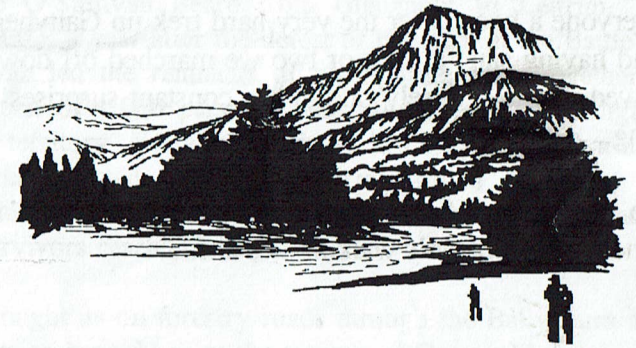


The Trekker



Editorial

Now with a wonderful summer only a memory we are into the main walking season of the year.

Those of you who were on the Summer Walk, The Ballyhoura Way, will always remember our amazement on reaching the summit of Galtymore and finding a band playing "*The Hills Are Alive To The Sound of Music.*" It gave everyone a boost after the very hard trek up Galtymore a short time earlier, and having sung a song or two we marched off down the far side with renewed vigour. Surely one of the constant surprises and pleasures of Trekking.

And so to the season of "*mists and mellow fruitfulness.*" The Club is thriving and a great season's walking lies ahead.

Brian Brennan
Editor

JUNE WEEKEND

The weekend, from Friday morning to Monday afternoon, was organised by Dick and programmed to include two days walking on the Ballyhoura (pronounced BALLYHOWRA) Way and one day climbing in the Galtee Mountains.

Friday, 23 June

Fourteen Trekkers were picked up by Tony's two buses at 7am and brought to Kingsbridge to catch the 9.10 train to Tralee. We left the train at Rathluirc and were met by Jon Cusack who, with his minibus, was to meet all our transport requirements for the next three days. We had lunch in the Deerpark Hotel, just outside Rathluirc, and the minibus then brought us to Ballyhea where we joined the Ballyhoura Way and the start of our walk.

The Ballyhoura Way is one section of a long walking trail following the route of the O'Sullivan Beare from Glengarriff to Leitrim. It was in December, 1602, a year after the defeat of the Irish at the Battle of Kinsale, that O'Sullivan led the remnants of his fighting men, together with their families, a total of 1,000 persons, with the intention of bringing them to safety in the territory of Breffni O'Ruairc in Leitrim. After a dreadful 300 mile trek which lasted two weeks during which the group was being constantly ambushed and many died from hunger, fatigue and exposure, thirty-five survivors reached Leitrim.

Our route brought us on forestry roads through the Ballyhoura Mountains. A short diversion brought us to the summit of Carron Mountain where there is an ancient burial cairn. The day was sunny and warm and, when we emerged from the forest, there were excellent views across the Golden Vale.

We passed a large telecommunications mast and then a rocky outcrop called Castle Philip, dropped down to the public road at the small village of Glenosheen (no pub!), cut across country again and at about 6pm came to Ballyorgan, having walked about 12 miles.

At Ballyorgan we had to split, seven of us staying in the Lantern Lodge in the village, the other seven being brought by minibus to Fleminstown House near Kilfinane. That night the Kilfinane crowd were brought by car to join us at the Village Inn in Ballyorgan, where The Croppy Boy mingled with Molly Malone and the Banks. There was general agreement on the excellence of the accommodation in both places.

Saturday, 24 June

To get to Aherlow the Kilfinane Seven had a walk of about 17 miles in front of them. The Ballyorgan Bunch were on the road at 8.30am and had to walk an extra four miles before we rejoined in the main street of Kilfinane.

The day became a hard slog, testing the grit of everybody in the group. The sun shone relentlessly and at times in the sheltered back roads it became very hot. Shortly after leaving Kilfinane we left the road and climbed along the edge of, and through, forestry on the slopes of Slieveveagh Mountain. We came back to the road near Glenbrohane village and followed a series of minor roads to reach Ballylanders shortly after midday. It was then intensely hot and we were grateful for the shelter of a pub where we re-hydrated and watched the start of the World Cup Rugby final between South Africa and New Zealand.

After Ballylanders, it was all roads, easy walking but never-ending. A refreshing splash in the Aherlow River and on to Galbally, a lovely village, past winner of the Tidy Towns competition, of considerable historical interest both from the post Kinsale times and from the days of flying columns of the old IRA. However, our concentration was entirely on refreshment and, barely waiting to get the result of the rugby match, we pushed on.

