



The Trekker

Trekkers Mountaineering Club Glenageary Co Dublin www.trekkers.ie
Edition 76 May 2023

Emerald rivers, limestone cliffs: trip to Croatia unforgettable



It's a cliffhanger: 41 Trekkers are just back from a trip which had rain, sun and wild horses. See story p5, 6

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Chair's Notes

The Trekkers are back in full swing after the dystopia of Covid. Much pent-up energy and demand for activities and events are fully in evidence. The programme of special events in these few months says it all.

Forty-one Trekkers are just back from Croatia, including yours truly, refreshed from action and fun, well described by Dermot Murray. This is only one of many upcoming outings.

A trip to the Pyrenees is organised for September. A little closer to home are trips to the Comeraghs (end June) and

the Cooleys (August). Getting away and above it all is in the air.

On the social front, the annual summer party will be in full swing on 10th June and more than 60 people have signed up for a night of celebration of life and likely exuberance.

The skill levels of members have been increasing rapidly with the fine map reading and navigation courses, and the leadership courses now provided in-house (next one on 18 June). Thanks to all involved.

Meanwhile, the weekly walks continue with a strong

presence of A and B walkers, a healthy rebalancing across different age and skill groups.

As a Committee, we are actively encouraging as many members as possible who are enjoying the thrill of walking to also lead or co-lead from time to time. Doing so has its own special thrill and reward.

I think you will agree that the Club continues to live up to its well-known reputation for love of walking imbued with good humour, generosity of time, and professionalism. Enjoy the summer months.

John Hegarty

Editor's Notes

Here's a new edition of the Trekker newsletter, which arrives as close to the May deadline as possible. It's full of varied and interesting pieces by Trekkers (and two outside contributors) on topics ranging from a hike by night, city and suburban walks, a walk on the Stairway to Heaven in Co Fermanagh and Joe Devine's story about how a bog he bought in Co Mayo is being restored. Josephine Cotter talks movingly about her late husband Michael, a Trekker stalwart.

There's also a full report on Trekkers' recent trip to Croatia: many thanks go to Dermot Murray who wrote his piece the minute he returned last Friday. Thanks to everyone who sent information about recipes, books, podcasts and shows and of course many many photographs. I've tried to include as many of them as possible throughout the newsletter. As always, I'm eager for contributions, ideas, pictures -- anything you'd like to send me: address them to franorourke@gmail.com.

Have a great summer.

Frances O'Rourke

Caption competition



What's happening to Padraig? It's caption competition time, and there's a prize for the winner. Send entries, labelled Trekker Caption, to franorourke@gmail.com



Safety first on the road

Safety on the hills is walkers' main consideration -- but some have recently raised concerns about safety when road walking. This is just a reminder that all walk leaders should have a hi visibility vest -- but ideally, everyone should bring one, and of course wear it when walking on a road. Other hi vis gear -- like this elaborate headgear, right -- would be useful too. Plus, remember to walk single file when walking on country roads.



Night Moves



Dublin city shine(s) bright like a diamond when you're looking at it from Fairy Castle in the dark.

Joe Devine and **Gaye Maguire** on the magic of a night hike

Route: Loop walk -- Johnny Foxes at Glencullen, heading to Three Rock, Kilmashogue, Tibbradden, Fairy Castle and back to start.

Distance: 20.7km

Time: 6hrs.15 minutes

Average speed: 4.4km/h

The A group of hikers is an ever-growing bunch – in numbers, in experience and in adventure, as evidenced by the days and trips especially over the last year. The boundaries are being pushed out, and so when it comes to planning a hike, well, some creativity can be required to keep everyone happy.

It was with this in mind that Joe suggested a night hike, while in a hut on the Picos (may have been a glass of two of red involved) and so the plan started taking shape. We wanted to do an introductory one where we weren't too far off any beaten track, as most people hadn't done a night hike before. After a bit of research, we decided to focus on a route used by Dublin & Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team (DWMRT) for their annual Walk the Line fundraiser in the Dublin Mountains.

Having completed the navigation course run by Mark



Into the woods . . . 17 Trekkers left Johnny Foxes car-park just after 3pm on February 4th. By dark, the atmosphere "was peaceful, cold and serene . . . the lights below us started to sparkle like jewels, and you could appreciate the beauty of our capital city"

& Alan, we were leaving nothing to chance, so planning had to be done. The DWMRT had used a path through Larch Hill, above Rathfarnham, but this was not an option for us as they had an event on the day of the planned hike. So part of our recce was to find an alternative route, and looking at the map it looked very straightforward -- except it wasn't.

We were very fortunate to meet a local man who showed us a path to link up to the Wicklow Way, and the last bit of the plan fell into place. We did the recce with another Trekker, Daithi Humphries, and our pal Michael Fortune, just back from Denali in Alaska. The night was freezing but clear and we didn't get lost. Result!

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'At dusk, we watched the sky darken slowly'



From page 3

We figured we'd get about eight or 10 people out on the 4th of February. We were amazed that we had 20 people on the list pretty quickly. The day arrived, clear and cold – perfect. We had three unavoidable cancellations. Some of us met in Johnny Foxes for a late lunch beforehand, and after a quick safety check (headtorches/reflective gear/food), we left the overflow car park just after 3pm.

Starting while it's bright lets your eyes get accustomed to the light easily, and it's a great experience to walk without the head torch by moonlight if you can. The forecast was for a bit of drizzle. Within an hour, we were drenched! Very heavy rain showers appeared out of nowhere but we were all prepared. Luckily that was the only rain, and the rest of the evening was beautiful.

We had a few hours of light before it started to fade,

and this also gave everyone time to adjust to the different environment that is hiking at night.

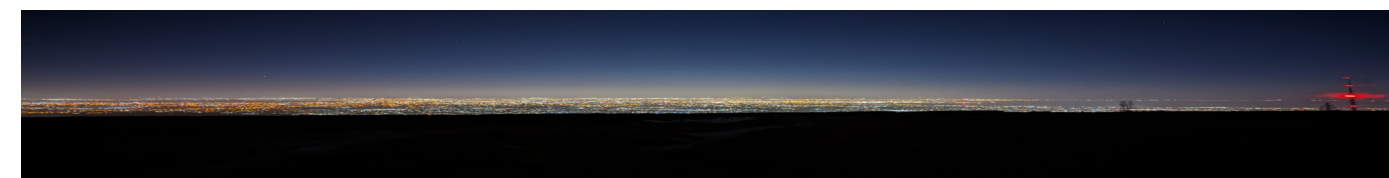
At dusk we stopped on the Wicklow Way for our tea, and it was so peaceful to watch the sky darken slowly, on such a lovely evening. You have to be extra careful about where you walk, you probably have to concentrate more (though some of the group ignored that and chatted the whole way around as usual – no names!!) and walking through trees takes on a whole new feeling.

All of a sudden, it's dark, and that's when the magic started. The lights below us started to sparkle like jewels, and you could appreciate the beauty of our capital city spread out – it was totally stunning. We spent a fair bit of time on Fairy Castle trying to identify different buildings and parts of town. Aurimas took some amazing photos which captured the atmosphere – peaceful, cold

and serene. In the last forest we turned off the torches to appreciate the surroundings and were able to finish in the moonlight as the sky had cleared.

We were walking at a great, steady pace, nothing to do with getting back to Johnny's before closing time! We had no issues on that score and enjoyed a drink and chat in the pub before heading home (via the chipper) for a good night's sleep. The feedback we received was really positive. Everyone seemed to enjoy the experience. Three or four of us had hiked in the dark before, so it was a new experience for the majority on the walk, which made it very special.

It was great training for anyone anticipating doing long hikes involving night starts or finishes. So, here's to the next one – you'd never know, we may even make it more of an adventure and camp out or hike off track with a few navigational challenges!!



First rain, then sun and singsongs

A trip to Croatia repeated the success of last year's trip to Crete.....

Dermot Murray reports

A feature of any successful enterprise is that once it has been achieved, efforts will inevitably be made to repeat it. The cynics among us will profess that this can only lead to disappointment – but then the cynics among us don't necessarily get it right every time.

