

The Trekker

AUGUST 2002

ISSUE 19



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

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TREKKERS 500

Tá ná Trekkers fiche bliain ag súil agus beidh an cuigiú cead siúlóid againn i mí Mheán Fomhair. As many Trekkers know our group developed from a quartet who had been involved in the Sandycove Sea Scouts for many years. The first designated walk took place in November 1982 on “a cold day with continuous rain” (they didn’t flinch then or since). The four walkers being Jack Langan, Tony O’Brien, Ronnie O’Sullivan and Shaun Trant. They climbed Djouce and Maulin and finished up in Sweeneys pub in Kilmacanogue. Thus setting the pattern for all walks to finish in a hostelry.

Over the next few years the walks were few and the numbers in the group were small. In fact it was not until December 5th 1992 that the 100th walk was reached but by September 1997 the 200th walk was recorded which indicates the increase in the number of walks.

Following the formation of **The Trekkers Mountaineering Club** in January 1995 there has been a marked increase in membership and as a consequence extra walks. Now with a choice nearly every Saturday as well as mid week ventures and away trips we are at our 500 mark. In order to mark this unique occasion it is intended to finish the walks on 28th September in the Glenmalure Lodge with a meal. So if you are interested to celebrate the event contact Eileen Gallagher and book your place early. The cost is €12-00.

Here’s to the next 500!!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- ❖ **September 28th** **500th Walk and Meal in Glenmalure Lodge Hotel.**

- ❖ **October 21st** **AGM – The Dunlaoghaire Club, Eblana Avenue.**

- ❖ **November 16th** **Anniversary Walk**

- ❖ **December 7th** **Christmas Dinner – Wicklow Heather, Laragh,
After the usual walk.**

YOUR ARTICLES

Issues No's 12-19 have all been made interesting by the contributions from so many members. This has made my job so much easier. Here is a list of the main stories which have appeared over the past two years. Thanks for your input. Editor.

Subject.	Author	Edition No.
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE		
Thoughts on Leadership	L. Walsh	12, 16, 17.
Erosion of the Wicklow Hills	G. Barry	13
Practical Field Skills/ First Aid Skills	J. Furey	14
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WALKS WITH A DIFFERENCE		
Woodenbridge Weekend	M. Berthiaume	12
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Donegal Report	E. Gallagher/B.Brennan	13
Trans Wicklow Trek	M. Tinsley	13
Urban Walks	M. Tinsley	16
Carrantoohill Conquered	T. Murray	17
Killarney Therapy	I. McCraith	17
Mourne Memories	B.Bracken	18
GLOBAL REPORTS		
Australian Trek	D O'Hegarty	12
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AWAY TRIPS DOWN THE YEARS

YEAR	BASE	CLIMBED	WALKED
June 1985	Westport:	Mweelrea and Croagh Patrick.	
No Away Trip in 1986			
June 1987	Connemara	Derryclare and Benfree	Kylemore Valle
June 1988	Achill	Croaghan and Slievemore	
June 1989	Westport	Mweelrea	Bangor Trail(28m)
June 1990	Clifden	Benbaun, Ben Gower & Benlettery	
June 1991	Kerry	Mangerton, Carrantoohil & Brandon	
June 1992	Kerry		Kerry Way
June 1993	Kerry		Dingle Way
June 1994	Connama	Benbaun and Benfree	Western Way
June 1995	Aherlow	Galtybeg and Galtymore	Ballyhoura Way
June 1996	Dingle	Masatiompan and Brandon	Dingle Way
April 1997	Wales	Snowdon	
May 1997		Cooley Mountains	Tain Trail
June 1997	Sligo	Kings Mountain and Benbulbin	Leitrim Way/L.Gill
June 1998	Ballymarchry	Knocknasheegowna and Knockmealdown	
April 1999	Wales	Cader Iris	
June 1999	Ballina	Nepin and Birren Corragh	Bangor Trail
Oct 1999	Birr		Slieve Bloom Way
June 2000	Gortahork	Dooish Mountain and Errigal	Horn Head
Sept 2001	Killarney	Carrantoohill and Mangerton	Gap of Dungloe
May 2002	Newcastle	Slieve Donard	Ulster Way
July 2002	Leenane	Benglensky and Benlettery	Western Way

In 1999 Shaun Trant produced a detailed history of the club. This text and the 18 Trekker Magazines to date record all the main events of our group. However to celebrate “20 years a Walking” I thought a pictorial parade might jog a few memories. Thankfully our resident photographer and archivist –Paddy O’Duffy –has been able to supply the necessary material.

*Now you will appreciate the value of being ‘caught in action’ or ‘just standing still’.
Anyway just relive the occasions.*



The Call of The Hills

Our esteemed editor asked me to write a few words on mountains, hill walking and me, in the broadest sense. I think he laid this on me as under club rules he and I will be vacating our respective positions on the committee after the forthcoming AGM, each of us having served for three years.

I was probably in my teenage years when mountains cast their spell over me. There was something of the "because they are there" syndrome about it. It is, of course, possible to have a love of mountains without ever climbing one. The unadventurous, the infirm, the lazy may never have reached a greater altitude or deviated from the horizontal than Killarney's Lakes or Killary Harbour and having seen those incomparable shapes, fallen under their spell permanently. For those of us who wanted to get to grips with the real thing however, Dublin was and is such an excellent location. Then you took the bus to get to the mountains, Enniskerry, Boharnabreena, Blessington or you got on your bike. The Glendalough bus extended possibilities but was reckoned as too expensive for student types. Equipment was cheap; World War 2 surplus stuff was available in the usual outlets in Capel St., for years after the war. U.S. Army boots and combat jackets (lots of pockets) were popular. Anoraks of the smock, pull over your head type would follow in due course. The day of the well-dressed colour co-ordinated mountaineer was still a speck in the distance.

As to the mountains they were as they are now except where forest and trees have changed the landscape and also, sad to remark, where there has been soil erosion. Crone Wood was always a good place to start a walk. Very quickly you are looking into the amphitheatre that is Powerscourt. Some further effort and you are on Djouce. In the silence and beauty between the two places you could imagine you were many miles from civilisation. Another place of easy access was and is Luggala. Walk through the gate piers, go downhill and you are in another glorious mountain area. Now one can do the whole lot, Crone to Luggala and on to Roundwood easily with our transport arrangements. In the early days one generally had to circle back to one's start point to get back home.

There is a multiplicity of facets to this passion for the hills. Few can give a rational account for themselves. It may be the visual impact. It may be the physical joy of a long day in the mountains where every muscle has been put to good use. If asked why they do it, a dozen different persons might give you a dozen different answers. All of us walk or climb because we enjoy it and what we find along the way doing it.

