

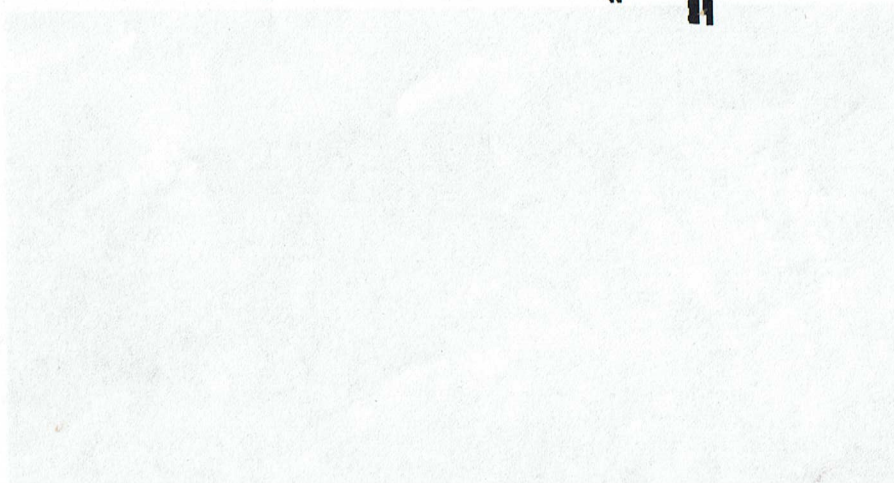
1997 has been a special year for the "Trekker". A number of milestones have been reached. In April we held our first trip devoted with a weekend in Snowdonia, during November in various weather. Another record was set when we held three walks on the same day to the Conwy mountains and both on Saturday September 20th we walked to the summit of Snowdon and on Sunday September 21st we walked to the summit of Snowdonia.

The Trekker

The opening of the two hundredth walk was marked with a meet in the Gloddaethau Hall. Everyone attended, except for the "A" walk, twenty one for the "C" walk and for a number who came especially for the meet.

At the end of the meet Stuart Xieut produced a booklet detailing the history of the Trekker up to the present. It speaks on the fellowship of the club, the commitment of the members to walking the "Trek" and the love of the outdoors.

The history of the "Trekker" is now being written and is being compiled by Stuart and contains excellent colour photographs.



The Two Hundredth Walk

It was almost inevitable that our two hundredth walk would include climbing Lugnaquilla, the mountain which was central to those two hundred walks. In excellent climbing weather - high cloud, good visibility, cool with sunny spells and some light rain - a group of twenty five, led by Fergal, started and finished the climb.

Two buses brought us to the upper car park in Glenmalure. From there we walked the green road, which had been built for mining in this area, to join a forest road higher up. We crossed the river at the entrance to the Fraughan Rock Glen and climbed steeply to Art's Lough. From the lake, with the ground rising ever more steeply, we climbed on to the Cloghernagh Ridge and had lunch in the lee of a turf bank. We followed the gently rising ridge along the edge of the South Prison to the summit of Lug.

The return from Lug was initially along the Cannow Ridge, then an abrupt drop to the cliffs of Benleagh on the north-western rim of the Fraughan Rock Glen. In the clear air the view from the cliffs over the sheer plunge to the Glen and across to Art's Lough and the outlying spurs of Lugnaquilla was spectacular and more evocative of the Bens in Connemara than of the rounded summits of Wicklow.

A rough path brought us down to the forest and back by the miners' road to Glenmalure car park where Tony's buses were waiting to bring us to Glendalough.

"C" WALK

While the main body of walkers were climbing "Lug" a second group led by Kevin Beegan and Brian Brennan set out on a "C" walk.

Of the twenty one present nine went with Kevin and the rest with Brian. As Kevin had to go to Glendalough to leave luggage at the hotel the second group commenced walking from Oldbridge. The two groups later joined together on Paddock Hill and walked to Laragh where we had a coffee break.

The walk resumed and went by the side of Derrybawn House to the green road. Here the group split again, Kevin leading a small party to Glendalough and the rest going higher up Derrybawn to take in the view of the lakes. Having walked over towards the Spink we came down by the side of the Waterfall to Glendalough. All in all a very pleasant days walking.

MOUNTAIN HYPOTHERMIA

(from the British Mountaineering Council Pamphlet)

What is Mountain Hypothermia?

The modern term mountain hypothermia has been adopted throughout this pamphlet although the term "exposure" has been used to describe this condition for many years. However, exposure to adverse climatic conditions is only part of the cause of mountain hypothermia. This exposure may induce excessive heat loss from the body, leading to a progressive fall of body temperature with a risk of death. It is the combination of this factor with fatigue, cold, anxiety and mental stress which is especially dangerous. The elements in this combination will vary greatly with the individual case as will the subject's susceptibility to some or all of these factors. In general it should be emphasised that the risk of death from hypothermia is a real, and often unrecognised, danger among those, particularly the young, undertaking mountain expeditions in bad weather.

CAUSES

Cold Very low air temperatures, as encountered in the Arctic, alone can chill the body sufficiently to induce hypothermia. Air temperatures in Britain generally are not much below freezing and will rarely cause mountain hypothermia without the addition of other factors.

Wet When water saturates clothing, it replaces the entrapped air and reduces the insulation value to one-tenth of normal. Further, when this water evaporates, it takes a considerable amount of heat from the underlying surface.

