

# The Trekker

*June 2000*

*Issue No: 12*

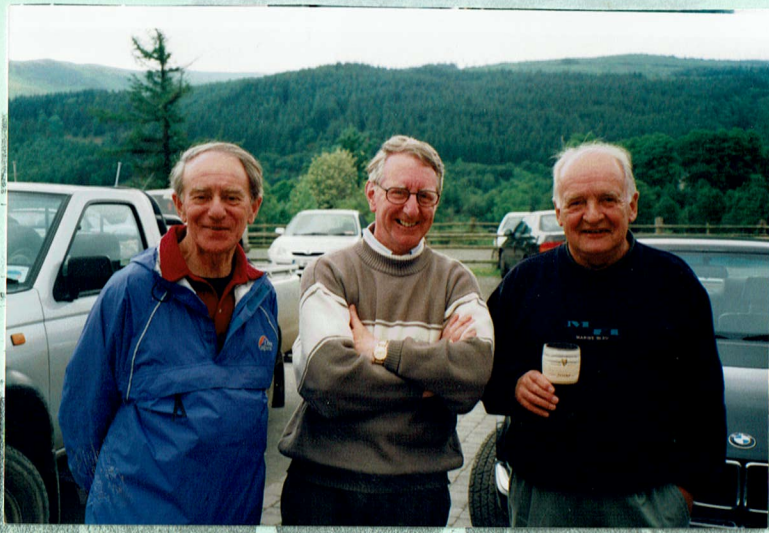


*The Trekkers  
Mountaineering Club,  
Glenageary, Co.Dublin.*





A Walk Amid The Winter Snows



Eugene Logan – Monty Tinsley – Kevin Beegan

## THANKS

*The roots of the Trekkers Mountaineering Club goes back to the early eighties, when Shaun Trant persuaded a small coterie to go for a short walk in the local hills. This they did and the rest is both history and folklore.*

*However the club did not adopt a constitution until 1997 and under Rule 5.3 "No member may serve as an Officer for a term longer than three consecutive years"*

*Therefore at the A.G.M on 21st February 2000, Kevin Beegan, Brian Brennan and Dick Needham stepped down after completing their terms of office. Their involvement with the club predates the constitution, in fact, Kevin joined the Trekkers in 1985 and Brian in 1990.*

*The new committee would like to thank them for all the general work they have done over the years and in particular Dick as Walks Co-ordinator, Brian as Editor of this Journal and to Kevin in his role firstly as Treasurer and latterly as Chairman.*

*It is good to know that they are highly committed to the Trekkers and that their collective wisdom and skills are available to the club.*



## Thoughts on Walk Leadership by L. Walsh

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This article is addressed to members who are new or relatively new to leading walks and to potential leaders which probably encompasses all of you. You find that you have been chosen to lead your first walk. Hitherto you have been coming out on walks, enjoying the mountains, the exercise, the sociability - responsibility lies elsewhere. Now you find that responsibility has been cast upon you

This is not to sound off-putting. You will still enjoy the day and remember that, invariably, there will be experienced members along who will be only too happy to help and give the benefit of their experience when needed.

Naturally however there are a number of things to keep in mind. The following is an effort to cover the basics. The walks are graded A, B or C.

GRADE A - this covers all types of terrain encountered on mountains - including steep climbs and descents, occasional scrambling but excluding rock climbing. Normal time involved six to eight hours.

GRADE B - will normally involve more forest roads and tracks with often a moderate mountain climb. There have been some excellent B walks without any mountain ascent. Normal time is about six hours.

GRADE C - will generally be confined to tracks & forest roads with a little rough on steep ground. Normal time four to five hours.

① A leader should be fit enough for the walk planned and know the route on the ground, not just on the map. This may not be possible of course for our 'away' walks where a different approach to the problem arises. As well as knowing the walk you should be competent to navigate if the weather demands it. You should ensure as far as practicable that there are no avoidable problems lurking (difficult rivers or streams, lack of rights of way). In planning the route, thought should be given to escape routes in case it becomes necessary to shorten the walk. The exit from the mountain terrain towards the end of the walk should be well noted. ⑥

Walk leaders should use any convenient method before the walk to check who will be on the walk and should inform Eugene Logan of the number participating by Tuesday preceding the walk so that transport can be arranged. Phone calls should be shared between the (normally) three leaders.

