



An Óige Hillwalkers Club

June 2009

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

THE HILLWALKER



*Hillwalkers lined up in front of Muckish on the first day's walk in Donegal.
Photo: Barbara Sudrow*

In this edition

- June Hike Programme 2
- Hillwalkers Away: June Bank Holiday Weekend 3-5
- EXPOSED: Bare Cheek / Club News 6
- Irish Challenge Walks / Committee 2008-2009 7
- Oxfam Ireland TRAILTREKKER 8

HIKE PROGRAMME

June 2009

MEET: Burgh Quay

DEPART: Sundays at 10.00 am

TRANSPORT: Private Bus

COST: €12.00 (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.*

14 June 2009

---Carrig to Duff Hill

Leader: Garry Byrne

2nd pick-up point: Pond at Sean Moore Park on Tallaght By-Pass.

Route: Carrig * Lugnagun * Sorrel Hill * Ballynultagh Gap * Black Hill * Mullaghcleevaun * East Top * Duff Hill * Military Road.

Distance: 17km **Ascent:** 700m

Map: OS 56, Harvey

21 June 2009

---Brockaghs to Oasis

Leader: Paul Miney

2nd pick-up & return drop-off points: Bus stop before the roundabout at Loughlinstown.

Route: Laragh * Brockaghs * Tonelagee * Stoney Top * Barnacullian * Mullaghcleevaun * East Top * Carrigshouk * Oasis.

Distance: 19km **Ascent:** 900m

Maps: OS 56, Harvey

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.

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.

28 June 2009

---Views of Glenmalure

Leader: Deirdre Muldowney

2nd pick-up & return drop-off points: Bus stop before the roundabout at Loughlinstown.

Route: Glenmalure * Lugduff * Conavalla * Three Lakes * Table Mtn * Table Track * Glenmalure Hostel * Barravore Car Park.

Distance: 16km **Ascent:** 750m

Maps: OS 56, Harvey

5 July 2009

---Shay Elliott to Glendalough

Introductory Hillwalkers Hike

Leader: Don Reilly

2nd pick-up & return drop-off points: Bus stop before the roundabout at Loughlinstown.

Route: Shay Elliott * Carriglineen * Coolalingo * through Forest * Cullentragh * Mullacor * Lugduff * part of the Spink * forest and Glendalough Visitor Centre Car Park.

Distance: 17km **Ascent:** 650m

Map: OS 56, Harvey

12 July 2009

---Glenmacnass Area

Leader: Steve Buckney

2nd pick-up & return drop-off points: Bus stop before the roundabout at Loughlinstown.

Route: Oldbridge * Scarr * Glenmacnass Car Park * Glenmacnass River * GR 075 058 * Barnacullian * Tonlegee * Wicklow Gap.

Distance: 18km **Ascent:** 900m

Maps: OS 56, Harvey

LEADER The leader has the right to refuse anyone who is not adequately equipped (e.g., without appropriate boots, rainwear, food, hat, gloves, torch, spare batteries & bulb, 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.

CO-ORDINATION If necessary, tickets are given out on Sundays to ensure that participants reserve a bus place as they arrive.

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.

Club members interested in leading a hike,
please contact Gerry Walsh:
hillwalking@hotmail.com

HILLWALKERS AWAY June Bank Holiday Weekend

Errigal go Brách



Hikers arriving at the new Youth Hostel located at the foot of Errigal. Photo: Dot Fine.

One special feature of this trip was the presence of no less than THREE club editors or ex-editors. Despite the extreme honour other members felt, it did give rise to tricky questions of protocol. Should members bow and scrape to all three or should there be a relaxation of normal custom in the interest of sparing everyone back pain? The issue was settled when we stopped for food in Monaghan town: our current illustrious Editor, Barbara, made the whole bus wait (patiently grovelling) while she perused the dessert menu in the Monaghan Arms Hotel. I could but admire this blatant abuse of power! So having established herself at the top of the editorial pecking order, it was decided she alone would have the full ceremonial honours. Deirdre and I would just have to suffice with the respect and admiration of our fellow hikers (?) and focus on keeping our ears out for scandal.

