



## THE HILLWALKER ~ March 2023

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

*The Club at Annalong River, Mourne Mountains, January 22nd 2023*

**Welcome folks, to another Club newsletter. We welcome your future input, especially hiking holiday accounts and any activities related to the outdoors, with which to entertain and inspire your fellow members.**

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## Recent Committee Deliberations

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Some of the recent matters tackled in our latest club committee meeting include:

- Training: 6 new trainees have been signed up for this year's navigation & leadership training programme.
  - Club Trips: the Scottish, Pyrenees and Connemara trips are all pushing ahead. All trips now have waiting lists.
  - Club Anniversary: events to mark the occasion are benign mooted, including a rebranding and logo.
  - Refund Policy: the matter of if and when refunds are issued if a person cancels for a trip or hike was debated. Generally a refund is conditional on whether a place can be filled, to ensure the club does not suffer a financial loss on its undertakings, though special circumstances will be considered.
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## Coffee Clique Crew

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You've all seen them, strolling 'round the corner at 10am, coffee mocha in hand: yes, it's the Coffee Clique Crew, all strut and caffeinated. Being neither cool or a coffee drinker, I am forced to look in the window at how the elite live, these denizens of **Boot Lane cafe** on Tara Street.

Their audacity reached new levels when the bus departure to the Mourne was made to await their leisurely arrival, coffee cups in hand (with the paltry excuse that "didn't a Committee member arrive even later?"). Such nonsense! Committee members are above the law!).

Such brazenness will no doubt just have more folk clamouring to join their ranks. However, all those wishing to join the Coffee Clique must pass a stringent written test on coffee machines & beans, as set by Aisling O'Keeffe (or just bribe her 50 euro).

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## Rules of the Road

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*"Take only memories, leave only footprints"* is one of the mantras of hillwalking and the respect it owes the fragile environment in which we tread. However, it was painfully apparent on recent club hikes that many persons are not familiar with their individual obligation to protect the trails.

All of us are properly booted to endure, *where safe & practical*, a bit of mud, so please use the trails even when mucky, and don't expand them by damaging the fragile edge.

Walking on the edge of a trail destroys the vegetation and expands the trail. If the person in front of you is not mindful of this, please do not copy their bad example, but exercise your own best judgement in this matter.

Remember, rock & stone can endure our footfall much better than peat & vegetation.

Finally, **all new members** are asked to please review the Club's environmental policy:

<https://hillwalkersclub.files.wordpress.com/2021/03/environmentpolicy.pdf>



*The club at Hare's Castle, Mourne Mountains*

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## *Wet, Wet, Wet*

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### **Club Trip to the Mournes, January 21st-22nd**

The club's January trip to the Mournes came within an ace of glorious success, as the weekend was preceded by perfect hiking conditions of sun, frost & snow. Alas, by the weekend, the weather had changed and the portents of doom were already clear by the time our bus reached Co. Down.

While many participants have since been diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, due to the brutal weather conditions, there were many highlights, such as the stylish PJ Parade back in our hostel. The Hutt Hostel in Newcastle bears no resemblance to an alien crime-lords den\* and was in fact quite snug & comfortable, especially as Frank has skillfully arranged that we had it to ourselves.

Once Mark got the wood-burner going, its warmth flooded the common room, and some of the group engaged in a fun board game of Articulate, that was until Shauna flipped the board ...such a bad loser. 😊

That evening, the gang had fun drinks at the Donard and then enjoyed a nice meal out, with a feast of tasty options. The Cilli Prawn & Spring Roll Incident will be skirted over, as forensic and legal proceedings are still pending as to who were those restaurant rogues. Suffice to say, no bill goes unpaid on Frank's watch!!!

The first days hike was sensibly cut short in the face of chill, unrelenting rain, wind & mist, but we had prospects of improving weather on the second day. This forecast unfortunately did not play out and it was a long day battling the elements. Such were the cold conditions that one lady exclaimed that she couldn't wait to feel her cheeks again... There is no judgement in our club.

But even amid the mist & rain there were bright spots, as when Tara & Shauna shared an enlightening discussion on jelly flavours, which has stayed with me to this day.

Such was the battered state of the group on the bus back to Dublin, your Editor felt a rare pang of humanity and shared his precious store of newly-gifted Dutch stroopwafels biscuits with his fellow be-dragled club members, a selfless act for which he is expecting a Nobel prize at least.

