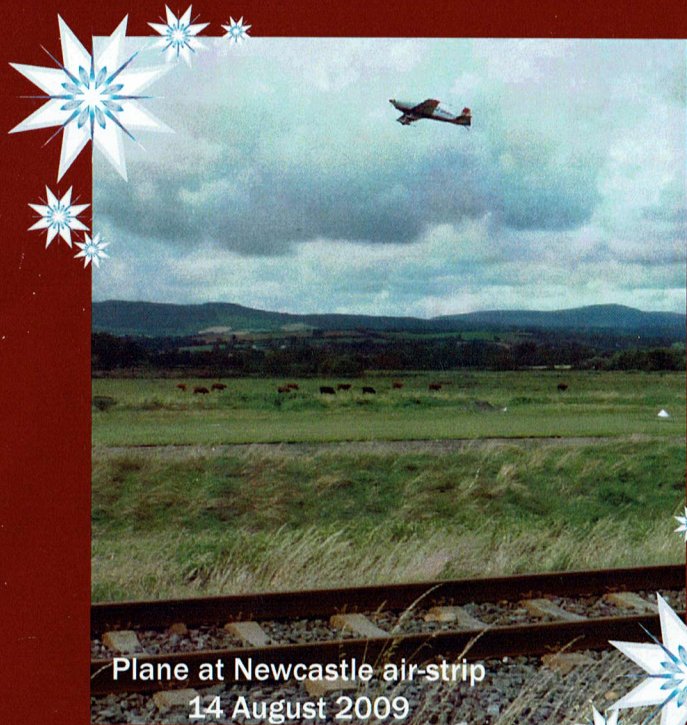


# IRISH Trekker



Plane at Newcastle air-strip  
14 August 2009

**The Trekkers Mountaineering Club**  
**Glenageary, Co. Dublin**  
**[www.trekkers.ie](http://www.trekkers.ie)**

*Wishing All our members a Happy and Prosperous Year for 2010*

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## Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to fellow Trekkers for their contributions to this issue of Irish Trekker. Fellow Committee Members; those who wrote articles: Bill Hannon, Marelene Travers, Dermot Murray, Owen McKeown and Derek O'Neill; those who provided photographs: Theresa Murphy, Myles Duffy, Noel O'Reilly and especially Paddy O'Duffy who was also most generous with his time. Thanks are also due to Roger Kirker and Joe Murray for maintaining the club's website some of which is reproduced in this issue. Finally, I would like to express my thanks to Ms Caoimhe Mulhall for the high standard of her design and layout work.

*T. Duff*

**IRISH  
Trekker**

Produced By  
The Trekkers Mountaineering Club  
GLENAGEARY, CO DUBLIN  
www.trekkers.ie



## Michael Dorgan RIP (1929-2009) An Appreciation



It was with sadness and a deep sense of loss that we learned of the death of Michael Dorgan. The esteem and affection in which he was held was reflected in the wide circle of friends, relatives and former colleagues present at his funeral. Among these was a very strong presence of the Trekkers Mountaineering Club.



Michael loved the great outdoors. Above all he loved hill walking. I first met him in the late 1950s but it was not until he joined our group in Dalkey that we came to know and appreciate him. When this group finally became moribund – it had been active since the 1940s – Michael was invited to join the 'Trekkers'. He took enthusiastically to the Trekkers and subsequently enjoyed many happy years with them, both on the Wicklow walks and on the 'away' trips.

Michael studied engineering at UCD and served with distinction in several Government departments, principally in the sphere of fisheries and marine engineering.

When illness first struck him he tried with great courage and perseverance to walk both in Wicklow and on 'away' trips. Later a cruel stroke of fate deprived him of mobility and inevitably of the comradeship and freedom of the hills. He found these deprivations hard to bear, even with the untiring and devoted spirit of Colette.

Michael was quiet and reflective in manner and always thoughtful in his opinions. He will be greatly missed, not least by the group of us who meet in the Druids Chair on Monday evenings.

To Colette and his six children we extend our sincere sympathy.

Bill Hannon



## Congratulations



Warm congratulations are extended to members who celebrated the birth of grandchildren in the past while: Shay Murran; Patricia and Myles Duffy; Noreen and Terry O'Brien; and to Ann and Gilbert Little, and Aidene and Tom Duff on the birth of their 'joint' grandson. Congratulations are also extended to any other members who have celebrated the birth of grandchildren.