And so after the huge success of the trip to Crete in May 2022, and not wanting to mess about with a winning formula, the Trekkers returned to foreign shores and warmer climes by descending en masse on the Dalmatia region of Southern Croatia. The size of the group increased from 31 to 41, and our



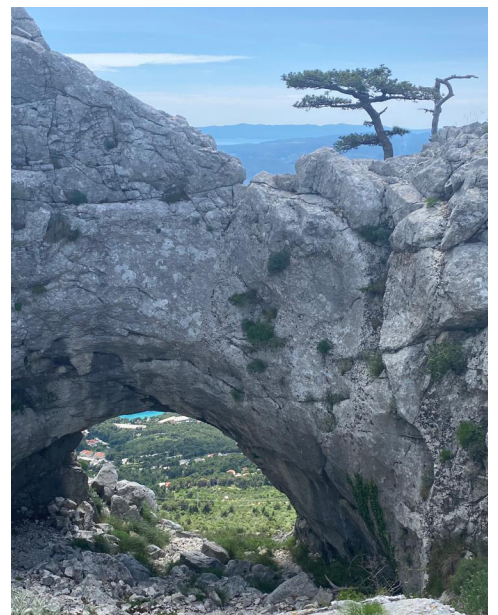
Trip organiser Mary Murphy, right, and Nick O'Loughlin, centre, show Trekkers how to chill out on a cliff edge. Below, from left: Dermot Murray; synchronised swimming in the Adriatic; eye in the sky

journey began by flying to the city of Split before undertaking the short bus-ride to the small town of Makarska. This quiet harbour is sandwiched between the calmest of seas and a vast barrier of sheer-falling limestone, towering above us; and so for the first 8 nights of our holiday, it became our home and base.

At first, the weather gods seemed to be frowning as they

looked down upon us, with the aforementioned cliffs of limestone becoming obscured by mist and heavy rain. Ingenious strategies were concocted to dry off wet boots and clothing under the conditions of staying in a hotel (some involving hair-dryers and the heat from kettles) and equally ingenious strategies were employed to make boots

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Boat trips and a walk over a precipice

From page 5

and clothing – already damp – just that bit more comfortable (the wearing of shower-caps over the feet was one such tactic).

But as the days passed by, frowning gods became smiling ones, and for the rest of the holiday we were to enjoy sublime heat and sunshine.

In terms of the walks themselves, these were, by and large, divided into three levels of difficulty, and featured rocky terrain, long descents and high temperatures – though with plenty of opportunities to dip hats into plunging mountain-streams and then to place these hats over perspiring heads for glorious relief.

And the walks brought with them a myriad of unforgettable experiences: sightings of snakes and limbless lizards; crossings of open land in the midst of wild horses; a tour of a monastery nestled in the craggy heights; a view through an archway of rock to lands far below; a boat-trip upon an emerald-green river to the town of Omis; and, of course, the Sky Walk.

This final feature was a balcony-like structure with a glass floor that invited individuals to walk out over a precipice and a fall of many thousands of feet for a most unnerving (and strangely exhilarating) experience. As with the Crete trip, the days of walking were interspersed with rest days and a chance to recharge the batteries for the exertions to come.

Naturally, an important part of the holiday were the



From top left, clockwise: Trekkers in the mist on Day 1; on the ferry to Brac island; another rocky road in Croatia; blessed is Nick amongst women; Trogir, a town 27km from Split

restaurants and food – and in this regard Makarska did not fail to deliver, nor did the town of Bol on the island of Brac where we spent the last 3 nights of the trip.

Pizzerias were especially prominent in both towns, but the fish and seafood was also excellent, and a highlight for me was a brodetto (or fish stew) of prawn-tails, mussels and monk-fish, no doubt enhanced by all of the walking beforehand and the appetite this walking unquestionably brought about.

In the main, the group of 41 broke up into clusters in the evening-time, although on two occasions during the holiday we congregated as a unit, with the second of these gatherings being rounded off with a riotous

singsong.

Sadly, our sojourn in the sun (and rain) could not go on indefinitely, and we always knew that suitcases would need to be packed and goodbyes would need to be said; but our singsong on the final night served as a joyous conclusion to 10 days engaged in the most pleasant of life's activities and a hugely successful trip overall – so that any or all cynics must now shrink away in shameful silence.

An enormous thank you must go to Nick and Mary for all their hard work in organising the trip, but special mention must also go to our guides Thierry, Mate and Antonia, whose enthusiasm and love for the hills was truly a thing to marvel at.

Trekkers train to take on the hills

20 Trekkers took the club's first Map Reading & Navigation Beginner's Course -- then put what they learnt into practice.
Alan Kane -- who created the course -- reports

I am delighted to report that the first Map Reading & Navigation Beginner's Course has taken place and the feedback from participants is very positive.

We started by running a pilot course in February with four members. The classroom sessions were held in Cabinteely Pastoral Centre and the outdoor sessions held in Cabinteely Park and Crone Wood. Feedback from the pilot was positive so with a few amendments we were ready to go with the course itself.

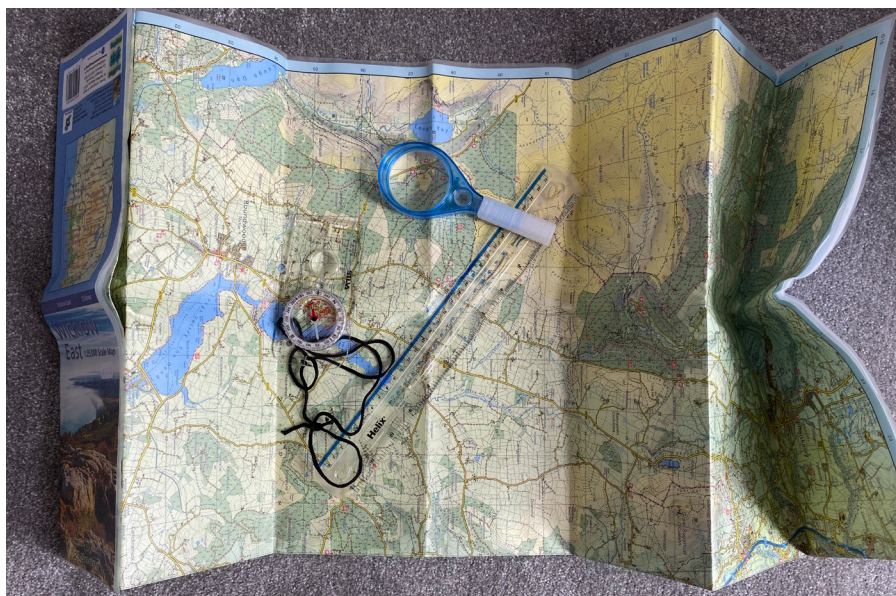
Twenty eager trainees and five tutors assembled in Fitzpatrick's Hotel in Killiney at 9am for day 1 of the course. With the room set up with a separate table and chair for each trainee to accommodate their maps, the first comments from trainees as they entered the room was 'are we doing the Leaving Cert'.

The course consisted of four modules; The Map, The Compass, Route Cards and Outdoor Active. The approach used was a combination of Powerpoint slides and breakout groups with a tutor for every four trainees as they worked through exercises to get them comfortable with the different navigation techniques.

The afternoon session on

day 1 was held in Killiney Hill Park where trainees worked with their tutors to master the different compass techniques.

Day 2 was held a week later to allow trainees the opportunity to do 'a bit of Homework', as we know no course would



be complete without 'a bit of Homework'.

Trainees were tasked with preparing their first Route Card which they would use on the afternoon of day 2 in Crone Wood. The morning session of day 2 covered the basics of using Outdoor Active, then it was into the cars and off to Crone Wood.

Most of us will have heard the phrase 'Use it or lose it', this applies generally to all training courses but somehow it seems to be particularly relevant for Map Reading & Navigation courses. With this in mind, the committee agreed to one Wednesday walk each month being used as a 'Navigation Practice Walk'.

Participants are given the opportunity to prepare a Route Card for the walk and have it reviewed by one of the tutors in advance of the walk. On the walk itself participants use their own route cards to take turns leading stages of the walk with

coaching from one of the tutors. The first of these walks was held on 19th April around Trooperstown Hill and Round Hill. Future Navigation Practice Walks will be held on the following dates 21st June, 19th July, 23rd August, 20th September and 18th October, these walks are open to all members but will be of particular

interest to those who completed a Navigation course at some stage in the past.

