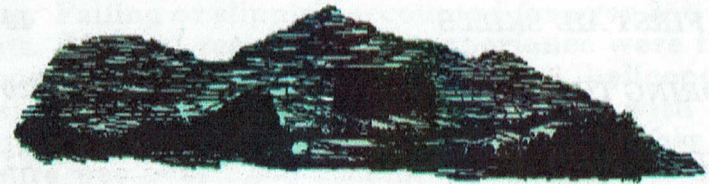


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The Trekker



December 2000 Issue No 14



*The Trekkers
Mountaineering Club,
Glenageary,
Co. Dublin.*

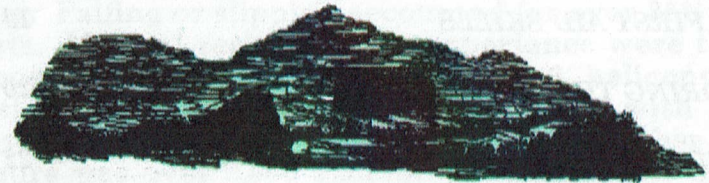


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CONTENTS

<i>EDITORIAL</i>	2
<i>ON THE TREK</i>	4
<i>HARDANGERVIDDA TREK</i>	7
<i>A SENSE OF PLACE</i>	10
<i>LIST OF MEMBERS</i>	11
<i>PHOTOS FROM INDIA</i>	17
<i>WALKS PROGRAMME</i>	18
<i>BASIC FIRST AID SKILLS</i>	19
<i>EXPLORING THE MOURNES</i>	20
<i>CULTURAL TOUR OF ANDALUSIA</i>	22
<i>SAFETY IN THE HILLS</i>	25
<i>DISCOUNT SCHEME FOR MAPS</i>	26

The Editor would like to thank all those who contributed articles and photographs for this issue.

The committee wishes all TREKKERS a holy and peaceful Christmas.

EDITORIAL

LOCAL RESCUE SERVICE

A recent report from the Dublin and Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team reports that during 1999 they assisted 58 people who got into difficulties. Amongst those helped were 19 injuries and 2 fatalities, both of those due to cardiac arrest.

The most frequent site of injury recorded was the leg/ankle/knee accounting for 45% of the injuries noted. As a result the treatment most often utilised was splinting. Falling or slipping accounted for over 35% of incidents. Medical reasons and inexperience were the next most likely causes. There were 6 helicopter evacuations of casualties during this period with 10 walkouts and 6 stretcher carries. The total number of man hours was over 2,500 excluding training. As one would expect 70% of incidents occurred over the weekend. Spring and early summer were the busiest periods for the service.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of this highly trained voluntary service for their commitment to all hill walkers and mountaineers. It is very reassuring for Trekkers to know this skill is available when needed.

Jack Langan



ON THE TREK

An Interview with Jack Langan by Monty Tinsley

Recently I spent some time talking to the oldest member of our group, Jack Langan, who will shortly celebrate his 80th birthday. The following could be a recipe for healthy living.

MT I know you were one of the first trekkers. How did this happen?

JL Well in 1982 Shaun Trant had just finished being leader of the Sea Scouts and he asked Terry O'Brien, Ronnie O'Sullivan and myself who were all involved with the sea scouts would we like to go on a mountain walk. We said "yes" and we climbed Doujce on a wild, wet and windy November day. I was so wet that I couldn't even sit down in the pub. A hot whiskey went down quickly but it was quite a while before I came back to normal.

MT You obviously did not have your wet gear with you.

JL Our clothes were completely wrong for the weather, but it did not deter us from continuing our walks – with better gear of course. I think I was on 80 of the first 100 walks. By then of course many more people had joined us including Paddy O'Duffy, Kevin Beegan and Charlie Ryan.

MT What was your most memorable walk?

JL Without doubt, the 32 mile trek on the Bangor Trail from Bellmullet to Newport on a very hot summers day in 1990.

JL *It took us 11 hours and we would have been badly dehydrated except for all the water we drank from local streams. We discovered, the hard way, the necessity of having water with you at all times.*

MT You were definitely very fit and capable of doing long walks, did you ever do a night walk?

