

HIKE PROGRAMME

March 2008

MEET: Burgh Quay

DEPART: Sundays 10.00 am

COST: Private bus. €12
(unless stated otherwise)

2nd pick-up point: The bus picks up walkers who are already at the designated point. It won't be waiting and places cannot be guaranteed as the bus may be full at Burgh Quay.

2nd drop-off point: Where indicated in the programme below, the bus will drop off hikers at the 2nd pick-up point on the return journey, unless circumstances dictate otherwise. We regret that this is not possible on all routes.

9 March 2008

---Wild West Wicklow

Leader: Joe Gilvarry

2nd pick-up point: Bus stop at Rathfarnham Castle, before the Yellow House.

Route: Oasis * Carrigshouk * Mullaghcleevaun East * Mullaghcleevaun * Billy Byrne's Gap *

Moanbane * Cock Brook * Hampden Memorial * Kilbeg * Poulaphuca shore * Lacken.

Distance: 18km

Ascent: 800m

Maps: OS 56 and Harvey

16 March 2008

---St. Patrick's Weekend Special Hike

Leader: Jim Barry

Route: Mount Leinster from Scullogge Gap, with stop for meal on the way home.

Map: OS 68

Please note earlier departure: 9.30 am

23 March 2008

EASTER

No Sunday Hike

30 March 2008

---Introductory Hike – Circuit of Glencullen

Leader: Eoin Moroney

2nd pick-up point: Bus stops at Milltown Bridge.

Route: Fern Hill Tunnel * Three Rock * Fairy Castle * Tibbradden * Cruagh * Killikee * Glendoo * Knocknagun * Prince William's Seat * Wicklow Way * Car Park (O 185 169).

Distance: 19km

Ascent: 720m

Maps: OS 50 and 56

6 April 2008

**---Commemorative Walk
for Annick Van de Venster**

Leader: Mark Champion

2nd pick-up & drop-off point: Bus stops before the roundabout at Loughlinstown.

Route: Walks finishing in Glendalough International Youth Hostel for tree planting in memory of Annick (see separate notice).

Maps: OS 56, Harvey and Healy

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.

CO-ORDINATION If necessary, 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.

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.

EQUIPMENT It is essential to bring good rain gear (both jacket and over trousers) and to leave cotton t-shirts and jeans at home!

Boots must be sturdy with proper ankle support and a rigid non-slip sole such as Vibram.

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 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.

Annick Van de Venster

It was with great shock and sorrow that the club learned of the tragic death of our friend Annick Van de Venster. She had been trekking in Uganda's Mount Elgon National Park when her camp was attacked on February 5th at night by what are believed to have been cattle thieves. She was hit by gunfire and died the next day, the weather and her remote location preventing speedy evacuation. It was almost a week before definite knowledge of the tragedy reached many of us in the club.

Annick was from Antwerp, Belgium and had been working and living in Ireland for many years now. She was a club member since 2000, participating in our hikes, weekends away and parties. Her most recent outing with the club was on Don Reilly's Holly Hike last December.

Seemingly quiet, she had a ready laugh and friendly personality. As fellow members of An Óige Hillwalkers, we shared one aspect of Annick's zest for life. There are many others, some of which we are only learning now we share memories with persons inside and outside of the club.

One aspect of her life that I did not know about was that she ran a Vegan cake stall in the Temple Bar food market. Several of us though can attest to the delicious quality of her baking. Music was another great passion and she was most animated when talking about her favourite band, U2, who she followed with extraordinary devotion.

Another aspect of her character was her deep-felt concern for the environment and social justice, which expressed itself through her volunteer work for the environment and the developing world. Tree-planting for An Óige at Knockree, conservation work while on holiday in Australia and working for Oxfam Ireland were examples of the practical way she expressed her values.

Her love of travel brought her on fantastic travels around the world, particularly in the Southern Hemisphere. I always admired her courage and resourcefulness in exploring these far-flung lands alone. Her ability to make friends on her travels and to seek-out the real wilderness attests to her adventurous spirit.

Two of her closest friends in the club, Sandra Brady and Caroline Carswell, had these words to offer in her memory:

"Annick was a very kind, gentle and very caring person. She also had a slightly other-worldly quality with an incredibly free spirit and strong ethical principles.

Annick was too gentle for this world and this makes what happened to her even more tragic. Her love of travel took her all over the globe, and her last journey led her to Mount Elgon in Uganda. For her, this trip had two purposes – she was following a dream of visiting Africa, and would learn about the continent for which she was working at Oxfam Ireland.

A natural modesty prevented Annick seeing just how many people valued her, and in the "me, me" generation, this quality was even more admirable. Her self-reliance was legendary, but she had many friends and was never heard to say a bad word about anyone. Annick was a wonderful person and it was a privilege to know her, we will all miss her very much. May her soul be at peace and her spirit live on forever... We will carry her forever in our hearts."

