



THE HILLWALKER ~ May 2022

<http://www.hillwalkersclub.com/>



Club trip to the Mourne Mountains, April 2022 ~ Photo: Tom Hennessey

In Memory of Tess

It was with deep regret the club learned of the passing of our friend and fellow hiker, Tess Buckley.

Tess passed away on the 27th February of this year after a battle with cancer. Her death is mourned by her many friends in the club. *Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.*



Tess (2nd from left) Photo *Elizabeth McWilliams*



Tess at a club Christmas Holly Hike, Photo *Tara Russell*

Mourne Mountain Disco Madness

It was with amazement that we learned of how our club became caught-up in dance floor shenanigans in Co. Down, while supposedly visiting a pub for a quiet drink. Several previously respectable members were reportedly swept up in a Newcastle Saturday night fever. A sanitised version of events has kindly been made available for us below...

It's 02 April and a bus (nearly) full of Hill Walkers hiker's leave Dublin dead on 9am. The driver was clearly on a mission as he sped through the winding roads of the north to reach our destination: Hutt Hostel Newcastle Co Down.

We the hiker's were on a mission ourselves. 15 minutes inside the The Hutt for bag drop on bunk beds and we were off again in the bus heading to Bloody Bridge for the start of Hike No 1: up and over Crossone, Slieve Donard and Slieve Commedagh. Well, more like up and up. Total climbing that day was over 1000 metres so our legs were in for a good stretching! I've never seen mountains and view's like this and we rambled relentlessly, powered by Tara's lemon drizzle cake at the Bridge! Most of us chose the steep walk whilst a small group led by Anne Marie skirted around Donard enjoying coastal view's all the way.

Lunch stop in beautiful Silent Valley and The Hike then opened up uniquely before me: The Mourne Wall. This feat of engineering has to be the best wall in the North! Frank (our Great Leader) advised this wall was built to keep a catchment area so that livestock did not spoil the water provided to the reservoir. By the time we hit Trassey our pick up point, the sun was back shining. What a great walk it was and we were looking forward to the all important dinner and drinks, the mark of a good weekend in the hills!

Food choices in Newcastle are good but we had to hurry before the all important 9pm cut off point. We were starving. Some broke off to the Fish and Chip place (way more than a sit down chipper by all accounts) whilst several including myself went to Quinn's bar for the all important Newcastle experience: amazing main course followed by a desert of Hen Night out and 'much younger' drinkers in the downstairs bar. Hilarious. All part of the night it was and we were all on top form as we headed back to the Hutt for tea (and whiskey don't forget!).

So the next morning after much hostel style foraging and rummaging to get dressed and fed we waited in the morning sun enjoying the much needed fresh air. I'm sure multiple pairs of hiking boots left in dorm rooms overnight and phantom snorer's meant nobody got much sleep...

No matter, it was Day 2. Soren (our Great Leader for Sunday) took us on an amazing route over Slieve Binnian, Slievelamagan and Cove Mountain involving some good solid up hill hiking. We were rewarded with otherworldly landscapes, the highlight for me being the impressive Tor rock formations. I even surpassed myself by boring at least one person on how the landscape and the Tors were formed, in conjunction with the peaks in Scotland. It was just amazing and so different to the Wicklow mountains.

By the time we got to Carrick Little at 5pm I was happy to rest the legs on the trip back to the Big Smoke but I got a sense of We all must do this again...soon! So, Mourne mission accomplished? Maybe there's more of that where it came from.

Philip Mortimer

Editor's Note: we see that Philip refers to the "*Great Leader Frank*", but then next day it's "*Great Leader Soren*". Clearly some coup took place overnight and the former great leader is likely languishing in some gulag. We approve these tactics...

p.s.s. Envious of these adventures in Mournes, or eager for more? See the flyer in this newsletter for great one day trip to the majestic Mourne Mountains on May 21st. To book your place email hikes@hillwalkersclub.com!



The Mourne Wall ~ Photo by Nguyen Bao Chau



Successful Litter Pickup Outing

From club hikers picking up who-knows-what in Mourne discos, we move now to a more wholesome club endeavour....