The five tutors deserve special mention, without their contribution we couldn't make this happen: thanks to Mark Taylor, Ann Carroll, John Casey, Farannan Tannam and Áine Allen.

We will hold another Map Reading & Navigation Beginner's Course later this year, dates to be decided. If you are interested in attending the course just drop a mail to alanfkane@gmail.com

Participant Padraig put the training into practice: see page 8

Padraig -- a map and compass user reborn

by Padraig O Fathaigh

I was looking forward to the course from the moment Alan announced it. The last time I had held a Silva compass, Gerald Ford was President of the free world and Jack Lynch was still Taoiseach. Last year I co-led a walk for the first time.

When John Casey was discussing the grid references for the various stages I was genuinely surprised and asked why not GPS coordinates and Outdoor active – I had even prepared my case at home for the purchase of a Garmin device – probably based on “John Casey said I’d need one”. Sorry, John! By the end of that day I was “map and compass user reborn”.

All I needed to do now was hone my skills or indeed re-acquire my long forgotten map and compass skills.

On the days of the course, the enthusiasm was palpable. All participants thoroughly enjoyed the classroom sessions and then the practical sessions giving an opportunity to use our new skills. It was very apparent that Alan had spent long hours assembling the material and putting the course together, drawing on an obvious and considerable expertise and enthusiasm for the subject matter. Having our tutors, Mark Taylor, Ann Carroll, John Casey, Farranán Tannam and Áine Allen, for each group of four made the assimilation of the material much easier.

Many of us have attended very worthwhile courses through work or professionally and then not put the course material immediately into practice. I remember reading many years ago that such knowledge acquired is lost within a surprisingly

short time if not practiced. The first of the practical application days was hugely valuable in addition to being a good day out on the hills. Each participant on the practice day was given a map of the route two weeks before from which we prepared Route Cards for submission to Alan and Mark prior to them being used on the day.

The absolute need for care and accuracy in measuring the distances and the bearings for the Route Cards was further illustrated. Thank God Mark was with us during my practical session because I afraid my Route Card was such that we’d have been like Moses and his tribe of old, wandering in the desert for 40 years, or at least long past teatime. I would thoroughly recommend to any trekkers venturing out on the hills to take part in the next course.

I have prepared Route Cards for future hikes with fellow course alumni and I can assure you that putting the knowledge into practice has added considerably to the enjoyment of hiking. Indeed, while walking the first half of The Wicklow Way recently with fellow Trekkers Liz and Louise, the practice of correctly orienting a map with compass was useful in saving us several additional kilometres from incorrect directions.

In conclusion, I can confirm that I have not purchased a Garmin device - yet. However, I have acquired not one but two compasses, six maps (waterproof of course), two magnifiers with led lighting to read the maps, a folding ruler and a pencil with the 1:25,000, 1:50,000 and metric scales marked on it. I have recently seen a notebook for “field notes”, with waterproof pages for sale online. I’ll let you know how it works out in due course.

‘The last time I’d held a compass, Jack Lynch was still Taoiseach’

Welcome to new members



Sarah Power, left, Julie Power and Barry O'Dowd. The club is currently closed to new members

'I admired Michael so much'

Josephine Cotter and her late husband loved to dance as well as walk

"Michael loved the chatter, that was the most important thing for him. I like walking on my own, but he used to love to be at the bus early, to talk to people."

Josephine and Michael Cotter joined Trekkers in 2009 and soon became deeply involved in the club. Four years after Michael's death, Josephine is grateful for what belonging has given her: "It's so important, after you're left on your own, after a good, happy marriage. Trekkers are amazing people, smart, knowledgeable, people who handle life well."

Many Trekkers remember Michael – who was walking up to three months before his death in April 2019 -- best from three away trips that he and Josephine led to France. "We just loved France, went every year with the children. From the mid-1980s, we'd been very involved in Comhaltas, went dancing every Friday night in its Monkstown centre. In 2007 and 2008, we'd taken a group to the Dordogne."

Then Trekkers' committee gave the couple the go-ahead to organise a trip abroad – and in July 2011, they brought B and C walkers to the Gorges du Tarn. Nowadays, organisers of Trekker away trips outside of Ireland/UK use specialist local agencies. But for all three of their trips away, the couple went on holidays a year ahead, receiving all the walks, sussing out and booking hotels and transport, with Josephine acting as Michael's translator. The trips were memorable, not just for the beauty of the surroundings -- Languedoc at Easter 2017 and the Pyrenees at Easter 2018 – but for the attention to detail.

Josephine – Cummins, as

she then was -- was the sixth of nine children growing up on the family farm in Doon, east County Limerick. She got what was then named "the call to training" after doing her Leaving Cert and an interview, and went to Mary Immaculate teacher training college in Limerick. She met Michael – Mícheal to Josephine -- after becoming friends there



Josephine and Michael Cotter on a trip to the Pyrenees

with his sister Mary, who took her to the Cotter family home in Bandon. Michael worked in AIB in Ennis, Co Clare, at the time. "We both had entanglements but realized where our hearts lay. We married in 1976, when I was 22; he was 26."

Walking then wasn't a big part of their lives: the couple moved from Limerick to Dublin, where Josephine taught in Stanhope Street primary school. The years that followed were busy, with the couple moving first to Tralee, then back to Dublin as Michael was promoted in the AIB. Their first child, Tom, was born in 1978, their second, Michael, in 1981 and Josephine became "a stay-at-home wife" when they lived in Kerry "which produces more teachers than any other county". In the late 1980s they fostered a year-old baby girl, Nadine and two years later, her younger sister Lyndsey. Sadly Lyndsey passed away in 2006;

Nadine still lives with Josephine.

Josephine's next teaching career came about slightly by accident. After settling in Killiney, "I was looking for a hobby and thought I'd improve my swimming." After taking lessons in Killiney Castle hotel swimming pool, she got a lot of qualifications – she trained as a swimming teacher, did lifesaving classes and lifeguard training and then trained to do swimming for people with disabilities.

"That's how I got back to proper teaching: I was told there was a job going in St Augustine's [a school for children with learning disabilities aged 8 to 18] in Blackrock for four days a week. In 1997, I went back teaching full-time there and retired last year."

Michael retired in 2005 but he was always busy, both before and after retirement. He was Trekkers' publicity officer from 2011, later the club's secretary, and from 2017 until his death in 2019, secretary. "I admired him so much. He was so interested in people. He got interested in genealogy, connected with people all over America; as well as walking, we both loved dancing, set dancing, ballroom dancing. His interests were many and wide-ranging, he played violin and guitar, produced beautiful botanical paintings, read widely on history and loved cooking. We were a very lucky couple, we really suited each other." Josephine is still an active Trekker, just back from the recent trip to Croatia. And she's trying to get friends interested in her latest hobby, Scottish country dancing. "It's every Thursday night from 8pm to 10.30pm in the Presbyterian church on York Road in Dun Laoghaire".....**FO'R**

At Galtymore summit, the band played on

In June 1995, Trekkers walked the Ballyhoura Way-- and found a brass band on top of a 918m high mountain. **Monty Tinsley** reports

For the first 15 years of the Club, there was no organised Trekker walk during the months of July and August. The calendar year concluded with a weekend away from the home base of Dublin and Wicklow in some part of Ireland. In June 1995 this expedition took place in Tipperary.

At that stage there were only 31 members in the club and 14 of them came on this trip traversing the Ballyhoura Way and the Galtee Mountains. Galtymore, at 918m, is the only Irish Munro outside Kerry and Wicklow.

There are a few memorable things to be mentioned about this Away Trip:-

- 1) It was the last such outing that included Shaun Trant.
- 2) It was the first time the team included a lady – Ciara Furey.
- 3) It would be 20 years before the Trekkers repeated the Galtee Challenge, when Brendan Bracken led the charge in 2015. The following is an extract from Trekker No. 3 written by its editor, Brian Brennan.