Of course not every day is a good day. In mountains on a bad day there may come a time when you wish you had never started but a single minute often pays for the earlier discomforts.

I consider my self to be very lucky to have been able to enjoy those simple pleasures for so long and doubly so to have found my way in recent years into the TREKKERS. It has extended the scope and the enjoyment and provided some memorable walks, which I would not otherwise have had.

LIAM WALSH



Liam Walsh

Chairman 2000-2002

CONNEMARA JULY 2002

Connemara is renowned for the variety of its scenery with a multitude of lakes in and around the Maamturks and the 12 Bens. The weather this year helped to keep the lakes full and the tops of the mountains rarely got scorched. This was Eugene's last chance to organize an away trip. How would it compare with Donegal or Kerry we all wondered?

For efficiency of planning it was up to his usual high standard; for the chosen walks there could not have been more variety of terrain; for a homely base the Leenane Hotel was ideal and for the weather we had, all seasons in one week.

Where else would you get –in the month of July – the opportunity to wear your fleece on the Tuesday, your shorts on Wednesday and your full wet gear on the Thursday? Such was our package holiday!

Thanks Eugene for all your patience and organizational skills and thanks to both Paddy and Derek for the photographs.



MUD, MUD, GLORIOUS MUD

The weather forecast for our five-day trip to Connemara called for variety: rain, light rain and heavy rain. Nevertheless, it was under a dry sky that the 28 of us boarded the bus, the balance of the group travelled by car. It being July, the suitcases were very light; a couple of shorts and sleeveless t-shirts, sun lotion, a hat and sun glasses – if only!

We had lunch in Ballinasloe. Through the windows of the conservatory we could admire a little garden and look at the rain coming down, but again the skies were dry when we boarded the bus. Although it drizzled a bit on route, the clouds were high and we were able to enjoy the beautiful scenery. The mountains were enticing and we knew we had come to the right place.

We were booked at the Leenane Hotel and it was a very good choice; a friendly bar/pub, two dining-rooms, one with three long tables set just for us so that we could talk and laugh without feeling we were disturbing the other diners, a large room with a piano for our sing-song later-on in the week, airy rooms, some with a balcony overlooking Killary Harbour, and comfortable beds, not forgetting the food which was superb, ample and varied, and the helpful staff.

They were expecting us at the hotel and the keys to the rooms were on the reception desk with our names alongside, very efficient, in a few minutes we were unpacking in our rooms. Like many others, Jeannette and I walked to downtown Leenane for a bit of a browse in the two gift shops and bought fruit in the food store.

The weather was still a concern for our leaders and as **Tuesday** had the best forecast, it was decided to do the “big walk” that day. So the A walkers were driven to the foot of Benglenisky, the idea was to walk up that mountain then on to Benglower and slide down Benlettery through the mud until they reached their bus stop. Although there were no prizes for the muddiest outfit, everybody participated.

The C walkers had another idea; as our walk was the famine trail from the main road to Little Killary Bay on a fairly horizontal line, we thought we would skirt a few puddles or jump gracefully over them; this was not to be as the path laid for the most part under two inches of mud. Rita’s pretty green shoes were a dull brown by the end of the walk but the wearer and everybody else wore a smile on their face, as the day had been beautiful with some sunshine, a light breeze and beautiful scenery.

For the A walkers also the visibility had been good making the view at the top of the mountain worth every effort on their part.

On **Wednesday** a choice between a longer and a shorter walk along the Western Way ending at the hotel was on the agenda. Others went off to Clifden for lunch and a bit of shopping or played golf or met friends or family or simply enjoyed the day, for it was a beautiful day with lots of sun and a warm breeze. The first part of the longer walk was most challenging as the rains of the previous week had turned rivulets into large streams, puddles into small ponds and a straight path into a zigzag. Many feet got wet and our special researcher found that the deepest hole was just past Eileen’s knees in depth. All in all it was a lovely outing and the last stretch overlooking Killary Harbour was a treat.

We finally got rain on **Thursday** but it made up for the lack of it on the previous two days. The target was Kylemore Abbey and we divided into three groups. The smart, sensible people took the bus, had a leisurely lunch and visited the convent, the church and/or the gift shop. Those with the dirtiest clothes opted for the longer walk in the hope of minimizing the clean-up job once they got home, and those who were willing to get wet but not completely soaked chose the shorter route (in vain) as we all got drenched.

For the first time we came face to face with a problem that has sprouted in some parts of the west; a mapped trail closed off by a gate and chicken wire with a sign forbidding entry. Our leader delegated our personal American ambassador, Jeannette, with an escort to enquire about this sign to the nearest occupants and we were told to go ahead, that no one had a right to stop us from using that path. So we did, but we were doubly careful not to leave any trace of our passage realizing how lucky we are normally to have the freedom of roaming this beautiful country.

That evening we had our sing-song which was a revelation to me the first time I went on a long trip with the Trekkers and which seems such a befitting way to spend the last evening together.

Friday was going-home day, but Eugene had a last treat in store for us; a boat trip along Killary Harbour to the Atlantic and back. Those who had brought their cars gracefully taxied the rest of us to the pier. Again no rain, so we could go out on the deck for a clearer view. There was a very interesting and instructive commentary along the way and inside there was a snack bar for tea, coffee and a dessert. When we returned to the pier, the bus was there, waiting for us. The trip home was uneventful but a last tiny pleasure was waiting for me. The approach to the city was crowded and slow but being in a bus, we could use the bus lane thus saving us almost an hour. Passing those cars was such fun!

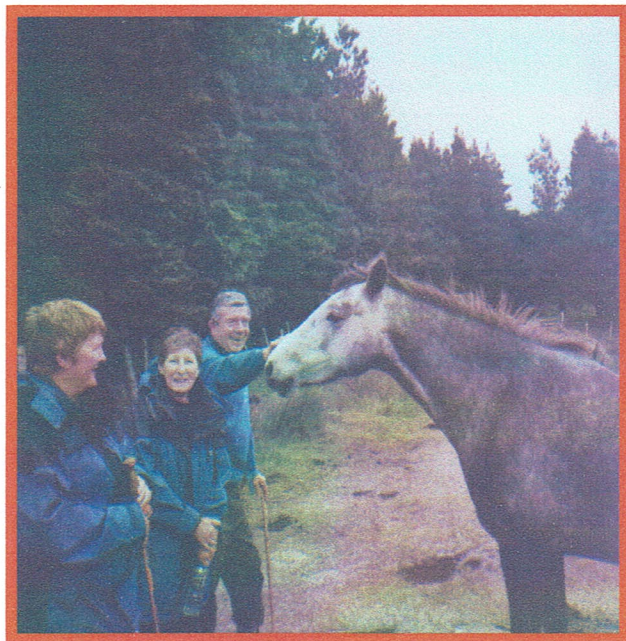
(Happiness is made of tiny pleasures).

