

January 2016 - Issue 57

Irish Trekker



Croghanmoire Summit

Trekkers Mountaineering Club
Glenageary
Co. Dublin
www.trekkers.ie

Contents



- Chairman's Greeting
- Upcoming Away Trips
- Galtee Hike Weekend
- Walk Categories
- Willow Wheelers in Tanzania
- Caption Competition
- Trekkers Dublin Walk - James Gandon & John Beresford
- Training
- Photos

Chairperson's Greeting

Shay Murrain

I would like to wish a happy and healthy New Year to all our members, in particular welcome the members who joined recently. The club now has 134 members and is going from strength to strength. We have a number of exciting trips at home and abroad arranged by experienced leaders for the New Year. I wish to thank all of the leaders who arranged these trips, they add a wonderful dimension to the club. We have one trip organised for 'C' walkers in September however it would be helpful if we could organise an additional trip during the summer. Volunteers please contact any member of the committee and we will assist. This year we begin a programme of training managed by Owen McKeown, the first event, on navigation, will be held on the 27th February. We intend to include courses on first aid. We changed the website password as the previous one had been used for a number of years, many thanks to J. Murray for this. The arrangements for the summer party are on-going and more information will be available shortly. - *Happy Walking to all for 2016*

Welcome

Welcome to recently joined members - we wish you long and happy trekking.

- Ursula Elliott
- Eamonn Magee
- Mary Magee
- Catherine Taylor
- Patricia Thunder
- Jim Whelan

Date to Remember

2nd April

Memorial Dinner

Glenmalure Lodge

Editor's Note

*Another great selection of contributions, many thanks to all. Anne Hayes recounts the pleasures of the Galtee Mountains. Aine O'Donoghue, continuing her journeys with the Willow Wheelers brings us to Tanzania. Myles led a memorable walk in Dublin and introduces us to James Gandon and John Beresford. We include a piece on Owen's Training programme, the definitions of walk classifications & a new **caption competition**. Thanks again to all who contributed photographs especially Ita, Myles, Aine, Owen, Noel. Enjoy - Niall*

Niall Humphreys; niallandeileen@gmail.com

AWAY TRIPS

Geraldine, Noreen & Terry are organising a Trekkers away trip next Autumn to **the Cooley's**, County Louth.

(Sept. 9th to 11th.)

Category C

Already largely booked but contact those above if interested

The list is closed for
Shay's **Spring Walk in Spain**
the Sierra Nevada Mountains

April for one week

Category B

Brendan Bracken is organising a hut-to-hut trip to the
Dolomites for July.

Hikes will be in the region of 5/6 hours with some significant ascents of up 700m. The total distance over six days will be about 70-80 km.

The plan is to spend our first and last nights in hotels.

Category: A/strong B

Upcoming Training in Navigation Skills

Dates

February 27th - Full
April 9th
June TBD

Useful Resources on Trekker Website

(Members section under Guidelines)

- John Fury's Introduction to Navigation on the Hills"
- "Mountaineering Terminology" document

We will base the Session on 27th Feb in Glencree

All participants need a copy of "East/West" map sheet "The Dublin and North Wicklow Mountains" & Compass: "Silva" Type 4

The extra stops require more clothing layers than normal

A Useful Contact if trekking near Glendalough:
Glendalough Cabs: 087 9729452

Galtee Hike Weekend

Anne Hayes

Even Met. Eireann declared the last week of September as being “something of an Indian summer”. So with mostly blue skies and the mountains in the distance eight Trekkers organized and led by Brendan took off to spend a weekend in the Galtees. Being a ‘local’ from the foot of the Galtees I was really looking forward to this trip. Although I had walked many times in the mostly low-lying surrounding areas and had participated each year since childhood in the annual Galtymore climb, the last time I had been up was about 10 years ago. So I was really looking forward to getting into the mountains, seeing anew and ‘joining the dots’ so to speak. I only knew one way, the “tourist trail” and was apprehensive that someone might ask me for directions for any other route!



On Friday evening we met up for dinner in *Kilcoran Lodge*, where we stayed for the weekend. Conveniently located just off the M8 (near Cahir), Kilcoran Lodge is a well-established, relaxed and friendly hotel ... an ideal base from which to explore the area. Here we were fortified by the very generous portions at dinner, buffet breakfasts and packed lunches to sustain us through the day.