“We started in Aherlow on a fine warm sunny day with a slight breeze as we gained height. We contoured



Lough Curra, below Galtymore mountain. Bottom picture: the loop of Galtymore

around the side of Cash Mountain without going to the summit but could not avoid the very steep climb to the summit of Galtymore.

“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 southern side of the range.

“On the way we met people of all ages and sizes, from a four-year-old to an 80-year-old gentleman who insisted he would get to the top in his own time.

“From Galtymore we continued on a circuit which brought us over Slievecushnabinna and back

to our starting point. We were picked up by cars and brought to the Aherlow House Hotel where we stayed the night.”

Postscript

Ten years later I was doing recce in the area to check out walks that would suit the C Group and I called to the local Information Office.

There I met a lady who informed me that she was on Galtymore that

day in 1995. She also highlighted two bits of information:-

1) There was indeed a band on top on the day: they had carried all their instruments to the summit and performed to raise money for a local charity. So, I had further confirmation that the “hills were alive with the sound of music” on the 25th June, 1995.

2) She also remembered a group of walkers joining them but not being allowed to stay too long. That too confirmed the story I heard that “they were moved on” -- no doubt by Shaun, in case they might lose their pace and commitment!!! In typical Trekker fashion there was the usual enjoyable social aspect to the weekend’s proceedings concluding with a music and dance session in the Glen Hotel.



“From Galtymore we continued on a circuit . . . and stayed that night in Aherlow

Restoring a bog in Bangor Erris



Bog restoration is in the news, with Mountaineering Ireland looking for volunteers to help restore Barnacullian bog in the Wicklow mountains. A few years ago, Trekker Joe Devine, left, bought an 1,800-acre bog near Bangor Erris in Co Mayo in order to rewet, restore and remediate it. This work is being carried out by Bord Na Mona. He took on the project as his contribution to the environment and hopes to generate carbon credits, improve water quality and garner other biodiversity benefits. He also plans, next year, to celebrate the 35th anniversary of a 42km Trekkers walk on the Bangor Trail through the Nephin Mountains from Bangor Erris to Newport, Co Mayo, by following in their footsteps over two days. The Bangor Trail goes through the only technical Wilderness in Ireland. Below, **Joe Devine** describes exactly what the bog conservation plan is.

This idea of restoring a bog came from hiking the Bangor Trail in 2017 through Ireland's only technical Wilderness Area, near Ballycroy in Mayo. A bog near Bangor Erris was for sale at the time but the deal never closed and four years later I got a call to discuss whether I had any ideas as to who might be interested in taking it on. I called everyone I knew in forestry, carbon trading, tourism, peat production and renewables and after this due diligence I decided to go ahead and buy it.

It has been a journey of discovery and education ever since and Bord Na Mona are helping me to restore the bog. In this article I will give you details of:

1. Restoration Plan
2. Rehabilitation Measures
3. Rehabilitation Goals and Outcomes
4. Key Constraints

Criteria for Successful Rehabilitation

By its nature the subject matter is technical but I have tried to summarise the project in a non-technical way. I include a few photos to give you a sense of the scale and what we are trying to achieve.

Restoration Plan

The restoration plan includes measures to restore this area of blanket bog. The bog was originally drained in the 1980s for industrial peat extraction.

Although only a small proportion of the original peat mass was removed, the entire acrotelm (i.e. peat containing living plants) was removed during initial peat extraction across a significant proportion of the site.

As the site has not been used extensively for industrial peat extraction for nearly 40 years, much of the site therefore consists of a mosaic of drained and degraded intact and revegetating blanket bog vegetation communities. The main objective of this restoration plan is to re-wet and restore this area of degraded blanket bog by blocking drains to raise water-levels and therefore encourage the restoration of wet blanket bog vegetation and associated habitats.

Such habitats will eventually return as a naturally functioning blanket bog habitat in good condition. Small areas of intact blanket bog and associated lakes and pools also occur within the boundary. The proposed drain blocking measures will further improve the quality, resilience and ecological coherence of the wider blanket bog landscape.

The proposed restoration should have the potential to bring significant biodiversity and other ecosystem service benefits to this site by improving blanket bog habitat condition and this would support Ireland's

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Main goal is restoration of degraded blanket bog



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national objectives in relation to restoration and conservation of Atlantic Blanket Bog.

Rehabilitation Measures

In order to achieve the proposed restoration of the bog, a combination of the following will be implemented:

- More intensive management of water levels through outfall management, drain-blocking and management of water levels within the bog; and
- Re-wetting of the drained and degraded remnant deep peat that will deliver suitable conditions for development of naturally functioning blanket bog vegetation communities.

The proposed restoration and rehabilitation measures are collectively designed for climate action benefits, to accelerate the trajectory of the site towards a naturally functioning blanket bog ecosystem, while eventually becoming a reduced carbon source and ultimately carbon sink in the future.

Rehabilitation Goals and Outcomes

The main goal, and outcome, is the restoration of degraded blanket bog. Another goal is the optimising of hydrological conditions for the development of Sphagnum-rich blanket bog vegetation communities, where possible.

The rehabilitation goals and outcomes take account of the following:

It will take some time for stable naturally functioning blanket bog habitats to fully develop across the entirety of the bog i.e., drains becoming infilled with Sphagnum moss and becoming peat accumulating one again.

Large parts of the bog have the potential to develop active blanket bog analogous to the priority EU Habitats Directive Annex I habitat within the foreseeable future (c.10-20 years).

Drain blocking is also likely to restore many of the previously drained lakes. The restoration of the lands within the boundary and the adjoining NHA/ State-owned lands will ultimately contribute towards improving the overall ecological coherence of the blanket bog habitat in the area.

Rehabilitating former drained blanket bog will also in the longer-term support other ecosystem services such as the development of more typical intact blanket bog vegetation communities and associated habitats, which in turn will support biodiversity and local attenuation of water flows from the bog. Restoration of the bog will support multiple national strategies of EU Habitats Directive objectives for blanket bog restoration and conservation, climate action, biodiversity action and other key environmental strategies such as the Water Framework Directive.

The time frame for the delivery of the restoration measures will be undertaken according to available resources and appropriate constraints.

Key constraints include:

- Bog conditions. Rehabilitation outcomes of sites can be constrained by the environmental characteristics of these particular areas.
- Current land-use. Much of the Bog was drained but not subject to intensive peat harvesting i.e. only a small quantity of peat was removed.
- The interaction between the boundary of the bog and the surrounding landscape. Care has to be taken that no active restoration measures are carried out that could negatively and knowingly impact on surrounding land.
- It is expected that weather conditions will be within normal limits over the restoration plan timeframe. Long periods of wet weather have the capacity to significantly affect ground conditions and constrain drain blocking and other ground activities.

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Baseline monitoring in 2022 will be repeated



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Criteria for Successful Rehabilitation

- Rewetting of formerly drained blanket bog, raising water-levels to encourage/accelerate development of typical blanket bog vegetation cover via natural colonisation, and reducing the area of any bare exposed peat. The target will be the delivery of restoration measures and this will be measured by an aerial survey after rehabilitation is completed.
- Setting the site on a trajectory towards blanket bog restoration and the development of active blanket bog and Sphagnum-rich peat-forming habitats, where possible. As much of the current vegetation shows signs of degradation as a result

of drainage, changes will demonstrate the success of the rehabilitation. It will take some time for stable naturally functioning habitats to fully develop. However, it is expected to respond positively to the planned restoration. This will be demonstrated and measured via aerial photography, habitat mapping, vegetation monitoring and habitat condition assessment. Baseline monitoring has been undertaken in 2022 and will be repeated again after rehabilitation is completed. It is proposed that the site can be monitored against this baseline in the future.

In summary, an exciting journey ahead for us to learn more about our environment and protect it for the next generation.

Caught on camera



Trekkers ring a giant sequoia -- 4.3m in diameter -- on a C+ walk from the Bog Meadow



Clockwise from top left: A walkers in January on Trooperstown Hill; C walkers in March snow in Massey Woods; B walk on Maulin in February

Culture, Chutzpah and Civics

Eighteen Wednesday walkers had a historic day out in March when **Catherine Almond** and **Pat Nolan** – with help from **Dara Robinson** and **Myles Duffy** -- led a walk through Dublin city. Here **Pat Nolan** details the walk through Little Jerusalem and the Liberties

Part 1

History on the foot. This walk has one mother (Catherine), two fathers (Dara and Pat) and even a benign uncle (Myles).