A big **THANK YOU** to Eugene and our leaders and everyone who contributed to the success of this trip.

Michelle Berthiaume









REPORT**TREKKERS TRIP TO GALWAY 1 TO 5 JULY 2002****DAY 2****ASSAULT ON THE BENS**

DATELINE

2 JULY 2002

LOCATION

LEENAUN Bearing L881 619

SUNRISE - WESTERN ATLANTIC APPROACHES 0630 GMT (We believe it would be sunrise if it wasn't raining).

0745 GMT

"A" Team look out windows and note depression (rain) approaching from the Atlantic. Logic would dictate a return to bed but hell we're Trekkers and therefore waterproof.

0815 GMT

Wet gear (including buoyancy aids) made ready or packed. Stumble down to breakfast; meet other team members plodding in. Team Leader, Captain Bill, looks remarkably fresh and obviously rearing to go. Order "hearty Irish" breakfast as we reckon we will need it.

0930 GMT

Collect lunch and gear and be available for inspection if required. Capt' Bill assistant carries out preliminary head count - 14 intrepid travellers identified.

1000GMT

"A" Team board armoured personnel carrier (*in reality a mini bus - Editor*), which is pointed towards the The Twelve Pins or na Beanna Beola (which we believe loosely translates to "the deadly points"). Captain Bill carries out another head count, fourteen souls all told excluding driver.

1015GMT

"A" team transiting to destination. ETA 1100. A buzz of anticipation emerges from experienced team members, concern from less experienced members. Convoy passes wayside Church inviting all to stop and pray. Is this some kind of warning? Nervous look at Capt' Bill who looks the essence of serenity. Obviously an over active imagination yet the mountains approaching on all sides seem massive and much higher than the Matterhorn. Concern turns to terror but what the hell, we're the Trekkers, aren't we.

1100GMT

"A" Team exit personnel carrier and kit out (with nervous glances at our target). Some brave soul seeks to put a name on it. For the record, Benglenisky it's called, which doesn't help at all.

1105GMT

Capt. Bill leads off convoy. Surprise number one, our path is in fact a "steamrolled road" with a gentle gradient. Bill indicates our direction is towards a distant forest.

1140GMT +

We reach wood and miracle of miracles the weather is dry, not a speck of rain in sight. However this is the end of the good news as we now turn right towards the rear end of Benglenisky and straight into a swamp. The stuff Napoleon met in his retreat from Moscow was nothing compared to this! Bravely we march onwards and upwards trying to identify solid footing to ease us on our way. Frequently this quest results in that awful "glug" sound that tests the waterproofing of our boots (and the quality of our souls). Gradually we leave the quagmire and find more solid footing as we zig zag our way up the "back leaning" side of Benglenisky. Despite everything this is a pleasant climb.

1210GMT (APPROX)

A plaintive cry from the "serried ranks" suggests that a banana stop might be in order, a suggestion seconded with acclamation by those of us with the energy so to respond. Captain Bill agrees and we all search for a dry drop zone. Food in hand the world takes on a more benign aspect. Fortified, we look at the scenery and it is breathtaking. Mountains behind and to the left; stretched out in front Joyce country with its hundreds of lakes appearing to march out to the "broad Atlantic" whose waves, can in the distance, be seen breaking on the shore. Way down below us. cars on the road to Clifden appear like busy ants, remote and way out of reach. Gradually it begins to dawn on us just how far we have come, for a short time ago we were those "ants".

1235GMT

Bill calls us to order and we are on the move again zig zagging somewhat more steeply towards the summit of Benglenisky. Our progress is punctuated with fascinating glimpses of the incredible variety of scenery that is Connemara. Frequently our climb is over narrow ledges and loose shale but no one complains as we are in a magnificent world of contrasts and the physical effort involved in the actual climb is almost secondary although one suspects we will have a slightly different view in the morning.

1313GMT

A distant cairn seems to suggest we are near our goal. However as we progress other cairns swing into view so all one can say is that the summit is up there somewhere. Skies turn grey and ominous but Monty assures there is nothing to worry about. Dick has had a word with "the man above" and supports Monty's forecast. We lash into the "sangers" drunk with one eye on the darken clouds which pass without dispersing its load. Who doubted the forecast?

1330GMT

We've made it! We are on the summit of Benglenisky. The 360-degree view is spectacular and requires greater descriptive skills than mine to adequately describe the scene so we leave it to Paddy to capture the scene in "glorious technicolor". One picture being worth a thousand words, thiginn tu. (*Good move – Editor*). Suffice to say we are on top of the world "looking down on creation" which seems to imply we are in a poetic mood (*that's pushing it – Editor*) as well.

1355GMP (ish)

Captain Bill announces enough of this hanging about, there are more mountains to climb so lets be on our way. He leads us into a wonderland- scenery so spectacular that someone whispers "its like the surface of the moon". This simile is not contested for as far as we know the Trekkers haven't yet walked on the Moon. (*Give 'em time-Editor*). This scene, between Benglenisky and Bengower, alone makes this trip well worthwhile. We appear to be viewing a scene untouched by thousands of years of civilisation. Not a single manmade thing can be seen anywhere. Neville Schute's "the land God gave to Cain" is another apt description. We descend and ascend – our target is now Benlettery. We cross to Benlettery over what is, we believe, technically called "a coll"

15GMT

We reach the summit of Benlettery after traversing many mini- mountains. Civilisation hoves into view again. Down below, way down below, we can just about make out a ribbon of a road wending its way to, presumably, Clifden. It looks like a sheer drop from here to eternity. We nervously look at Captain Bill and can detect nothing but benign good humour. A quivering question is asked- do we really have to go down that way, elicits the answer "of course, no worries mate" or words to that effect. Mercifully a banana stop is called and the last of our iron rations are consumed. Somewhat fortified we answer Bill's call and commence our absailing down the mountain.

1630GMT

Head count, still 14, no casualties – so far. Downward progress satisfactory and mostly steep perpendicular. Overheard "well the cars are getting bigger"

1645GMT

Road is getting bigger all the time. Capt. Bill estimates our ETA at coach to be 1700. Thoughtful of Bill to say that but nobody believes him; the pain threshold is too high. For the marathon minded – we hit the wall hours ago. A head count should probably be taken but nobody really cares, after all we are the Trekkers and we are indestructible.

