



Spring Gathering 2017
Hosted by
Tyndall Mountain Club

Friday March 3rd – Sunday March 5th

Tyndall Mountain Club

Founded in Kilkenny in 1981, Tyndall Mountain Club was named to commemorate John Tyndall, the renowned 19th century mountaineer and scientist, who was born at Leighlinbridge on 2nd August 1820.

Tyndall was a member of the very first team of mountaineers to reach the summit of the Weisshorn in 1861 and led one of the first teams to reach the top of the Matterhorn in 1868, and was also one of the names associated with the “Golden Age of Alpinism”.

Our badge logo depicts the image of the Weisshorn and also bog cotton familiar to our own mountains.

Tyndall Mountain Club currently has 103 members and activities include mountaineering, hill walking, trail hikes, cycling and water sports. The club has twice weekly hikes, Wednesday and Sunday. Climbs abroad have included Mount Elbrus, Himalayas, Mt. Kilimanjaro, Mt. Kenya, Picos De Europa, Julian Alps (Triglav), the Pyrenees, Andes and Swiss Alps, Purcell range in Canada, Drakensberg in South Africa. Also ancient routes – The Cathar Way in the South of France and various routes of the Camino De Santiago.

Tyndall Mountain Club will host Mountaineering Ireland Spring Gathering and A.G.M. In Kilkenny City. Our club welcomes all Mountaineering Ireland members and clubs who join us this weekend.