It's a walk for any time of day and any season. It might be rather nice for a fine Summer evening. Our objective was to explore atmospheric parts of the city that Trekkers may have driven through or passed but never got around to investigating.

The built environment, public and domestic, is truly interesting. Walkers saw some of Dublin's oldest buildings and a wealth of Victorian and early 20th Century additions. Little Jerusalem, as the name suggests, was the centre of the Jewish community for approximately 80 years.

Whitefriar St Church has St Valentine's earthly remains in a casket – he only became Irish 1,600 years after his death. It also has the shrine to Our Lady of Dublin, a statue of the Virgin which hid in plain sight for the duration of the Penal Law era.

The Augustinian Church in Thomas St is spectacular Victorian Gothic with marvellous stained glass windows and altarpieces. A caveat. There are virtually no toilets available on the route –



The Augustinian Church in Thomas St, above, is a spectacular Victorian Gothic with marvellous stained glass windows. Below: casket with St Valentine's remains in Whitefriar St church



though if you come in the evening the pubs will be open. So, give your bladder a stern talking to before setting off, and maybe go easy on the coffee. And enjoy!

The Walk

Meet Royal College of Surgeons. Walk from Stephen's Green along King St to Aungier St. Meet-up outside Gaiety Theatre is also a good option on account of its glass canopy.

Visit Whitefriar St Church, back to Stephen's Green via Montague St, turning right up Harcourt St, take sylvan detour through Iveagh Gardens, then left along Adelaide Rd to view the former Adelaide Rd synagogue

facade, back to Harcourt Terrace and on to the Grand Canal. Turn right/west and follow path of canal to Latouche Bridge. Turn right/north along Richmond St, then left/west into Lennox St.

Then follow meandering route through Little Jerusalem area between SCR and Canal. Turn right/north onto Clanbrassil St to left turn at Donovan Lane to enter the Tenters area of D8.

Have a ramble here and then cross Cork St onto Ardee St. in the Liberties. While in the Liberties see iconic housing provided by Dublin Artisans Dwelling Company following massive slum clearance in late 19th century. Then head north up Meath St to Thomas St and turn right to visit Augustinian church.

From there head east along Thomas St, turn right/south into Francis St to view the now derelict Iveagh Market and from there head east then north to see some of the last remnants of Dublin City walls.

Cross Cornmarket into St Audoen's park, and check out 40 steps to old city wall. Cross back over road to head up Patrick St to walk past and among the Iveagh Trust Buildings until reaching the park at St Patrick's Cathedral. There's a café here (with a toilet!)

In the next Newsletter, Catherine Almond will describe the rest of the walk, which leads past Christ Church and St Patrick's Cathedrals – and finished on the day in Teelings distillery.

The guns that started the Civil War

Where did the British hand over the field guns used to bombard the Four Courts in June 1922? **Sean Boyne** finds out on a walk in the Phoenix Park

Last year I took part in a most enjoyable Trekkers walk through the Phoenix Park, led by Myles Duffy, and I was reminded of a pivotal event in Irish history – the start of the Civil War 100 years before.

It was in the park (or near the park, according to a couple of sources) that four 18-pounder field guns were handed over by the British on a summer night in 1922 to Major General Emmet Dalton of the National Army, or Free State Army as it became known.

The guns were then taken directly to the Liffey quays in central Dublin, and used to bombard the anti-Treaty IRA garrison in the Four Courts, after it rejected an ultimatum to evacuate the complex. The first shell was fired about 4.15am on 28 June 1922, and the bombardment is generally seen as the start of the Civil War.

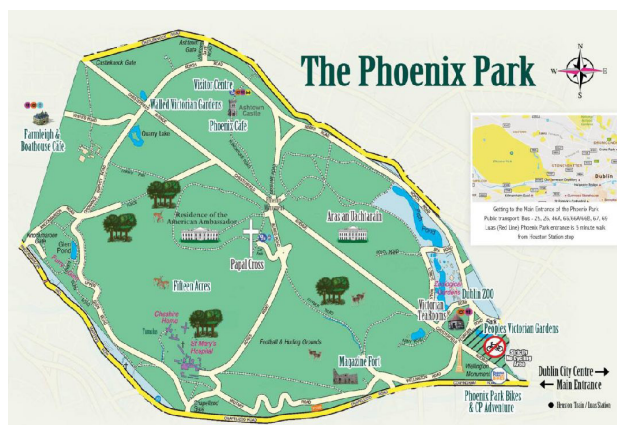
So where exactly did Dalton take delivery of the artillery on that fateful night of 27/28 June 1922? According to a couple of writers, the British handed over the field guns at Marlborough (now McKee) Barracks, which is adjacent to the Phoenix Park). But there are strong indications that the guns were handed over, not in the barracks, but in the Phoenix



The Ordnance Survey centre, left, in the Phoenix Park where the guns were reportedly handed over. Below left: one of the 18-pounder guns now on display in the National Museum, Collins Barracks. Right: guns bombarding the Four Courts from Bridge Street



took delivery of the guns "at the far gate of the Phoenix Park". "Far gate" is a rather vague term –



Park itself. Dalton himself, in an interview with RTE radio in the late 1970s, said he "took over four 18-pounder guns from the British in the Phoenix Park..." Unfortunately, he did not identify where exactly in the park this occurred.

Calton Younger, who interviewed Dalton for his 1968 book on the Civil War, said Dalton

Younger was an Australian living in the UK, and may have lacked the average Dubliner's knowledge of the various gates of the park.

Important information to solve the riddle was provided by William Mullen, of Rathfarnham, Dublin in a letter to the Irish Times in November 2012. He told how his late father,

also William Mullen, was one of a party of Free State troops who travelled by night in Lancia lorries from Wellington Barracks [now Griffith College] on the South Circular Road to the Ordnance Survey HQ in the Phoenix Park – the centre was occupied by British troops at the time.

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British military located in Park before leaving

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At this location, the British brought out field guns and hitched them onto the back of the lorries. They put straw on the floors of the lorries, on which they placed a number of shells. Then the Free State soldiers drove to Winetavern Street, on the quays. This was one of the streets from which the Four Courts would be bombarded. Private Mullen himself would take part in the siege of the Four Courts.

The suggestion that the field guns were handed over at this relatively isolated complex in the north-western sector of the park, now occupied by Ordnance Survey Ireland, seems credible. Many elements of the British military that had evacuated bases in the provinces were located temporarily in the Phoenix Park at this period, prior to leaving Ireland under the terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty.

The field guns provided to Dalton were from the 17th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, which had pulled out of The Curragh in May and then moved to Dublin.

The artillery officer overseeing the handover was a tough Scotsman, Major Colin McVean Gubbins. During the



Major General Emmet Dalton, left, took delivery of the guns from Sir Colin McVean Gubbins, right

Second World War, he would head Britain's secretive Special Operations Executive which organised sabotage and guerrilla warfare behind enemy lines.

Dalton had never fired a field gun, and it is likely that Gubbins gave him a crash course in the handling of the 18-pounders. According to Brian Lett, who published the authorised Gubbins biography in 2016, Gubbins and some of his men accompanied the field guns when they were taken to the Liffey quays and the British gunners advised the Free State soldiers on the firing of the guns. "Eventually their aim became more accurate."

Happily, one of the 18-pounders supplied by the

British in 1922 to the National Army has survived. Having been sold off as surplus in the late 1950s, it was discovered at a restaurant in Virginia, USA, brought back to Ireland by officers of our Defence Forces in 2016, and restored at The Curragh.

The Mark II 18 pounder Field Gun 9168 has gone on display at the National Museum in Collins Barracks. It is considered likely that it is one of the guns that fired on the anti-Treaty garrison in the Four Courts just over 100 years ago.

As for the Ordnance Survey Ireland complex, it is located in a particularly tranquil part of the Phoenix Park, not far from the entrance to Farmleigh and includes Mountjoy House, built in 1728 as the suburban villa of developer Luke Gardiner; it was later a military barracks.