Wind Wind blowing on a wet surface increases the rate of evaporation of the water and the consequent rate of loss of heat from the underlying surface. The insulating properties of many garments depend on the still air lying within their fabric. Wind, if it can penetrate the garment, will cause rapid replacement of this still air and reduce the insulating properties considerably. Bare heads are especially vulnerable to heat loss in wind. The strenuous effort needed to battle against the wind calls for a much increased energy output and leads to exhaustion.

Exhaustion Subjects suffering from mountain hypothermia in Britain are usually exhausted. As well as being caused by efforts to combat the elements, this exhaustion is frequently contributed to by such factors as lack of fitness and progressive training, over-ambitious planning, too heavy loads and too fast a pace. Lack of sleep and food before and during expeditions are also common factors.

Morale It is difficult to know whether low morale is caused by the hypothermia or contributes to it. However, high morale is certainly beneficial.

Drugs Some drugs taken for psychiatric conditions predispose the patient to hypothermia.

THE EFFECT ON THE HUMAN BODY

From a heat regulating point of view, the body is best regarded as consisting of the core which includes the contents of the skull, chest and abdomen, and the shell

which is the remainder of the body (the limbs, and extremities, skin and underlying fat and muscle), and comprises almost half of it.

Normally the body maintains the core temperature accurately at an average temperature of 37°C (98.6°F), whilst that of the shell is more variable but is generally about 3°C (6°F) lower. When the core temperature rises, more blood is circulated through the skin where it is cooled. This cooling can be increased further by sweating, and then evaporation from the surface. When the core temperature falls, blood circulation to the skin is reduced, there is less cooling of the blood at the surface and the skin looks white and cold to touch. If core temperature cannot be maintained with minimum blood circulation to the skin, then shivering occurs. This is an automatic rippling action of muscle fibres, which can produce as much heat (and as much exhaustion) as fairly heavy manual work. Shivering is a visible indication that the body is cooling.

The preservation of the core temperature is vital for a fall in this leads directly to mental deterioration and loss of muscle co-ordination, and eventually to unconsciousness and death.

PREVENTION

Clothing Ample warm, windproof clothing, including head gear and gloves, should be carried and put on in good time, whilst fully waterproof outer clothing should always be carried, particularly if it is intended to continue an expedition despite the weather. It is wet cold which kills.

Emergency Equipment Extra protection should be carried in the form of 500 gauge 8ft x 4ft plastic bags as a minimum. It is usual to include a sleeping bag, the means of making a bivouac or even a tent in winter, and food and cooking facilities for groups even on one-day expeditions.

Strength and Ability Detailed consideration of the size, strength and composition of parties and careful planning with flexible options is essential. Graded pre-training, sensible pace, reasonable loads for camping expeditions (one-third body weight maximum but not more than 35lbs for young people), and good selection of routes following recognised paths all considerably reduce the danger. Good sleeping arrangements before the expedition and ample energy-giving food both before and during the walk are also important considerations. Above all, confident, sensible leadership, good judgement and the courage to retreat are prime factors in reducing the risk of exhaustion.

Prevailing Conditions Considerations of weather forecasts, observations of weather, cloud and wind changes, the recent conditions of the hills, time of year, and length of day, all combine to make the onset of exposure conditions more predictable.

Awareness of Danger A continual re-appraisal of many of the above factors, and the comparison of rate of progress against distance and time available, will usually allow modification of plans so that the wise party is never subjected to the accumulation of factors which will cause hypothermia.

RECOGNITION

To know when it is feasible to retreat to shelter and to recognise when the case is serious enough to stop and treat, calls for great experience and judgement with continual observation and alertness on the part of the leader. This constitutes the crux of the problem.

Symptoms

These are the factors the potential victim notices:

- a) he may complain of nothing more than the sensation of cold, shivering and discomfort suffered by all the party;
- b) he may complain of cramp in the legs.

Signs

These are the abnormalities the leader looks for and notes. To be aware of these, he needs to know his party. It should be stressed that not all these signs may be noticed and that they may not appear in any fixed order.

- a) inconspicuousness - quietness, apathy, lack of enthusiasm, slowing pace, a pale face always near the end of the line;
- b) slow thinking - does not answer questions, or refer to map when asked; cannot perform tasks well within his level of skill and knowledge; does not react to commands; forgets or ignores things such as gloves, rucksack securing, bootlaces; careless footwork on broken ground;
- c) unexpected behaviour - he may do quite unreasonable things, physically resist help, use violent language or exhibit sudden outbursts of energy;
- d) loss of faculties - the speech may be slurred, vision disturbed, muscle co-ordination may fail causing stumbling and falling;
- e) there may be violent fits of shivering;
- f) loss of consciousness - this is a late and grave stage.

IMMEDIATE TREATMENT

The essential and immediate treatment is to prevent further heat loss by insulating the body and, if possible, removing the causes.

Early Recognition

This allows some or all of the following actions depending on the conditions reached:

- a) loads should be lightened by reallocating or even abandoning non-essential;
- b) direction of route changed downhill and down wind;
- c) more clothing put on such as waterproofs, extra sweaters, down jackets, gaiters, hats and gloves;
- d) shelter can be sought in the lee of a ridge, summit, wall or large boulder;
- e) a bivouac can be made with polythene bags, sleeping bags and tents;
- f) group warmed by huddling together, and a warm companion put into or alongside the sleeping bag, with insulation above and below patient; if possible a stove going in a tent;

g) refuelling with warm drinks and energy-giving food.

The Leader should:

- a) check the rest of the party for symptoms (warm drink and food for them too)'
- b) sound the mountain distress call on whistles and by shouting;
- c) plan the rescue team call-out evacuation;
- d) reassure and cheer the patient and the rest of the party.