## Welcome

### New Members

Trekkers welcome the following new members to the club:  
Pat Chapman, Karl Foley and  
Geraldine Meindl

**IRISH  
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## Walks and Walk Leaders – Discussion at AGM October 2009

At the Club's Annual General Meeting on 12 October 2009, there was a lively debate in relation to the growing numbers of members wishing to participate in C Walks and the difficulties being encountered in this regard. Subsequently, the Committee considered this and related matters and recommend the following actions be taken:

- Walk Leaders are requested not to take names of those wishing to participate in their designated walk more than two weeks in advance of the scheduled walk date. This should take pressure off Leaders and will give all members a better chance of being listed for a walk.
- In order to assess the exact number of members who have been left on a waiting list the Committee would appreciate if Walk Leaders listed on the Insurance Form the names of those who have been unable to get on the walk.
- As a means of promoting sociability among members at different walk levels, Walk Leaders should confer in order that walks scheduled for the same date should, where possible, finish at the same location/venue.
- A policy of not encouraging any new C walkers will be put in place as an interim measure (currently a number of names are on a waiting list), since the possibility of filling a second bus is not feasible at present and there are likely difficulties in getting additional leaders.

The Committee will keep these matters under review and inform members of any updates.

## Bus Fares

The January 2009 – Issue 37 of the Irish Trekker included a reference to buses and bus fares. If a member who is listed for a walk cancels after the Wednesday prior to the walk and is not replaced then that person must pay the full fare.

## Access to Information

Members are reminded that as well as the club's magazine which is published three times per year, a range of other information is available on the Irish Trekker Mountaineering Club's website [[www.trekkers.ie](http://www.trekkers.ie)]. Further information (insurance, activities, safety matters for example) may be accessed on the Mountaineering Ireland website [[www.mountaineering.ie](http://www.mountaineering.ie)] and in the Irish Mountain Log which is a membership magazine published four times a year by Mountaineering Ireland and of which the Trekkers Club is a member. Mountaineering Ireland promotes the interests of hillwalkers and climbers in Ireland.

## Training – Navigation: Map and Compass Reading

On Monday 19 October 2009, 16 members attended the first session of a navigation course organised by John Furey and Monty Tinsley. 13 of these came out on a walk on the following Saturday 24 October for an outdoor practical training session. Although the weather started fine that morning it quickly deteriorated, so that conditions became quite difficult as the day progressed. However, all participants agreed it was a very worthwhile session during which a lot of practical information was gleaned which was the purpose of the exercise.

It was also agreed that a further evening session 'while things are still fresh in our minds' would be valuable. This took place on Monday 16 November. The session with 11 members focussed on:

- A review of what had been learnt from the two sessions thus far – high points and low.
- Co-ordinates and map reading.
- Plotting your next walk of any grade.

The dogged, restless spirit that is the Trekkers has, in recent years, employed new ways and means to find an interesting "scratch" for its notoriously itchy feet; and in the latest chapter of the Trekkers' story thirteen of its members found themselves in the Picos mountains in north-west Spain. Our base for the week was a picturesque hotel nestled in lush and largely uninhabited countryside – and reached by a narrow and fiendishly steep road. Nevertheless, a bus crawled courageously down this as we gathered in the driveway before the hotel on the very first morning of the holiday. We enjoyed the company of a number of fidgety chickens strutting confidently over the gravel – a confidence which could be attributed to the presence of a Labrador who kept the surrounding gardens free of foxes and other potential predators. I ought to digress at this point to mention that these gardens were abounding with a whole variety of vegetables: onions, cabbages, French beans, strawberries, artichokes, potatoes, blackcurrants, raspberries – to name but a few. The owner of the hotel lovingly nurtured this colourful crop, and it formed the basis of the salads, soups and sauces dished up to us for our evening meals. The hotel truly adopted a "good life" approach to all things, and even the soap and shampoo provided in the bathrooms consisted of a special homemade concoction.

We boarded the bus, and it brought us by a long, winding, vertigo-inducing route to the beginning of the walk. We disembarked at a small mountain village. Many of the farm buildings in the Picos are built on squat, wooden "stilts", with a wheel-shaped rock between each stilt and the building above – the purpose of which is to keep out rats and other vermin. We left the village behind, hiking uphill through fields and farmyards, and came at length to a forest of mature beech trees. A lingering morning mist rendered the trees eerie and mysterious, until we crossed the timber-line to grassy open ground.

At this stage, we came upon a small herd of cattle and the solemn tolling of their bells – in the Picos these creatures are often permitted to wander high up into the mountains. Among them also were several handsome, thickset horses, who, like the cattle, are at liberty to roam wherever they please – in the past the horses were used for carrying loads about the hills but they now enjoy a semi-wild existence. (Other curious encounters with the animal kingdom during the holiday included soaring griffon vultures, tales of wolves and wild boars, a dead viper, some of the most enormous slugs I've ever seen, and a long, involved, post-dinner discussion on the finer points of bee-keeping.)