At the ruins of Moor Abbey we left the road and followed the banks of the Aherlow river, then left the river to clip steeply up, and still more up, to a good track. Along the way we had to beat off the attentions of a heard of flighty bullocks. When we entered forest we were cruising home, along the western flank of Slievenamuck Mountain. An hour later we were still cruising home, very tired and suffering some effects from the sun. The final test of the day was an obstacle course down through a stretch of felled trees and finally to the Glen Hotel in Aherlow.

That night we split again, eight staying in the Homeleigh near the Glen Hotel and six in Cooleen with the Foot Bar as their local. A relaxing night, recovering from a hard day.

Sunday, 25 June

Kevin, Jack, Charlie and Ciara opted to explore Aherlow while the rest of us went climbing in the Galtees with Galtymore the centrepiece. Galtymore, 3018 feet, is one of the Irish Munros, the only one outside Kerry and Wicklow. The weather continued warm and sunny with a slight breeze as we gained height from Aherlow.

We contoured around the side of Cush Mountain without going to its summit but could not avoid the very steep climb to the summit of Galtybeg. From there a stiff ascent over excellent climbing ground brought us to the summit of Galtymore. On the summit was the Mitchelstown Brass Band in full regalia, playing to an audience, most of whom had climbed from the Mitchelstown (southern) side of the range. On the way up we had met people of all shapes and sizes, from a four-year old child to an eighty-four year old gentleman who insisted that he would get to the top in his own time. From Galtymore we continued on a circuit which brought us over Slievecushnabinnia and back to our starting point in Aherlow. We were picked up there by cars and brought to the Aherlow House Hotel where we were to stay the night.

Later that night Ciara persuaded the driver of a bus from Donegal to drive some of us to the Glen Hotel where there was a session, Tipperary style.

Monday, 26 June

The minibus picked us up at the hotel and brought us to Limerick Junction where we caught the 11.30 train to Dublin. Tony met us at Kingsbridge and had us home at about 3.30pm.

THE BALLYHOURA MOUNTAINS

Having walked the Ballyhoura Way in June what do we know about the Ballyhoura Mountains? Starting in North Cork they continue into counties Limerick and Tipperary, extending from Castletownroche in the south to Ballyneety in the north, and from Drumcollogher in the west to the Glen of Aherlow in the east.

The name Ballyhoura or Ballahoura derives from Bealach Fheabradh or Bealach Eadhradh, meaning the road, or pass, of Fheabhradh or Eadhradh a mythological figure from the remote past. The highest points in the Ballyhoura range are to be found at the eastern end, these are Blackrock and Seefin. Formerly these two hills were know as Carraig Dubh an Iolair or in English "The Black Rock of the Eagle" and Suí Finn, "Finn's Seat" from Finn McCool leader of the Fíanna. At the foot of Seefin is Glenosheen i.e. Gleann Oisín. According to local legend it was here that Oisín returning from Tír na nOg, having been there for 300 years, accidentally fell from his horse and was immediately transformed into a very old, grey and wizened man.

Padraig O'Suilleabhain B.L. wrote the libretto of an opera based on the story of Oisín and Glenosheen. His description of the setting for his story goes thus:-

*“From Ballyorgan, looking south,
 The Landscape opens like a mouth;
 In front there is a valley deep
 Where tall trees grow and brushwoods creep.
 From the valley’s side ‘tis seen
 But reaches not to Glenosheen;
 Dark glowering, ominous and grim
 Nearby, on right, is dark Seefin . . .
 Below the mountain is a hill
 The place is called Ardpatrick still.”*

Treasurer, Kevin Beegan, would like to remind everyone that your annual subscription is now due. The fee remains the same .. £15.

Congratulations

Ingrid and Kieran

on the arrival of their first born,

a son.

To

Sean Trant, Kevin Beegan
 and Charlie Ryan

on becoming Grandfathers

WALK LEADERS & DATES 1995/96

Walks take place on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. They will be either normal standard (Grade A) or a lower/easier standard (Grade B).