Avoid the Use of hot water bottles, rubbing and alcohol. These may cause a sudden surge of core blood to the surface. The return of this blood to the heart, after cooling by the cold outer shell, can be disastrous.

EVACUATION

During the earliest stage of exposure, it may be possible to abandon all previous plans and to retreat, following a sheltered downhill escape route, preferably near easily recognisable features, with the unladen, well dressed, suspect walking. In most cases, however a full rescue operation must be put into action.

1. Semi-conscious or unconscious patients should be laid in a slightly head-down position.
2. Human crutch, pick-a-back type carrying. rope stretchers and makeshift methods which keep hypothermia patient in the head-up position should be avoided.
3. When wet clothing is removed the patient should be moved as little as possible and the head should be kept low.
4. During the stretcher-loading every effort should be made to preserve all the insulation around the patient. Face and mouth should be protected to minimise heat loss whilst allowing breathing.
5. The evacuation should be planned to be as gentle and smooth as possible. Speed is not the prime consideration.

TREATMENT AT BASE

It is assumed that a doctor may be available at base and that any treatment can be directed by him.

1. **Active Rewarming** Patients who reach a valley base with their temperature over 31°C (88°F) usually will survive, whether actively rewarmed or not. This state can be judged clinically as the level when a patient is unconscious but reacting to stimuli. Active external rewarming in a bath of water kept at 45°C (113°F) for twenty minutes can be undertaken safely in these cases. The bath should be filled three-quarters full and the patient laid in it in such a way as to keep the trunk as horizontal as possible with the face out of the water. The correct temperature is one at which an elbow can be kept immersed. Ample extra hot water will be needed to keep the bath near this temperature.

Subsequently, after the body temperature has returned to normal, the patient should be placed in a warm room at 20-21°C (68-70°F). Beware of the patient fainting when getting out of the bath.

1. The rewarming of patients whose temperature is lower than 30°C (86°F) is a very complex medical problem, and **must** be undertaken at a hospital whenever possible. When this is not feasible, allowing the patient to rewarm slowly in a warm room is possibly the safest method available at present.
2. Research is progressing to enable properly trained and equipped rescue teams to actively rewarm patients on the hill.

CONCLUSION

It should be emphasised that it is far better to take the correct steps to avoid cases of hypothermia than to have to treat them. In conditions of cold and wet on the mountains, and especially if there are also strong winds, leaders must keep a very careful watch on their parties for the first signs of cold and exhaustion. With all groups on mountains in poor weather, be they led or unled, it is vital to remember that one of the earliest effects of hypothermia is a dulling of a sufferer's ability to reason clearly, and because of this, by the time hypothermia has started to take effect, it is already too late for that person to do anything about it. It is not uncommon to find people who have died of hypothermia with their salvation literally at hand in that they were carrying food, extra clothing and even tents and sleeping bags in their rucksacks.

There is also evidence to suggest that the people who cope best with adverse circumstances are those who have thought and reflected about them beforehand.

The detection of incipient mountain hypothermia is not easy and throws a great responsibility on leaders in mountains. They must be aware of the causes and prevent them, recognise the early signs and be ready to give immediate treatment, realise when a serious condition is reached and have the confidence and equipment to prevent deterioration in the patient or the rest of the party and finally be able to organise a safe evacuation and ultimate treatment.

The death of a person suffering from hypothermia can be very rapid. He may be walking quite strongly and then, three hours later, be dead. It is better, if possible, to get the party down into more tolerable weather conditions or shelter, and so avoid any serious case of exposure, than to have to stop to treat a victim and so risk having other members of the party succumb.

WICKLOW MOUNTAINS WALKING FESTIVAL

October Bank Holiday Weekend Sat. 25th & Sun. 26th

The whole of County Wicklow is a Walkers' paradise - rolling hills, deep valleys, doomed granite mountains, lake sides, river banks and long sandy beaches - all offer year round opportunity for the active and less energetic ramblers. This weekend is organised by Wicklow County Tourism to give people a choice of some of the walks that are available.

On both days of the Festival there is a choice of three walks. Experienced Guides will lead the groups.

The Festival is also a social occasion and entertainment will be provided in Glenmalure Lodge at the finish of the walks. All walkers will receive a souvenir Map. Certificates will be awarded to participants whose entries are received on or before October 20th.

Walkers are advised to bring with them: Walking boots - essential; A rucksack with a change of clothes; Full waterproofs; A whistle; A lunch pack; you will see beautiful scenery so why not bring a camera too.

THE RULES

1. Meeting place is "Glenmalure Lodge". All participants may check in from 8.30am on both days. Parking available in Glenmalure. Those wishing to travel from Rathdrum by bus must book in advance to ensure a seat (small charge). Bus leaves from Parnell Memorial Park, Rathdrum at 8.45am sharp.
2. Every walker must have submitted an entry form and paid entry fee by October 20th. Late entries will be taken on the day but prebooking will ensure your seat on the coach and your certificate.
3. Everyone must be in possession of a numbered identification card which will be issued at the check in. This card should be handed in at the finishing point.
4. It is forbidden to light matches, fires or discard litter along the route.
5. Dogs are not allowed.
6. Radios are not allowed.
7. Participants aged 16 years or under must be accompanied by an adult who assumes complete liability for them.
8. Walkers should be satisfied that they are fully capable of undertaking their chosen walk.
9. The Committee will not be responsible for any accident however arising.
10. Walkers not resident, but wishing to walk on the day are welcome.