JL *No, but I nearly completed the Lug Walk once. This walk which crosses 19 mountains, ascending 8000 ft, normally takes 15 hours. We started at 4-45am and we had to encounter wind and rain, whereas at sea level the day was glorious. However at the Wicklow Gap, after 25 of the 33 miles I was exhausted and for safety reasons I had to abandon the walk. Shaun Trant and Sean Pender finished it.*

MT Well Jack, you must have recovered because it did not dampen your spirits whatever about your clothes.

JL *It certainly did not and we often did the Wicklow Way (25 miles) on the trot, sometimes starting at Marley Park and sometimes ending there.*

MT What about trips outside the country?

JL *Yes, over the years I have taken part in a number of organised walking trips all of which were very different and very enjoyable.*

MT Where did they take you?

JL *Well I have walked in France (Alps), Greece, Israel, Italy (Tuscany), Morocco (Atlas Mts), Tibet (Himalayas) and Spain.*

MT That is quite an extensive list, could you pick one or two highlights from it?

JL *From a mountaineering point of view I would mention the highest mountain in Spain, Mt Mulhacen (11,420ft.) in the Sierra Nevada Range, where we were lucky enough to see an ibex in its natural habitat and of course the 23 day trek in the Himalayas. This was on the Annapurna Circuit which took us through the Thorang-La Pass at 17,900 feet and we knew it.*

MT This was certainly some feat for a young man of 70, were you always involved in this form of exercise?

JL *In my younger days I did a lot but not so much while my sons were growing up.*

MT Moving away from the call of the hills, I notice some books here, what kind of reading matter do you like?

JL *I used to read a lot of historical biographies but I find television has made me a bit lazy now in that respect.*

MT Finally Jack, if you had to take three things with you to a desert island what would you choose?

JL *A fishing hook, an axe and a packet of seeds.*

MT The sign of a very practical man. I know you don't climb mountains anymore but long may you continue to enjoy your summer tours and your trips with the Trekkers. We need someone like you to keep us in line.

HARDANGERVIDDA TREK



The image of Norway that many people have is probably one of a cold and unwelcoming place, certainly not somewhere to visit in summer. They would probably be surprised, then, to learn that it can be quite hot at that time, with much more landscape than snow and ice.

In fact, the Hardangervidda plateau in the south is a land of contrasts – a drive through this part of the country reveals densely forested hillsides reflected in deep blue lakes, and, narrow fjords stretching far inland with their steep sides offering breath-taking views of the valleys far below. Then on gaining altitude, the landscape changes to treeless expanses of tundra-like vegetation, and everywhere the evidence of the ice ages that carved out this region thousand of years ago is obvious. Glaciers still inch their way down the mountainsides, and even in the height of summer, large patches of snow, unmelted since the winter, dot the landscape. This is a land of tiny, beautiful wild flowers and berries, of juniper and dwarf willow, and, reindeer, moose and birds of prey. The weather too, is inconstant – intensely hot and sunny periods suddenly give way to completely overcast and misty skies, and the feeling that the rain is never far away.

This is what it was like, near the town of Geilo, a winter ski resort, about halfway between Oslo and Bergen, in first week of August. The Raklidekkan Lodge, a comfortable, wooden building, was our base for six days walking on the plateau. Situated in a forest clearing, at a height of about 900m, it is an ideal place to start exploring the many tracks through the forest. This is sheep-farming country, and Ivar, the owner of our lodge and the leader of our walks, was himself a sheep-farmer, as well as a teacher of English, a local historian and ski instructor.

Under his guidance, we set out each day to walk on the plateau. We visited his summer pastures in a valley called Vedalen, a remote place, with a trout-filled lake, and surrounded by the holdings of other sheep farmers. The peace and silence was remarkable, broken only by the sound of sheep-bells in the pastures. Another day, we walked to the foot of Hallingskarvet, a snow-capped mountain ridge which rises from the plateau and seems to dominate the skyline towards the north and west. We trekked with ease along the tracks, which in winter would be buried in snow up to 1m thick, but were now carpeted with wildflowers.