② Before setting out the leader should be satisfied that everyone is properly equipped. In practice this would mean checking with a newcomer or guest that they have suitable boots and raingear. In this area, too, a leader should be aware of the various competencies in the group. A time might come when a leader might have the unpleasant duty, in the interest of the group as a whole, to decline to take someone insufficiently equipped or not up to the walk involved. This could be crucial in an "A" walk situation.

③ You and every other participant should have a map, compass, torch and whistle. You should also carry a first aid kit or be satisfied that others will have first aid kits along. You should appoint a competent sweeper (often one of the 2 assistant leaders) who will walk at the back to see that the group does not get too strung out. In that event the sweeper uses the whistle to alert the leader and enable the group to come together again. 7c



3 [Keeping the group together is important.] In poor visibility it is imperative. In such circumstances, especially on open mountainside, [the distance between front and back should be shortened sufficiently to ensure that the leader and sweeper are in sight of each other at all times. [The leader should keep continually aware of how the walk is progressing by looking behind every now and then. The leader, not the sweeper has the main responsibility.] If the group does get strung out, in broken ground, say with high rocks or peat hags, the sweeper may lose sight of the leader. In such conditions the leader should keep an eye to the rear to see that regrouping is swiftly done. This linkage cannot be overstated.

In general nobody should pass the leader. However the leader may consider it appropriate from time to time to drop back to see how things are progressing, but always keeping an eye to the front.

On severe climbs the leader may not be the fastest climber and common sense indicates that he or she be bypassed. Anyone bypassing should wait further up and always within sight of the group until everyone can regroup and then after a breather, move upwards.

Normally there will be a lunch break and a shorter break in mid-morning and mid-afternoon. You should call a halt at any time you see fit to allow people to catch up and also if the sweeper signals. The breaks are more important on steep ascents or if someone is having a bad day. The time for breaks should be calculated as part of the plan and particularly in estimating the time of arrival at the finish.

1 - 5 Repeated a No 16

6 - 10 Repeated a No 17  
4

8 If unsure of the exact position reached, bring the group to a halt and, by taking note of the last known position, the terrain since covered and the time since elapsed, make the best estimate of your position on the map. If necessary, consult with experienced members of the group. Use GPS as far as practicable. A stream or forest boundary may be a useful point to note. Having decided on what direction to proceed, estimate the time required to get to the objective. Use the compass on a strict bearing and keep note of the time as you go along. When walking on a compass bearing, it helps concentration to walk ahead on one's own.

4 [In case of accident or illness requiring outside help several things need to be done. Bring the group to a halt. Keep the safety of the group as a whole in mind throughout. Administer first aid in so far as qualified persons are available for the purpose in hand.] Keep the injured person warm and sheltered. Use the mobile phone - dial 999 or 112 asking for Mountain Rescue. Give the exact location including the grid reference and state as best you can the condition of the injured person. Give your phone number and most important stay available for the call back. Give any helpful information about the terrain and the approach route. If a cardiac condition is suspected, the need for a cardiac ambulance should be stated. Circumstances, e.g. weather, oncoming darkness, may indicate that the main body of walkers should get off the mountain. Select who will lead and that a safe route is chosen. Ensure that those who are needed to remain with the injured party have adequate warm clothing, food, phone, torch and whistle.

5 [The distress signal is six blasts of whistle or torch flashes followed by one minutes silence, then repeated.] The answer is three blasts or flashes following a minutes silence, then repeated. If Mountain Rescue cannot be contacted e.g. mobile phone out of range and it is necessary to go for outside help, the party going for help should write down particulars of the location of the accident including the grid reference. [They should aim for the most convenient place where help might be expected, a farm or public road.] It may be found expedient that the group going for help take a different route to the main body who are getting safely off the mountain.



## *A Weekend In Woodenbridge by Michelle Berthiaume*

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*On April 1<sup>st</sup> last, 23 determined Trekkers set out for a weekend in Woodenbridge. The weather forecast called for rain, violent at times, and very cold – it must have been an APRIL'S FOOL'S joke because after a few drizzles the sun came out and stayed with us on both days.*

*We were let loose in the park of Avondale House, family home of Charles Stewart Parnell and now a National Forestry training centre. We walked along Avonmore River amongst century-old trees and were treated to a bit of history by Eugene when we reached the Standing Stone. We left the park and started the 'real' walk, slowly but surely ascending to the Mottee Stone, a large granite stone. Legend has it that the boulder belonged to Finn MacCool and was his hurling stone. Another legend tells, that the large iron staples embedded in the stone were put there by a local landowner as rungs so that his bride could climb to the top and fully appreciate the size of his estate. A few brave ones did climb to the cheers of others and we all enjoyed the view of Howard Castle and the surrounding countryside. We passed an abandoned copper mine on our way to Avoca.*