For Further Information Contact:

Wicklow County Tourism,
St. Manntan's House,
Kilmantin Hill, Wicklow.
Tel: 0404 66058 (office hours)

Mary Byrne,
Ballyknocken House,
Glenealy, Co. Wicklow.
Tel: 0404 44696
Fax: 0404 44627

PROGRAMME DAY ONE - Saturday

25km Walk (strenuous with steep ascents): Coach leaves the Car Park at Glenmalure Lodge at 9.30am sharp to Barravore Ford. Walk via Table Track to Lugnaquilla Mountain (925m), where we can enjoy spectacular views. We then proceed to Corrigasleggaun Mountain (794m), via Carrawaystick Mountain back to Glenmalure Lodge.

15km Walk: Coach leaves the Car Park at Glenmalure Lodge at 10.15am sharp to Aughavannagh. We walk via Iron Bridge to Carrickashane Mountain (508m), on to Croaghanmoira Mountain (664m) then to Fananerrin Ridge where we have magnificent views. Forest paths back to Glenmalure Lodge.

10km Walk: Coach leaves the Car Park at Glenmalure Lodge at 11am sharp to beyond Flags Pass. We climb to Croaghanmoira Mountain (664m) then on to the Military Road. We take forest paths back to Glenmalure Lodge.

PROGRAMME DAY TWO - Sunday

20km Walk (strenuous with steep ascents): The coach leaves the Car Park at Glenmalure Lodge for the Wicklow Gap at 9.30am sharp. From Turlough Hill we walk to Lough Firrib, then Conavalla Mountain (734m), on to Lugduff Mountain (652m) and Mullacor Mountain (657m). Return via Ballinafunshoge taking forest paths back to Glenmalure Lodge.

15km Walk: Walk leaves the car park at Glenmalure Lodge at 10.15am sharp for Ballybraid. We climb Kirikee Mountain (474m), where we can enjoy spectacular views, then on to Ballinderry Woods. From there we proceed to Carriglineen Mountain (455m) and return to Glenmalure Lodge.

10km Walk: Coach leaves the car park at Glenmalure Lodge at 11am sharp to Shay Elliot Memorial. We walk to Cullentragh Mountain, then follow the track to Mullacor Mountain (657m). We tack the panoramic walk above Glenmalure Valley back to Glenmalure Lodge.

Festival Entry Fee IR£5 per person per day. Special rate for groups of 10 person or over IR£4 per person per day. Cheques should be made payable to: Mary Byrne (Wicklow County Tourism).

ENTRY FORM

Name: _____ Tel. No. _____
Address: _____ Entry Fee IR£ ____ enclosed

Please indicate your intention:

Day 1	25km Walk	Day 2	25km Walk
	15km Walk		15km Walk
	10km Walk		10km Walk

Cut off and send back with your Entry Fee.

All entry forms received by October 20th will be acknowledged with a copy of the Wicklow Festival Accommodation Guide.

SNOWDONIA - April 1997

On Friday, 11th April, 1997 we departed on the 6.40am Stena HSS from Dun Laoghaire - bound for Holyhead. There was a total of 33 people. We had a very calm, flat crossing and we hardly noticed the time passing.

We were brought from Holyhead to Llanberis by coach to the Royal Victoria Hotel - a large, old-world, extended hotel just above the village. We explored the village, had lunch in the Weavers Shop after which we had a few hours' walk around Lake Padern. The scenery was beautiful and we were blessed with wonderful weather.

Shaun, John Furey and David Kirker climbed Snowdon that afternoon by the Pyg Track in order to scout out any tracks which might prove to be difficult or dangerous for the big walk the following day.

On Saturday, the main group climbed Snowdon by the Miners Track and back by the Llanberis Track. The weather conditions were again ideal.

Kevin, Brian Brennan, Maria and Joan took the train to Rocky Valley station and from there climbed Snowdon. Annette, Marian Beegan and Marian McKean took the train also and walked back from Rocky Valley. Nancy went with her daughter and climbed to the summit from the train. As Agnes was suffering from a sore heel from Friday's walk, Jack and I went with her to Caernarfon and then to Bangor by bus and enjoyed the day sightseeing.

In the evening, a great night was had at the Prince of Wales pub listening to a Welsh choir.

On Sunday, we left by coach for the 13.30 boat, arriving in Dun Laoghaire at 15.30. It was a most enjoyable weekend - weather was great, scenery magnificent. A special tribute to Dick for organising it and looking after us for the weekend.



Eileen Trant

TOM CREAN - ANTARCTIC EXPLORER

Tom Crean was born in Annascaul in 1877 in Gurtacurrane. He enlisted in the Royal Navy in 1893 when he left Minard aboard a cargo ship sailing to Cobh in Co. Cork and then onto England. In 1901 Commander Robert Scott called into New Zealand to refit his ship Discovery and replenish his crew. Crean volunteered to join and was accepted as a crew member of Scott's expedition which was then en route to Antarctica. Crean's good fortune in joining Discovery is generally attributed directly to the death of a young seaman, Bonner, who fell to his death from the top of the main-mast. Though his name appeared rarely in Discovery expedition records, Crean obviously proved himself adaptable to Antarctic conditions, and made his mark with Scott. He was a strong sledger, a hard worker, and a cheerful companion. This was the first of three major epic expeditions in which Crean would partake. Crean joined the British Antarctic Expedition of 1910-1913 in May 1910 as a seaman in the Terra Nova. In this expedition he achieved greater prominence. Following this journey, Crean was awarded the Albert Medal for life for his role in rescuing Evans and Lashly.