A coach trip around mid-week brought us further west to the Voringfoss Waterfall, which plunges about 280m into a narrow gorge. Further along, we stopped at Eidfjord, a town situated on the Hardangerfjord, and from there, drove up through a mountain tunnel to Kjasen, a farm situated at a height of 530m, overlooking the fjord. This farm has been constantly occupied since the year 1300. Although the weather was misty on that visit, the views over the fjord in good weather would have been spectacular.

Other days' walking gave us the opportunity to see traditional Norwegian houses, with their curious grass-covered roofs; to learn how to walk across snow-fields without slipping (easier said than done) and to identify the many unusual wild flowers and berries all round us.

This was a trip I would certainly love to repeat, if only for the beauty of the landscape and the variety of scenery to be found in relatively small area.

Carol Behan

Raklidekkan Lodge



Typical Grass Roofed House



A SENSE OF PLACE

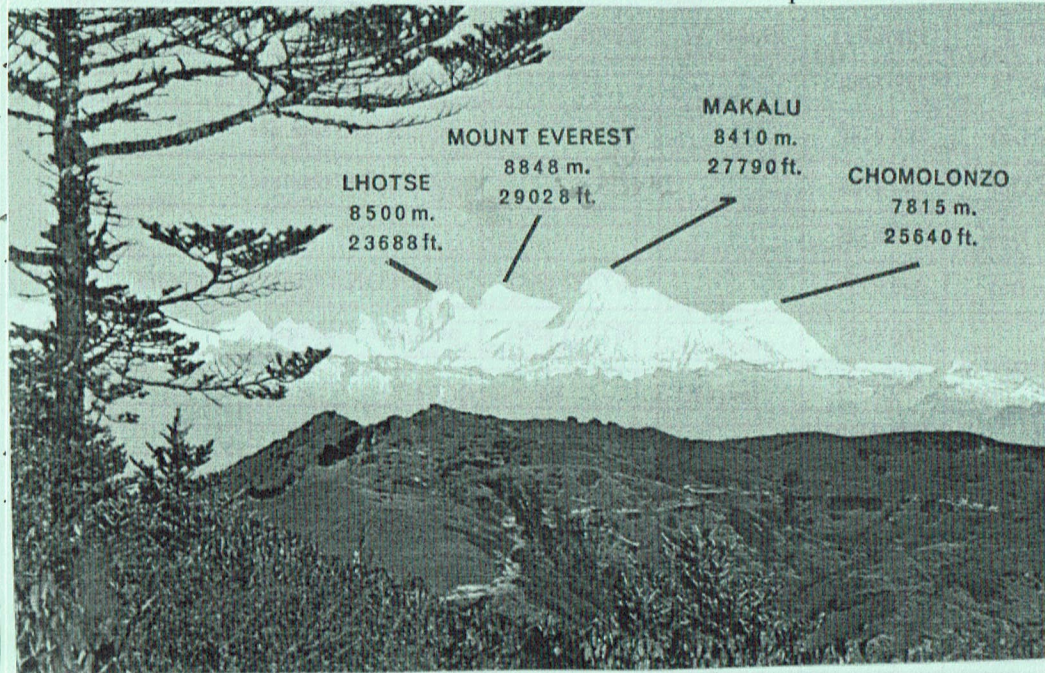
The importance of knowing where one is when out in the mountains cannot be over stressed and where exactly one is, is even more important, particularly if the visibility is not good. Recently John Furey gave a very interesting theoretical and practical course on navigation to 17 club members. The first session was held in the Killiney Court Hotel and the second on Trooperstown Hill.

John explained how to read the details on a map so that from a single flat sheet of paper the landscape can be imagined with accuracy thus helping to visualise the rise and fall of the land as well as the different types of terrain.. He also gave us an example of a route card so that a time prediction can be made when planning a walk. Finally he explained the value of a compass and how to use it so that one can get from A to B with faith rather than hope.

The field manoeuvres were designed to put all this into practise and for 4 hours on the exposed hillside on a very wet and windy day 4 teams were put through their paces. At the end of the course everybody felt more knowledgeable and confident that in spite of the lack of obvious landmarks they could achieve a sense of place.