That said, nothing ventured, nothing gained and credit to Frank for organising and for *Mark Champion, Rosaleen Clarke & Soren Stuhr Mandrup* for support on the leading front.

\*you win the prize of the Editor's esteem if you got that one...



*Mark Champion* adopts the Arctic Survival technique of rolling in snow to dry off!

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## Gutter Lords & Striking Ladies

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Congratulations to Lisette on organising an immensely enjoyable club social bowling outing to ALSAA sports centre by Dublin Airport. With the accolades of our excellent Christmas party still fresh, she once again served up a memorable night.

The 15 club members who gathered were a mix of novice and rusty bowlers, with only Simon & Michelle able to claim any real familiarity with the sport. It was to them that we appealed for explanations as to the scoring system for Spares & Strikes.

Initially, there were plenty of gutter shots and more than one person was appealing for the gutter-buffers used in children's bowling lanes. However, as the evening progressed there was a change and the cries and cheers of success mounted as everyone found their groove and their best bowling ball weight.

Everyone had their own tactics but a particular note must be made of the Lisette Method and Tara Technique, which are set to revolutionise the sport. The former bore comparison with the loading of cannon balls into ye olde pirate ship-guns, whereas the latter approached ballet/modern dance!

One of highlights of the evening occurred when *Frank Keoghan* scored his first STRIKE to great applause ...and then even greater laughter, as we realised that the computer system thought it was Orla's turn and duly awarded her the points.



The light-hearted nature of the evening meant no one was paying much heed to scores ... until toward the end it was apparent that Limerick and Dublin were in a close contest, if not for Liam or Sam\*, then at least for pride and some light slugging. Dublin won out, but talks of a re-match are already underway (once we get through all the other fun events Lisette has planned).



Bowling gang at ALSAA

\*The Liam McCarthy Cup & Sam Maguire Cup are the two highest prizes in GAA sports.

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## Laura's Art O'Neill Challenge

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Congratulations to Laura Grealish who completed the Art O'Neill Challenge walk in arduous conditions. The weather was unrelenting, with constant wind and rain and forced over 70 of the 200 participants to bail out. But not Laura, who forged on, fortified by a stop over at *Chez Tommy & Terrys*, an exclusive, bespoke, pop-up café by Stone Cross.

Not only did Laura finish this extra challenging undertaking, her fundraising efforts were very successful (one of the top contributors) and with the support of the club and others she raised **€885** for Dublin & Wicklow Mountain Rescue. This included a donation voted by the Committee in recognition of the vital support Mountain Rescue provide for our activities.

Thanks to all those who supported Laura.



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# Club Training Notice

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## Leader's briefings get off to a flying start!

Following on from last year's briefings when a number of new leaders offered their services, the 2023 briefings commenced on 22nd February. We have now completed three sessions in the Ireland Institute in Pearse St. and plan two more.

A condition of coming to the briefings is that attendees will lead hikes. Of last year's group, *Lisette Heijnen* and *Tara Russell* have led and will soon lead their second hike. *Brian Farrell* is also due to lead in the early summer while *Paul Bourke* unfortunately suffered an injury and could not complete the sessions.

This year's crew is: *Arnaud Bellanger*, *Nguyen Bao Chau*, *Lina Wang*, *Brian Murphy*, *James Cooke* and *Matthieu Kervegan* and it is indicative of the health of the club that so many should volunteer.

When the evening sessions are completed, each participant will be assigned a volunteer mentor whom they will accompany when the mentor is leading a hike.

They will then have a day in the hills followed by a weekend in Glendalough in July. They will then lead a hike accompanied by their mentor – having previously undertaken a recce.

The sessions are conducted by *Frank Rooney* and *Frank Keoghan*.

Regards, Frank Keoghan (Club Chairman/Training Officer)

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## Environmental Messages from our CEO Mark

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*Mark Campion*, our Club Environmental Officer, begs your attention to the following events & info.

### Upcoming events :

**Ruth Murphy** will be leading another walk/talk hike on **March 26<sup>th</sup>**. There's a millennium wood oakland in a section of



Ballygannon wood (the second largest oak forest in Ireland – you surely know where the largest is!) which is located in Clara Vale and there will be a speaker present to talk about this project. It's not to be missed!

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Following on from Ruth's very successful venture last year, I hope to coordinate another **litter pickup** this **May**. We'll run it on a Friday evening or a Saturday morning and maybe adjourn to a **local pub** afterwards.