In recognition of his contributions to the Terra Nova expedition, Crean was once again promoted, this time to Chief Petty Officer. This promotion was antedated to 9 September, 1910.

In 1913 Crean joined Shackleton's Trans-Antarctic Expedition. The most important role planned for Crean was that he would accompany Shackleton, along with four other men, on a sledge journey across Antarctica. Crean's expectation of being the first to cross the Antarctica continent remained unfulfilled, for Endurance never reached the continent. In January 1915 the ship was beset in the pack ice of Weddell Sea, and remained there despite strenuous efforts to free it. By late October the men were forced to abandon Endurance as the ice began crushing it from all sides. Life on the ice was uncertain and hazardous. After surviving 5 months on the ice floes the expedition took to 3 small boats. Thus began an appalling 6 day voyage through freezing temperatures and gale winds.

The first landing site on Elephant Island proved untenable so 2 days later the entire party made a 6hr voyage to Strancomb Wills through gale winds. Crean was spared the suffering on Elephant Island. Instead he participated in Antarctica's most incredible saga - an open boat journey to South Georgia. The sea journey began on 24 April 1916. The party finally reached South Georgia on 10 May 1916. It was now necessary to get from the uninhabited Southwest coast of the island to the whaling stations on the Northeast coast. The feebleness of two of the men precluded a boat journey around the island. There was no choice but for a smaller party to cross the island. A courageous undertaking since at that time no one had ever ventured into its unknown interior. Crean and Worsley accompanied Shackleton.

During the final stage of their journey, they followed a ravine that ended in a 30 foot waterfall. After a day and half of nearly continuous marching, climbing and sliding, the 3 reached the Stromness whaling station. Crean worked with Shackleton until all the men were rescued.

On retiring from the navy in 1920, Crean returned to Annascaul and married Ellen Herlihy and raised a family. They purchased a public house and called it the "South Pole Inn" which he ran until his death in 1938. He is buried locally in Ballinacourty graveyard.

TOM CREAN (3rd Annual) WALKING FESTIVAL

October 24th - 27th 1997

Annascaul/Inch, Dingle Peninsula, Co. Kerry

Programme of Events

Friday Night Walk with local astronomer.
Sat, Sun, & Mon 7 guided walks to suit the novice and the experienced walker

Lectures by: Frank Nugent of South Aris (A trip to South Georgia)
Mike O'Shea on Irish Explorers
John Falvey - Local Astronomer

Maps Needed: Ordnance Survey: O/S 1.50,000 70/71 Discovery Series

Equipment needed: Waterproofs, mountain boots, cap, gloves, whistle, small rucksack, flask, snack, binoculars, torch (night walk).

Friday 24th October

Night Walk Grade C Guided by Ann Curran of Irish Village Walking Tours and local Astronomer John Falvey.
8pm - Meeting Point - Annascaul Community Centre. Time 2 - 3 hours (approx.)

Saturday 25th October

Walk 1 Grade A To be guided by Con Moriarty of Hidden Ireland Walking Tours and Dirk Pomeranz. 9am - Meeting Point - Annascaul Community Centre Sliabh Mish ^ - Knockmore ^565 - Moanau ^566. **For Experienced Walkers Only.** Distance 6 - 7 miles, Time 5 - 6 hours.

Walk 2 Grade B To be guided by Ann Curran and Mick Wall of Irish Village Walking Tours. 9.15am - Meeting Point - Annascaul Community Centre, Acres Hill (Knockacree ^286A). Hill walk. Distance 5 miles (approx.), Time 4 - 5 hours.

Walk 3 Grade C To be guided by Peter McDermott Ornithologist and Tony O'Callaghan of Irish Village Walking Tours. 12 noon start - Meeting Point - Annascaul Community Centre. Maum - West Inch - Redcliff - Bunanear Bay - Annascaul. Road Walk. Distance 3 - 4 miles, Time 3 - 4 hours.

Lecture:

Lecturer: Mike O'Shea Time: 8.30pm
Place: Annascaul Community Centre. Topic: Irish Explorers

On show will be Shackleton's ration bag and sprig of holly which was bought at Christies of London earlier this year.

Sunday 26th October

Walk 1 Grade A To be guided by Con Moriarty of Hidden Ireland Tours and Dirk Pomeranz. 9am - Meeting Point - Annascaul Community Centre. Cool na Goppage - Knockmulane ^593 - Reanmore - Dromavally - Annascaul. Mountain Walk - 5 hours (approx.). **For Experienced Walkers only.**

Walk 2 Grade B & C To be guided by Mike Shea of Hidden Ireland Tours and Peter McDermott Ornithologist. 10am - South Pole Inne, Annascaul. Official Opening of the Tom Crean Historical Walk. Annascaul - Minard - Gurtacurrane - Ballinacourty - Annascaul. Distance 6 miles (approx.), Time 5 hours.

Lectures:

Lecturer Frank Nugent, Member of South Aris (Recipients of the inaugural Tom Crean Award for outstanding achievements 1996).
Time: 8.30pm Venue: Annascaul Community Centre
Topic: Recent visit to the Antarctic aboard the Tom Crean.

10pm

BLISTER BALL AT BRACKLUIN HOUSE

Monday 27th October

Walk 1 Grade B To be guided by Ann Curran and Mick Wall of Irish Village Walking Tours. 10am - Meeting Point - Annascaul Community Centre. Knockafeen Ridge ^300. Hill Walk. Distance 4 - 5 miles, Time 4 - 5 hours.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: Tel No.
Address: Grade Walk:
Friday Night Walk: Saturday:
Sunday: Monday:

Registration Fee: £7 per day, £18 per weekend. Covers walks, workshops and lectures.