Already after one day, rumour had reached me of VPLs and disintegrating clothing on the hills. As I wandered the hostel corridor, I surveyed the growing carnage: an unidentified towel-clad streaker was being chased by two flirty French girls, whilst two other ladies engaged in environmental friendly-showering (in an effort to save on water apparently). Tut, tut, tut.

It was also noted that Don Reilly was very determined to impress the girls this weekend. He had started a "Wet T-Shirt Contest" on the

slopes of An Eachla Mhór. However, even as the sole entrant, he failed to win any votes. He was not to be kept down for long, as the next day he resurfaced (literally!) from a mountain lake, giving the An Óige women their very own "Mr. Darcy" moment. Gasping, swooning and photo-snapping ensued among the ladies as this modern day Man from Atlantis swam about Loch An Mháma Beag.

As to the walking, it was with trepidation that I had packed for Donegal: rain-gear, water-proofs, ~~garters~~ gaiters, heavy combats, winter hat, et cetera. It was only with vain hope that I packed my "summer" gear, but were we in for a surprise: We travelled up in beautiful sunshine and experienced three days of intense sunshine. Shorts and sun-cream were GO!

Saturday, 30 May

The Saturday had both groups walking between Muchais Gap and Errigal, visiting beautiful Lough Altáin and running very low on water in the heat. Mention must be made of "Madra Muchais", an endearing border-collie who accompanied the hard-hike all day and who we only sent home at the foot of Errigal (in a friendly stranger's van).



Lunch at Lough Altan, with "Madra Muchais" taking part in the activities. Photo: Dot Fine.

Later that evening we dined in Bunbeg and enjoyed a lovely meal. If Garry Byrne had attacked Errigal with the same gusto that he went at the desserts, he might have got to

the top. After dinner, a large gang went for a lovely beach walk and took the evening air and midges.

Sunday, 31 May

The second day's walking centred on Sliabh Sneachta and the "Poisoned Glen". But that day, it was once again the "Heavenly Glen", as the dry ground, blue sky and cool breeze allowed us to enjoy its rugged surroundings and many lakes. Both hikes briefly united on top of Sliabh Sneachta and then made the long descent back to the hostel.



Well-deserved dinner at a local hotel.

Photo: Barbara Sudrow

Monday, 1 June

The last day's walking was spread around An Dubhais, Errigal (Take 2) and Glenveagh National Park. It was a very satisfied and sated bunch of hikers who headed back to Dublin.



Hillwalkers on Dooish, on the last day of the holiday weekend. Photo: Dot Fine.

I would recommend Errigal Hostel to any individuals in the Club who want somewhere truly special to walk or relax, be it enjoying the views from the breakfast room, reading in the snug or taking the nearby trail up Errigal.

Great thanks are owed to Frank "Terminator" Rooney, who organised both fantastic weather and savage walks. In fairness to him, he achieved the impossible: not only did it not rain in Donegal that weekend, but after two of his walks I was so exhausted that I had no energy left to drink, the only time I have ever left a pub early on an An Óige weekend. Frank was ably assisted in the hike-leading by Jim Barry and Barbara Sudrow. Thanks are also owed to our local publican Michael McGeady and to our very friendly warden Karl, who even gave out beer to returning walkers on Sunday. Bless him!

Warren Lawless

Note: *Members are asked to assist with the following enquiry: "Gweedore Gardaí are seeking information on the driver of a silver Golf car that made a high-speed getaway from Dhún Lúiche petrol station without paying for their petrol. The female driver is believed to have a Roscommon/Dublin accent and was last seen heading in the direction of Inchicore..."*

First-time visit to Donegal

This was my first trip to Donegal and the gods were with all of us with 4 beautiful, summery, sun-filled days, great leaders, walks, camaraderie, a friendly hostel manager and his well-run hostel.