If any leader is not available on his allotted day he should arrange to swap 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

DATE 95/96	WALK	WALK LEADER & TEL. NO.	LEADER & TEL. NO.
11/11	A	F. ENGLISH(H)2804363 (W) 4597704 or 451 411	K. TRANT (H) 282 7591
25/11	B	J. FUREY (H)2893045 (W)8385527	I. THOMPSON (H) 285 4797
9/12	A	D. KIRKER (H) 2820971 (W) 2808441	P. FUREY (H) 295 6682
13/1	A	E. LOGAN(H) 285 2548	C. RYAN(H) 285 5493
27/1	B	K. BEEGAN (H) 2851698 (W) 6776881	R. HALPENNY (H) 2855976
10/2	A	B.McKEAN (H) 2819717 (W) 6684181	J. BRETT (H) 2853358
24/2	B	C. FUREY(H) 2893045	K. PIERCE(H) 2829606
9/3	A	S. TRANT (H) 2853979	J. FUREY (H)2893045 (W)8385527
23/3	B	B. BRENNAN (H) 2855700 (W) 2082666	N. O'REILLY (H)2809929 (W)7644815
13/4	A	D. KIRKER (as above)	E. LOGAN (as above)
20 & 21/4	Wicklow W/E	F. ENGLISH (as above)	I. THOMPSON (as above)
11/5	A	F. TRANT c/o 2853979	K. TRANT (as above)
25/5	B	P. O'DUFFY (H) 2804789 (W) 8728011	J. LANGAN (H) 2854843
8/6	A	S. TRANT (as above)	C. LAVERTY (H)289 4644
14 & 17/6	June W/E	R. NEEDHAM (H) 2849571 (W) 2801130/2808074	

MOUNTAIN SAFETY

The following are some points which should be considered before heading off to the mountains.

1. Fitness

The group leader should be aware of the general level of fitness within the group, and plan the route accordingly. In some cases a walk in the Djouce, Maulin area might be more appropriate than an attempt on Lug.

2. Leadership

The leader should be fully confident and experienced in navigating in all conditions in the hills. Not only does the leader have to navigate for the group but he/she has to look after and make decisions for the group. Some of these decisions may be unpopular (eg to turn back), but may be the right decisions.

The leader therefore has to have the trust and confidence of all party members. It is also essential that the leader knows the group's limitations.

There are many different leadership styles which are often amusing to observe, but the main objective of the leader is to bring everybody home safely after having a good day out.

3. Personal Equipment

It is essential, especially in winter, that everybody is well kitted out for the walk. This includes, in particular, sturdy footwear, good waterproofs and warm clothes, including cap and gloves. There is no worse feeling than being cold and wet with a couple of hours left on the hills. Too often it has resulted in tragedy. Spare food, map and compass, a whistle, a torch, a watch should also be carried. A flask and a hot cup of tea or soup will pep your spirits during the latter part of a long walk in winter.

4. Group Equipment

This might include a casualty bag, rope, a kishu (temporary shelter), mobile telephone, first-aid kit.

5. Good Navigation

It is essential for any hill walking group that at least the leader is a confident and experienced navigator. Having more than one navigator in the group narrows the gap for error in that people can compare and discuss alternatives, bearings etc.

A good navigator will plan the walk, taking into account the group's abilities and limitations, and therefore avoiding steep ground, crags etc., or deliberately aiming for them. Probably the most important single requirement of good navigation is that the navigator should at all times be able to pin-point the position of the group on the map.

6. Mountain Hazards

- **Crags** You can generally walk around crags but the ground will be steep. Before going into this type of terrain the leader should know that all party members will be able and confident on it.

- **Cliffs** Cliffs are deadly hazardous but are also great navigational aids. Coming off Tonelagee for Lough Ouler is an example. If there are high easterly winds in this case, it might be wise to avoid the cliffs.

- **Rivers** Crossing a river in spate can sometimes lead to wet feet, sometimes wet clothes, sometimes a drowning.

If somebody falls in they will be completely soaked and freezing cold. Hence the need to carry spare clothes. Presuming this is winter, and the person does not change immediately, he/she could suffer hypothermia.

The general rule for crossing rivers in spate is "don't." A perfect example is the parking spot above Glenmacnass Waterfall. Many hill walkers have returned to their cars after a day on Tonelagee to find the river they crossed that morning has risen and covered the stepping stones.

The hill walker has two choices. Firstly, to sit down and wait for the river to fall again or secondly, to walk up stream, perhaps a considerable distance, to where the river is young and find a narrow crossing point.

However an experienced hillwalker would the previous night predict any problems with crossing rivers by taking into account the rainfall. Hence he/she may go for Tonelagee from Wicklow Gap.