1650GMT

A shout goes out. Somebody has spotted our coach on terra firma and within our "line of sight". How did the driver know we would be in this area; must be a homing instinct. Logically and rationally of course the coach is there due to Eugene and Bill's superb organisational skills. A ragged cheer can be heard from team members now spread out over the slopes and the pace accelerates.

1655GMT

Our dash to our coach is temporarily checked by a fence of barbed wire stretching out into infinity. Is this a setback, hell no? We are the Trekkers and a little bit of barbed wire is not going to stop us.

1710GMT

We are all aboard and heading for home and all of us delighted to be part of a great adventure. Thank you Bill. A job well done.

1745GMT

“A” Team arrive back at hotel and head count is still fourteen.

1750GMT

Heaven is a long hot bath.

1930GMT

“A” Team join other Trekkers for dinner. The wine flows free, the craic is mighty, the food is fantastic, the days exploits are recounted (*and lose nothing in the telling- by the dessert stage all Twelve Bins have been climbed –Editor*). All feel they deserve to eat, drink and be merry- and we do just that.

Day 3

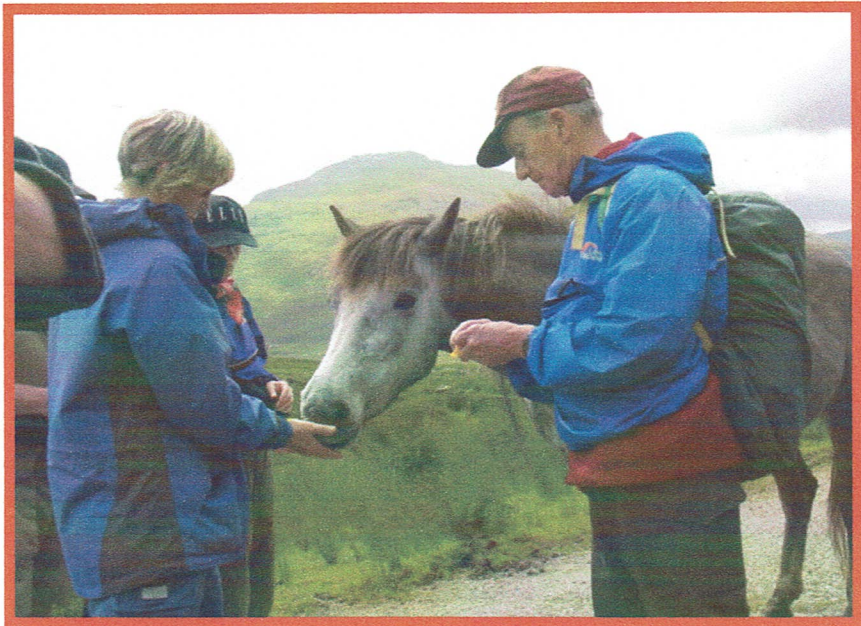
Over to you Editor. I’m exhausted after Day 2.!!!

John Murphy



Words from A Mountain Sage

“ It isn’t necessary how far or fast you go, but how much you enjoy it”



OUR WEBSITE

<http://indigo.ie/~behanc>

I am not an Internet surfer but recently I revisited our own website. It is a fund of knowledge about our club – facts and figures, places we have explored and the up to date walks programme. Even I found it easy to click from one section to the other. The Thumbnail pictures give a marvellous panoramic view of all our activities. They feature the ‘usual suspects’ as well as interesting places we have been and animals we have seen.

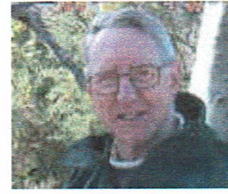
I would recommend that all our members visit the site and savour the diversity and details of The Trekkers Mountaineering Club.

The credit for all this work must go to Carol Behan whose initiative it was and whose upkeep it is.

Thanks Carol.

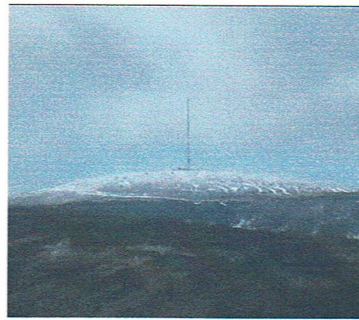
Here is a selection of some of the thumbnails:

FACES

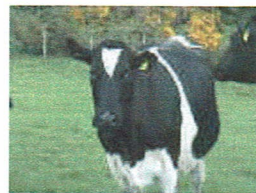




PLACES



ANIMALS



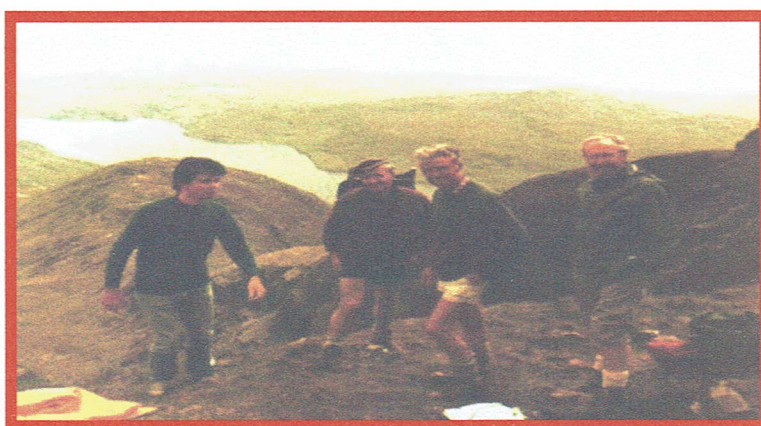
The Cardinal and The Trekkers

Did you know that the house where we have held our recent AGMs – the Dun Laoghaire Club – was once the home of the 3rd Parish Priest of Kingstown, Edward Mc Cabe. He presided over the development of the parish from 1865-1879 during which a large and imposing church was built and the Sisters of Mercy started the hospital.

In 1878 McCabe was consecrated Auxiliary Bishop of Dublin and following the death of Cardinal Cullen in 1880 he was appointed first Archbishop and then Cardinal. He continued to reside in Eblana Avenue and the building became known as the 'Little Palace' and was referred to as such for many years to come.

There is no doubt that many momentous decisions were made for Kingstown and beyond during Dr. McCabe's term of office.

So the next time you enter the hallowed building think of His Eminence and how he would have dealt with The Trekkers. Maybe his ghost still haunts the premises!