The club offers its deep condolences to her father and mother, Paul and Liliane, and her sister Christel. We hope they derive some solace from the knowledge that in our company over the years she enjoyed beautiful walks and good friendship. May she rest in peace.

Warren Lawless

The article below was written by Annick Van de Venster and first printed in the July/August 2001 edition of the club newsletter. We are reprinting it here as a tribute to Annick.

Patagonia, South America, 2000

I started my adventurous 5-week trip to Patagonia (southern Argentina and Chile) in mid-October 2000, so it was early spring in the Southern Hemisphere.

At least I arrived in style as I flew business class into Buenos Aires and then got a lift from my neighbour's private driver into the city centre. The rest of my journey was more humble as they dropped me off in front of a youth hostel.

I immediately hooked up with my Lebanese-Australian roommate to explore the Argentinean capital. Tango on the streets is commonplace in certain areas so no need to pay to enter a show. The popular tourist area Caminito with its colourful metal houses, situated in La Boca, one of the poorer parts of the city, is where the ever-famous football player Diego Maradona started his career. We ended up cooking dinner in one of the local's modest shelter and had a taste of mate, a strong bitter tea that one drinks through a pipe. I later found out that all Argentineans are addicted to it.

After a few days of acclimatisation I headed south to Península Valdéz NP (National Park). Because of its remoteness I was forced to join a bus tour. For most people the highlight is the boat trip which gets you very close to the (*Eubalena australis*) whales, others got really excited observing copulating sea elephants, whereas my weakness lies with the cute Magalan pinguins.

Next destination was the island of Tierra del Fuego in the far south which is half Argentinean, half Chilean. I only spent some time on the Argentinean side. The mountainous surroundings of Ushuaia, the southernmost city in the world, are simply captivating. There were good hiking possibilities from the city to Glaciar Martial but sudden snowfall and poor visibility made me return early. Inside the national park, a choice of easy tracks along the lakes, or somewhat more challenging ones up high.

Back on the mainland in Los Glaciares NP, I firstly joined a tour to the biggest tourist attraction, the 60m high glacier Perito Moreno. Frequently big blocks of ice create an immense sound and light spectacle. More up north the Fitz Roy Range offers excellent hiking. I ended up camping with other backpackers. A bit too cold for me as it was still freezing at night but the harsh conditions were worthwhile as at sunrise the red glow on the famous peaks of Cerro Torre and Cerro Fitz Roy were absolutely breathtaking.

Crossing the border into Chile, the little seaside town Puerto Natales was the starting point of my backpacking trip in the huge Torres del Paine NP. A large choice of tracks! I did a popular 5 day hike carrying all my gear and food. The park was not yet invaded by the masses, which allows you to enjoy its sheer beauty even more. The most famous feature of the park are the Torres: 3 granite columns reaching 2600 to 2800 metres. On the eastern side via a steep climb over rock blocks you can see the Torres in full but when I reached that point they were hidden by fog. Staying in huts is rather dear but the Chilean hut wardens were extremely friendly. In one hut they spontaneously started singing beautiful Chilean songs.

Further north to the volcanic Lake District

Puerto Montt is a booming tourist fishing town, with several national parks nearby. I did a few day trips. The fairly unfrequented and difficult accessible Alerce Andino NP is famous for its alerce trees, huge native conifers. I undertook a marathon hike in the volcanic Pérez Rosales NP partly climbing up the perfectly shaped Osorno volcano. I seemed the only hiker and was only surpassed by cars.

Eastwards into the Argentinean Lake District

Bariloche is the most famous ski resort of the country having undergone many European influences (p.e. Hotel Edelweiss, Mont Blanc ...). The city overlooks the large Nahuel Huapi Lake. Plenty of hiking possibilities, weather permitting. A must is to pop into the prestigious remote Lloa Lloa hotel built in an idyllic area overlooking mountains and lakes. Thick snowflakes changed the spring landscape suddenly into a beautiful winter scene.

The little town San Martín de los Andes by Lacar Lake was my final destination. I was invited to join 2 other hikers to climb Cerro Colorado volcano. Track invisible due to the thick snow layer so we had to make our own often sinking way. The top was coloured red, offering spectacular views. My last few days, I took it fairly easy just walking along Lacar Lake.

Back to the hustle and bustle of hot Buenos Aires felt like a slight shock after several weeks of peace and quietness in the outback. I never had the impression I was making that trip all by myself as I met a lot of other backpackers and bumped into them at various locations.