7. Hypothermia

- is where the vital core of the body is cooled as a result of exposure to cool conditions. The main causes of mountain hypothermia are

- **Windchill** for any given air temperature the cooling effect (windchill factor) increases rapidly with increasing wind speed. Therefore good windproof clothing is essential to avoid the worst effects of windchill.

- **Wet Cold** A person who is wet and cold will quickly suffer a drop in body temperature. This fall in temperature will be further aggravated by the windchill factor.

- **Exhaustion** This can come about by attempting too much or by not eating enough to replace energy used. Exhaustion can be a dangerous condition because it implies that the body has no reserves to call on to do the work required.

A good breakfast of carbohydrates and fatty foods followed by breaks for carbohydrates during the day can help keep up energy levels.

- **Dehydration** There is a general reluctance among hillwalkers to drink water on the hill. Maybe it is to enjoy the pint better at the end. The more work the body performs, the more the need to replace water. Dehydration can also lead to exhaustion.

- **Alcohol** A person who has a feed of pints the night previous to a hill walk is putting him/herself at risk of suffering from hypothermia. Alcohol reduces the body temperature and hostile conditions can further aggravate this.

A person suffering from hypothermia should be treated immediately. Give him/her extra jumpers. Erect a Kishu. Ensure there is insulation between the person and the ground. Give him/her a hot drink. Always remember if there is not enough room for everybody in the Kishu, then those people outside are in danger of getting cold.

8 Staying Together

Within a group, different people will have different paces. The group has to stay together otherwise a fast walker with no navigational experience may find him/herself suddenly surrounded by a mist and hence lost. It is important, especially in poor visibility, that a group has a sweeper as well as a leader. A good general rule is that nobody goes in front of the leader, nobody falls behind the sweeper.

9. First Aid Kit

Somebody within the group, normally the leader, should carry a first aid kit. The first aid kit should be equipped to deal with breaks, sprains, headaches, cuts, blisters etc.

10. Telephone

A mobile telephone might be a life saver in an emergency. It should however be treated with some sensitivity because, used indiscriminately, it can destroy the isolation of the hills. In an emergency, dial 999 and ask for Mountain Rescue.

11. Weather Forecast

It is always advisable to take a local forecast before heading out for the hills. If high winds and heavy rain is forecast, it may be wise to stay away from cliffs or rivers. It may also be advisable to adjust your intended walk so as to walk with the wind on your back.

The telephone number for weather forecasts for the Greater Dublin area is 1550-123-854

12. Route Card

A route card is a plan of the intended walk. A route card should be prepared by the leader and left in an obvious place at home so that the Mountain Rescue can be informed of the route if the group fails to turn up that night.

13. Other Points

- Never travel alone on the hills. Aim for a minimum of four in the group
- Aim to be off the hills well before dark.
- Trust the compass, especially when a "gut feeling" tells you that the compass is wrong.
- Keep the map close to hand and regularly check your position on it.

ZELLERS OF LACKEN

As you are all aware Lacken Village is off the beaten track, but what a find Zellers pub is! Hidden from the road down a dip over looking the Poulaphouca Reservoir it is a pub that fits perfectly into its surroundings. A great, largely undiscovered, gem of a pub.

Last autumn we arrived there dying of thirst to find a small group of musicians playing in a corner. In no time at all set-dancing had commenced and Sean and Eugene were all up dancing and Noel O'Reilly joined the group playing the spoons. No one wanted the bus to arrive to take us home. That Zellers should change would surely be a disaster. Long may it stay in its homely antiquated state, one of Irelands great pubs.



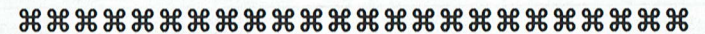
INFORMATION NEWS FLASH

For those of you who like to plan in advance the following information may be of use:-

3 Day Orienteering April 6th - 8th 1996

Ballyhoura Country Walking Festival May 3rd - 6th 1996

Contact Ballyhoura Country Holidays, Kilfinane, Co. Limerick.



Native American Wisdom - The Sweet Breathing of Flowers

Hear me, four quarters of the world - a relative I am!
Give me the strength to walk the soft earth, a relative to all that is!
Give me the eyes to see and the strength to understand,
that I may be like you.

With your power only can I face the winds.

*Black Elk (1863 - 1950)
Oglala Sioux holy man*