

IRISH Trekker

April 2004 • Issue 24

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Glenmalur in early Spring; Pearse, Derry, Eileen.

The Trekkers Mountaineering Club
GLENAGEARY CO DUBLIN

*In Memory of the late
Charles Ryan, R.I.P.*

Charlie Ryan,
Our loyal friend
Has moved on
Leaving us,
Trailing Trekkers,
Lagging behind.

Bravely,
Overcome by fog,
He has left us flashes
Of his old personality.
His cap
Tilted to good fortune.
His humourousities,
The witticisms he honed on us,
His love of sing-song on a bus,
His sense of gentleness.

Charlie Ryan,
A man of all weathers,
All Walks and lofty hillsides,
Of unsuspected steel.

Our loyal friend,
Has moved on.

*[An Old Trekker]
5-2-2004.*

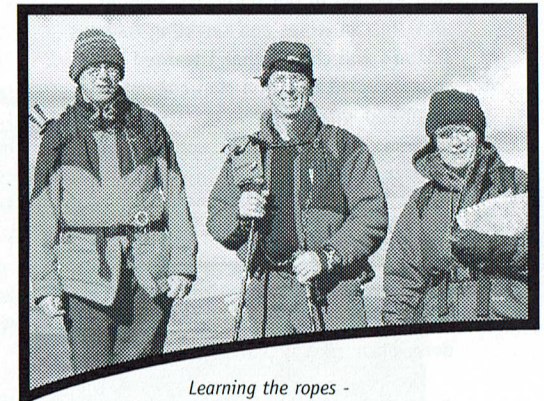


**Thanks to John Furey
on his direction of a
Navigation Course
for Trekkers**

John led the group up Trooperstown Hill and was his usual patient self in explaining the skills and in answering questions. In the practical exercises, he was ably assisted by Mike, Monty & Pearse.

We now have 8 extra potential leaders of future walks. Breda, Conor, Dermot, Derek, Gaye, Ita L, Maeliosa, & Maud take a bow!

We are very grateful to John, who gave us the benefit of his experience since he joined the Trekkers in 1985.



*Learning the ropes -
Conor and Ita with John (centre).*



The Trekkers Mountaineering Club
Glenageary, Co. Dublin

<http://homepage.eircom.net/~trekkers>

Cycling Tour of Tuscany

By Jeanette Hooban

Last October Jim and I flew to Pisa, took the train to Florence and spent one glorious afternoon and evening in that lovely city. The following day we met our tour leaders at Stazione Santa Maria Novella and were driven one hour to the village of Montaione, the start of our cycling tour. It is customary that the leaders meet all the guests in the lobby and then set out for a practice ride to familiarize everyone with the loaned bikes and terrain. It may have been that first evening in our hotel bar, sipping local Tuscan wines and sampling fragrant salami's and cheese that I learned our tour included two Iron Man competitors (man and wife) and two marathon runners. The tour was actually a rest week for Kristen who would run the New York City Marathon in November and hope for a time good enough to allow her to compete in Hawaii in the next Iron Man competition. Ah, says I, this is what was meant by "moderate to challenging" as a description of this particular tour.

Our holiday actually began in Blessington where we spent our summer weekends biking around the Pollaphuca Reservoir choosing routes of 25 to 35 miles.

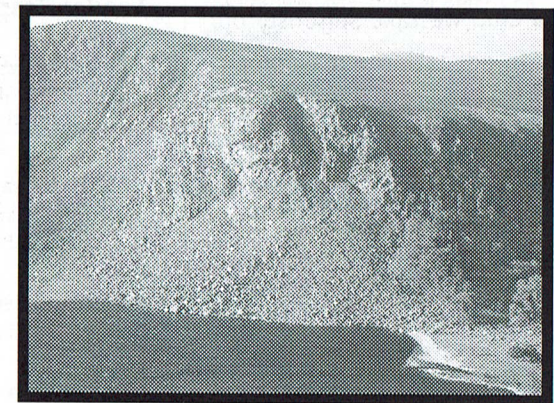
Then, realizing our routes were not hilly enough, we discovered the road up Sorrell Hill and included that in our training. Zeller's Pub was never far away.

