more importantly, the postage costs.

We are very grateful to Marie and her colleagues in the office for their cheerful help, especially with the temperamental copier.

The whole exercise takes up between 1 and 1.5 hours which is very little in a calendar month. And as we are both retired (for more years than we care to remember), it is no inconvenience.

Pearse Foley

CLUB NEWS

Pub Quiz for Sri Lanka

Moderate walkers Adrian and Catherine are going to Sri Lanka in March 2007 on a School Building Project. Mick Heneghan is organising a Pub Quiz to raise funds for this project.

Venue: Gate Bar, Crumlin, Dublin 12
Date: Friday, 19 January 2007
Time: 9 pm
Contact: Mick Heneghan, Tel: 01-6570244

Mick's pub quizzes are legendary, so it's going to be a good night out for all! Also, donation of prizes most welcome!

SOCIAL CORNER

PAST EVENT: Going to the Dogs

The latest social event was a repeat trip to the dogs, this time at the Harold's Cross venue. In all, 14 people came, and most of us staked out a patch of floor space upstairs, on the periphery of the crowd. We were not in time for the more salubrious seats lower down, but managed even so. No major wins or losses as far as I know.

Later, most of us adjourned to the pub next door, known as either Flanagan's or Peggy Kelly's. It was all over by 11.30 as 11 of the 12 participants at the pub fled for the last no. 16 bus to town - one of the many advantages of having a bus driver in the group.

Another bonus of the night was that 2 people independently came up with the idea of the next social event (see separate listing below).

Steve Buckney

FUTURE EVENT 1: Smithfield on Ice

Venue: Smithfield (www.smithfieldonice.ie)
Date: Friday, 5 Jan 2007
Time: 8 pm to skate at 8:30 for 1 hour till 9:30
Cost: 16 Euro per person includes skate hire
Booking: Will need to book in advance so interested persons please contact Steve Buckney
Après-ice: Drinks at The Cobblestone Pub

FUTURE EVENT 2: Orienteering by Night

Venue: St. Anne's Park in Raheny

Date: Tuesday, 30 Jan 2007
Time: Between 6 and 7 pm
Cost: Small registration fee

This is similar to last year's orienteering event but will most likely take place in a different part of St. Anne's Park. Further details including meeting place, post-match drinks etc. will be available mid-January.

Contact: Mark Campion

Other suggestions welcome!

Please contact our Social Organiser Steve Buckney.

BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND

An Óige Hillwalkers Club

Easter Weekend 2007

Thursday 5th – Monday 9th April 2007

Visit to the Wild and Scenic Snowdonia National Park, North Wales

Llanberis Youth Hostel, Llanberis, Brecon, Caernarfon, Gwynedd

Moderate/Hard and Easy Walkers Welcome

Two grades of organised hikes daily including Monday plus numerous short walk options for easy walkers

Leader: Jim Barry

Boat & Bus Trip Only

Weekend Itinerary will be chosen from the following:

- Carneddau Ridge from Ogwen (G.R. 649604)
- Glyders Ridge from Ogwen (G.R. 649604)
- Glyders Y Garn & Elidir Fawr from Nant Peris (G.R. 608582)
- Moel Hebog and Nantlle from Rhyd Ddu Village (G.R. 571526)
- Cnicht and Moelwyns from Croesor Village (G.R. 632447)
- Low Level walking facilitated at each of the above locations
- Social Events

British Ordnance Survey Maps: 1:50.000 Landranger Series, Sheet 115

Notes

Accommodation: Youth Hostel close to Llanberis Town

Booking: €180 NON REFUNDABLE deposit to An Óige Head Office by credit card or cash deposit (8304555). Balance of €150 to be paid before Friday 9th March 07, as hostel has to be paid in full at this time. Booking facilities will be available from 3rd Jan 07.

Cost: €330 (approx.) (includes 4 Bednights, Meals & Transport costs)

Meals: Available at hostel (included in the price of the weekend)

Food: as above; stopping at local shops for extras (STERLING CURRENCY REQUIRED).

Bring: Suitable Walking Boots/Winter Rainwear & Clothing/Towels/Toilet Gear/ Flask/Torch/First Aid Kit/Camera/Binoculars/Valid An Óige Membership Card.

Meeting: Stena Line Departure Terminal, Dun Laoghaire at 10.15am

Departure: Holy Thursday from Dun Laoghaire at 11am sharp on HSS Stena Line Ferry to Holyhead. Then onward by bus to Llanberis Youth Hostel.

Return: Monday evening from Holyhead on 1530hrs Ferry after bus journey from Llanberis to arrive back in Dun Laoghaire at 1720hrs approximately.

Welcome Aboard