Leaving the horses behind us, we paused for lunch, and then set about tackling the summit. Doing so brought us by narrow, slightly hair-raising paths – and at times we were compelled to scramble on all fours – but eventually we reached the bare ridge of Jario Peak. The mist which had been so stubborn earlier in the day had now moved aside to reveal distant green slopes and undulations, many of them crested with pinnacles of naked rock – the perfect backdrop for some suitably impressive photographs! Our guide, Alberto, was able to identify the various surrounding peaks, each of which seemed to be connected to some tale of daring and adventure. Alberto's passion for the outdoor life was such that although he was indeed a full-time mountain guide, his days off were spent wandering over the very same hills and dales. Some of Alberto's stories involved potholers as well as mountaineers, and apparently the Picos are a paradise for this type of activity.

Finally, we retraced our steps back to the trees and a hut which we had passed hours earlier, and we stopped for a well-earned drink. There is a gimmick in northern Spain whereby the locally brewed cider is poured from a bottle held high overhead to a glass held at waist-height – but none of us were in the mood for such nonsense (besides, it would have been highly hazardous to do so with scalding hot coffee, which is what most of us were drinking.) This hut was certainly a cosy affair, with a large stove and beds up in the rafters, and it almost seemed a pity to have to move on at all.

As we left the hut and made our way back through the forest to the mountain village where we began and our awaiting bus, the heavens opened and it became a good idea to put on some extra clothes (which was in sharp contrast to a walk some days later on a certain beach – but I won't go into that here), and we were then subjected to a boisterous performance of thunder and lightning. However, with the day's walking behind us, our spirits could not be dampened and the fat rain-drops simply made thoughts of a hot shower and evening meal all the more welcome.



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# Connemara in September

By Marelene Travers

On Sunday 7th September some 21 Trekkers set out for Clifden for a 5 night stay in Abbeyleen Castle Hotel. As we headed west, weather conditions deteriorated, driving rain and heavy mist together with navigating the pot holes (lakes) and road works made the journey down one to remember. However afternoon tea and the hurling semi final soothed and relaxed the weary travellers!

On Monday, with improved weather conditions, the C walkers, led by Kevin Beegan set off for a walk along Killary Harbour estuary – The Famine Relief Road. Whilst not reaching The Famine Village (due to threat of rain) some derelict buildings could be seen along the track reminding us of the exodus of people who left the area during the 1840's and '50's. On our right we could see the mussel and fish farms in the harbour and on our left was our NBF (new best friend) the wire fence which some of us clung to in an effort to navigate the muddy stretches. Whilst we came away with dry feet – I am sure the farmer's fence may be somewhat lopsided! The B walkers (all 4 of them) led by John Murphy set off to climb Tully Mountain (375m). This is an important landmark on the Neolithic map of Ireland, with 2 portal tombs, several stone alignments and other Neolithic monuments confirming human life on the peninsula more than 5 millennia ago. On a clear days the views are spectacular, with the Twelve Bens rising to the southeast, Mweelrea across Killary to the northeast, in the distance Croagh Patrick & Achill Island to the north, the coastline of Connemara in the south and Inishbofin in the west. The Trekkers first climbed this mountain in 1985 on their first "away" trip, that group consisted of Shaun Trant, Kieran Trant, Charlie Ryan, Paddy O'Duffy and Bill Hannon.

Monday night brought heavy rain and gales and the proposed trip to Inishboffin was rescheduled for Thursday. It was agreed that the group would meet at 1p.m. on Tuesday for Monty's Plan B. The Trekkers enjoyed the free morning, spending the time pottering around the shops in Clifden, relaxing in the hotel, visiting old friends or walking/driving along the Sky road. 1p.m saw some 12 Trekkers driving to Claddaghduff church and walking across 1 km of tidal sands to the road on Omev Island. This route is impassable for 2 hours each side of high tide.

In 7th century St Feichin founded a monastic settlement on the island and we visited the ruins of Teampaill Feichin, one of the gables being of an older structure and dates probably from the 10th century. A clear sky offered spectacular views of the island & the sea and the strong winds made the walk invigorating. The Trekkers had an opportunity to practice belly dancing skills when they shimmied under a barbed wire fence. (no damage to island fences....)



Wednesday morning brought blue skies and sunshine. The Trekkers were collected by coach and headed for the Inagh Valley and walks along the Western Way. Monty and the B walkers joined the Western Way in the middle of the Inagh Valley and headed north with Maamturk Mountains on the left. The C group, led by John Furey, joined the Western Way further on. Whilst the C group kept ahead of the B group during the walk, both groups survived the mud and met in Leenane for a welcome drink/cuppa.