*In Avoca, Fitzgerald's Pub of course, we met the 'C' walkers who had also gone to the Mottee Stone, but on a shorter walk. After exchanging notes and refreshing ourselves with chips or a glass of something, we went on our last leg of our walk. An easy and agreeable ¾ of an hour walk overlooking the Avoca River where we had time to discuss the latest turns of the Catherine Nevin trial and speculate on the chances of our boys winning the rugby match against the Welsh team played in pouring rain in Dublin. To the cries of "FORE" we crossed the beautiful Woodenbridge Golf Course and reached our hotel where our luggage was waiting.*

*Freshened up and hungry, we gathered for a well-earned dinner and later went to the pub, where an American western singer was playing, but the real treat came when members of the Welsh Choir Group started singing and put a final note to the day.*

*We woke to a beautiful sunny day and, after a late breakfast both groups were ready to embark upon their respective walks. The "A" group lead by Mike Simms headed for Croghan Kinsella and the "C" group, lead by Mike Dorgan headed for Shelton Abbey, which is now an open prison. We walked through the grounds, marvelling at the sculptured façade of the old house & the huge rhododendron in full bloom facing it. We had lunch by a small pond where some fish were jumping to catch insects. The sun was shining, the birds were chirping away and two rabbits were chasing each other in the woods; we felt privileged to be free to enjoy such moments. Nevertheless, we still had to walk back!*

*On our walk that day, we had seen a pheasant farm and later, some 20 dead foxes hung by their tails on a wire fence so that after crossing the golf course, when we stopped to admire a small hut with a beautifully thatched roof on which stood a fox & a pheasant made of reed, it seemed to summarise our day.*

*After an early dinner, it was time to board the bus and say farewell to Woodenbridge and a lovely weekend. Such wonderful outings do not just happen, they are planned & researched in advance & require lots of work & dedication. Thank you Eugene, the leaders of the walks & everyone who helped make this weekend a success.*





Joan Needham , Nancy Boyne,  
Noel O'Rielly & Kevin Beegan

### Social and Personal

Congratulations to Dick Needham and Paddy O'Duffy who recently joined an elite band of retirees.

They are now available for the Wednesday - Pathfinders Group.

Congratulations also to Bill Hannon who acquired three grandchildren, Louis in Castlebar, William and Natalia in Madrid.

We welcome Ita McCraith, Pauline Brennan, Marian Goff and John Murphy who have joined the Trekkers in the last six months.

### Trekkers Around The World

We note that during the last six months Fergal Mulloy has been crossing the Arctic Circle whilst Derry O'Hegarty visited the Antipodes and in between Bill Hannon has been in the Lake District, this we hear was a practice run for another of his Alpine expeditions during the summer.