Saturday September 26th

On Saturday morning we met with *Jimmy Barry* who was our guide for the day. A proud Tipperary man and a true people’s person, Jimmy has vast knowledge and experience of all things Galtees. As well as being a member of the South East Mountain Rescue Association, he is also an active member of Mountain Meitheal. A keen photographer, Jimmy published his book “Under the Galtee Skies” in 2011. A compilation of some of his photos, they portray the beauty, history and ecology of the area. And so we drove to Kings Yard near the village of Kilbehenny. Here a range of services including secure parking (€2), a snack shop, shower and toilet facilities are available. From King’s Yard we took the rocky track that led out onto open moorland, passing the remnants of paths that were used in the war years to convey turf on improvised sleighs to Mitchelstown Creameries, as well as to local

homes, from the still visible turf-cutting in the blanket bog. This provided the first of many snippets of information of the day, in this instance the different types of bog: fen, raised and blanket bog and how they were formed.

Onwards, we crossed the best constructed footbridge I've ever seen in the mountains to bring us westwards and upwards onto open trackless moorland to skirt the lower slopes of Carrigeen and then Lyracappul mountains. With my new-found knowledge I was now identifying and appreciating the importance of sphagnum moss, how much water it is capable of absorbing (20 times its weight), making for wet bogland underfoot!



Sphagnum Moss

Heading eastwards we began the climb up Galtymore, using the Galtee wall as a guide. The Galtee wall is one of the best examples of mountain walls in Ireland. Of Scottish design it is about 4kms long and was built in the 19th century to separate two landowners' estates.

Galtymore is a 919m high mountain in the Galtee mountain range. It is Ireland's highest inland peak and qualifies as one of the Irish Munros. Although the summit is marked with a metal cross (painted each year by Tommy), the actual highest point of the mountain is marked with a pile of rocks just several meters away from the cross. The Trig pillar on the summit is broken and only half of it remains. The county borders of Limerick and Tipperary cross the summit so one can have one foot in each county, giving true meaning to the phrase "having one foot in each camp"!



As we neared the summit the light breeze turned into a strong gusting wind from the south. However we found shelter on the sunny north side and enjoyed lunch looking down over Lake Diheen (one of 5 corrie lakes in the Galtees), and out over the Glen of Aherlow, Tipperary plains and beyond. From here one also gets a very clear view of some of the cliffs

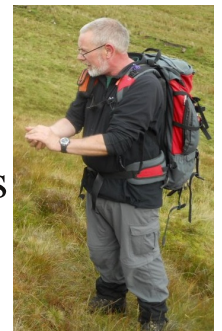
where in poor visibility I can imagine that one step could very easily be a step too far!

Leaving the summit we headed south over Knockduff with views of the Knockmealdowns and the Comeraghs beyond and picked up our homeward trail. All the time, Tommy pointed out areas of interest and entertained us with poetry, song, yarns, history of the Booley huts and the 'Ice road', mountain rescue experiences, identifying the different types of heather and advice on adjusting walking poles for personal use. Lots of information!



Our final stop was at a delightfully situated, isolated stone cottage ruins, where we imagined what life had been like for the occupants and if re-constructed, could be like living there! From here it was plain sailing along a firm track that led us back to Kings Yard. Before adjourning to Kilcoran for a post-walk 'beverage' and dinner we stopped off to purchase some Galtee Honey. As well as its anti-bacterial effects I'm told that honey also aids short-term memory ... useful for me when trying to remember what path I've taken!

A wonderful day guided by a man whose love of the Galtees is contagious ... a true 'keeper' of the mountains.