On a recent cycle trip to take photos, my Outdooractive app guided me from Furze Road along secluded Tinker's Path to the location, as herds of deer grazed peacefully nearby. Idyllic.

• Sean Boyne is the author of **Emmet Dalton: Somme Soldier, Irish General, Film Pioneer**, published by Merrion, 2014.



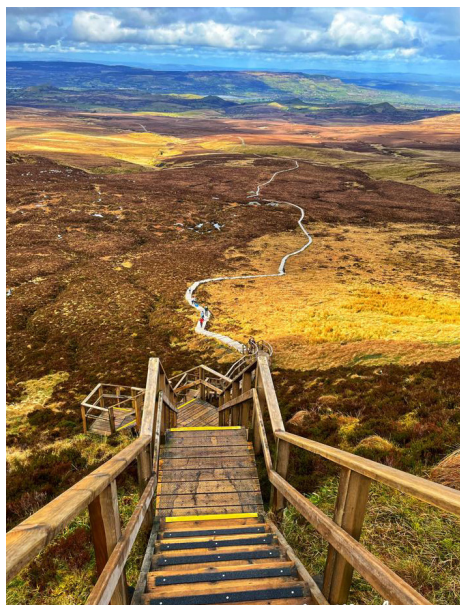
Exploring the Powerscourt Deerpark in February, left; above, at the Hellfire Club in April

Climbing the Stairway to Heaven

450 steps lead up to amazing views on a walk in Co Fermanagh. Two hillwalker friends, **Liam Edwards** and **John O'Donohoe**, recommend it

At the end of March this year a friend and I embarked on a hike in County Fermanagh to climb the "Stairway to Heaven" walk. An important thing to know is that one should prepare for this walk. I would invoke the Roy Keane dictum "fail to prepare, prepare to fail" especially if you are in your fifties, sixties or older. A younger person might have the natural fitness to complete the walk, but definitely others must train.

It is important to prebook the car park in advance (see panel). Another thing to note



The Stairway to Heaven, above. John O'Donohoe, left, and Liam Edwards admire the view from the summit

The Stairway walk

The Cuilcagh Boardwalk Trail, nicknamed the Stairway to Heaven Walk, is in Co. Fermanagh and is one of several walks that you can take on the long-distance Cuilcagh Waymarked Way – a 33km walking route that takes in Cuilcagh Mountain and the surrounding area. The Stairway Walk is an approximately 11km loop walk. It's about a 2.5 hour drive from Dublin, 162km, via M3 and N3. It's advisable to pre-book car-parking, €7, see theboardwalk.ie. There's also free parking at Killykeegan Nature Reserve car park, 1km past the main entrance to the Cuilcagh Stairway to Heaven trail.

is there are no toilet facilities in the car park. The trail takes you approximately 5km along an established path and then

onto the start of a boardwalk over a bog, which then takes you to the bottom of the stairway. Along the trail is beautiful scenery -- in March, we experienced four seasons of weather.

It's at the bottom of the actual stairway that one should brace for the steep climb ahead, which is quite arduous: it is here where your fitness counts. The climb up 450 steps is a short distance of 400m but very steep. On reaching the summit, the scenery is amazing. There are signs at the top advising people to not leave the stairway structure and it would be very wise to heed this advice.

Overall it is a lovely experience which takes in total about four hours for the whole walk -- but we did stop at the very top for a while to take in the views. We thoroughly enjoyed it and recommend it to anyone who is thinking of going.



Left, Social walk in the city; Right: C walk in February



Highways and byways in Killiney

Cathal Drohan's fascinating guide to a local walk

This article is a bit of a guide, a little bit of history and a bit of a commentary on the local landscape and its evolution. Thanks to other members and particularly Myles Duffy for their information. The full walk is 12.8km with a climb of 457m. However it can be walked in sections.

Stop 1 Killiney Dart Station

This was built to cater for seaside visitors from Dublin in the late Victorian and early Edwardian times. However surprisingly it was the second Killiney station to be built. On the pathway down to White Rock about 1km closer to Dublin the original 'Obelisk' station was located beside the pedestrian bridge.

Route to Stop 2 Please cross the road and locate the path close to the southern end of the station. After crossing two minor roads you will arrive at stop 2

Stop 2 Cill Iníon Leinín

This Cill – church - is the origin for the name Killiney. It was built by Leinín, a 6th century chieftain who founded this monastery. It was probably a nunnery, as little is known of its early history. Parts of the existing structure date from the 10th



century and it passed into the control of the Church of Ireland at the time of the Reformation. The site is currently not accessible as part of the gate entrance has collapsed recently.

Route to stop 3. Walk up the minor tarred road beside the Australian ambassador's house and turn right up the hill. Stop at the Martello tower.

Stop 3 Martello Tower

These towers should really be called Mortello towers (death in Italian). The design was copied and slightly modified by the British navy from a Genoese tower on Cap Mortello in north eastern Corsica. The fort, which was by then French, was eventually subdued by a land attack after two failed bombardments by the British Mediterranean fleet. The land invasion was led by Sir John Moore who

seized the Mortello tower. Sir John Moore, a few years later was almost unique in acting humanely while suppressing the 1798 revolt and acquired the name Moore of Coruna for his masterly tactical retreat from Northern Spain following the defeat of the British/Portuguese Peninsular Army by Napoleon. Unlike the other Martello towers, it is built on high ground; a connected barracks housed about 40 extra sailors available to reinforce any of the other towers. This tower, number 7 of the 29 around Dublin, is a private house.

Cross the road and pass by Druids Hill House. Turn right into what appears to be a back garden near the corner of Killiney Ave and Killiney Heath road.

Stop 4 Druids Chair

This chair belongs to the 18th Century Druids! The one in Killiney Hill Park is that of the 19th Century Druids. However, this one was constructed from a genuine cromlech and therefore has some historical significance. Retrace about 25m back and turn right down Killiney Avenue. You reach Church Road opposite St Matthias's church where you turn right until you reach the post box and then follow Balure Lane to the top. Entering the

golf course, look right to ensure your safety before crossing on the white stones. When you enter the gorse area I recommend you leave the right of way path and climb up to the right to reach the top of the granite cluster.

Stop 5 Golf Course view

The view is really nice. The background is 3 Rock and the Dublin Mountains, the middle view is of Cabinteely House and Tullyvale and the foreground is Killiney golf course. This 9-hole course -- conceived in June 1902 by three prominent Killiney residents, EP Stewart, George Aspen and George Stewart -- was opened on Easter Monday 1903. The period from 1914 to 1924 was a challenging one because of the loss of members. The club persevered and membership increased. The course

Continued on page 19

From Mullins Hill to our first Ministry of Finance

From page 18

remains pretty close to the earliest design with two intersecting rights of way in to its layout.

Exiting the rockface on to Glenalua Road, turn left and exit at the end onto rough hillside. Turn uphill immediately and follow the rough narrow track to the summit of the hill. The summit has a great view to the north and west of Dublin.

Stop 6 Mullins Hill

This hill is called Roches or Flagstaff Hill by the Ordnance Survey and almost universally called Mullins Hill by residents of Killiney. The residents correctly call the commonage Rochestown Common. The Mullins family were quarrymen who worked on this hill and in the Dalkey Quarries. The Commonage is owned mostly by Dun Laoghaire Co Council. Gorse is the dominant planting on the hillside and there have been regular fires here the most recent in 2022.

Retrace your route about 25 meters and you will see another track on your right which you take and then after about another 25 meters you veer right again descending steadily to a granite boundary

marker. Turn left and after about 50m the wide track splits again. Take the right path. In 50m you will see a narrow track to the right. Follow it over the granite boundary marker on to the adjoining Ballinclea lands formerly part of the Talbot estate.

Stop 7 Ballinclea Diversity project

Ballinclea lands look similar to the commonage. However these lands are managed for diversity and sustainability. The gorse is removed to protect the mixed broadleaf forest. The gorse fires have destroyed many of the trees on council lands. All rhododendrons are removed, ivy is controlled to protect the older trees and briars are cut back though not eliminated to ensure biodiversity. Last year residents planted 120 broadleaf saplings to replace the dying ash trees.