Thanks John for your time and patience and very practical handout. Now it is up to us to practise what we have learnt.

Scenes that Liam Walsh saw on his recent trip to India



Madras Hotel (**** Star????)

Note the mode of transport and the cows (Sacred Animal) about to enter the Surrat Hotel



Trekkers Walks Programme January to April 2001

DATE	Grade	Leader	2 nd Leader	3 rd Leader
6 th Jan	B	M.Tinsley	C. Brandon	J. Brandon
13 th Jan	A	C. Behan	P.Owens	B. Bracken
13 th Jan	C	J. Needham	M. Beegan	H. Fitzpatrick
27 th Jan	B	K. Moore	E. Gallagher	G. Fogarty
3 rd Feb	B	M. Dorgan	C. Dorgan	C. Stephens
10 th Feb	A	W. Hannon	C. McHale	F. Mulloy
10 th Feb	C	C. Brandon	C. Mangan	I. McCraith
17 th Feb	B	M. Sims	Ml. Sims	R. Doyle
24 th Feb	C	P.O'Duffy	M.O'Duffy	R. Halpenny
3 rd Mar	B	E. Logan	N.O'Reilly	G. Barry
10 th Mar	A	D. Kirker	J. Murphy	M. Tinsley
10 th Mar	C	C. Dorgan	M. Dorgan	M. Delaney
24 th Mar	ABC	AWAY	OVERNIGHT	
31 st Mar	B	Ml. Sims	R. Kirker	I. Lawton
7 th Apr	A	J. Furey	T. Gillen	D. Kirker
7 th Apr	C	R. Halpenny	M. Berthiaume	T. Tuthill
21 st Apr	B	B. Bracken	T. Murray	M. Murray
28 th	C	L. Walsh	M. Goff	A. Keegan

All wishing to walk must contact the Leader by Tuesday before the walk.

There may be a standby list after the buses have been ordered.

Basic First Aid Skills

What to do in the event of Ankle Injuries.

Over 70% of injuries dealt with by Mountain Rescue teams are lower leg injuries and the majority of these involve ankles. So how do you assess these injuries?

- 1 Apply basic first aid – check Airway, Breathing and Circulation (major bleeding). Control if necessary before proceeding. Do not concentrate on the ankle just because it hurts.
- 2 Check for other injuries. For example the patient may have injured their arm or collar bone when falling onto an outstretched hand.
- 3 Remove both boots. Let the patient take off the one on the injured foot; they will cause themselves less pain. Do not worry about getting the boots back on again. If the ankle swells up that quickly the patient will not be walking anywhere. In general fractures and ligament injuries will swell rapidly, while sprains take 12-24 hours. Examine the feet by comparing one with the other, feel and look. When finished, put the boots back on or wrap the feet with a spare jacket, boots provide warmth as well as support.
- 4 Serious injuries tend to be tender; that is, they hurt more when 'poked'. There may be sensitive spots, which should be noted and reported. Sprains tend to maintain the same level of pain when handled (gently).
- 5 Check for movement and feeling in the toes, foot and ankle. Compare both feet. If possible shield from the patients sight while doing this test. Comparison between good & bad is a powerful diagnostic tool.
- 6 Check circulation. Pulses in the feet are difficult to find-even for experts. Test by pressing a toenail on each foot simultaneously and checking to see if the colour returns at the same rate – slow return means impaired circulation. Doing this avoids errors due to cold feet.
- 7 If the injured foot has impaired circulation, poor feeling or reduced movement, then try to move the foot back gently to its normal position – in so far as the patient will let you.
- 8 If necessary splint the foot. Soft padding or placing on a folded jacket is sufficient – hard splints are uncomfortable if you have to wait around for assistance. Tie both feet together for support
- 9 Control minor bleeding if necessary.
- 10 If in any doubt, get help to move the patient. Considerable additional damage can be done by walking on an injured ankle or foot. This damage may lead to permanent impaired use of the foot or ankle. Why take chances?

Gerry Butler WEMT, DWMRT Secretary.