Thursday saw the Trekkers heading for Cleggan and the ferry to Inishboffin. With Monty acting as our island guide, we spent a happy few hours walking around the island in sparkling sunshine. The first documented history of the island dates back to the 7th century during the life of St. Colman. The present church on the island was built in

1910 and serves the population of about 200 souls Whilst we didn't encounter the mythical white cow or Grainualie, we did meet a friendly islander who went out of his way to direct us to the Poll Tolladh (the bore hole).

Thursday night after dinner, the singsong in the hotel was in full swing. With the Trekkers taking it in turns with the Clontarf Golfers, the party of French Fishermen were suitably impressed, although I think the 3 pretty female musicians may have had something to do with it!

Unfortunately all good things come to an end. However it was a wonderful trip, the good weather, the hotel with its friendly staff & lovely food and lively entertainment will make it one to remember. A big Thank You to Monty for all the organisation and planning that went into it and to the other leaders, Kevin Beegan, John Murphy and John Furey for leading the walks.

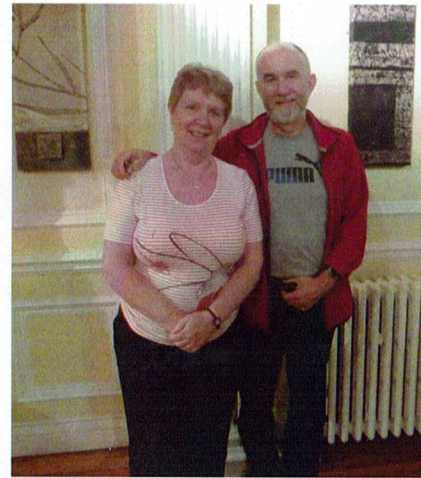


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## Trekkers in China

Maeve and Mike Sims have been in China for several months now, and have been sending us all updates of their interesting experiences.

Before settling into their new 'home', they had the opportunity to visit Beijing, touring the famous Imperial Palace, Summer Palace, the Temple of Heaven and a silk and pearl factory. While we watched the 60th Anniversary celebrations of Tiananmen Square, Maeve and Mike were there in person watching the TV screens and preparations being constructed in advance of the commemoration.



Their main purpose of being in Beijing was to receive their 'In Country Training', the most difficult aspect being 30 hours of Chinese language classes. Very difficult! Naturally the language is the most challenging obstacle, with their Charades and mime abilities being tested! Learning a new language is hugely courageous, but one with a different alphabet, characters etc. must be mind boggling!! Our admiration for our two colleagues is great!

In their second letter to us all, Maeve and Mike described adjusting to their new life in Shanyang. They described the stark differences in the educational system in China, with 70 children to 1 teacher in some cases! Maeve has successfully set up an English Club, and Mike was refining his miming skills using the game 'Simon Says'! Such innovation!

Throughout this hard work Maeve and Mike have had time to engage in their favorite hobby Trekking. They have walked along Dragon Mountain, and in one of the valleys surrounding Shanyang. No doubt they will have conquered many more famous peaks and valleys before their trip comes to an end. Probably very different terrain to the Wicklow Way!

Throughout their letters home, it is clear that Maeve and Mike are being welcomed by the local people and all whom they meet. There have been quite a few celebrations and banquets in their honour, with dancing, speeches, toasts and drinking games!

We send them all our best wishes from Ireland, and hope they will have a 'Slainte' from us with their 'local poitin'!

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# Ascending Mont Blanc

By Owen McKeown



Mont Blanc from Chamonix

Mont Blanc, at 4807m is the highest point in the Alps and Western Europe and is undoubtedly a beautiful mountain. With its permanent snow cover, it dominates the Chamonix valley. Straddling the Franco Italian border, it is a peak that is a magnet to all climbers that go to the French Alps. At this stage, I have been lucky enough to have visited the Chamonix valley on six occasions and three times I have attempted to climb this mountain. Each time, the weather, which can be very temperamental, was against us. In 2001 three of us got to the Tete Rousse Hut (3107m) but we had to descend when high winds and early snow (in September) obliterated all the trails and guides refused to bring anyone up for over a week. I was back in Chamonix in 2003 and again in 2008 when we had a "Trekking" trip. On that occasion a group of us climbed to the Forestiere des Rognes Hut (2768m) which may be a record height for a Club walk by the Trekkers? That trip, I must admit, reawakened my interest so when one of my American friends, Ron, suggested last year that we should give it another go, he was pushing an open door!

Older and we hope a little wiser, this time we planned in greater detail than other occasions and I personally joined the Gym to strengthen the legs and lose a little (sic) weight from around the midriff. We also went on an advanced winter skills course in Scotland's Glencoe area last March when we hopefully

improved our crampon and mixed climbing skills. We spend two very enjoyable days on Buachaille Etive Mor on that occasion which was the subject of a previous article in the "Trekker".