The first day's ride was to San Gimignano with cycling options of 24, 36 or 50 kilometers. As many of you know, this is the walled city of medieval towers also famous for its white wine, Vernaccia. It was sunny and warm and divine. Over the next five days we cycled from San Gimignano to Colle Val D'Elsa, known for its crystal, to Siena, home of the Palio horse race, Pienza and its glorious pecorino cheese and lastly, Montepulciano. These are some of the most picturesque villages of Tuscany. The weather cooled and it became windy. The flat stretches of road we so looked forward to on our last day were peddled in high gear to compensate for the cross winds that almost blew us over. The hills were gradual, long and relentless.

Each morning we left the most delectable breakfast buffet behind us, loaded up with water and left in groups and pairs. Fresh persimmons were in the fruit bowl as well as the ubiquitous bananas. We cycled at our own rates, passed each other as we stopped to take photos or break for snacks when we found the van (people/bicycle carrier). One leader stayed in the van and one leader cycled with the group each day. It was customary to meet in a village at a tiny local trattoria for a lunch of pasta, salad and wine and then wander across the square to a café for gelato of the most delectable flavors: mango, hazelnut, pistachio. Each morning we cycled from an ancient fortified Tuscan village, at the top of a hill, down into a valley and back up a hill to our next village. Our luggage was moved for us. We had nothing but luxury on this trip, our only concern was the length of our daily ride and how much shopping we could stuff into our panniers.

Jim was at my side the first two days of the trip but I knew I was holding him back so on day three he was off with the leaders and at the front of the pack. This allowed me a more leisurely pace, time for photos and seeing the sights. We visited magnificent churches and viewed recently restored jewel-like frescoes. We enjoyed a picnic our last day and spent most of the time around a roaring fire to dry our damp lycra and warm our chilled bones.

This was our third holiday with Vermont Bicycle Tours. Their website is www.vbt.com. The trips last six to seven days, include breakfasts, many dinners, superior accommodation and side tours of interest. This summer we plan another biking holiday, perhaps to Provence. Arrivederci. ●



January day above Lough Tay

Good Practice ...on the Hills

Although many people go into the hills individually most of us are attached to clubs.

Local communities form their opinion of hillwalkers through observing our activities so how we are perceived is important.

It is also through walking groups that most people are introduced to the hills and so develop walking practices.

As a club we take seriously our role in educating our members on good practice in the hills and the following points might be useful.

Club Responsibility

- Appoint only competent leaders to lead scheduled club walks
- Ensure that the leader knows the area for the walk: its hazards, access problems and local agreements
- Ensure that the group size does not exceed the recommended maximum number
- Ensure that the Group is provided with first aid and emergency equipment/training as appropriate.

Leader Responsibility

- Be recognised as competent to lead groups on the terrain and in the conditions likely to be encountered
- Check that each participant is properly equipped and knows the likely severity And severity of the walk.
- Check weather forecast, estimate distance and time of arrival
- Be trained in first aid or know it is available within the group

- Familiarise her/himself with the members of the group, their fitness, experience and discreetly ascertain if they're any medical conditions that could cause problems.

- Know the route and be familiar with access problems, hazards and local agreements

- Make firm decisions based on evaluation of the existing circumstances and not be influenced by pre-arranged schedules or uninformed group pressure.

- Not be afraid to abandon, abort or alter the route as appropriate

- Keep all participants under general observation and note any problems developing

- Be environmentally aware and ensure that every member adheres to good hillwalking practice, explaining the reasons when necessary

- Review the walk and discuss with the club committee any problems and how they could be avoided in future

Walk Participant's Responsibility

- Be responsible for his /her safety and do not jeopardise the safety of others.

- Be properly equipped and self sufficient

- Comply with the standards and practices laid down by the club for those participating in the walks

- Co-Operate with the instructions and requests of the leader and not be a "back street driver"

- Remain part of the group and not lead or join with splinter groups on the walk

- Keep the leader informed of any problems developing-before they become critical

- Have a big smile when Paddy takes photographs!