I can't speak for the Mod and other walks, having done all three of the Hillwalkers' walks led by Frank Rooney. They were tough hikes, but not insurmountable, and although our ranks decreased as we got to the last walk, we also gained some new recruits on Sunday, the middle day, with Mods who wanted more of a challenge and an earlier start.

Saturday, we started at Muckish Gap and headed for Errigal, negotiating two other mountains before having to deal with the scree going up and down Errigal. The views were worth it.

Sunday, we tackled Slieve Snacht. There was a steady uphill through Poison Glen and through the Derryveagh Mountains. We could see Errigal from much of the walk. We joined the Mods on the top of Slieve Snacht. They had taken a shortcut.

Coming down Slieve Snacht was a little tough. Fortunately, when I took a header, it was on the grassy slope before we got to the rocks, and was unscathed.

On the last walk, we scaled Dooish and went on for a lunch break with views of the river and national park. I found the terrain that day more difficult than the uphills of the previous

days. It was more reminiscent of negotiating heather in the Wicklow Mountains with many holes hiding, ready to trip up one.



Bill Fine on top of Errigal (Lough Altan in the background).



Path to Errigal. Photos: Dot Fine

It's always sad to head back after such a great weekend of well-planned walks and beautiful weather, but we can look forward to our weekly Sunday walks, and trips planned on the Continent this summer.

Dorothy Fine

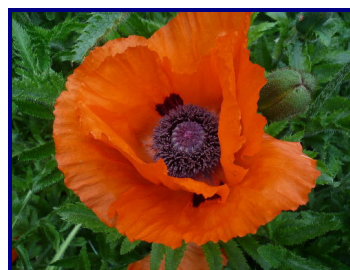
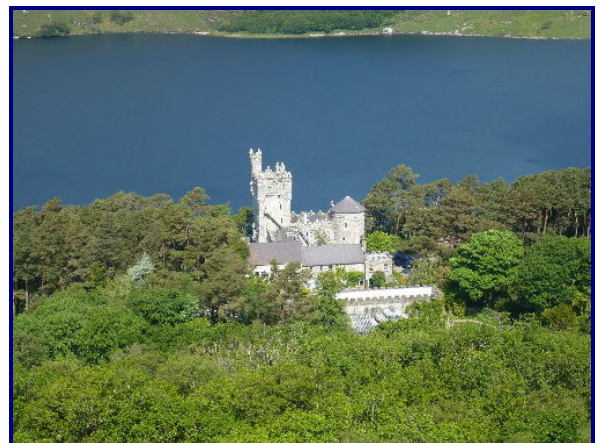
Glenveagh National Park

After two days of great walking, a sizable group of hikers decided on the Monday to sample the beauty of Glenveagh National Park and its variety of leisure attractions. For example, a 4km flat walk along the shore to Glenveagh Castle and a stroll around the extensive castle gardens where some lucky hikers were treated to a guided tour of the multitude of flowers by one Garry Byrne (free of charge, as far as I know).

Also on offer was an official tour of the castle itself (€3.00) which was built in the 1870s and designed to resemble Balmoral on a much smaller scale. Glenveagh Castle was only used as a summer residence and had three owners; the last owner was the Irish-American Henry McIlhenny who lavishly entertained many rich and famous society people there. In 1983, McIlhenny bestowed the castle and gardens to the Irish state.

After the tour, those with enough energy left could stretch their legs by hiking up to the viewing point above the castle (*see below*).

Back in the court yard, there was traditional and contemporary music, dancing, Japanese origami, jewellery displays and a variety of craft stalls as well as an exhibit of birds of prey, ranging from barn owl (*see below right*) to kestrel and young golden eagle. Actually, shortly after the birds had been brought out and chained to their perches, their keeper whisked them away again, to a shadier place! Such was the effect of the glorious sunshine...



With so much on offer, it was hard to tear ourselves away from the lovely festival atmosphere in the castle grounds. Luckily, there was a shuttle bus available for those who wanted it; still, some 8 or 10 hikers preferred to walk the 4km, since we would be sitting on the bus back to Dublin for long enough during the journey home.