Walkers attend at their own risk.

Signed:

All miles and times are approximate depending on weather conditions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Needham

I wish to express my thanks to all those who attended the funeral, sent sympathy cards, mass cards and letter of condolences on the death of my father. Your thoughts were much appreciated by the whole family.

MOUNT ETNA, SICILY

The first time I saw Mount Etna was in 1957 whilst on passage, east bound through the Mediterranean Sea, for the Suez Canal prior to proceeding to the Persian Gulf. I was to see it again very shortly, this time west bound, for when we arrived at the anchorage off Port Said, at the entrance to the canal we had to anchor for three days as passage through the canal was blocked due to the Suez crisis. We then headed west towards Gibraltar and the very long passage around the Cape of Good Hope and up through the Indian Ocean to eventually arrive in the Persian Gulf.

To return to the mountain, it was very impressive when I first saw it, perhaps because, at 10827ft, it was the highest one I had ever seen up to then, and still remained so when I visited it in June 1997. The mountain consists of one main volcano peak/crater with several surrounding volcanic craters at a lower altitude, mainly around 6/7000ft.

Visits to Mount Etna are organised on a very commercial basis. The trip I took was by coach to about 6000ft where there are the inevitable restaurants and bars, the latter being appreciated in the heat. You then transfer to cable car to approximately 7500ft and then to a very rugged minibus to almost 10000ft and from there you walk (guided) to a spot marked 10000ft.

There is a continuous irritating smell of ash in the air. Ash as we know acts as a fertiliser. This is very obvious on the mountain as grass and flowers are still growing at about 8500ft. Also butterflies are flying around at this height and even at 10000ft there are ladybirds in abundance.

The road the minibus takes is literally across a cinder/lava type of surface. When you get out to walk you can feel the heat of the mountain under your feet. The smell of ash is very strong. The guide brings you to a place where the steam can be seen coming out of the rocks. You are shown many craters, the largest of which is about 1.5 miles across. It was a sight the like of which one could not imagine.

Mount Etna has a history of erupting every 3 to 5 years or so. It is regarded as a "tame volcano" as the local population have plenty of warning prior to an eruption. This warning is usually given by a very distinctive cloud formation over the main peak with rumbling for some months prior to the eruption. Indeed while we were there it had been rumbling for about 3 months. The noise when you first hear it is quite alarming.

In 1983 there was a very big eruption from one of the lower craters. It lasted for 3 months with the lava flowing for a distance of 20 kilometres. We could see in places where it had reached a height of about 40ft, had destroyed houses and a church. In one place it had flowed to within 5ft of a convent door, the convent had been evacuated for the duration, but when the lava cooled and hardened they just built a fence around it and carried on as normal.

When one sees the amount of lava you wonder where it has all come from. The guide told us that for a minor eruption the activity within the volcano starts at a depth of around 20000ft below sea level and for a major eruption it starts at about 100000ft below sea level. It is difficult for the layman to imagine the forces behind these eruptions.

The Sicilians are resourceful people. They regard the lava as a commercial product and use it for building roads, houses, walls, pottery and even jewellery. Just as we have cement factories here for making cement bricks, they have lava factories for making lava bricks. From an economic point of view they are lucky to have this infinite resource of material.

Some thoughts about the trees we see and the forests we use.

The trees are in their autumn beauty
the woodland paths are dry.

"The wild swans of Coole" W.B. Yeats

There are few times of the year when trees look better than autumn. It is the time of year when colour change takes place. At least that is what it seems. It is after all what we see. But is it the reality? Well not really. In physiological terms what happens is that the chlorophyll within the leaves of some trees has ceased to mask the colours that now appear. Without chlorophyll, the process of making sugars, which ultimately becomes wood, ceases, the tree stops growing and takes time out to await the next year. Again that is what it seems. In reality however the process of bud making for next season has already begun and will continue over the next few months.

So it is that one year slips into the next year, before the old one has even finished. A resource is being created by the repetition of this, year in year out, for up to two hundred years by millions of trees. This resource is both economic and ecological, makes a significant contribution to rural development, recreation and, if properly undertaken, landscape enrichment.

Ireland's lack of forests has been a matter of concern since the early part of this century. At that time Ireland had less than 2% forest cover while the rest of Europe had an average of over 30%. Although many of our place names were called after trees, few trees and even fewer forests graced the Irish landscape. Since the foundation of the state, afforestation was regarded mainly as a function of state. However, land with minimal, or no, agricultural potential was the only land considered appropriate for afforestation. For almost all the period of years between the foundation of the state and the early 1980's the maximum price per acre of potential forest land seemed to be linked for some extraordinary reason, to the prevailing price of a pair of men's shoes! In such circumstances it does not take a fruitful imagination to appreciate the quality of land planted in the first sixty years of statehood. Land of high elevation, peatland, or marginal agricultural land with severe agricultural constraints and minimal agricultural production potential became the norm for the state afforestation programme.

It was under these circumstances that the Wicklow uplands, the favourite haunt of the Trekkers, became afforested. About 14% of Co. Wicklow is under forest today and represents the highest percentage forest cover of any county in Ireland. This compares with the national average of 8%.

One of the most significant forestry problems in Co. Wicklow today is the increase of deer and sheep populations. The forest objective is to diversify forest species. Unfortunately both deer and sheep have a huge appetite for the diverse tree species foresters want to plant. Few species, other than sitka spruce, survive the attention of deer and sheep. Culling deer is a troublesome exercise from the viewpoints of public perception and the physical difficulty on the ground, while sheep are heavily supported by EU subsidies. It has been estimated that there are about 7 million sheep in Ireland of which 350,000 are in Co. Wicklow.