This area has planting and management in zones to create favourable conditions for wild rabbits, frogs, butterflies and bugs (Noreen's Bug Hostel). It also has a fairy circle in the centre of this field or so I am told by a local historian. Above it there is a rock granite outcrop which is the most northerly point on the South Leinster granite chain

which is the longest granite chain in these islands.

Exiting the field at the back, turn left and exit the commonage on to Claremont Road. After about 70m you will see a narrow path on your right. Take it (it is also the shortcut to the other Druids Chair the one with food and booze). When you emerge on to Glenalua Road turn right past the Quarry cottages and just before the last house on the left take the path downhill crossing St George's Avenue and reaching Killiney Hill Road at the former Grove nursing home.

Stop 8 First Ministry of Finance.

The house now called The Grove played a little known but vital role in the war of Independence. It was the Ministry of Finance of the First Dail. All the donated gold and silver from the United States and other countries was hidden in a secret vault under the grotto in the pond. A core of 'civil' servants kept the proceeds of the taxes raised by the Provisional Government on these grounds. Hard to believe the national reserves were kept on this property.



Cathal Drohan, fourth from right, with Trekkers on Mullins Hill

Cross the road and descend Strathmore Road to Bono's house. At this point you can shorten the walk by turning right for the station, 6.2km and 203m climbed. If you opt to continue further, turn left at Bono's house and climb The Vico Road, stopping on a bend overlooking Killiney Bay.

Stop 9 The view

I would argue this is the best view of the Bay, the beach view fails to show the majestic circular bay and the top view is a bit of an aeroplane feel. Here on occasions you can hear the waves breaking and smell the sea. You are also overlooking one of the nicest smaller gardens in Ireland, a beautiful example of an Italianate garden. Turning around and looking to the right of Mapas House you will find a garden modelled on the other important garden design in Ireland, Robinsonian. This Irish gardener created many fine gardens in Ireland and England.

Continue up The Vico Road until you reach Mount Eagle house on your right. Cross the road and enter Killiney Hill Park through an easy-to-spot iron gate.

Summer trifle, chilli chicken

Mary Darcy has two tasty summer recipes

LIMONCELLO TRIFLE



INGREDIENTS

300g fresh raspberries
6 trifle sponges
4 tbsp lemon curd
10 tbsp limoncello
250g full fat mascarpone cheese
1 x 300 ml tub of fresh vanilla custard; I use Avonmore or can be home made custard
Finely grated zest of half large lemon



METHOD

You will need a 1.4 litre trifle dish (glass if you can, so you can see layers)
Put raspberries in base of dish
Slice sponges in half, spread one half with lemon curd and then sandwich halves back together.
Arrange the sponges around the edge and centre of dish covering raspberries, with the cut side

facing out, so you can see through glass dish
Drizzle Limoncello over sponges give a good soaking
Put mascarpone into large bowl and mix using electric hand whisk until soft, then carefully add the custard a little at a time until it is fully incorporated and the mixture is smooth

Pour the mixture over sponges, then sprinkle the lemon zest over
Chill in fridge, take out approx. 10 mins before serving to return to room temperature.

Serves 6

Can be made up to 8 hours ahead and kept in fridge
Not suitable for freezing

GLAZED CORIANDER CHILLI CHICKEN

INGREDIENTS

4 tbsp sweet chilli sauce
Juice and finely grated zest of 1 lime
5cm (2in) knob of fresh root ginger peeled and grated.
(it can be difficult to peel, take a teaspoon and scrape away skin, it will come off easily)
2 tbsp olive oil
1 small bunch of coriander finely chopped
4 skinless chicken breasts



METHOD

Pre oven to 200c /180c Fan. / Gas 6
Put chilli sauce in small bowl, add lime juice and

zest, ginger, olive oil and coriander, mix well.

Season chicken with salt and pepper. Marinate the chicken in the sauce in the fridge for 1 to 2 hours if there is time.
Remove from fridge, place in large shallow roasting tin, making sure chicken breasts

well coated. Roast in oven for approx 20 minutes until lightly golden and fully cooked through.

Pour any juices left in pan over chicken.

Serve with potatoes – it's lovely with new potatoes -- and salad.

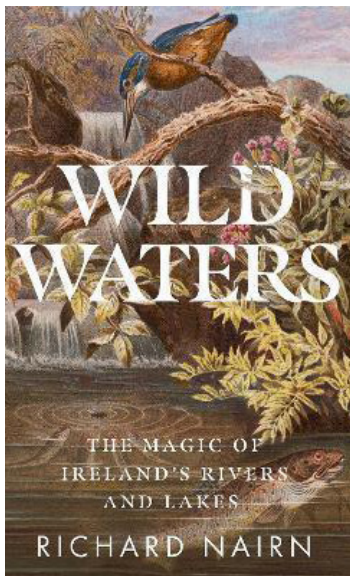
Serves 4

Happy cooking



After the walks, left. Right: Trekkers on tour in Gran Canaria





Wild Waters: The Magic of Ireland's Rivers and Lakes by Richard Nairn

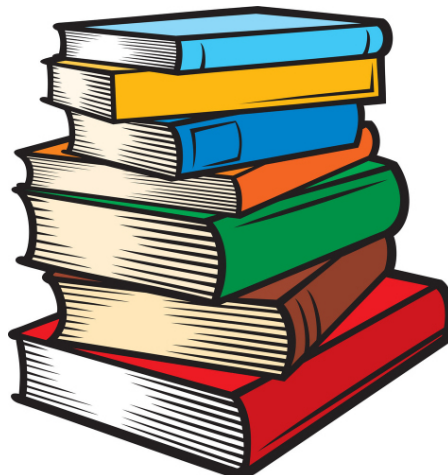
Nairn, an ecologist who has been visiting waterways around Ireland for over half a century, sets out on a year-long adventure to explore every stretch and tributary of the Avonmore River.

I think Nairn's book will be of particular interest to Trekkers, covering territory regularly walked by us including Lough Dan, Annamoe, Laragh, Glendalough, Rathdrum etc, and is full of interesting background information. Richard is also the author of Wild Shores and Wild Woods. Available in hard copy now but I suspect an audiobook version will follow.

Vincent Heagney

The Downhill Hiking Club: A Short Walk Across the Lebanon, by Dom Joly

I have just finished the audio version of this fascinating book. Read by the author himself, British comedian/journalist Dom Joly, it's an account of how he and two friends, all of them middle-aged with little hiking experience, undertook a most challenging walk across Lebanon. They were following a route known as the Lebanon Mountain Trail (LMT). Having paid visits to Lebanon in the past, and

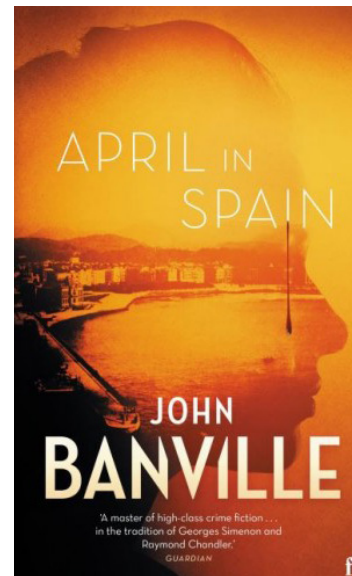


**BOOK
BEAT
What
Trekking
are
Reading**

become utterly fascinated by this beautiful, tragic country, I was eager to find out more. The LMT goes from the Israeli border in the south, through the high mountains that form the spine of the country, all the way to the Syrian border in the north.

For Joly, it was a kind of homecoming as he had been raised in Beirut. He and his friends spent 27 days on the trail in 2019, covering 470 kilometres. They had professional guides, accommodation was pre-booked and their main baggage was transported by car every day. Parts of the route were quite hazardous – uneven tracks at the edge of steep cliffs are not for the faint-hearted, and then there were the army checkpoints and militia gunmen. Sadly, the current official advice is to avoid all non-essential travel to Lebanon.

Sean Boyne



April in Spain by John Banville

Banville's crime thriller finds his curmudgeonly state pathologist Quirke in San Sebastian. One of the best books I've read this year

Death to the Emperor by Simon Scarrow

Another is Scarrow's book: 1st century Britannia is the setting for an epic and action-packed novel of tribal uprisings, battles to the death and unmatched courage in the Roman army ranks.