Annick Van de Venster

Remembering Annick Van de Venster

The Hillwalkers were deeply shocked and saddened to hear of Annick's untimely death under such tragic circumstances. There have been and will be a number of events dedicated to Annick:

- ❖ Many Hillwalkers attended the Commemoration Service organised by Oxfam Ireland on 29th February, at the Unitarian Church on St. Stephen's Green. Gerry Walsh spoke in tribute of Annick at the Service.
- ❖ Frank Rooney, Chairman, entered a tribute to Annick in the Book of Condolences at Oxfam Ireland on behalf of the club.

- ❖ At the beginning of the last Committee Meeting on 28th February, a minute's silence was observed in memory of Annick.
- ❖ A Commemorative Walk for Annick is planned in the Glendalough area on Sunday, 6th April 2008.
- ❖ A tree dedicated to Annick will be planted in the grounds of Glendalough International Youth Hostel on Sunday, 6th April 2008, at 5 pm.
- ❖ An Óige Hillwalkers Club has made a donation of €200 to Oxfam Ireland in memory of Annick Van de Venster.

CLUB NEWS

An Óige Hillwalkers Club extends its best wishes and congratulations to Deirdre Corrigan and Paul Smith on their recent marriage.

Congratulations!!

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Paul Smith and Deirdre Corrigan  
Would like to thank all our friends  
in An Óige Hillwalkers Club  
Who joined us in celebrating  
our marriage on 29 February 2008.

It was great that so many of you could make it, and a special thank you for the extraordinarily generous gifts.

Sorry that we couldn't spend more time with you on the night itself, but we look forward to seeing you all on the hills soon.

Paul & Deirdre

### **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, [barbarasudrow@eircom.net](mailto:barbarasudrow@eircom.net)

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# Forthcoming Events

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## June Bank Holiday Weekend

Friday, 30th May – Monday, 2nd June 2008

## Walking in Galway & Mayo

Sheefry Hills \* Mweelrea \* Devil's Mother

**Leaders:** Mark Campion & Philip Hayden

Separate notice below

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BBQ Weekend

Sat-Sun in June or July TBC

Ballinlea Summer Madness

Hikes, food, music and good company

Leader: Don Reilly

Details in April newsletter

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## Hillwalkers Trip to Slovakia

Sat, 5th July to Sat, 12th July 2008

**--THIS TRIP IS NOW FULLY BOOKED--**

Please email [rooneyf@eircom.ie](mailto:rooneyf@eircom.ie), if interested in waiting list.

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Hillwalkers Trip to Scotland

Wed, 30th July to Tue, 5th Aug 2008

--THIS TRIP IS NOW FULLY BOOKED--

Please email campion@ireland.com, if interested in waiting list.

Committee 2007 - 2008:

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|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Chairman</i> | Frank Rooney |
| <i>Secretary/Sunday Hikes</i> | Garry Byrne |
| <i>Treasurer</i> | Jim Barry |
| <i>Membership/Training</i> | Donal Finn |
| <i>Weekends</i> | Mark Campion |
| <i>Promotion</i> | Deirdre Muldowney |
| <i>Newsletter</i> | Barbara Sudrow |

Special thanks to:

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Webmaster</i> | Matt Geraghty |
| <i>Distribution</i> | Pearse Foley & Cyril McFeeney |

JUNE WEEKEND AWAY

An Óige Hillwalkers Club

JUNE BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND

Fri 30th May – Mon 2nd Jun

Leenane Hotel, Co. Galway

Walking in the hills between Lough Mask and the Atlantic

Moderate and Hillwalkers Welcome

Leaders: Mark Campion & Philip Hayden

Possible hikes:

**Mweelrea Horseshoe * Ben Creggan and Ben Gorm * Sheefry Hills
Maumtrasna to the Devil's Mother * Ridge Walk South of Leenane**

Please note that the walking programme may be altered or curtailed at the discretion of the leaders, in the event of bad weather and in accordance with walkers' capabilities.

Notes

Strictly bus trip only

Hotel accommodation only (3 nights B&B)*

Cost: €280

Booking: €150 NON REFUNDABLE deposit by credit card or cash to An Óige Head Office, phone 01-8304555. Booking facilities open from 10th March; balance to be paid by 9th May.

Meals: All breakfasts, packed lunches and dinner Sat and Sun included in the cost.

Departure: Friday 30th May, from George's Quay (Tara Street) at 4 pm sharp.

Return: Monday 2nd June, arriving in Dublin City Centre at 8 pm approx.

* Overlooking Killary Harbour, Ireland's only fjord, the Leenane Hotel enjoys one of the most scenic locations in Ireland. Originally established as a Coaching Inn, the earliest records show that there has been an establishment in existence here since the 1790's. The Hotel is situated in the village of Leenane which sports two pubs, Hamilton's Bar and Gaynors "The Field" Bar. Visit <http://www.leenanehotel.com>