Sunday September 27th

Today Brendan was leader, ably assisted by Breda and Ita continued to be group photographer. Our start point was the Black Road to climb Galtybeg. The Black Road is a very popular ascent route to Galtymore and Galtybeg and is often referred to as the 'tourist route' ... evidenced by the many people we passed. Not very comfortable underfoot as it is very stony, it is an easy to follow track. Leaving the track we began to traverse rough ground in the direction of the coll between Galtybeg and Galtymore. Within a few minutes the mist came down. It really brought home to me how on trackless moorland it is so easy to become disorientated in mist. So Breda's compass came out and walking in single file, barely able to see the person in front, we climbed Galtybeg (799m). Not delaying here we walked east to get a glimpse of beautiful Lake Borheen (also known as Teardrop Lake because of its shape). Descending, we quickly picked up the Black Road again and

stopped at the Memorial stone for our picnic. This stone, in the shape of the tail section of a plane, was unveiled in 2006 for the three men from Abbeyshrule Air Strip who crashed in the Galtees in 1976.

A shorter day but a good walk following which we stopped to have a cuppa before getting back on the road to Dublin.

Over the two days in the Galtees we were treated to amazing views, majestic mountains, corries, sheer drops, gentle slopes, moorland, a little challenge, patchwork meadows, great open skies, lots of stories, conviviality and so much more.

Classification of Walks

Just in case everyone is not aware of the definition of the grades of walks we include the guideline here.

This information is on the 'about us' page of the website and we have recently added it to the Guidelines page in the members only section. Joe Murray has recently, 31 December, circulated a new password for access to this section.

Grade C: - This is confined to forest tracks and quiet roads. Gradients relatively gentle. Normal time is four to five hours with total climb up to 400m.

Grade B: - This covers forest tracks, some open hillside but fewer mountain tops. The elevation in general is less than for A walks. Normal time is five to six hours with a distance of 15 to 18 km. Total climb, 500 to 800m.

Grade A: - Covers steep gradients, mountain tops and open hillside. The emphasis is on terrain, length, elevation, and pace. Normal time is six to eight hours, the distance is over 18km with a total climb of >800m. An A walk significantly above these levels may be classified as 'A+'.

Wednesday walks may be grade C or B in difficulty; the leader needs to make the level of difficulty clear in the advance notification.

Leaders planning walks need to be aware of these definitions. Some walks may not be easily classified. The full St. Kevin's Way walk from Hollywood to Glendalough for incidence has been classified as both a B and an A walk as it is 26k in length but on track the whole way and without too high a climb.

Willow Wheelers Trip to Tanzanian Province of the Spiritians 2015

Aine O'Donoghue

Cyclists aiming to break the cycle of poverty

The Willow Wheelers cycling club, now in its 25th year, raises much needed funds for projects in the Third World. For many years the Wheelers have hosted quizzes, cake sales, and race nights to raise funds but the annual 100 mile cycle which takes place in May is the group's main fund raising event. Hundreds of adults and students participate in the event which is orchestrated with precision by the founder of the Wheelers Christy Mc Daid. Having been at the event I can vouch that it is a most uplifting experience - although I only sat in a car accompanying the cyclists to offer help



whenever it was needed. Every cent raised from the cycle goes directly to projects in the Third World. Each year a representative group of Wheelers visit the projects to allocate funds where they are needed most and to maintain contact with those working on the ground.

A New Destination - Tanzania

This year the Willow Wheelers chose a new destination, Tanzania, and were accompanied by Fr John Taizer C.S Sp. a native of the Maasai tribe. Also travelling were Bishop Liam Mc Daid, students, parents, teachers and friends of the Willow Wheelers. The fact that the Mission in Bagamoyo Tanzania was the first Spiritan mission in East Africa made this trip particularly special. Arriving in Dar es Salaam it was lovely to be greeted by a warm breeze at 4 o'clock in the morning particularly as we had left behind a cold, damp Ireland. It took a day to adjust and recover from the long journey and then the group headed for Bagamoyo to begin the Mission visits.

Slave Trading

Bagamoyo was a centre for slave trading, it was here in 1868 that the Spiritans set up the first Catholic Mission in East Africa to liberate slaves. They immediately set to work freeing as many slaves as they could, creating a community called "Freedom Town". Many of the freed slaves were ransomed or purchased by the missionaries themselves. When the slave trade was officially abolished in 1873, the missionaries continued to minister to the freed slaves, educating them

and helping them find employment. The first missionaries were open to all kinds of diseases and many of them died young. However the seed of faith they planted continues to grow and this is symbolised in the large Baobab tree planted in 1868 to mark the official opening of the Catholic Mission.