The First Away Trip – 1985

Kieran Trant, Charlie Ryan, Shaun Trant and Bill Hannon



On Top Of Lug – Oct. 1995

**John Furey, Paddy O'Duffy, Gerry Keane, Ronnie O'Sullivan
Fergal Trant, Ronan Browne, Shaun Trant , Terry O'Brien & Charlie Ryan.**

DUTCH FUNDS BUY IRISH BOGS

Many of the Irish Boglands have been consumed in recent years by our need for energy. Holland lost their peatlands centuries ago but realising their unique value they have bought four bogs in Ireland. Scragh Bog in Co. Westmeath was the first bog bought by the Dutch and was presented to their Irish people by Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands in 1987. It is now a haven for wild life.

Peatlands, which originally covered 17% of our land surface, is now down to less than 4% in "a relatively intact condition". Blanket bogs, which characterise much of the west of Ireland, are under threat due to sheep overgrazing; repeated burnings; patches of forestry and other badly located developments. If you want to help Save Irish Bogs contact Irish Peatland Conservation Council, 119 Capel Street, Dublin 1. 2-mail : ipcc@indigo.ie

Remember we walk over a lot of peatland and damage some of it.



Keem Bay – June 1988
Fergal, Jack, Gerry, Shaun, Charlie & Br. Alfred Hassett



Glendalough – September 1988
Kevin, Gerry & Ronnie

GLENDALOUGH

One of the best ways of approaching Glendalough is on foot, as the early Christians did, approaching the monastic ruins from the east through Derrybawn Wood. The ancient track is overhung by gnarled trees and, through gaps in the woodland; the spectacular scenery begins to unfold before your eyes.

Landscape

This is one of the most beautiful and best-known sites in Co. Wicklow and, as well as being of archaeological and historical interest, it is rich in plants and animals. The original Irish name Gleann dá Locha means the valley of two lakes and these are still the main natural features, which dominate the area. The valley is deep and narrow with the typical U-shape showing that it was carved out by a glacier during the last Ice Age. In retreating, the glacier left a moraine across the mouth of the valley, on which the present Glendalough Hotel is built. A tributary, the Poulanass River which plunges into the valley from the south, created a delta, which eventually divided the original lake in two. The valley is surrounded by high mountains with summits rising over 650 metres (2132 feet).

Habitats

Glendalough contains some of the best surviving examples of native broadleaved woodland in Wicklow. While they have all the appearances of ancient woodland most of the trees are less than 150 years old, as substantial clearances took place in the nineteenth century. The present woodland is dominated by sessile oak with an understorey of holly and birch with rowan around the margins. There are groups of introduced trees, including beech and Scots pine, near the lakeshore and on the northern slopes. The ground flora includes woodrush, bilberry, sweet vernal grass, a number of ferns and many typical spring flowers such as anemone and lesser celandine. Grazing by sheep, goats and deer has restricted natural regeneration on all but the steepest slopes. The Lower Lake, close to the monastic ruins, is fringed by a marsh and fen containing articulated rush, horsetail and marsh violet. The acidic water of the Upper Lake is deep and contains only a few plant species such as white water lily, pondweed and bulbous rush. At the upper end, near the mining village, the lake is shallower owing to deposits of granite sand. A marsh has formed here with common reed, bottle sedge, articulated rush and horsetail. The Poulanass River forms a deep gorge with rich growths of mosses and bryophytes in the moist conditions.

Wildlife

Deer and badgers are common in the woodlands and otters feed in the lakes and river. Bats are common in the valley. Red squirrels are regularly seen in the trees and stoats use the area for hunting prey such as rabbits. The oak woodlands are rich in breeding birds, especially wren, chaffinch, blackbird, blue and grey tits. The birch and willow woodland around the Lower Lake holds reed bunting and willow warbler, jay, treecreeper, blackcap and sparrow hawk are scarcer but regular members of the bird community. Wood warbler and redstart breed in most years in the oak woods. Woodland butterflies include silver washed fritillary, holly blue and speckled wood. Raven and peregrine breed on the cliffs above the Upper Lake and ring ousel can be seen on the higher ground in spring and summer. Herons and cormorants feed in the river and lakes, which contain small brown trout. Whooper swans are present on the Upper Lake in some winters.

(Extract from Wild Wicklow by Richard Nairn and Miriam Crowley)



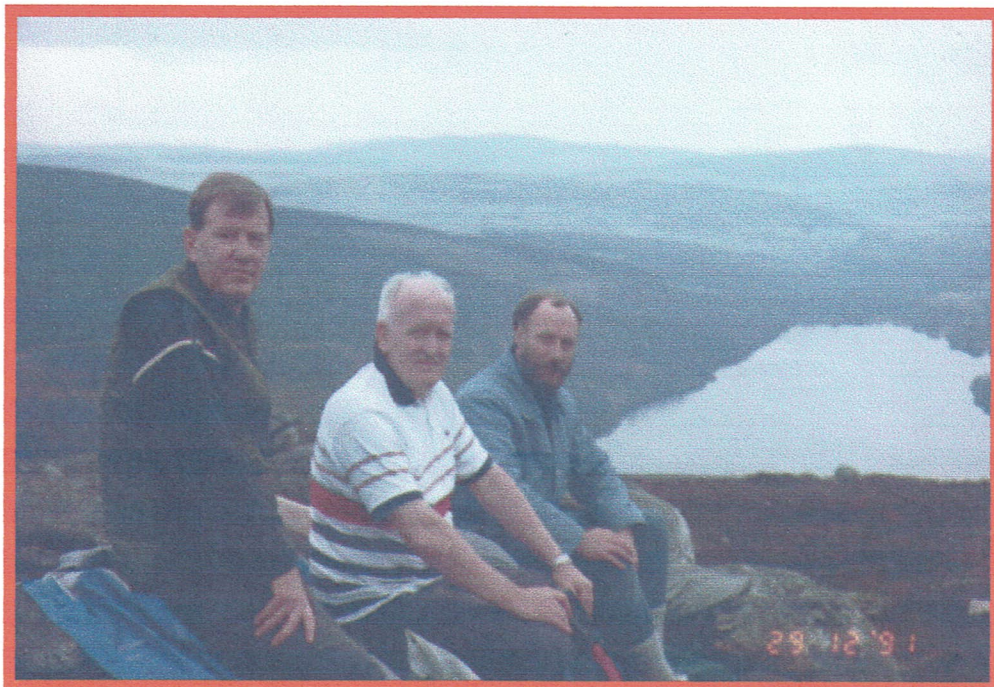
**Derrybawn – May 1989
George Barry, Pat Molloy with core group.**



Back at Base – Saturday – All alive and well.