Is there a particular part of Wicklow that you think you should focus on? Please email me on [markmjcampion@gmail.com](mailto:markmjcampion@gmail.com) if you've any ideas.

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I've been in touch with **Crann** recently (Crann is Ireland's leading voluntary tree organisation dedicated to the promotion and protection of our trees, hedgerows and woodlands. It is a membership-based, non profit registered charity (CHY13698) uniting people with a love of trees...see <https://crann.ie/> for more information). Their chairman has agreed to come out at a time that suits. I'll probably leave it until September.

Is there any aspect of Ireland's tree culture that you think would be worth hearing? E.g.

- they could just use the chat for advocacy and to tell us about their projects
  - they could chat about biodiversity
  - we could use it as a tree identification walk along with the social history of certain trees
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And a couple of reminders :

I would encourage people who have time to get involved with **Mountain Meitheal** – this is a great group of volunteers who create and repair tracks in the Dublin and Wicklow hills. We are regular beneficiaries of their blood, sweat and tears so please consider giving back if you can. This is their website <https://www.mountainmeitheal.ie/>

When on the hills try to be conscious of our club policy of walking on existing tracks (**boots are made to get muddy!**) and picking up a few pieces of litter each time you head hiking.

Thanks for your time. **Mark  
Campion**





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# Club Group Email

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We are appealing to accept the invitation to be part of:

[hillwalkers-members@googlegroups.com](mailto:hillwalkers-members@googlegroups.com)

All active and new members are added to the Hillwalkers Google Group, to receive emails on upcoming hikes, club announcements, or social events. **Please join/stay in the group if you want to get club notifications.**

## Benefits of the Group Email

1. The group-email is only used for official club communications and emails can only be sent by current Committee members.
2. No one else can see the emails behind the group-email or send emails to the group email.
3. The list of emails is only maintained in one place: this is more secure, easier to administer and is better than the committee sending emails to individuals. All this makes committee work easier.

We voluntarily work on your behalf to run the club, so please lend us a hand in turn, and sign-up.

For everyone who has signed up: THANK YOU! We have heard that some zealous mail systems are treating the Club-related email as spam (!!!) so **please check your spam folders** for messages from [hillwalkers-members@googlegroups.com](mailto:hillwalkers-members@googlegroups.com) and mark this email address as Not Spam.

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## Send Us Yer Photos!!!

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Our Social Media officer, *Shauna O'Hara*, invites you to send photos of our hiking club activities to the dedicated email below:

[\*\*hillwalkersphotos@gmail.com\*\*](mailto:hillwalkersphotos@gmail.com)

Sunday hikes, training sessions, weekends away, or club social outings ...all are grist to the modern social media mill!

Shauna will post a selection of your offerings on our website. If possible, please supply the date/place/event of the photo, and your name so we can give you credit.

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## 2022/2023 Membership

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ATTENTION CLUB MEMBERS!!! Your club membership is due for renewal since 1st November 2022. Membership provides you with **Mountaineering Ireland membership & insurance** cover and also partially subsidises the club bus and is **essential** for all participants in club activities.

Go to the club website to details provide your details to the Membership Secretary:

<http://hillwalkersclub.com/online-membership/>

**Payment of €50 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.



There may be a slight delay issuing Club cards as we wait for Mountaineering Ireland to supply its accompanying MI card.

**Remember: Your MI card gives you 10% off in several hiking stores (like Great Outdoors), and 15% off in Cotswolds.**

We have now added a Next of Kin entry on the 2022/23 membership card. Please avail of this feature when renewing.

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## Roundy Birthday Boys

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A special congratulations to *Steve Buckney* and *Michael Quinn* who are co-celebrating their “Roundy” birthdays on the Club’s 12th March hike ...exact birth dates and ages are classified as per GDPR 😊

Wishing you both health, joy and many more years hiking.  
More power to ya both!!

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## A Note From Our Sponsors

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***John Butler’s Fine Wine Emporium*** invites those of you looking to bring a tippie on the hills, say for our annual Christmas Holly Hike, to think BIG and go for one of their handy-to-transport Wine packs.

Tired of broken glass in your backpack?

Wine running out before your imploring fellow hikers have been placated?

Why not try the 1.5 LITRE plastic pack Merlot?

Comes with Platypus-compatible tap!

10% discount with club membership card!!

Let the good times flow!!!