The Demented Ferret ...and other tales

By Brendan Bracken

Leaving Glenageary Station by AER DART at 7am and driving out of Leeds Bradford Airport at 10am on the way to the Yorkshire Dales was a quick and successful start to a recent long weekend. Especially with the flights costing €10 each!

The Dales are a beautiful part of England with pleasant country inns, lovely villages with names that resonance- Kirby Lonsdale, Lintwhite; Dukerdale. The Americans have a name for it- "cute"

We based ourselves in Sedbergh, an old market town surrounded by the Howgill Fells. Apart from its stunning situation, it has many historic houses, a Norman church, a famous public school and the first Quaker Meeting House to be established in the North of England in 1652.

The Howgills are a fine range of mountains rising to more than 2000 ft (600m) with access directly from Sedbergh. The views are magnificent embracing the Lakeland hills, the Pennines and the sea. The fells (hills to us!) are unenclosed and subject to common grazing rights. Walkers enjoy open access and there seems to be none of the "aggro" that sours relations between the farming community and hill walkers here. There is no heather and walking is easy and pleasant. Routes vary in length to suit all levels with wonderful names such as Cautley Spout, Bowderdale Head and Randygill Top.

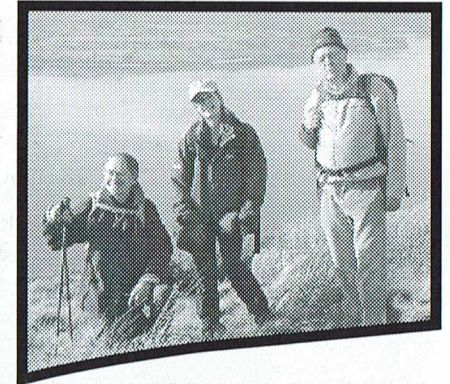
A highlight of the weekend was watching the Ireland Scotland rugby match in a local pub called "The Demented Ferret" As the only Irish there we received a warm welcome, our hosts no doubt confident of victory. As the match progressed, you could sense a certain feeling of unease followed by disbelief.

Still the crowd were generous in defeat and put up a drink for the victorious visitors.

Somewhat the worse for wear I made our way back to our accommodation, a beautiful country inn where the other guests serenaded us with "When Irish eyes are smiling". I don't remember much after that.

The Sunday was spent visiting Harrogate, a really beautiful spa town and York itself where they have a "Historic Toilet Tour" a tour of "convenience" from Roman sanitation to the 18th century "Sugar" house and the 19th century attempts to promote public decency. Given that I was feeling "delicate" from the previous evenings celebrations, I don't know if this was such a good idea.

Anyway, it was no distance back to Leeds Bradford Airport and back to Dublin by 8pm. Anybody planning a short break should consider this neck of the woods. It's relatively accessible with lots to see and do with the added attraction of falling into bad company in "The Demented Ferret" ●

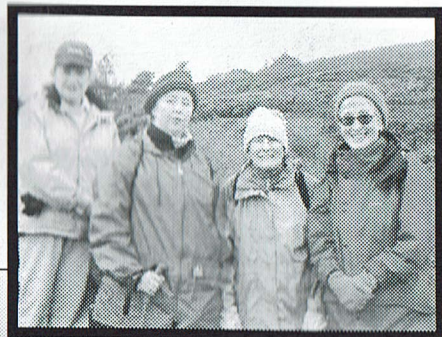


Eugene, Jeanette, Fergal
at Pollaphuca.