Arusha - giving hope

We headed north and continued our visits in Arusha, where we witnessed first-hand how the Spiritans work with oppressed and marginalized communities. The USA Holy Ghost Fathers Health Centre for example, cares for victims of AIDS. Pregnant women who are HIV positive are given anti-retroviral drugs to prevent their babies



from contacting the virus. To date the clinic has had a 100% success rate. “One day we hope to eradicate AIDS” Dr Kangaru told us “that is why we call this ‘The Dream Centre’”. Another project that stood out was the Tengeru Vocational Training School where students are taught a combination of practical skills and academic subjects. The Willow Wheelers

promised to buy tools and machinery for the workshops. Without skills and training the young people have little or no hope of finding employment. Indeed it was a common sight to see many young unemployed youths in the towns and villages of Tanzania.

The reality of poverty

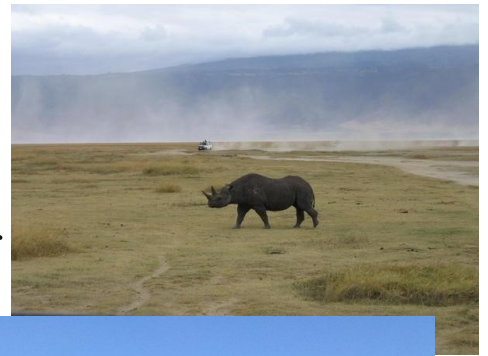
For the Willow Wheelers the trip is more than visiting and funding projects, it’s also about meeting people, listening to their stories and coming face to face with the realities of living in Third World conditions. The Maasai, for instance, suffer the effects of global warming, the rains are unpredictable and drought is widespread. From a distance the Maasai paint a tranquil picture, tall lean figures draped in ‘Shukas’ herding cattle. Up close things look different, the Maasai women we met were emaciated and most had rotting teeth. Fr. Richard Musodja CSSp who works in the Monduli Juu Parish attributes the poor health of his parishioners to the lack of clean drinking water.



The urgency of the situation prompted the Wheelers to fund a survey to find a viable solution for the water problem.

Wonders of Tanzania

There is so much more I could write about our trip to Tanzania, the beautiful scenery, the sight of Kilimanjaro, bathing in the warm water of the Indian Ocean and cooking freshly caught fish on the beach. Seeing animals such as tigers, wildebeest, zebras and rhinos in their natural habitat of the Ngorongoro Crater is truly breath-taking.



Thank you to the Trekkers

Finally I would like to thank The Trekkers for supporting the work of the Willow Wheelers by donating funds and taking an interest in the ongoing African projects. I'm sure at this stage that some of you are fed up of my constant references to Africa.



Your generosity will help aid workers in their quest to tackle poverty. Sr. Ingrid a member of Our Lady of Africa Sisters manages feeding and educational programmes in



Tandale Shanty Town. At times, she is disheartened, as she faces daily struggles to feed and educate the most vulnerable in society. She appreciated the gifts of money but she places more importance on the fact that other people had opened their hearts to the poor. She said "that it is the small things that matter, small good deeds lead to greater gestures"

CAPTION COMPETITION

We are looking for a suitable caption for the trekker's hidden talents (or not).

Entries by end April

(Thanks to Owen for the photograph)



Trekkers' walk in the footprints of architect James Gandon and power-broker John Beresford

Myles Duffy

One day in early November over two dozen Trekkers' withdrew briefly from tramping the granite of the Wicklow hills and took a close look at the immense contribution of the distinguished architect James Gandon to the character, profile and streetscape of our capital city, much of it accomplished under the patronage and guidance of the Right Honorable John Beresford MP. The Trekker outing included narrated visits inside the *Custom House*, the *Four Courts*; and the headquarters of the Honorable Society of *Kings Inns*. Another Gandon creation, *Carlisle (now O'Connell) Bridge*, was viewed from the top floor of Liberty Hall.



James Gandon (1742-1823)



Of French Huguenot descent, James Gandon was one of the leading architects in the late 18th century. Born in London on 29th February 1742, in an era when the majority in London lived in squalid circumstances, the gentry, nobility and prospering merchants were becoming ever more wealthy; building elegant squares and terraces of tall imposing houses.