So it was that I met my friend Ron in Geneva airport on Sat 27 June having flown in from Dublin and New York respectively. We had originally hoped to have a party of four but due to other commitments, we had two dropouts leaving only Ron and myself.

We spend two days walking in the Chamonix valley to acclimatise and we climbed to the Albert Premier Hut (2702m) and did the showcase walk of the "Grand Balcon Nord" route to the Mere de Glace which a lot of the Club will remember from the 2008 trip. To maximise the chances of success on this occasion we had engaged a Guide from the "Compagnie des Guides de Chamonix". To anyone contemplating an attempt on Mont Blanc, this is highly recommended as apart from knowledge of the Mountain, Serge certainly improved our climbing techniques and exposed us to situations and locations that we could not have even thought of attempting on our own. We hired him for five days, three days for preparation and acclimatisation and two days for the summit attempt itself.

**Day 1.** We climbed the Petite Aiguille Vert (3512m) above Argentiere which certainly in parts is a rock climb and we were grateful for the fact that we were roped up to an expert. The exposure on occasions was "interesting".

On the same day we climbed down into the Argentiere Glacier where we practiced Ice climbing and Crevasse rescue. After a long day of 10 hours we were grateful to get back to Chamonix that night!

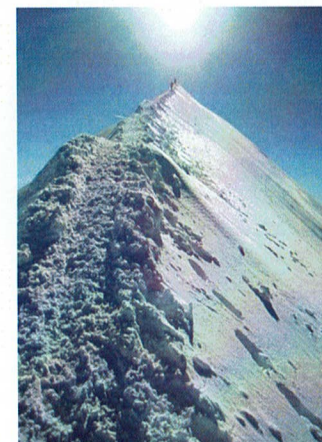


**Day 2.** saw us, after an 8 am start, climbing in the Aiguilles Rouges. We ascended Aiguille Crochues (2840m) and found this to be an exciting and enjoyable Grade2 scramble.

**Day 3.** This, we both agreed was the "piece de resistance". Here we took the cable car to Aiguille de Midi and trekked down into the Vallee Blanche. We then climbed back up to the cable car station via the "Cosmiques Ridge". This was "Mixed" climbing, in crampons, with sections of snow and ice followed by sections on rock. Negotiating the latter sections with crampons needed practice. The entire ridge was certainly enjoyable, but parts of it were a definite rock climb. As a hillwalker at heart, there were several occasions where I was definitely outside my comfort zone. An abseil down a gully to a narrow ledge followed by an ascent of a 10m smooth rock pitch over a 300m drop was an experience that I won't easily forget!

### Summit Aig. Crochues

**Day 4.** Starting at 0800, we took the cable car from La Houches and then the Cog railway to Le Nid d'Aigle (2372m). Then the really hard work began. The first stage to the Tete Rousse Hut is a climb on a relatively easy graded path and takes about two hours. At the hut the permanent snow begins so it's crampons and helmets on and we rope up. After a short break the most hazardous part of the climb has to be negotiated, the infamous "Grand Couloir". This is a traverse across a steep snow slope. It is not technically difficult but is very exposed and is an area where you have to watch your step. The really dangerous aspect of the area is that it is subject to constant rock fall and there are regular fatalities where climbers are hit and fall. There is a sheer drop down to the Bionnassay Glacier. In 2001, during our last visit an Irish climber was killed on this traverse. We managed to cross safely but it took a while for the heart rate to return to normal. From here to the Gouter Hut (3817m) is a steep rocky scramble. Icy in places, it is hard work with an ice axe essential. We finally arrived for a late lunch pretty well exhausted after a total climb of about 1500m from Nid d'Aigle. The Gouter Hut was very crowded and there was very little else to do apart from an evening meal and prepare the gear for a 02.30 start for the peak.



**Day 5.** started at 0200 with the chaos of the hallway of the hut as upwards of 100 climbers tried to don boots, crampons, and gaiters and pack gear all by the light of head torches. How somebody didn't lose an eye or get stabbed by an ice axe is more by luck than anything else. It was with some relief that we fled the mayhem and climbed the short distance to the ridge above the hut and started the trek for the top. The section from the Gouter to the Dome de Gouter is a long steep snow plod. It was a matter of head down and trudge upwards for what seemed forever. The only light is your head torch although every so often one would look up and see the rather beautiful spectacle of the lights of those that had left before us snaking up the mountain ahead. Another beautiful sight was the lights of the Chamonix Valley twinkling 4000m below. A level section and a short climb took us to the Vallot Hut where we had a break in the lee of what is only an emergency shelter.

## Final ridge to Summit

At this stage dawn was breaking, so visibility was better and we could see the Bosses ridge rising ahead. From here to the summit is a series of steep sections and in places we had to cross some narrow exposed knife edges. There is pretty much a sheer drop into Italy on the right and France on the left. I could see why Serge was assessing how susceptible we were to vertigo during the preparation days. These sections were short however and another hour of climbing finally saw us with a final snow ridge to climb to the summit (4807m). We arrived at 0645.