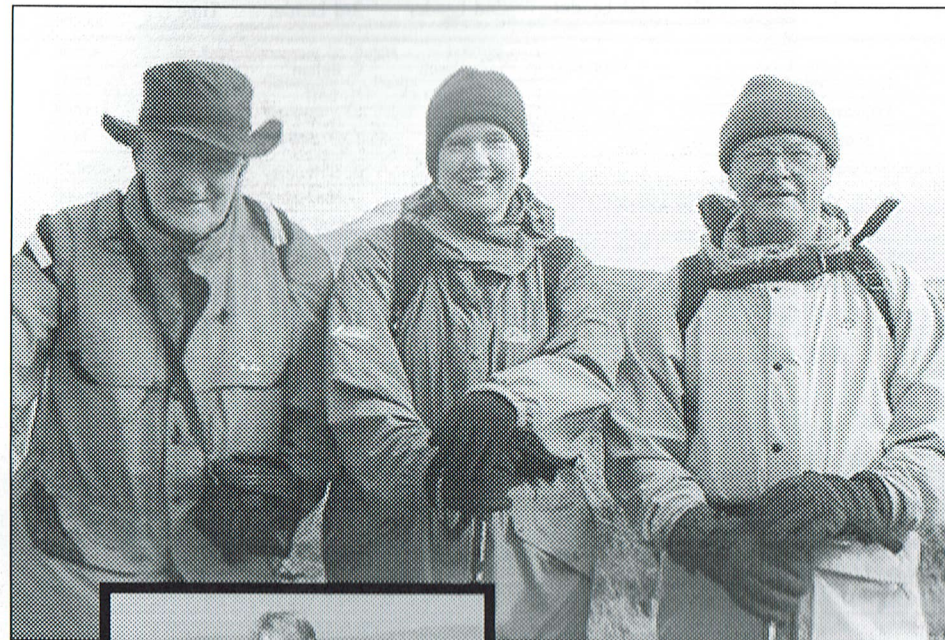
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The Photocall!

*Brid, Mary, Maria
and Catherine on the
C walk at Howth.*



*C walk, Howth Head,
March 2004*



*Grigo O'Duffy with Carol
and Kevin.*



Mary on Black Hill 14 Feb

Walks Programme

May - August 2004

Date	Grade	1st Leader	2nd Leader	3rd Leader	Time
May					
1	A	P. Connolly	S. Cantwell	C. Behan	9.00
	C	E. Logan	H. Fitzpatrick	M. Goff	11.00
8	ENNISCORTHY WEEKEND				
15	Nil				
22	B	E. Gallagher	B. O'Hara	D. O'Hegarty	10.00
29	B	R. Crowley	M. Tinsley	C. MacHale	9.00
June					
5	A	Mike Sims	Maeve Sims	R. Crowley	9.00
	C	B. Brennan	A. Keegan	C. Mangan	11.00
12	B	H. Welch	P. O'Duffy	D. O'Neill	9.00
19	B - 1	E. Logan	S. Ryan	Maud Halferty	10.00
	C - 1	B. Hannon	N. O'Reilly	D. Lindstrom	12.00
26	Nil				
July					
3	A	B. Bracken	G. Fogarty	C. Stephens	9.00
10	B	T. Murray	M. Murray	D. Murray	9.00
	C	C. Dorgan	M. Berthiaume	K. Moore	11.00
17	B	T. Gillen	J. Murray	I. Lawton	9.00
24	B	Maeliosa Ryan	Gaye Maguire	D. Ryan.	10.00
	C	P. O'Duffy	M. O'Duffy	T. Casey	11.00
31	Nil				
August					
7	AB.- 2	J. Hooban	D. Needham	B. Lane	9.00
	C - 2	M. Tinsley	E. Tinsley	K. Beegan	11.00
14	Nil				
21	B	F. Mulloy	C. Stephens	J. Hamilton	10.00
28	B	B. Brennan	M. Berthiaume	E. Lindstrom	9.00
	C	L. Walsh	A. Keegan	I. McCraith	11.00
September					
4	Nil				
11	KILLARNEY WEEK				

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NOTES

WALKS LEADERS SHOULD:

- Contact Eileen Gallagher by the Tuesday prior to the walk to book bus.
- Hand completed Insurance Attendance Sheet to Walks Co-ordinator.

Notes 1 - "Foot & Mouth" Dinner - Glenmalure
2 - Coastal Walk.



PRODUCED BY
The Trekkers Mountaineering Club
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