Gandon was apprenticed at the age of 16 to **Sir William Chambers**, a distinguished architect of the era who combined a familiarity with ancient Rome and the art of modern Paris. Chambers became Architect of the Works to King George III on his coronation in 1760. He designed *The Casino in Marino* and *Charlemont House*, now the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery in Parnell Square, for James Caulfield, 1st Earl of Charlemont, - who was highly regarded as an art connoisseur and who, in 1785, founded the Royal Irish Academy and is now the nation's premier learned society and cultural icon. Chambers also designed the *Chapel and Theatre at Trinity College* when the Chancellor of the University was Prince William, 1st Duke of Gloucester and Edinburgh and brother of the King.

The first foray into Ireland by James Gandon came when he was runner-up in a competition among 60 architects in 1769 to become the architect of the Royal Exchange, now *City Hall*. He was 27 years old at that time. The winning architect, *Thomas Cooley* died in 1784 at the age of 44 and the project was completed under the architectural supervision of Gandon to a design recast by him.



Other public buildings that enjoyed the Gandon genius include *Army HQ at the Phoenix Park*, the eastern extension of Parliament Buildings in Westmoreland Street. Private commissions included the renovation and extension of *Abbeville, Kinsealy* as a private residence for John Beresford, a terrace of five houses on Beresford Place to the rear of the Custom House, *Emo Court* in Queen's County (Co Laois) and *Waterford Courthouse*.

Gandon was also a consultant to the **Wide Streets Commission**, a body spun from Dublin Corporation in 1757 and charged with transforming Dublin from a walled medieval city to modernity and is often defined as the country's first planning authority.

Married, with six children, James Gandon resided in a Georgian House at 7 Mecklenburgh Street off Marlborough Street (sadly, no longer in existence) and latterly at Canonbroke House in Lucan. Gandon had been a widow for thirty years when he died in Lucan in 1823 at the age of 80. He chose to be buried in Drumcondra in the Church of Ireland graveyard with his friend, the antiquarian Francis Grosse, a father of ten, whose death preceded that of Gandon by over thirty years.

Rt Hon John Beresford MP (1738-1805)

Apart from his parliamentary role in the course of which he represented County Waterford for over 40 years, John Beresford was also the first Chairman of the Revenue Commissioners, a role he occupied for 30 years; Chairman of the Ballast Board which was responsible for the development and maintenance of Dublin port and the quays on the Liffey and Chairman of the Wide Streets Commission which was responsible for the conception and layout of North Frederick Street, O'Connell Street, Westmoreland Street, D'Olier

Street, Dame Street and the creation of Parliament Street.

Prior to Beresford's appointment as Chairman, responsibility for taxation was transferred from the Irish Parliament to the Lord Lieutenant's regime at Dublin Castle. While Ireland was uncharacteristically peaceful in the 18th century, England fought five major wars from 1700 to 1815 and the principal means of financing these was through customs and excise.

The original port was located near Essex Bridge (now Grattan Bridge and probably known to most of us as Capel Street Bridge) which was the first bridge over the Liffey and linked Parliament Street with Capel Street, then the principal north-south urban artery. The original Custom House was built in 1707 under the patronage of the Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, William Conolly but had become unfit for purpose.

Beresford had a multifaceted vision for Dublin, the foundation of which was to improve accountability and efficiency of tax collection. His vision included moving port traffic east towards the mouth of the Liffey and the construction of a new bridge. His Custom House cost £200,000 to complete, a fortune at that time. But it was intended to be judged not merely as a facilitator of trade and commerce but by its impact as a palace; a public expression of the status and influence of John Beresford. But who was John Beresford?