At the summit, the ridge broadens somewhat and there is enough room to stand around, enjoy the view and take photographs. The views were amazing but all too soon the cold reminded us that we had to descend. Heading down the ridge needed care in places as we had to pass a lot of people that were still climbing up. Given the narrowness of the ridge, the best procedure in a case like this is to give way to those ascending, step carefully off the track and let them pass. After a half hour or so the traffic jams eased and we made better time. We arrived back to the Gouter Hut at 0930 and had a late breakfast. Despite the enormous amount of calories that we had burned, neither of us was very hungry but we did appreciate the rest and the hot coffee. The descent to the Tete Rousse hut was difficult enough as due to the early hour, there was still a lot of ice on the rock which make some sections pretty slippery.

### Summit Mont Blanc (4807 mts)

We had the second heart stopping traverse of



View from Gouter Hut of the Chamonix Valley

the Grand Couloir though this was in fact easier than the previous day as the sun had not yet started to melt the ice and rock fall was less of a problem. We continued on without taking the short detour to the Tete Rousse and only stopped to take off crampons and helmets. We also dispensed with the rope and we were able to make better time. After a further two hours of jarring descent, it was a grateful group that caught the train at Nig d'Aigle for home.



View from the Summit

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## 0 Canada! – Rocky Mountain Tales

By Derek O'Neill

During the summer of this year I visited Canada for a 3 week holiday. Canada has always captured my imagination with its rich culture and absorbing scenery and wildlife. I decided to visit both the east and west coasts within the one holiday. Coupled with this I wanted to fit in sight seeing around some of the fantastic cities together with a week long trek in the Rockies.



My holiday commenced in the cosmopolitan city of Montreal. I based myself in the "Old Montreal" part of town which is a charming place peppered with small narrow cobbled streets, artists and street performers. Many a warm evening was spent sitting in an outdoors restaurant eating beautiful food washed down with a nice glass of wine. I took a road trip one day to the affluent ski resort of Mount Tremblant. Although it was summer time you could get a sense of the place bustling with skiers in search of the slopes or the après ski. And like any child at heart I had to try the ski lifts up to the top of the mountain (not exactly the spirit of walking up mountains because "they are there").

After the good living of Montreal I made my way to Quebec for a couple of days where the weather was very wet and grey. The French influence is very strong in both cities (especially in Quebec) with all traffic signs, menus and conversations with shop assistants etc in French. The key is to make the effort to engage and attempt to converse in French and everything will work out. Any visit to Quebec should really include a visit, meal or overnight in Le Château Frontenac. The Château Frontenac was named in honor of Louis de Buade, Count of Frontenac, who was governor of the colony of New France in the 17th century. It stands majestically over the Saint Lawrence River with spectacular views for many miles and was even used as the location of Hitchcock's "I Confess" film in 1953.

While I was in Quebec I took the opportunity to walk to the top of Cap Diamant (the official name of the promontory on which Quebec City is located) to the "Citadelle". The Citadelle is part of the fortifications of Quebec City. It was designed by the French in the 17th century and rebuilt by the British in the 19th century. During World War 2, Churchill and Roosevelt discussed strategy at the Citadelle.

After plenty of bagels and cream cheese it was off to Vancouver on the West coast of the country. Vancouver was experiencing a heat wave at the time (high 30's) and the locals were not used to this type of weather. Vancouver is an immaculately clean city with an English influence (no more dual traffic signs!). While there, I took an interesting side visit to Granville Island to see the fresh food markets. One of the highlights of my time in Vancouver was taking a beautiful walk around the circumference of the beautiful Stanley Park (circa 9 km). There are many interesting facets within the park including a collection of stunning Totem Poles.

It was time to get the hiking boots out and get walking. So I made my way to Calgary to meet up with the guided tour group of 9 fellow walkers for a week of walking in the areas of Banff, Jasper and Yoho. We would travel around national parks by car and set up camps in national park camp sites. Each day we would leave early and drive off to commence a full day's walk.

Our group included people from Portugal, England, Belgium, Australia, France and Germany (no

Canadians!). Our tour guide for the week was German and was extremely helpful and knowledgeable of Canada, its history, landscape, wildlife and flora. Her attention to detail ever went to making sure only Canadian CD's were played in the car.

In Banff we did a one day hike to Healy Creek on an extremely hot day, it was over 35 degrees. This was the equivalent of a B walk however the heat made walking very difficult. I was amazed to note that none of the group brought walking boots with them. The entire walk was one long incline to spectacular views including a walk through a meadow of beautiful pink flowers. Everywhere you walk you see numerous squirrels perched upright observing and recording everything.