Expoloring the Mourne Countryside

~~~~~  
*Wet, Wild and Windy as the October Bank Holiday weekend was it did not take from the grandeur of the Mourne Mountains, in fact it probably enhanced them. With Slieve Donard towering like a sentinel 850 metres over the coastal town of Newcastle, and holding back the granite range sweeping down to the sea, this seaside resort is well protected from westerly winds. Needless to say the town was not quite as busy at the end of autumn as it would be in mid summer when all the local caravan parks are full, but there was still plenty activity.*

*Evelyn & I arrived on the Friday afternoon – a glorious day – and took the scenic coastal route from Rostrevor via Kilkeel and Annaong. The sea was lapping the shoreline, no telltale signs of things to come, and the landscape was bathed in sunshine. That night Slieve Donard stood out in high relief against a star studded sky. It was indeed the calm before the storm because for the next 36 hours the highest mountain in Ulster and the surrounding peaks were enveloped by a thick blanket of rain dispersing clouds.*

*On the outskirts of Newcastle is the 500 hectares of Tullymore Forest Park, a beauty to behold, and clad in our wet gear we set off on a 5 mile trek. However the sheets of rain pierced the canopy of trees and the only beneficiaries were the rivers Shimna and Spinkwee whose waters deepened and broadened on their way to the sea, now bedecked with white horses. In spite of our now very wet gear we could still appreciate the mixture of autumnal colours that met our eyes from tree tops to ground level. But a quick shower and a change of clothes soon became a priority.*

*Sunday whilst being windy was not as wet so we headed for granite land to view the rugged landscape of Slieve Binnian, Slivelamagan, Slieve Corragh, Slieve Loughshannagh and Slieve Muck, all of which encompass the Silent Valley Reservoir. This amazing feat of engineering started in 1902, was developed in two major phases to capture the water from the surrounding mountains and supply it to Belfast and towns of the County Down. As I looked at the Ben Crom Dam (height 706 ft) holding back some 1700 million gallons of water in the upper reservoir, I thought of the Dambusters film and the damage that could be done if these walls were pierced.*

*The area is full of fascinating names like Brandy Pad, Hares Gap and Bloody Bridge which demand exploring as well as Hen, Cock, Pigeon and Eagle Mountains, but that is for another day.*

*The final place of natural beauty we sought was Murlough Nature Reserve situated on a peninsula in Dundrum Bay. It was full of interesting flora and fauna as well as attracting a wide variety of birds and colonies of seals.*

*Meeting nice people and partaking of good food and fine wine made the weekend extremely enjoyable like the Maam Turks in Galway, the MacGillycuddy Reeks in Kerry the Mourne countryside calls you back. So will you join us there next spring for a weekend away.*

*Monty Tinsley.*

## Cultural Tour of Andalusia

*October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2000 dawned bright and cool. Heading towards the Airport I felt excited and a little bit apprehensive – the latter because I had just discovered that there would be quite a lot of walking involved in the tour and I am certainly not a TREKKER!*

### Ronda/Seville

*Having spent the night near Malaga, our first stop was Ronda – famous for a deep gorge, between 600 and 1,000 feet deep, which divides the town in two. The view from the bridge which spans the gorge was breathtaking. I saw some intrepid souls walking down the steep slope to the bottom of the ravine and could picture the Trekkers rushing down and up again in their usual carefree manner.*

*Seville was our next port - of - call and we were spending 2 nights there. We were brought on a walking tour of the Cathedral, the Alcazar and the Jewish Quarter. The Cathedral is the third largest in the world. The ornate altars, the magnificence of the architecture and the overall air of wealth and opulence, while impressive, was for me a turn-off.*

*The Alcazar Palace was a most impressive building – its simplicity in stark contrast with the grandeur of the Cathedral. I could have spent hours in the gardens – their beauty and magnificence impressed even my non-gardener soul. In the afternoon we took a trip down the Guadalquivir River and saw the many pavilions which Spanish speaking nations had built for the 1929 Hispano-American Exhibition. Many of these are still in use. We could not leave Seville without seeing the Flamenco – Romany Gypsy dancing and singing at its best.*