Barbara Sudrow

For more photos of the June Bank Holiday Weekend visit www.hillwalkersclub.com

EXPOSED: Bare Cheek

Some of you will have read with amusement the Metro article (27th April) that described how Switzerland had banned German nudists coming over their border to hike. Alas, how little we would have laughed if we only guessed the repercussions for Ireland! Feeling repressed by such kill-joy legislation among all their neighbours, the German nudists looked around for a country rich in beauty and poor on legislative enforcement and of course found our dear isle. Soon any venture onto the hills ran the risk of encountering enthusiastic groups of tanned naturists.

The Hillwalker's Exposed team (suitably dressed for the occasion) were quickly on the scene to witness this carry-on and interview one of the group leaders.

Exposed: So Marcus, fairly nippy today? How are you finding Ireland?

Marcus: It is wonderful in many ways, no laws or officers or concerned citizens stopping you from wandering free as Mother Nature intended. Your pathless muddy hills are wonderfully soothing on the feet, not like the hard-stone tracks of the Continent. However, we have been finding your weather very challenging.



It is June and this month alone five of our members caught hypothermia, most while waiting for public transport to take them to the hills. This would not happen at home. Another ten have had various digits and extremities amputated due to the unpredictable weather. We are finding it very ridiculous and have had to relax some of our stricter rules on the use of clothing, in order to combat the elements.

Exposed: Yes, I noticed some of you are wearing, em, goretex..., eh, "covers".

Marcus: Yes, yes, but this compromise with our full and free expression has caused a split in our ranks and now you have the uncompromising "Real Naturist Walkers" and us. At least, in return we have managed to attract a few Irish members, though... (*he said beckoning to one gentleman in particular*). I think some are out to explore more than nature.

Suddenly I heard the sound of laughing voices and I saw a flash of white hair literally streaking past. Recognising a familiar face I shouted out:

"Brendan Dempsey! Is that you? We were wondering where you'd got to this last while. Stop chasing those Fräuleins and come back to An Óige!"

Pausing only to turn and shake his fist at me, he continued his merry pursuit.

Exposed: Well, Marcus, thank you for your time. You know one could get used to this, but alas I don't think it would go down too well in the Palace. Plus our bus-driver might have some rules against it... Oh hold on, here comes the Easy group, and there they go now running away; so easily shocked. Time to make a strategic withdrawal.

This is Exposed, reporting buck-naked, live from Tonlegee. And now back to the studio...

CLUB NEWS

Lost & Found

Paul Farrell found a Black Ladies Long-Sleeved, Half-Zipped, Hiking Top on the Lake District bus after it arrived back in Dublin. It's a Size 12, Marks & Spencer top.

Contact: Paul Farrell, 086-1713982

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Support Sunday Hikes

Our monthly bus statistics continue to show good participation – please keep up the effort and show your support for the Sunday Hike Programme.

Many thanks!

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NEXT NEWSLETTER EDITION

Please note that the **July/August 2009** edition of THE HILLWALKER will be published on **16 July 2009**.

CHALLENGE WALKS

The Walkers Association are posting regular updates on these walks on their website. Make sure to check for important new information there or follow the contact details given for each event.

13 June 2009 Mourne Way Marathon

Marathon Run and Challenge Walk, both 26 miles, incorporating a half-marathon run and a 10k run/walk; route fully waymarked.

Details: <http://www.mournewaymarathon.com>

20 June 2009 Lug Walk

Distance: 53 km **Total Ascent:** 2,290m

The Lug Walk usually takes place on a date as close to the longest day in the year as possible - this is a long walk! Water is provided at checkpoints which helps to keep one's weight down. If the weather is good there will be wondrous views all day; if the weather is doubtful, however, a long day's intense navigation is sure to ensue.