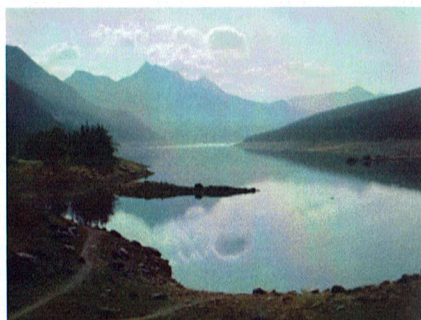
The following day saw us visit the beautiful Lake Louise. We started our walk at the hotel beside the lake and climbed up and up to Lake Agnes and lunch in the tea houses near the summit. We then made our way up some severe zig-zags to the Big Beehive summit. From here we had wonderful views looking back down to Lake Louise and the hotel where we started. We then made the steady decent back down the other side of the mountain and on to Lake Louise.

Every time we transported to and from walks we always stopped to look at some beautiful scenic spots or if someone spotted some wildlife. This was wonderful and no one complained about wanting to return to the camp site once the walk ended. One beautiful stop on route was to see the amazing mountain range of "Castle Cliffs".

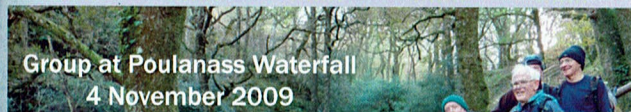
The following day saw two short hikes near the Athabasca Glacier and a visit to the Icefields Centre. These shorter hikes acted as a little respite to the two previous days. The penultimate day saw us take numerous hikes around the Jasper National Park. At the start of each walk was a large notice board with interesting facts about the animals and plant life that you would see on route. Details would also be provided on the average weather patterns in the last number of years for each month of the year. Danger areas would be indicated and of course the very important "Bear Update". The notice board would list the last time a bear was sighted on the walking route. On one walk the notice indicated that a large brown bear was sighted

on the walking route on the previous day. We all took this advice very seriously as although these animals are wonderful creatures, we are encroaching into their habitat plus they probably can smell the sandwiches from a long way away!

The final days walk was around Parker Ridge with panoramic views of a stunning glacier that was retreating. Interestingly, 4 hours into this walk and in the middle of nowhere we saw a park ranger approach. He was checking on the walkers in the area and checked our group to see if we had the correct permits (to walk and drive in a National Park) and if we where alright. After a careful decent on loose shale like material we were back at the car and that was it - all over. After one more night at the camp site, which included thunder and lightning all night, we were making our way back to Calgary. The following day I flew back to the Fair City convinced that I will return to this stunning country. On the flight home I felt like I had just enjoyed two separate distinct holidays. I would recommend a visit to the Rockies to all walkers. O Canada!



# Photo Gallery



Group at Poulanass Waterfall  
4 November 2009



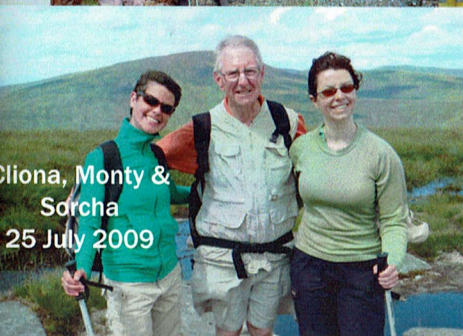
Group near education centre  
4 November 2009



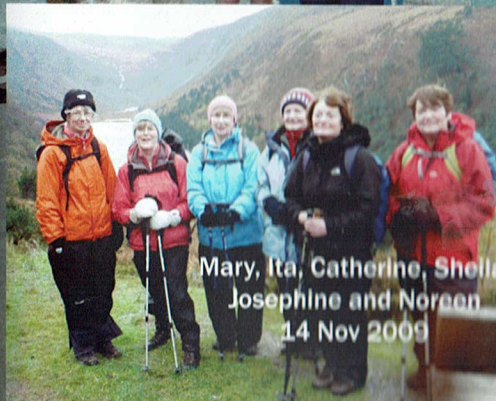
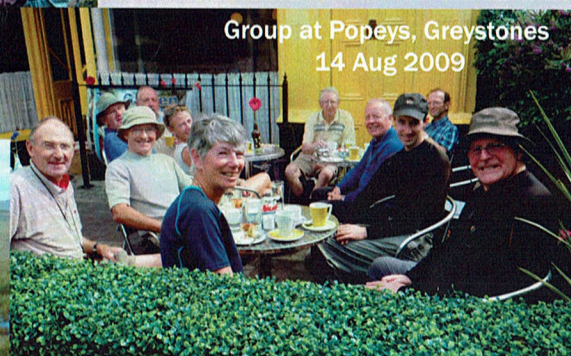
Group at Ballinastoe Woods  
2009