As part of An Taisce's National Spring Clean, 7 volunteers from the Hillwalkers assembled near Stone Cross, just past the Bohernabreena Reservoir, on the morning of Saturday 9th April, to rid the surrounding countryside of some of the litter abundant in the area. With litter pickers in hand, we donned the hi-viz jackets and worked our way up and down the roadside for around 1 km between the car parks used to access Seahan. We collected roughly a dozen bags of everything from household waste to bottles, cans and drive-by litter. Unfortunately, we also discovered some fly-tipping as well as buried bags of household waste. We even came upon a sheep's carcass disposed of in plastic. The organic items could have long since decomposed if they had not been wrapped in plastic! Our finds serve as a stark reminder of the ongoing disconnect between many humans and our natural environment and the continuing need for education and policing in this area. It is hoped that the GDPR concerns around the use of CCTV footage to prosecute fly-tippers will soon be resolved, leading to more convictions for dumping offences.

On a brighter note, we got plenty of encouragement along the way from passing cyclists and walkers, all of whom were very appreciative of our efforts to restore their favourite beauty spots. We also found a new Hillwalkers recruit (see picture), but decided he was put to better use guarding the rubbish until collection by Dublin City Council.

As it was a lovely sunny day, we did a short looped hike of around 9 km up to Seahan after lunch. We enjoyed fabulous views of the circuit of Kilbride as well as a sighting of the skylark, whose song filled the open countryside. Ruth explained that the skylark sings on its ascent and on the wing in a bid to find a mate. According to Birdwatch Ireland, the skylark is 'Rather vocal. Commonest call is a "chirrup" or "trrrp" given in flight. The song, which can be heard from February/March to June, is a distinctive continuous stream of warbling notes. It can last up to half an hour and is usually given while the bird is flying 50 to 100 metres overhead.' After replenishing our souls with our fill of nature and wildlife, we headed to the Jobstown Inn for somewhat more worldly pleasures in the form of coffee and cakes!

A big thank you to the committee for partly subsidising this event, to Ruth for organising, and of course to the volunteers (Ruth, Annemarie, Philip, James, Steve, Liz and myself) who gave their time and energy to the endeavour. Possibly a new annual event for the Hillwalkers calendar?

Tara Russell



The gorilla is now believed to have found a home in Liz's house



After the pickup, on Seehan

Why Is the Club Named So?

To newcomers to the club, it may seem pretentious that we call ourselves ***The** Hillwalkers Club*, but there is a story behind that: we grew out of An Óige, the Irish Youth Hostel organisation/walking group and were

originally called the *An Óige Hillwalkers* in honour of our origins, though we were effectively a separate club. However with the global financial crisis of 2008 we were warned by An Óige that any implied link to them might give the banks an excuse, however paltry, to try get their claws into our healthy club account, at a time when An Óige itself was in financial difficulty. Hence we prudently but reluctantly changed our name, to make clear our independence. As for our website, Gerry Walsh was ahead of the curve back around 2000 A.D. with this whole new internet-thingy and got the website address when people barely knew what a website was. So there you go.

Licenced to Kill!

Thanks to Ruth for organising an outing with a difference on May 8th, when we were joined by a Glendalough National Park guide, Ian. He gave us information on numerous topics of flora and fauna and explained the efforts at bog restoration going on near Barnaculla ridge and the use of “exclosures” to close-off areas of vegetation to grazing wild deer and goats. He also filled us in on the skilled, arduous and fascinating task of stalking the deer herds (in the absence of natural predators) when they need culling to preserve balance in the park.

The shot is only taken after careful selection of a healthy target and a safe kill-zone, within a range of 200m that guarantees a clean kill of the creature. I never knew a park ranger’s role was so “hands on” as they have to then disembowel the felled creature (which provides a quickly-claimed treasure trove for ravens, birds of prey, foxes, badgers, and other natural scavengers). After that the authorised hunters have to extract the carcass manually and then get to work in a dedicated cold storage facility, to prep it for resale as venison. It was enough to wet the lips of venison lovers ...or put you off it for life! We all agreed that if the club adopted a similar culling policy that *Liz McWilliams* would be the one to take the shot, as the person least likely to be restrained by squeamishness or sentimentality.

It behoves us to also highlight the noble actions of the back-marker on Ruth’s walk. When one member fancied the shorter option available at the end, *Terry Curran* selflessly stepped up to escort them down and, without even asking for assistance, was readily joined by *Neville Ransome* “for support”. They say goodness is its own reward, as no doubt were the pints they imbibed in sunny Glendalough while the rest of us hiked on.

Committee 2021/2022

Chairman	Ruaidhrí O’Connor
Treasurer	Rosaleen Clarke
Secretary	Ruth Murphy
Sunday Hikes Coordinator	Frank Rooney
Environmental Officer	Ruth Murphy
Membership Secretary	Frank Carrick
Social Events Coordinator	Lisette Heijnen & Ursula Tipp
General Committee Assistant	Gavin Gilvarry
Weekend Away Coordinator	Søren Stühr Mandrup
Training Officer	Frank Keoghan
Social Media Coordinator	Laura Grealish
Newsletter Editor	Warren Lawless

Good Luck

Good luck to all the lassies and lads who are Scotland-bound at the end of the month with Michael Quinn. The Editor expects, nae, DEMANDS an account of your adventures, so nominate your trip’s chronicler early.