He was son of Marcus Beresford 1st Earl of Tyrone who built Tyrone House on Marlborough Street, now headquarters of the Department of Education and, briefly, the largest private house in Dublin until Leinster House was completed. He was well networked. His ancestor was Tristram Beresford who settled in Ireland in 1574 and became manager in 1609 of London Company of Planters in Derry. He was wealthy and owned 60,000 acres in the vicinity of Portlaoighis Co Waterford; 26,000 acres in the vicinity of Arklow and 4,500 acres in Co Leitrim. He was married twice and became the father of 17 children. Nine children were born to his first wife, a native of a small town in Northern France in whose honour he named the renovated residence in Kinsealy. His second wife, Barbara Montgomery, was a celebrated and well-connected beauty, who bore him eight children and in whose honour the infamous Montgomery Street (Monto) was named! He was politically tenacious; survived a sacking on full pay in 1794 from his official positions by Earl Fitzwilliam whose tenure as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland barely lasted three months and showed that he enjoyed the trust of the British Prime Minister, William Pitt the

Younger! He also used legislation to replace an estimated 1,200 small distilleries with forty larger distilleries in order to make tax collection less onerous on the State.

The Wide Streets Commission

The Commission was established in 1757. Over the following decades to 1851, it reshaped the old medieval city of Dublin, and created a network of main thoroughfares by wholesale demolition or widening of old streets or the creation of entirely new ones.

The Commission widened Essex bridge at Capel Street and built Parliament St. and City Hall. They merged and widened several streets to create Sackville (O'Connell St.). They widened Dame St. to College Green. These changes moved the central artery from Capel St. to Sackville St.

Other notable architects building Dublin of the period

Richard Cassels (1690-1751): Leinster House, Carton, Russborough, Powerscourt, Rotunda, Westport House.

Edward Lovett Pearce (1699-1733): Castletown House, Dublin Houses of Parliament.

Theodore Jacobsen (d.1772): Trinity College quadrangle, West entrance from College Green

... and the Liffey it stank like hell ...

In the mid 1800s, for a length of the Liffey of about two kilometres - from Barrack (Rory O'More) Bridge to Carlisle (O'Connell) Bridge - one hundred and eighty one sewers emptied their untreated contents into the river. It was no wonder that the Liffey's powerful miasma was the talk of the town!

Piecemeal improvements were made. By 1825 the city's open sewers were closed in a rudimentary fashion and larger, more robust sewers were being laid citywide - but still emptying into the river. The practical solution adopted by most Dubliners was to cover one's mouth and nose and scurry over the Liffey bridges, especially at low tide!

Work on the much talked about city sewage system finally began in 1896 and it was in operation in 1906. Buried beneath the quays are giant interceptor sewers which direct all waste to the Ringsend pumping station. The city could breathe again - almost. The foul smelling Camac still emptied directly into the river until around 1980 - allowing a rock group to record a best selling song!

from <http://www.bridgesofdublin.ie/historical-dublin/the-liffey-and-dublin>

Training

Owen McKeown, as our Training Officer, has issued a couple of emails on Training, we reproduce their content as a reminder.

Navigation

The Navigation sessions are aimed at existing Leaders who want to practice or improve their skills and also new walkers who aspire to leading in the future. We encourage new members especially to come out.

We intend to incorporate Navigation and Map Reading training sessions in future Walks Programmes. In fact, the first of these is scheduled for **February 27th**. The session substitutes for a normal "B" or "C" walk on a Saturday at 2 or 3 month intervals.

The sessions are voluntary and take the form of a module dealing with the use of Map and Compass for "A/B" walkers and in the case of "C" walkers, it will take the form of map reading only. If any "C" walker wishes to broaden their experience with map and compass, they are welcome to attend the "A/B" sessions - as also are Wednesday walkers.

There may also be sessions on Sundays, if there is sufficient interest. This would have the advantage of not interfering with the normal Saturday walks programme.

First Aid

We intend to organise First Aid courses for all interested Trekkers. Such courses will be all day sessions tailored to our walking activities. These are being organised at the moment but since they require the participation of outside bodies such as Red Cross and St. John's Ambulance, this will require a little more time.

Other Courses

As well as these in-house sessions, all Trekkers are encouraged to take part in formal training sessions with outside bodies such as "An Oige" and "Outdoors Ireland". Some members have attended these in the past. They are an essential part of a walk leader's expertise especially if leading groups outside Wicklow and further afield.

These courses can lead to formal Leader qualifications such as "Mountain Leader". They are highly recommended and we intend to distribute regular newsletters and information with a view to broadening the skills base in the club in the future.

PHOTOS



Rathmichael



Glendalough



Christmas Party



Galtees



White Hill