Jim Costello

The Postcard by Annie Berest

Winner of the Choix Goncourt Prize, The Postcard is a vivid portrait of twentieth-century Parisian intellectual and artistic life, an enthralling investigation into family secrets, and poignant tale of a Jewish family devastated by the Holocaust and partly restored through the power of storytelling.

Audrey McAleese

The 100 Years of Lenni and Margot by Marianne Cronin

Life is short. No one knows better than 17 year old Lenni living in a terminal ward. She meets Margot, an 83 year old fellow patient. Their bond is instant as they

Continued on page 22

From page 21

realise that together they have lived an astonishing 100 years. This is a funny tender unforgettable tale of their time together.

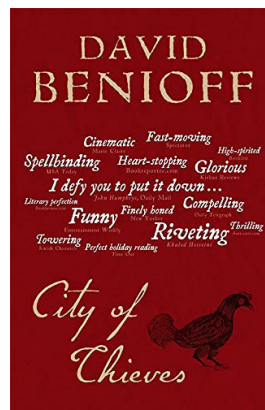
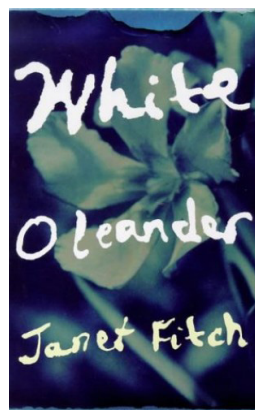
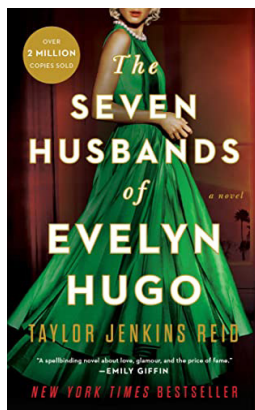
City of Thieves by David Benioff.

During the Nazis brutal siege of Leningrad in WWII, two young prisoners are given a shot at saving their own lives by agreeing to carry out an absurd task. Despite the war, the hunger and cruel winter weather, they adventure together with humanity and humour. This is a book for someone who wants to read a WWII story but doesn't feel like crying!

The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo by Taylor Jenkins Reid.

An aging and reclusive Hollywood icon is finally ready to tell the truth about her glamorous and scandalous life. She chooses an unknown young reporter to write her biography. A tale of ruthless ambition, unexpected friendship and a great forbidden love.

White Oleander by Janet Finch.



A masterful yarn about a complex relationship between Ingrid and her daughter Astrid.

Astrid gets tossed around the American foster care system while her mother serves a life sentence in prison. A redeeming and surprising journey of self discovery.

Una Davis

American Dirt by Jeanine Cummins

A mother and her young son have to leave Mexico after her husband and family are murdered by a drugs cartel. They travel to America on the train called the Beast – pictured recently in the Irish Times -- jumping on as the train travels along, very scary. An Oprah Book Club selection, the

book sparked controversy when it was published with Cummins being accused of appropriating the story of a Mexican immigrant.

The Great Alone by

Kristin Hannah

Love, life and domestic abuse in Alaska is the theme of this book about a former Vietnam POW who moves his family north, where they will live off the grid in America's last true frontier

Dympna Thunder

Kurt Wallander series by Henning Mankell

Any books by Swedish crime writer Henning Mankell, best known for his books featuring his fictional crime inspector Kurt Wallander. I picked up one of his books by chance in the book depository at Nero coffee house in Blackrock, enjoyed it and since then, I have picked up further publications in Dublin bookshops.

Fergal Gaynor

What Trekkers are listening to

Countrywide -- A Wicklow River Walk

In an RTE Radio 1 May Bank holiday special on April 29th, Phillip Boucher Hayes and a team of Countrywide reporters followed the Avonmore River from where it rises in Co Wicklow and discovers some of the waterway's hidden gems. Still available –in two parts -- on RTE Radio1: See

<https://www.rte.ie/radio/radio1/clips/22244944/>
<https://www.rte.ie/radio/radio1/clips/22244945/>

Also available as a podcast on RTE Radio 1 podcasts, Countrywide, April 29th.

Part 1: <https://www.rte.ie/radio/podcasts/22244944-bank-holiday-special-a-wicklow-river-walk-pa/>

Part 2: <https://www.rte.ie/radio/podcasts/22244945->



bank-holiday-special-a-wicklow-river-walk-pa/

Breda O'Hara

Rachel Maddow Presents: Ultra

I've been enjoying podcasts like this one, a series of eight 40-50 minute podcasts by MSNBC reporter Rachel Maddow detailing a time in US history (1940s) where extremists plotted against America, detailing

the lengths they went to. The antics of the past six years are almost a walk in the park in comparison and certainly few lessons were learnt from history! I'm a fan of Rachel Maddow, she is a super storyteller and has a way of explaining the most complex issues.

Anne Hayes

Living

Set in 1953 London, the movie depicts a bureaucrat, played by Bill Nighy, facing a fatal illness. The screenplay is by Kazuo Ishiguro. On Sky Store Movies

Audrey McAleese

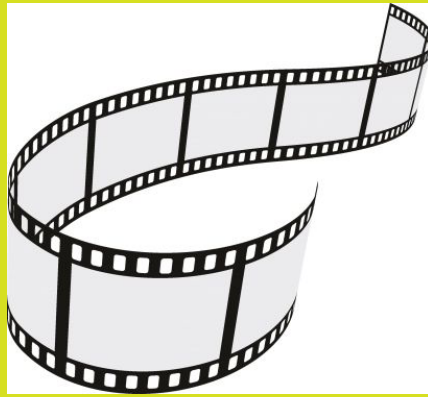
Marie Antoinette

Historical drama television series about the life of the last queen of France before the French Revolution is enthralling, my favourite TV viewing. The eight episode series has just finished on RTE2, but is available on RTE Player.

Jim Costello

Talking Pictures

A new – free -- TV station called Talking Pictures shows a variety of films from the 1940s to the late 1980s, with the best of mainly British actors of the day, a variety of general interest programs and some of the best BBC and ITV series from 1960



What Trekkers are watching

to 1985. A large number of the black and white films have been reprocessed by a French company to improve the viewing quality.

See talkingpicturestv.co.uk.

Fergal Gaynor

The Americans

Cold War spy drama set in Reagan's 1980s Washington about Soviet "illegals", Russian spies living undercover as a suburban American couple with two children. Excellent writing and acting, it's terrific both as a cliff-hanging thriller and wrenching family drama. Six series brings the show from Reagan's 1981 inauguration to the 1987 arms control treaty.

On Disney Plus

The Hunter

Gripping Italian TV series based on the memoir of an anti-Mafia prosecutor in Sicily in the 1990s. Determined to bring the pressure of the law on Mafiosi, he becomes known as the Hunter. Fictionalised but very much based on real events. See Channel 4.com

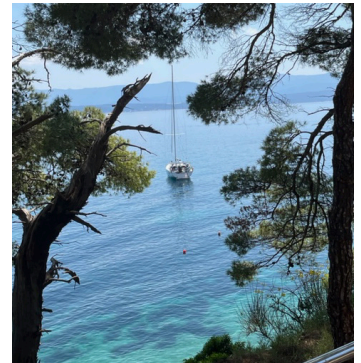
Frances O'Rourke



Left: Social walkers look at an exhibition designed by Mark Leslie, centre, on a walk to Glasnevin Cemetery in April.

Above: Friday walk around Glendalough in May and top right, Ann Carroll and Pat McGettrick share a joke

Photo finish



Triumphant Trekkers walking along Napoleon's Road, above; top right, Nick and Mary, who organised the trip. Right: safe harbour

In bluebell woods



Clockwise from left: by the banks of the Avonmore in May; Ciaran Mahon's picture of a Red Kite on Paddock Hill; WW in January; Rathdrum in April; in the Leadmines, May



In the woods: top Eudie Power and below, group on trip led by Aine Allen to Mullaghmeen Forest Park in Westmeath in May