# The Trekkers Mountaineering Club

## Trekkers Walk Programme From July 2000 To December 2000

Date	Grade	1 <sup>ST</sup> Leader		2 <sup>ND</sup> Leader		3 <sup>RD</sup> Leader		Route
8 <sup>th</sup> July	B	David Kirker	282 0971	Ronnie Doyle	284 1787	Philip Owens	285 0435	
22 <sup>nd</sup> July	A	John Furey	289 3045	Michael Condon	289 3258	Monty Tinsley	285 2126	
	C	Brian Brennan	285 5700	David Brennan	285 5700	Evelyn Tinsley	285 2126	
12 <sup>th</sup> August	ABC	Dick Needham	284 9571	Michelle Berthiaume	284 9908	Noel O'Reilly	280 9929	Coastal Walk
26 <sup>th</sup> August	A	Michael Sims	285 4568	Liam Walsh	298 2042	Eileen Gallagher	285 5162	
	C	Clare Brandon	285 9563	Ita Mc Craith	284 1661	Clare Stephens	285 9026	
9 <sup>th</sup> September	A	Kevin Moore	285 6592	Carol Behan	280 5610	Cindy Mangan	285 2668	Art's X, Firrib, Glenmalure.
	C	Colette Dorgan	285 8170	Ita Lawton	285 1675	Marie Beegan	285 1698	
23 <sup>rd</sup> September	C	Eugene Logan	285 2548	Reggie Halpenny	285 5976	Anette Keegan	285 4682	Derrybawn, Glendalough
30 <sup>th</sup> September	B	Liam Walsh	298 2042	Michael Dorgan	285 8170	Fergal Mulloy	285 5614	
7 <sup>th</sup> October	A	George Barry	285 4906	Tom Gillan	298 5377	Bill Hannon	284 7095	
	C	Henry Jack	285 2955	Hilary Fitzpatrick	285 6502	Tony Tuthill	285 4283	
14 <sup>th</sup> October	B	Monty Tinsley	285 2126	Philip Owens	285 0435	Nancy Boyne	269 3984	Laragh - Glenealy
4 <sup>th</sup> November	B	Derry O' Hegarty	280 8335	Fergal Mulloy	285 5614	Brendan Bracken	285 7914	
18 <sup>th</sup> November	A	John Furey	289 3045	Dick Needham	284 9571	Kevin Moore	285 6592	
	C	Cindy Mangan	285 2668	Ronnie Doyle	284 1787	Clare Brandon	285 9563	
2 <sup>nd</sup> December	B	Brian Brennan	285 5700	Michael Dorgan	285 8170	Colette Dorgan	285 8170	
9 <sup>th</sup> December	A	Maeve Sims	285 4568	Michael Sims	285 4568	Carol Behan	280 5610	
	C	Dick Ryan	285 3960	Joan Needham	284 9571	Maura Byrne	282 0553	
27 <sup>th</sup> December	ABC	Eugene Logan	285 2548	Eileen Gallagher	285 5162	<i>Note Start Time **10-00am**</i>		Christmas Walk

Walk Leaders should advise Bus Numbers to Eugene Logan (285 2548) by Tuesday Evening at Latest  
(Months of July & August to Eileen Gallagher 285 5162)



## MAP READING SKILLS

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*IT IS PROPOSED TO HAVE A TWO-PART SESSION ON MAP READING SKILLS AND NAVIGATION IN THE AUTUMN.*

*THE FIRST PART WILL BE AN EVENING SESSION WHILST THE SECOND WILL BE A FIELD EXERCISE.*

*ALL MEMBERS SHOULD AVAIL OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN OR RELEARN THEIR BASIC KNOWLEDGE.*

*GETTING HOME SAFE AND QUICKLY IS ESSENTIAL TO A GOOD DAYS HIKE.*

*FOR THE MORE ADVENTUROUS – TIGLIN IN ASHFORD, CO. WICKLOW OFFERS A RANGE OF COURSES– MOUNTAIN SKILLS, ROCK-CLIMBING AND MOUNTAIN LEADERSHIP. ALSO WINTER WALKING IN SCOTLAND AND THE ALPINE REGIONS OF FRANCE AND ITALY.*

*FOR FULLER DETAILS OF THESE COURSES AND OTHER ONES CONTACT TIGLIN TEL: 0404 40169*



Springtime on top of the Brockagh



## *They're Just Not Tough Enough*

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*One night while watching television, Joan Needham asked husband Dick "was it correct that he was leading the next "C" walk on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> February". "Yes" said Dick "and this walk will be different to any other "C" walk. "You see Joan" said Dick "the "C" walkers are just not tough enough, they need a challenge"*

*And so it came to pass that twenty two unfortunates arrived at the bottom of Turlough Hill for the beginning of the walk. It looked very promising, weather wise, it was pouring rain and a good stiff gale was blowing.*

*Reaching the top of the hill the weather had changed for the better, it was now snowing. Being a considerate man, Dick called a lunch break. We huddled in a hollow, had our lunch and Dick Ryan outlined how the Power Stations inside the mountain operate.*

*"Where do we go from here" someone enquired.*

*"Oh just across those peat hags and up the summit of Comaderry Mountain" said Dick.*

*This was when the fun really began. The weather got better, gales, sleet, snow, rain, sunshine, in fact everything. The happy group sank, slid, fell and generally became covered in liquid peat and mud.*

*"have we much further to go" asked an exhausted soul from the rear. "Ah no" said Dick, as they struggled to the the summit of Comaderry. And there it was away down down below in the distance, Glendalough.*

*It was all downhill and some of us slid down faster than others, on our backs in fact.*

*Meanwhile in Glendalough the 'A' Team had arrived at the hotel having completed a simple little climb over Tonlegee Mountain. "Where's the 'C' Team" they wondered? No one knew. Soon our bus arrived to take us home. We still had not yet finished, "Better get the bus driver to drive up the valley" suggested Eugene Logan, "they could do with a lift to the hotel".*