## Cordoba

*On Wednesday we set out for Cordoba. What struck me as we drove along was the endless miles of open, unfenced land, including 1 ½ million Olive trees, with not a house in sight. Already I was beginning to miss our "forty shades of green".*

*Of the 3 major cities which we visited, Cordoba was, for me the most fascinating. I loved the narrow, cobbled streets, the sense of history and mystery which emanated from the old Jewish part of town. The breathtakingly beautiful Cathedral is still known as the Mezquits – for that was what it originally was, a Mosque. The building dates back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century and its roof is supported by 850 columns. A Christian sanctuary has been built in the centre of these columns but the superbly decorated Mihrab (the niche facing Mecca) still remains in its original state. Moorish architecture may never depict any living thing (human, animal or plant) in its decoration – it uses geometrical shapes and Arabic writing (normally quotes from the Koran) instead. There was so much to see and do that our time was, alas, too short.*

## Granada

*Our final destination was Granada. My first impression was of factories, high-rise flats and endless construction sites – all symbols of our modern world. Dominating it all was the Alhambra and snow topped Sierra Nevada to the east. The Alhambra Moorish architecture at its best. We spent 2 ½ hours on our tour and this was not nearly long enough, but with 8,000 visitors every day, we had to keep moving all the time to make way for others. On Saturday we visited the centre of the city. Here we saw the Cathedral and the market area. I had great craic bargaining with the stall owners and knocking the price of items down to half the original asking price. They had no English and we had no Spanish but this did not hinder communications at all.*

## CONCLUSION

*The week was hectic – so much to see & do & so little time. However it was a rewarding and memorable week nonetheless. There are so many aspects of Spain & Andalusia which we experienced – amongst them were the bars (with & without tapas), our group (almost as welcoming as the Trekkers), the weather and of course, the wine! But I have run out of superlatives. I arrived home exhausted and sore-footed but with a real sense of achievement.... I'll be back.*

*Dympna Moore*

## Dympna Moore



Feeding wild life in Seville

**DO'S AND DON'TS FOR A  
SAFE DAY  
IN THE HILLS**

**The Dublin & Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team would like to make some recommendations to hill walkers & climbers to help ensure their safety:**

- Don't rely on a mobile phone to get you out of trouble;**
- Advise somebody of your intended route and return time;**
- Carry a map and compass and know how to use them;**
- Do a recognised training course such as mountain skills;**
- Carry a head torch, whistle and spare battery;**
- Ensure you have a survival bag, spare clothes and food for an overnight stay;**
- Wear appropriate footwear with good ankle support;**
- Wear a helmet if scrambling or climbing;**
- Check the weather forecast before you go out;**
- Carry a First Aid kit;**
- If you do get into difficulty, dial 999/112 and request mountain rescue.**

**Already up to the first half of 2000 the teams have responded to 20 incidents. Two of these have involved fatalities.**

**Claire Collins DWMRT Stats Officer  
David Butler DWMRT PRO**

*Bob GAVIN  
780 Mountain View  
Boon  
Co Wicklow*

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FOR MAPS & GUIDEBOOKS**

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

Best wishes,

Barry Dalby, EastWest Mapping, Clonagal, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

Telephone/Fax : 054 7783 email: eastwest@eircom.net



## THE COUNTRY CODE

- ❖ Seachain tine/ Guard against all risks of fire
- ❖ Dún gach geata/ Close all gates
- ❖ Coiméad madraí faoi smacht/ Keep dogs under proper control
- ❖ Lean na cosáin trasna talún/ Keep to paths across farmland
- ❖ Bí curamach le gach fál agus cláí/ Avoid damaging fences, hedges and walls
- ❖ Na fág bruscaí/ Leave no litter
- ❖ Cosain foinsi uisce/ Safeguard water supplies
- ❖ Cosain ainmhithe, plandaí agus crainn/ Protect wildlife, plants and trees
- ❖ Taisteál go mall ar bhóithre na tuaithe/ Drive carefully on country roads
- ❖ Bíodh meas agat ar shaol na tuaithe/ Respect the life of the countryside

ENJOY YOUR WALK!