**Connemara Revisited – June 1990
Cormac Trant plus three**



**Overlooking Lough Dan – December 1991
Brian Brennan, Paddy O'Duffy & Roger Kirker.**

RECOLLECTIONS

Monty your Editor/Publicity Officer/Social Manager asked me to write a piece for the Trekker magazine. He suggested Recollections of my own on the Trekkers Mountaineering Club. What I have written can best be described as ramblings.

As many members know, nothing can be written on the history of the club without the mention of Shaun Trant our founder, leader and long-term strategist. Shaun has produced two detailed booklets on the early history. These are still excellent reading.

The original group led by Shaun had to learn the hard way ---- by experience. I remember our gear in the early days was primitive compared to the present outfits. Wellington boots were to be seen on some feet. We learned very quickly that rubber and skin do produce a good mixture.

For a number of years Shaun took on all functions of walks co-ordinator, leader, treasurer and long-term strategist. There were no A B C walks. We did not know the routes of the walks until we disembarked the transport at the start of the walk. The usual was 10 to 15 miles.

I joined the group in 1985. On the last 2 miles of my first walk my legs stiffened up. I opted out near Johnnie Fox's Pub from where I rang a friend to drive me home. I said at that stage "**NEVER AGAIN**". However, escape from the group was not possible so I continued and learned to enjoy the company and the Wicklow Hills. I found the walks good for the body and soul. The world problems were usually solved in conversation at the top of the mountain or in the pub thereafter. The Civil Service was re-organised several times.

Jack Langan RIP and I would take up a position in the rear guard ---- a mistake! The main group would be some distance ahead. They would be good enough to wait for us but as we caught up they would move off again. We had to learn to stay in the middle group.

Coming down from Tonelagee one Saturday, Ian Thompson had trouble with a leg and had difficulty walking. With help he reached the road at the Wicklow Gap. I attempted to stop an N.I. registered car, but coming near us it accelerated. They must have thought we were rebels coming out of the mountain. The fact that some of us were wearing balaclavas didn't help. Charlie Ryan threw his cap into the middle of the road and succeeded in stopping the next car. Ian was transported to hotel in Glendalough where he had an enjoyable time at a wedding reception. When we reached the hotel I spotted the couple in the original N.I. car and explained that we were not trying to ambush them. They left the hotel rather promptly.

Ciara Furey and I had a run in with a bull in Co. Tipperary. However it turned out to be a frisky bullock. Too frisky for our liking.

Time passed on and more people were invited to join. The Constitution, which is now the granite foundation of the club, was drafted, approved and accepted. An important aspect is that officers must step down after three years. One result is that the present committee is the first that does not have any of the originals. This is healthy and displays that members are prepared to take on the working of the club----- sometimes onerous ----- without leaning on those who carried the organisation in previous years.

The creation of C walks was a very important development. It enables many members who might feel the A and B walks too strenuous to take part. C walks opened up the joy of mountaineering to those who might otherwise have missed out. In the fullness of time the present more energetic members will be grateful for C walks.

John Furey one of the originals became a very important member in many aspects, particularly in navigation, always willing to teach others the art.

Brian Brennan was assigned the job of editor of the Trekker magazine, a great source of communication. He was ably followed by Monty Tinsley who is an author of a number of books. Such talent available to us!!!!!!

Paddy O'Duffy an original has provided a pictorial history of the club and is still very active with his camera.

There is a serious note to be sounded. Mountaineering can be dangerous. All members must appreciate that safety measures must be followed. Numerous articles have appeared in the Trekker on safety. Tom Gillen and I have direct personal experience of injury. In November 1997 my leg was broken descending Derrybawn Mountain. Ann Brennan, Richard Needham and others were very efficient in the first aid procedures. The A + E staff in the hospital were very impressed with the manner in which I had been strapped and wrapped up.

After our first visit to Wales we knew that the Welsh could sing a lot better than the Irish. It was decided that a choral group within the club was needed. Practises were held, songs were written but it never really got off the ground in the way it was intended. The ladies have filled the gap with their excellent sketches at the Christmas dinners. Our permanent M.C. Splish Splash Brennan has plans for the future. The social night in Leenane was a total success and the talent from the members present was without question very enjoyable. One aspect of the social scene that seems to have disappeared is the singing in the return bus from walks. Charlie Ryan would always start with a rendering of Poor Little Lambs and Paddy Camera O'Duffy would remind us of The Banks – not A.I.B or B.O.I. Maybe our M.C. could use this bus time as a practise period for his new choir.

We have been very fortunate in having such excellent Walk Co-ordinators as Richard Needham and Eugene Logan. Beware of Eugene's nice family walks ----they can be very long.

In my view the club has been very successful. While some degree of fitness is necessary for membership compatibility is essential and we have been very fortunate on this front. All our committees have been prudent in approving members.

Finally I have enjoyed my years in the Trekkers Mountaineering Club and look forward to the future development of the club.

Kevin Beegan



**Killarney Way – June 1992
Ingrid joins the Team.**



A Break on the Dingle Way – June 1993

THE ETHOS OF THE CLUB

The ethos of the Trekkers Mountaineering Club was succinctly highlighted by its Founder and First Chairman Shaun Trant as follows:

- > A genuine appreciation of all aspects of our wide-open spaces.
- > Maintenance of a reasonable level of physical and mental fitness.
- > An enduring concern for the needs of other members of the group.
- > An avoidance of elite groups in the club.
- > An acceptance of both sides of the leadership role: leading and being led.

Extracts from the Constitution of the Trekkers Mountaineering Club

Objectives of the Club

- > To promote the interests of hillwalking and mountaineering among the members of the club.
- > To provide an opportunity for members of the club to meet and participate in hillwalking and mountaineering activities together and to engage in such social activities as may be arranged to this end.
- > To act on behalf of and in the interest of Club Members.
- > To promote awareness of the need to maintain access, conservation and protection of the hill and mountain environment.
- > To take part in the work and activities of the Mountaineering Council of Ireland.

Article 3-2

Membership is open to persons who are aged eighteen years or more, who have an interest in hillwalking or mountaineering and who are prepared to play their part in furthering the objectives of the club.

Article 3-3

In addition to the provisions of Article 3-2 above, the membership of the Club will be open only to persons who recognise that hillwalking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Members shall be aware of and accept these risks and agree to be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

Article 3-4

The power to admit new members to the Club and to suspend or dismiss members from the Club rests with the Club Committee.

Article 5-3

No member will serve as an Officer for a term longer than three consecutive years.