Some changes for 2009 will be published soon; check out the web details:

<http://www.walkersassociation.ie/node/465>

26-28 June 2009 Mourne International Walking Festival

A series of walks (maximum 30km) each day, over three days in the Mourne Mountains. For further information contact:

Tracey Kearns, Warrenpoint Town Hall
Church Street, Warrenpoint

Tel: (048) 4175 2256

Email: tracey.kearns@newryandmourne.gov.uk

28 June 2009 North Sperrins Challenge Walk

Binevenagh Mountain to Donalds Hill

Choice of distances: 10m / 22m, using parts of North Sperrins Way

For details visit www.northernwalking.com

4 July 2009 Comeragh Crossing

Approx. 35km with an ascent of 1,150m with beautiful scenery on a good day but has proved a difficult walk on an inclement day. The average time to cover the full route is approx. 10 hours. There are 3 stages to the Walk and it is possible to join the walk at the start of Stage 2 or Stage 3. Entrants can join a group led by experienced leaders. Experience is needed to complete the entire 3 stages.

Details: <http://walkersassociation.ie/node/25>

18 July 2009 The Joyce Country Challenge

There will be three routes on the day:

Finny, Maumtrasna, Devils Mother, Ail Dubh (road) Bunacunneen, Ben Beg, returning to Finny via the Southern Ridge.

Distance: 30 km. **Total Ascent:** 1,936m

Walk A: A led walk taking in Maumtrasna, The Devils Mother, and completing the circuit along the Shore line path of Lough Nafooeey back to Finny.

Walk B: A led walk for the less experienced walker. Finny, circling Lough Nafooeey on lowland trail and returning to Finny by road. 14.5km, 281m ascent.

Details: <http://walkersassociation.ie/node/151>

Committee 2008-2009

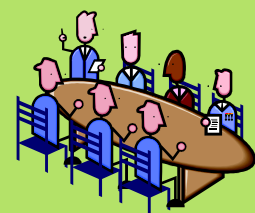
Chairman
Secretary
Sunday Hikes
Treasurer
Membership/Training
Weekends/Training
Promotion
Newsletter

Frank Rooney
Betty Kehoe
Gerry Walsh
Jim Barry
Donal Finn
Mark Campion
Deirdre Muldowney
Barbara Sudrow

Special thanks to:

Webmaster
Distribution

Matt Geraghty
Pearse Foley & Cyril McFeeney





26-27 September 2009

Oxfam Ireland is organising a group fundraising event this September.

Each group consists of **4 walkers** who together must complete a circuit of **100km** in less than **30 hours** and raise a minimum of **€2,000** which will support Oxfam's work to overcome poverty and injustice in some of the world's poorest communities.

As part of the event, Oxfam Ireland will be naming one of the prizes after **Annick van de Venster**.

Teams will register on the evening of Friday, 25th September to be ready for an early start to their 100km challenge on the Saturday morning!



TRAILTREKKER will begin in Kilbroney Park, Rostrevor, Co. Down (see map above). Teams will follow a route traversing sections of the Mourne Mountains, the Ring of Gullion and the Cooley Peninsula. The distance between each checkpoint/stop is approximately 10km.

Teams will be transported across Carlingford Lough from Warrenpoint to Omeath by boat. The highest point on the route is Clermont, Black Mountain (410m) which teams will reach at 88km. All teams taking part will be supplied with a detailed route map prior to the event.

An Óige Hillwalkers Club is currently exploring ways of supporting the Oxfam Ireland Trailtrekker event, by entering a team of walkers and/or by supporting the fundraising effort.

Anyone interested in registering for the Oxfam challenge as part of an An Óige Hillwalkers Club team, please email barbarasudrow@eircom.net no later than Friday, 19 June.

Further details are available below and also from www.oxfamireland.org/trailtrekker where you can download an information brochure.

- There is a registration fee of €200 per team; registration can be easily done online.
- Teams are strictly confined to four members.
- Each team must have at least one person to support them. The support crew is responsible for organising transport to the start and from the finish and for being at various checkpoints along the route. In order to minimise impact on the area, each team support crew can only use one vehicle for the event.
- Once registered, teams have to be committed to the challenge; should one team member have to pull out, the team needs to find a replacement walker.