2021/2022 Membership

Remember! The annual club membership has been up for renewal since last October. Your club membership provides you **Mountaineering Ireland insurance** cover and also partially subsidises **the club bus** and is essential for all new participants after 2 hikes.

See the club website for details: <http://hillwalkersclub.com/online-membership/>

Payment is made the same way as for club hikes. Please ensure you comment your membership payment (and any other payments) with your name and its purpose. The Membership Secretary will then be in contact with your Club & MI membership cards, when ready.

June Weekend Away

Three Day hiking trip to Tipperary for the June Weekend on Saturday 4th June, Sunday 5th of June and Monday 6th of June 2022.

- ❖ Organiser Frank Rooney
- ❖ Hiking in the local areas of the Galties and Knockmealdown (hikes to be finalised).
- ❖ Coach service from Dublin to Hotel and return including all drop off and collection points for hikes.
- ❖ **The Talbot Hotel, Clonmel**, on a two persons sharing basis. Two nights Bed and Breakfast plus two evening meals.
- ❖ Leisure facilities included (offers a 20m pool, **sauna, steam room & jacuzzi** & fully equipped gym).
- ❖ Coach departs Burgh Quay, Dublin at 9am Saturday 4th of June and returns Monday 6th of June for 9pm.
- ❖ On booking please indicate who your agreed room mate is going to be.
- ❖ Otherwise your room mate will be assigned on a same sex basis.
- ❖ Cost of the trip is €250.
- ❖ This is non refundable unless a substitute is available.
- ❖ Presently, the trip is limited to 20 people so early booking is advisable.

Members are asked to indicate their interest in this trip as soon as possible so that the necessary transport and accommodation bookings can be secured.

The trip can only go ahead if the response from interested members is prompt. Please don't make any payment until your place has been confirmed. Please email hikes@hillwalkersclub.com with the subject "**Clonmel Trip**" to book or make enquiries.

Mountain Rescue Fundraiser

Your attention is heartily drawn to this very worthy social outing on **May 20th** organised by An Oige's very own rockstar, Terry Cartin. He and other musical members of An Oige will be strumming and singing in aid of our **Mountain Rescue** teams and the vital work they do.

The gig takes place in the Clontarf Yacht Club (which is rumoured to serve beer) and is very easily reached by the frequent 130 bus from Lower Abbey Street (opposite the VHI offices).

Hikers with oodles of excess energy can even jump off the bus early and enjoy a pleasant stroll to the venue along Dublin Bay on the Clontarf sea-front beforehand.

Contact Terry Cartin (087 7680440), Udo Sap, Larry Meaney, John Cobbe, Ed Dillon and Marie's Mc Donnell for tickets.

Can't attend? You can still buy a raffle ticket for only €5!



AN OIGE MEMBERS PRESENT A
FUNDRAISING SOCIAL EVENING FOR
THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE
ON FRIDAY 20th May at 8.30 pm
at Clontarf Yacht & Boat Club

• Concert - Ballads Folk Rock and Blues

• **TICKETS €10 WHICH
INCLUDES €5 RAFFLE TICKET**

• Clontarf Yacht & Boat Club is on the Coast road and served by 130 Bus from Abbey Street. Get off at Bus Station and Club is 100 metres next door to Circle K Garage. For those driving there is a car park on seafront opposite Club. It's a 14 minute walk from Clontarf Dart Station along sea front or you can catch the 130.

• If you cannot make it on the night you might like to buy a €5 Raffle ticket to support the Mountain Rescue

The Hillwalkers Club.

Six peaks in the Mournes.

Saturday May 21st leaving Burgh Quay at 9:00 sharp.

Cost €25.



**Banns Road - Slieve Muck, - Carn Mountain, - Slieve Loughshannagh -
Slieve Meelbeg - Slieve Meelmore - Slieve Bearnagh - Hare's Gap -
Meelmore Lodge. 1,296m - 17km.**

Guided escape routes available at approx. 800m and 1,000m.

Back in Dublin at approx. 10:00 pm following meal.

Leader: Frank Keoghan.

Visit the Mournes this May! Photo by Nguyen Bao Chau



To book your place email hikes@hillwalkersclub.com