At the AGM in October Liam Walsh, Eugene Logan, Carol Behan and Monty Tinsley will be retiring and new members will be needed fill the positions of Chair, Walks Co-ordinator, Secretary and Publicity Officer. Our Treasurer, Eileen Gallagher is available for re-election. During the year Kevin Moore and Dick Ryan were co-opted as non-voting members as per Article 6-9 and they will be eligible for election.



**Sus Beag in the Bens – June 1994
Eugene Logan, Joe & Fred English.**



**Map Reading – June 1994
John Brett & Eugene Logan**



The Proof of the Story – Galtymore – June 1995



The Great Blaskets Invaded – June 1996



On Route to Ventry – June 1996



Ciara Furey surveys the Route to Ventry – June 1996



Ciara Furey surveys the Route to Ventry – June 1996



**Wicklow Landscape – September 1996
Paddy, Derry, Kevin & Dick.**



Wales – April 1997



On Route to Snowdon

GUIDELINES FOR WALK LEADERS

- NAVIGATION** Work on this. Be prepared to find your way in bad weather over unfamiliar ground.
- ROUTE** Put some thought into selecting a route that will suit the experience and fitness of the group. Pay attention to :
- a) distance involved
 - b) amount of climbing
 - c) special difficulties, i.e. rivers
 - d) time required for the walk
- If possible check out the route.
- DAYLIGHT** Pay close attention to the amount of daylight available. Avoid the dangers of getting caught out on an open mountain after dark.
- GROUP** Keep the group together, taking into consideration the various strengths of individuals.
- Agree a Leader and a Sweeper.
- Nobody to walk in front of the Leader or behind the Sweeper.
- RIVERS** Beware of rivers that must be crossed. A stream can become a torrent after a short spell of heavy rain.
- WHISTLE** Always carry a whistle. Do not hesitate to use it in order to keep the group together.
- COMPASS** Always carry a compass and be able to use it.
- STEEP GROUND** Steep ground is often best avoided. It is more dangerous descending steep ground than ascending it.

ROUTE

Leave notice of the route with a map showing the route marked (an A4 sized photocopy of the relevant section of the map is easiest) with a responsible person at home. We should also give a copy to the bus drivers, as they will be the first people to know that we are late at our final destination (i.e. the pub in Glenmalure)

We already give the bus drivers an ETA (for collection purposes). We should also give an ETA for our arriving home.

WEATHER

Get the weather forecast and judge how it will affect the walk. In winter months especially, if possible, look/listen at/to the forecast on Thursday & Friday for Saturday. Also listen to 0755hrs radio forecast on Saturday morning.

ESCAPE ROUTE

In winter months especially, it is important that we have an escape route in case we are caught on the mountain in severe weather or some other problem/emergency arises. We must also be prepared to use the escape route if necessary. Here the leaders of the day will make that decision and the group must abide by it without dissention. We cannot split the group under any circumstances. The leaders should not hesitate, if they so wish, to ask for advice in this matter from the more experienced members of the group on that day.

POSITION/ DIRECTION

Involve other members of the group as the need arises to check your position and direction.

EQUIPMENT

Our club should consider having some important equipment on each walk i.e. mobile phone, kishu, bivui bag, torch.

EMERGENCY

In the event of an emergency where we require outside assistance we use the following procedures:

1. Dial 999, ask for **AMBULANCE, MOUNTAIN RESCUE.**

2. **6 Blasts of a whistle }**

or

6 Flashes of a torch }

Repeated with one minute intervals.

3. **Where it is necessary to send someone for help it is advisable that three (3) people should go in case the party going for assistance get into trouble themselves.**



On Top of Snowdon – April 1997



The Nire Valley Trip – June 1998
Sign Posts do not confuse the Trekkers!



A Break with the C Team – Nire Valley June 1998



Dooish Mountain – beside Astellen Waterfall - June 2000
A well deserved rest after a cliff climb.

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Anyone for Santa Barbara?

We had a letter from Delima thanking all the Trekkers, but especially C Company for all the enjoyable walks she had amongst the Wicklow Hills. She has made contact with a Walking Group and hopes to join them soon. (I'm sure she would love to organise another type of an AWAY TRIP. So anyone for Santa Barbara?) Her email address is still the same and Four Seasons Hotel, Santa Barbara will do for the post.

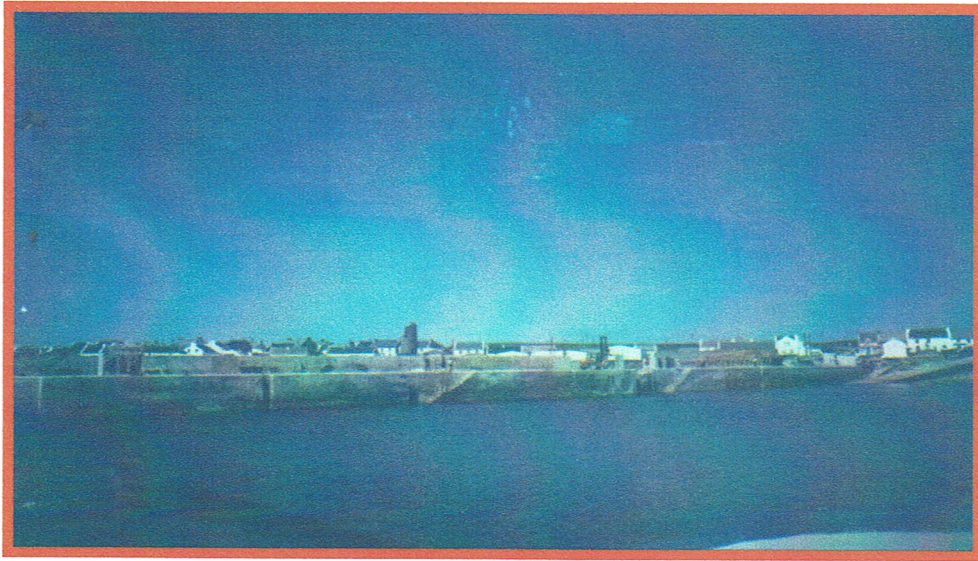
First to the Top

It was noticed that the youngest and fittest of the A Team – Dermot Murray – was the first to the summit of both Benglenisky and Benlettery on the recent Connemara Trip. The young of age sometimes surpass the young at heart.