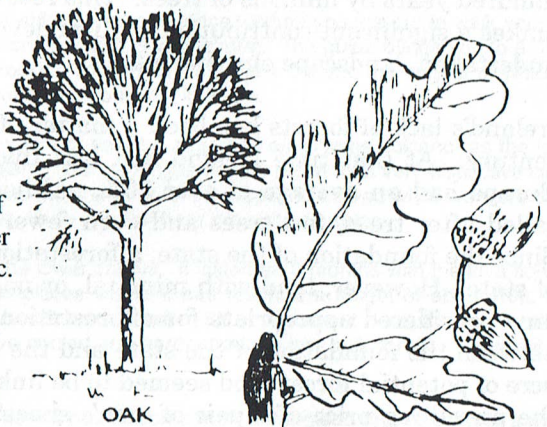
On the next walk through Wicklow, whether it be through the many miles of forest tracks or on open mountain, take another look at the trees of the forest, spot the changing colours and objectively assess the impact of forests on the landscape. Consider too the resource that has been created and is yours to enjoy. After all you helped to pay for it.

Finally, if Charlie Ryan can wax lyrical on the Wicklow Way during a recent walk about the vegetation being "unprofitably gay", you too can think of an appropriate poem and poet to capture your thoughts on autumn colours.

Fergal Mulloy

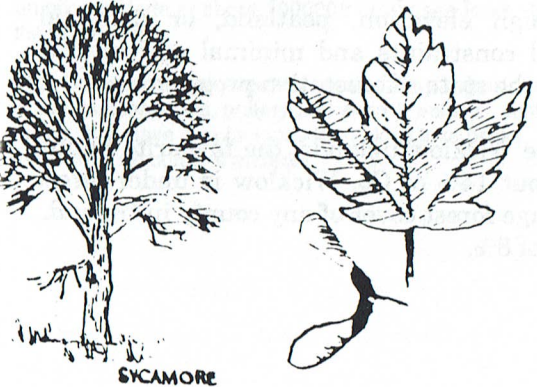
THE OAK

The Oak has been growing all over Ireland since long before man arrived. It is our chief native tree and in the past supplied the timber needs for housing, furniture, shipbuilding etc. Oak wood is strong and does not easily rot. It needs very good soil to grow well, but the Forestry Division could not afford to buy such land. Besides, it takes about 100 years to produce a good Oak tree.



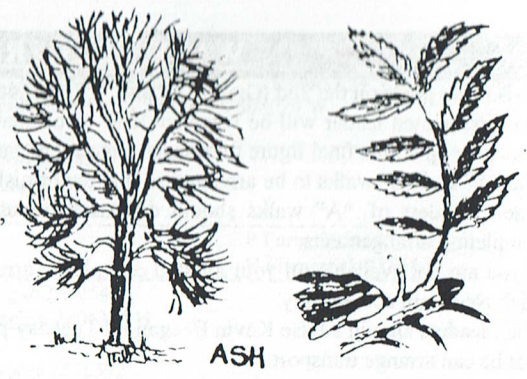
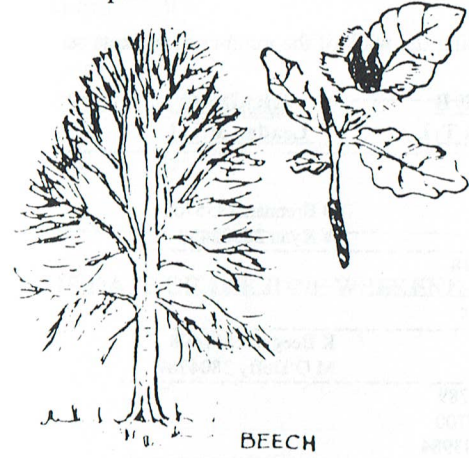
THE SYCAMORE

The Sycamore produces a hard, smooth white timber, very suitable for veneers and in great demand for dancehall floors. It wears very smoothly. This species was introduced to Ireland in the seventeenth century and is now very common, but it needs good soil.



THE MOUNTAIN ASH

One of the most beautiful of our native trees, it grows wild all over the country, but especially on mountains and in valleys. Its wood is not as valuable as the lowland or common ash which is excellent for hurleys, tool handles, and in ancient times, the shafts of weapons.

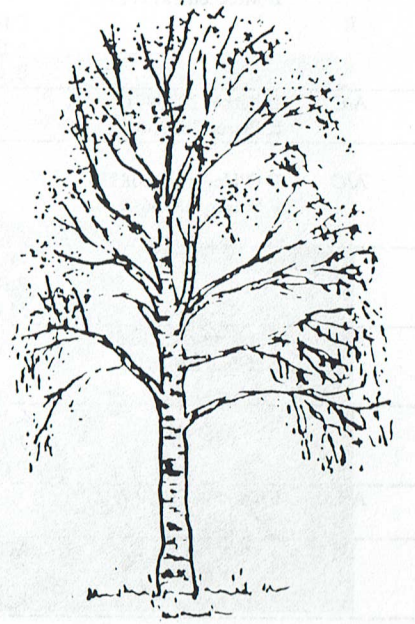
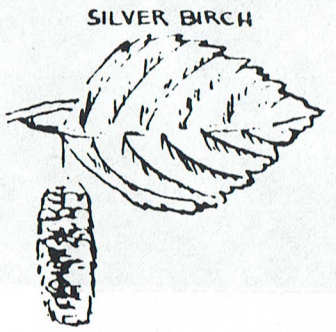


THE BEECH

It was introduced from England about 200 years ago, but now it is very common. Beech can grow up to 100 feet in good soil. The Forestry Division has planted many (about 5% of state planting). Its wood is excellent for furniture and veneer.