*We had now reached the road and were on the way back to the hotel when the bus appeared, "Do you want a lift" asked the bus driver. "Nonsense" we replied, "we'll finish the walk as planned".*

*Dick smiled quietly to himself, "They're tough enough now alright".*

*B. Brennan*





Carol Behan – Eileen Gallagher – Ronnie Doyle

## THE FORGOTTEN CONTINENT

The World's ten top hiking trails are generally recognised to be in Europe (4) Africa, India, North & South America and New Zealand. Not one is in Australia, a region undisturbed by geological upheaval for millions of years. Yet Australia has some very interesting areas which Irish hill walkers would find congenial. Allowance must be made for climate; only 1% of the population lives above an east /west line from the northern suburbs of Sydney to North Perth, approximately 32 degrees South. In addition there are some unfriendly native species which include 11 of the most poisonous snakes in the world and nasty spiders such as Redback and the Sydney Funnel spider whose bites can kill a human in minutes.

However in visiting Australia I have learned of (but not experienced) some interesting areas for hikers. The States to consider are New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia.

In New South Wales there are many hiking areas in the mountains which run north/ south about forty miles from the coast. The most accessible are those in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney, easily reached by train. In southern N.S.W. in the Snowy Mountains are plenty of opportunities for the more adventurous. All hiking requires careful preparation and close liaison with the Rangers and Emergency Services. Periods of high fire danger are always well sign-posted and are strictly "no-go".

In Victoria similar conditions exist but opportunities are more limited ( I am not considering long range expeditions).



South Australia is 85% barren but the area east of Adelaide is very attractive in the Mount Lofty Ranges. Further north the Flinder Range (one of the oldest mountains ranges in the world) stretches for 500 km and has very attractive hiking areas for bush walkers.

Western Australia is a state which occupies almost one third of of the continent and is largely desert but parts are very attractive. In the extreme south west corner around Bunbury and Albany is an extremely interesting area and one which I would put at the top of the list. It is only about 250km north of Perth, which is only 4 ½ hours by air from Singapore. Bunbury on the west coast, 180km from Perth is said to have the most ideal climate in the world. Donnybrook is only 36km to the south east. The famous Bibbulmun Track which stretches for 950km has recently been upgraded – there are camping grounds spaced roughly a days walk apart. The newer sites have huts sleeping 8 – 12 people with rainwater tanks, bush toilets, tables and tent sites. The south west area has biological diversity equal to that found in Tropical Rain Forests and from August to October is a wonderland of blooming flowers and rare plants.

Derry O'Hegarty.

STOP PRESS :

Go to: <http://indigo.ie/~behant>  
for extra information on the  
Trekking Mountaineering Club.

## Thoughts from Finland

Fergal Mulloy - April 2000

If seven maids with seven mops  
swept for half a year  
"Do you suppose" the walrus said  
"they would get it all clear"  
"I doubt it" said the carpenter  
and shed a bitter tear.

Lewis Carroll was not talking about Dublin's litter I know, but the snows of Joensuu could have been in his thoughts. "Where in the name of God is Joensuu" I hear you ask. Get out a map of Finland and look for Helsinki and, like Paddy Reilly giving instructions to Ballyjamesduff, stop halfway to the Arctic Circle. There you will find it I know sure enough because it is a city about the size of Waterford. Five kilometres north east of Helsinki, it is near the Russian border in the province of North Karelia.

Joensuu is a university city with beautiful lakes, rivers, a friendly people and of course forests. It is a highly motivated society with no shortage of parks and ski tracks. Like most of Finland, it is a little short on hills, mountains and open country. It has plenty of turf bogs however, the product of which heat the city homes and offices, so too does the rubbish I am told. Joensuu has been my other home since November, when I arrived here to work at the European Forest Institute (a research institute). I am filling in for somebody who got another job in a relatively tropical city of Beijing. Although staffed mostly by Finns, it has a healthy mixture of other Europeans including this particular Irishman.

Forestry is of course a big business in Finland with over 60% of the land area under forest (Ireland is now 9%). If forestry is big business here so too is science and technology. There is an extraordinary appreciation of the value of research and the pursuit of knowledge throughout all areas of society, a visit to the city library will tell you that.