Group at Popeys, Greystones  
14 Aug 2009



Cliona, Monty & Sorcha  
25 July 2009



Mary, Ita, Catherine, Shella,  
Josephine and Noreen  
14 Nov 2009

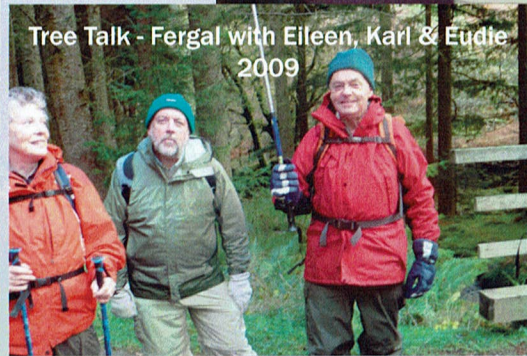


Gilbert, Tom, Ann, Jane & Owen  
25 July 2009





Eugene with the 3 Himalayan Trekkers: Sorcha, Gaye and Judith  
Christmas Party  
12 Dec 2009



Tree Talk - Fergal with Eileen, Karl & Eudie  
2009



Cliona, Marjorie & Sorcha  
2009



Group near Derrybawn  
14 Nov 2009

IRISH  
**Trekker**

# Programme of walks - 2/01/10 to 24/04/10

Date	Grade	Start	First Leader	Second Leader	Third Leader
<b>January</b>					
2	B	09:00	Paddy O'Duffy	Bob Curran	Mary Dillon
	C	11:00	Myles Duffy	Kevin Moore	Patricia Duffy
9	A	09:00	Owen McKeown	Gaye Maguire	Jane Sykes
	C	11:00	Richard Needham	Mary Delaney	Hilary Fitzpatrick
16	BY	09:00	Sorcha Ryan	Judith Poynton	Maellosa Ryan
	C	11:00	Kevin Beegan	Marion Goff	Catherine Walsh
23	B	09:00	Brendan Bracken	Monty Tinsley	Marjorie O'Shee
	C	11:00	Eugene Logan	Marie McKeown	Maura Byrne
30	A	09:00	Phillip O'Neill	Shay Murran	Cliona McCarthy
<b>February</b>					
6	B	09:00	Gerry Fogarty	Niall Humphries	Roger Kirker
	C	11:00	Eileen Gallagher	Ann Little	Marelene Travers
13	A	09:00	Ita Lawton	Derek O'Neill	Brian Brennan
	C	11:00	Kevin Moore	Sheila Cantwell	Brid Dunne
20	B	09:00	Monty Tinsley	Owen McKeown	Michael Cotter
	C	11:00	Liam Walsh	Evelyn Tinsley	Josephine Cotter
27	A+	09:00	Gilbert Little	Dermot Murray	Brendan Bracken
	C	11:00	Eugene Logan	Bernadette Coggins	Teresa Casey
<b>March</b>					
6	B	09:00	John Murphy	Shay Murran	Cliona Carey
	C	11:00	Ann Little	Noel O'Reilly	Theresa Murphy
13	A	09:00	Derek O'Neill	Jane Sykes	Paddy O'Duffy
	C	11:00	Noreen O'Brien	Dick Needham	Catherine Minogue
20	B	09:00	Mary Murray	Tom Murray	Catherine Walsh
	C	11:00	Dick Ryan	Cindy Mangan	Trish Duffy
27	BY	09:00	Gaye Maguire	Sorcha Ryan	Maellosa Ryan
	C	11:00	Eugene Logan	Marie Comiskey	Aidene Duff
<b>April</b>					
3 - Easter	B	09:00	Brian Brennan	Conor Stephens	Dermot Murray
Saturday	C	11:00	Sheila Cantwell	Colette Dorgan	Henry Jack
10	A	09:00	Mary Dillon	Joe Murray	Ita Lawton
	C	11:00	John Furey	Liam Walsh	Marie McKeown
17	B	09:00	Niall Humphries	Monty Tinsley	Gaye Maguire
	C	11:00	Fergal Mulloy	Kevin Beegan	Marion Goff
24	B	09:00	John Murphy	Tom Murray	Tom Duff
	C	11:00	Eugene Logan	Kevin Moore	Mary Delaney

## Walk Leaders

Walk leaders should email members at least 10 days in advance of their scheduled walk to advise of the planned route details, including the distance to be travelled and height to be climbed. Where a named leader is unable to lead a walk she/he should arrange for and agree a replacement. Any such changes should be notified to the walks co-ordinator Colette Dorgan.

Please note Bus Driver details: Gerry Haskins tel: 086 3359961