THE BIRCH

Another native tree, still very plentiful on waste ground and hillsides. It grows quickly in most conditions. After about thirty years it produces close-grained wood suitable for round articles such as tool handles and spools.



WALK LEADERS 1997 - 1998

Walks take place on the 2nd (Grade "A" and "C") and 4th Saturdays (Grade "B") of each month. The first named leader will be responsible to co-ordinate the responses from members so that he/she can come up with a final figure for transport requirements.

The "A" and "C" walks to be arranged so that they finish up in the same place at near enough the same time. Leaders of "A" walks should discuss the route with Shaun Trant or Dick Needham before completing arrangements.

If you are not available on your allotted day please arrange to swop with another member and notify Dick Needham accordingly.

Walk leaders should advise Kevin Beegan by Tuesday preceding the walk of the number of walkers so that he can arrange transport.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>WALK</u>	<u>GRADE A Leader & Tel.</u>	<u>GRADE B Leader & Tel.</u>	<u>GRADE C Leader & Tel.</u>
<u>1997</u>				
13/9	A/C	F Trant 2853979 J Moore 2855035		B Brennan 2855700 V Ryan 2858243
27/9	B		E Logan 285 2548 F English 2804363 C Furey 2893045	
11/10	A/C	J Furey 2893045 K Trant 2827591		K Beegan 2851698 M O'Duffy 2804789
25/10	B		P O'Duffy 2804789 D Brennan 2855700 E. Gallagher 2683984	
8/11	A/C	S Trant 2853979 B McKeen 2819717		N O'Reilly 2809929 N Boyne 2683984
22/11	B		C Behan 2805610 A Brennan 2836595 B. Lane 2859259	
13/12	A/C	D Kirker 2820971 K Pierce 2829606		C Mangan 2852668 M Beegan 2851698
<u>1998</u>				
10/1	A/C	D O'Hegarty 2808335 F Mulloy 2855614		J Needham 2849571 C Brandon 2859563
24/1	B		M Armstrong 2852434 R Kirker 2840784 M Byrne 2820553	
14/2	A/C	W Hannon 2858251 C Behan 2805610		J Langan 2854843 J Brett 2853358 A Keegan 2854682
28/2	B		L Walsh 2982042 J Brandon 2859563 P Owens 2852435	
14/3	A/C	F Trant 2853979 B Lane 2850259		C Dorgan 2858170 C Stevens 2859026
28/3	B		M Tinsley 2852126 T Gillan 2985377 M Condon 2893258	

<u>DATE</u>	<u>WALK</u>	<u>GRADE A Leader & Tel.</u>	<u>GRADE B Leader & Tel.</u>	<u>GRADE C Leader & Tel.</u>
11/4	April Weekend		R Needham 2849571 2801130/2808074 W	
25/4	B		M Dorgan 2858170 C Furey 2893045 D Brennan 2855700	
9/5	A/C	S Trant 2853979 G Barry 2854906		P Furey 2956682 H Fitzpatrick 2856502
23/5	B		E Logan 2852548 F English 2804363 H 4597304 W K Moore 2856592	
13/6	June Weekend		R Needham 2849571 2801130/2808074 W	
27/6	B		J Moore 2855035 E McInerny 2850996 J Sexton 2300486	

THE DATE OF THE JUNE WEEKEND IS FLEXIBLE UNTIL BOOKINGS ARE MADE.



JUNE WEEKEND - SLIGO AND LEITRIM

The June weekend brought 23 persons to Sligo and Leitrim. It was the clubs first outing to this part of the country. Another first was the fact that A, B, and C walks had to be organised so as to take in the various strengths of the, by now, very much enlarged club membership. This meant that on Friday there was a B, Saturday an A, B, and C, and on Sunday A and C walks.

Carrick-on-Shannon was the first stop where the party had a very acceptable lunch in Cryans Restaurant. The coach then drove to Drumshanbo from where the Leitrim Way above the east shore of Lough Allen was followed as far as Ballinagleragh. The way is not well marked in places here, and the styles crossed over were quite formidable, being vertical and 6 to 7 feet high.

Saturday, the A walkers continued on the Leitrim Way walking from Aughrim to Manorhamilton, a distance of 14 miles and a height of 400mts. The B walkers went on a circular route passing through Rosses Point and back to the guest house in Sligo, a distance of 10 miles. The C walk was also circular (7 miles) and passed through the village of Drumcliffe (where W.B. Yeats is buried). Sunday, the A walk was to go over Benbulbin, Tuskmore Mt and Tievebaun Mt. Unfortunately the weather turned very nasty and it was only possible to complete Benbulbin. The C walkers were luckier weatherwise and did a circular route to Lough Gill.

As a group, members walked a distance of 55 miles, however this does not include the mile to and from the nearest pub for evening refreshment.

Staying in the Red Cottage Guest House just outside Sligo town on the Donegal Road for the three nights proved to be very satisfactory.

The scenery in this area is beautiful. Fergal Mulloy gave two very interesting short talks about the local countryside, going into detail about rift valleys, bog formation, plant life etc. Transport to and from Dublin was by train and local transport by coach. The driver in Sligo was particularly helpful.

The general consensus was that the area is interesting and attractive in many ways and that it would justify a return in better weather.