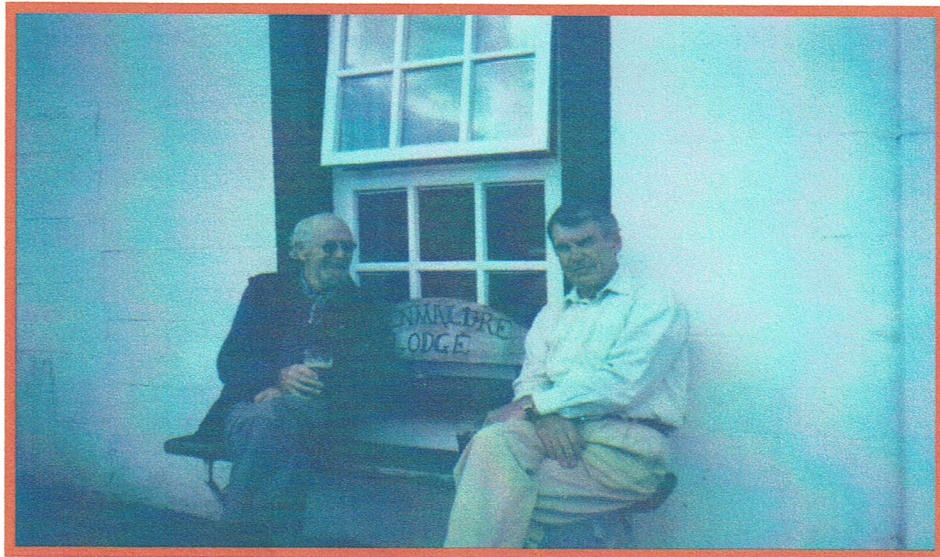
Congratulations to the following : Paddy and Marie O'Duffy on the birth of their second grandchild Ivan, Teresa Casey on the birth of her grandson Alan and to Reggie Halpenny on the birth of his first grandchild Sonny.

We welcome our two new members, Janette Hooban and Teresa Murphy.

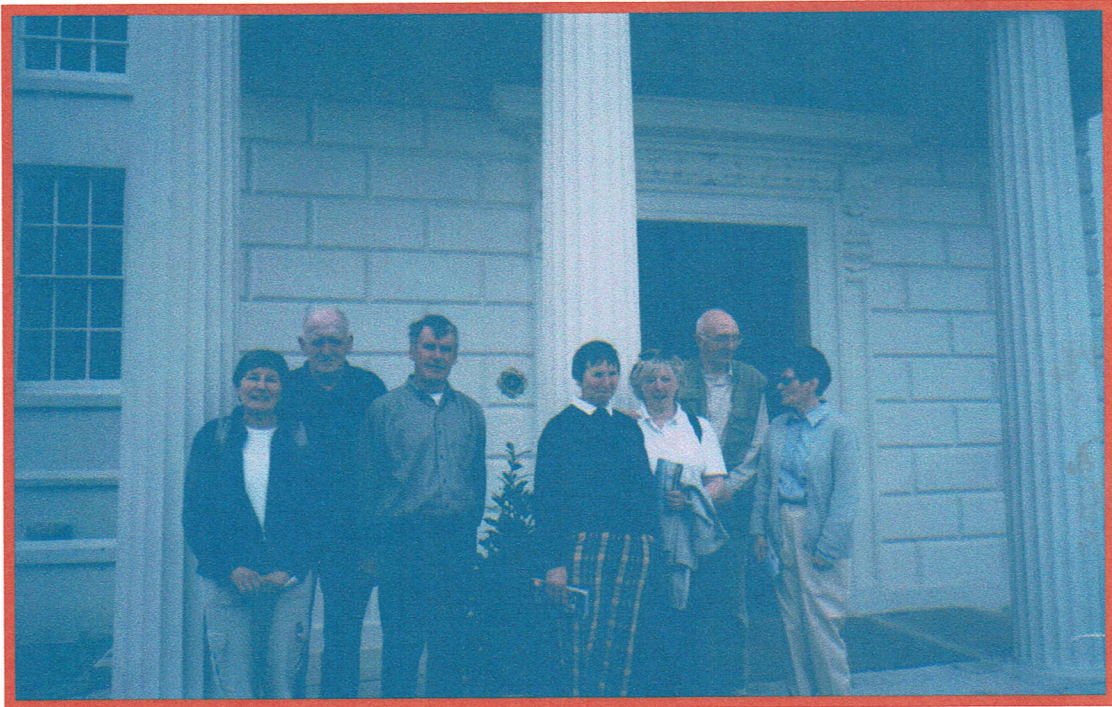
December 7th: Don't forget a change of attire for Dinner,
December 27th: Christmas Walk @ 10am.



Tory Island was on the Agenda – June 2000



The Usual Haunt – June 2001



The Trekkers at The Aras – May 2001



Carrantoohil Conquered – September 2001

The Trekkers Mountaineering Club

WALKS PROGRAMME – SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2002

Walk Leaders should :

DATE	GRADE	1 ST LEADER	2 ND LEADER	3 RD LEADER	TIME
Sept. 7 th	B	M. Sims	M. Sims	C. Mangan	9am
	C	F. English	M. O'Duffy	N. Boyne	11am
Sept. 14 th	A	E. Gallagher	C. McHale	C. Behan	9am
Sept. 21 st	B	M. Tinsley	I. Lawton	I. McCraith	9am
Sept. 28 th	B	P.O'Duffy	S. Cantwell	B. Brennan	9am
	C	K. Beegan	R. Halpenny	H. Fitzpatrick	11am
Oct. 5 th	B	L. Walsh	G. Fogarty	T. Murray	9am
Oct. 12 th	A	M. Sims	R. Crowley	M. Sims	9am
	C	C. Dorgan	M. Goff	M. Delaney	11am
Oct. 19 th	B	F. Mulloy	D. O'Hegarty	J. Murphy	9am
Nov. 2 nd	B	D. Needham	D. O'Neill	T. Gillen	9am
Nov. 9 th	A	E. Logan	K. O'Brien	D. Murray	9am
	C	D. Kirker	B. Coggins	B. Dunne	11am
Nov. 16 th	B	B. Bracken	W. Hannon	C. MacHale	9am
Nov. 23 rd	B	P. Connolly	T. Murray	M. Murray	9am
	C	J. Needham	M. Berthiaume	E. Tinsley	11am
Dec. 7 th	B	K. Moore *** BRING A	L. Walsh CHANGE OF	E. Gallagher CLOTHES FOR	10am DINNER
	C	C. Mangan	A. Keegan	T. Casey	12 Noon
Dec. 27 th	Christmas	Walk	B. Brennan	N. O'Reilly	10am
Jan. 4 th	B	R. Kirker	D. Ryan	B. Lane	9am

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

In the interest of safety please use the seat belts provided on the buses.

*Wherever you walk, take time to Stop and Stare in order to:
Wonder at creation,
Admire the Flora and the vista,
Understand the elements,
Appreciate the seasons.*