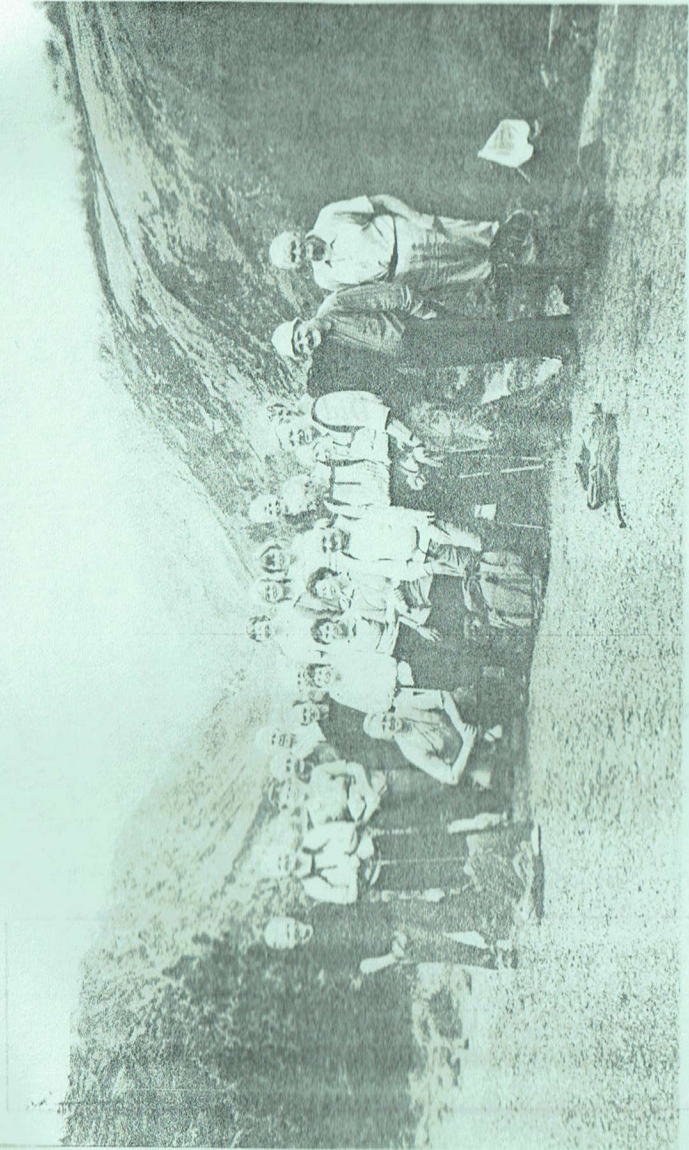


Finland has become a knowledge – based society, spending a higher proportion of its GNP on research than any other country in the EU. It is that thirst for excellence that made NOKIA the global company it is. Formally a sawmill, NOKIA is now the largest company in Europe. Hence research, education and the transfer of knowledge to users is big business in Joensuu. In particular it takes pride in the fact that it has become a prime forest research centre in Europe.

Since I arrived here in November, apart from the past week, there has been snow on the ground – the lakes are still frozen. The seasons fall of snow I am told, was greater than normal. Nearly 2 metres fell during winter, all of which remained on the ground below and the air above was below zero. The temperatures I was assured were not particularly low this year. It only went to minus 25 for a week or two!!

I experienced every one of those degrees, particularly standing at the pedestrian lights with other Finns waiting for the little green man to appear with not a vehicle in sight. Daily, even after a few millimetres of snow, sweepers were out on every footpath, road and cycle track making brisk walks invigorating, if not a little hazardous without crampons, particularly when it is either plus zero or minus zero! Finland is the only place where there is a difference between the two. The vision of cigarette butts emerging from the snow outside the local supermarket as it thawed is a study in itself. Just think, a butt thrown in November emerges a week after a butt thrown in March. In the same way the grit dispersed in November is the last to be swept away.

Unlike seven maids, a half a years sweeping did not make it clear and not a bitter tear in sight. So now for Spring and the explosion of leaf!



Glendalough on a Summers Day Walk





## *Special Features Inside*

- ◇ *How The "C" Team Did An "A" Walk*
- ◇ *Thoughts On Walk Leadership*
  
- ◇ *An April Fool In Woodenbridge*
- ◇ *Walks Programme July - December*

THE EDITOR WISHES TO THANK ALL  
CONTRIBUTORS TO THE EDITION AND  
WANTS MORE FOR THE NEXT ONE