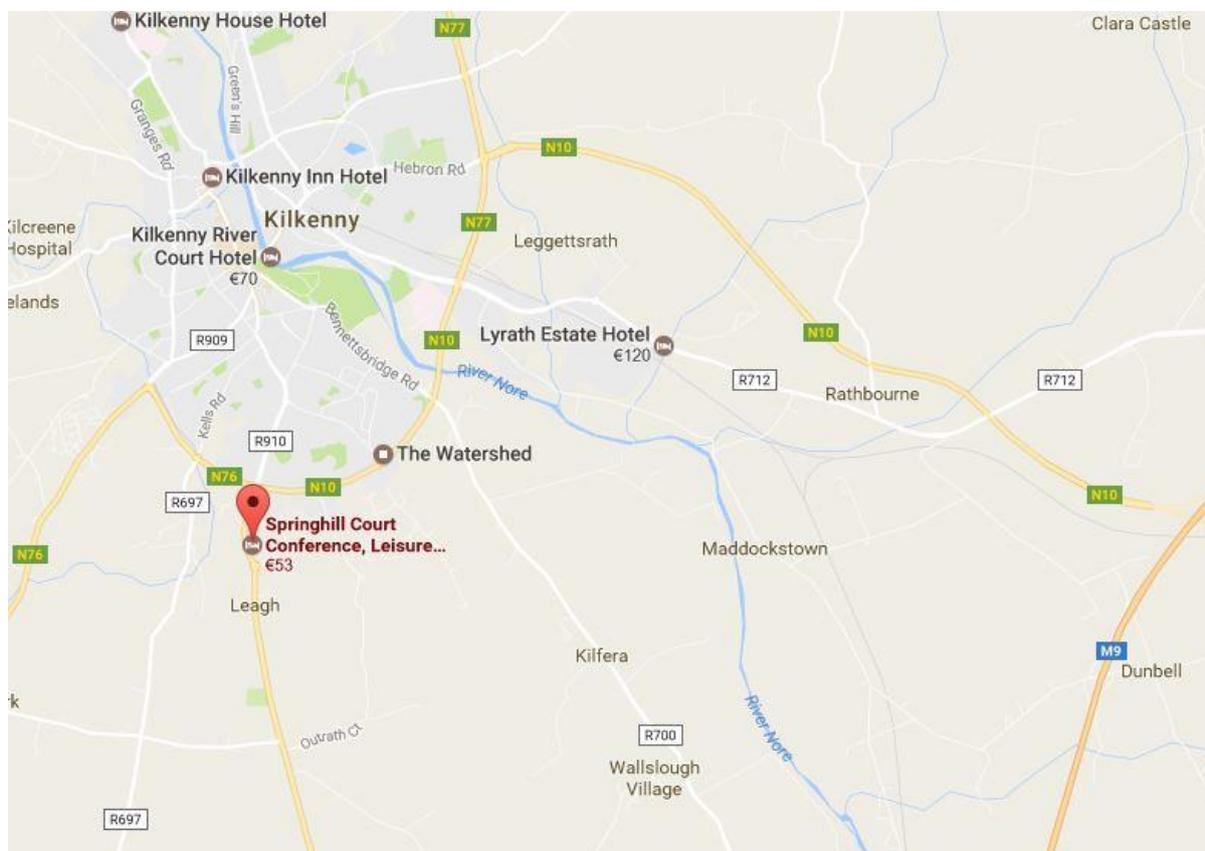
Spring Gathering 2017

As usual the weekend will start with registration from 7.00pm in the lobby area of the Springhill Court Hotel in Kilkenny. The welcome talk will take place from 8.00pm in the Kilkenny Suite 2. Saturday sees a full programme of activities including walks in the Comeraghs and Blackstairs and climbing in Ballykeefe Quarry. Please click on the links below for a map of the various walks. There will also be specific workshops for Club Environmental Officers and Club Training Officers – again details can be found below. The Mountaineering Ireland AGM and Members Forum take place in the Kilkenny Suite 2 with AGM registration from 5.30pm. There will be refreshments in the lobby area outside the Kilkenny Suite beforehand. Saturday evening finishes off with a dinner in the hotel itself.

We have a range of workshops arranged for Sunday morning. Some will incur a small additional fee which is payable online as part of the registration process.

See below map for key venues over the weekend

We will be based in the [Springhill Court Hotel](#) for the weekend. The Springhill Court has full leisure facilities and a separate bar and restaurant area. We have booked a number of rooms for the Gathering. Please let the hotel know you are with the Mountaineering Ireland Spring Gathering at the time of booking. **Unallocated rooms will be released back to the hotel on February 20th and we cannot guarantee accommodation in the hotel after that date.**



Alternative Accommodation in the area:

Although we would encourage as many as possible to stay in the Springhill Court, it may not suit everyone. Please find below some alternative ideas.

Lanigans Hostel, Kilkenny - www.hostelkilkenny.ie

Kilkenny Tourist Hostel - www.kilkennyhostel.ie

MacGabhainn's Backpackers Hostel - <http://macgabhainnsbackpackers.com>

You can also visit www.visitkilkenny.ie for a full range of accommodation.

The Comeraghs and Blackstairs

Kilkenny is ideally situated midway between the Comeragh and the Blackstairs mountains which both provide excellent walking opportunities. Coach transport will be provided from the Springhill Court to the start and finish points of all walks. The walks this year take in well-known routes such as Mahon Falls and Coumshingaun, Mount Leinster and Slievenamon. There are walks for all abilities and all will be led by members of the Tyndall Mountain Club who are very familiar with the area and will be ready with local stories and insights! Please read through the descriptions of the walks outlined below before you start the online registration process as you will be asked for your activity selection during registration.

For our climbers, Ballykeefe Quarry is nearby and there will be independent climbing arranged in and around this venue over the weekend.



Friday March 3rd

Why not start the weekend with a short informal walk in the local area with members of the Tyndall Mountain Club. There is no need for advance booking – please meet your walk leaders in the reception area of the Springhill Court hotel just before 2.00pm . This walk from [Bennett's Bridge to Kilkenny](#) follows the banks of the River Nore with a chance of spotting otters, heron and other wildlife along the way. This is an easy walk lasting approximately 2 hours and a perfect way to start the weekend. Please note that as we don't take advance bookings for this walk, please meet your walk leader in the hotel reception at 2.00pm promptly. If you are late, the walk may have left without you or the walk leader may presume that no one is coming and not start the walk at all!

19.00 – Registration in the lobby area of the Springhill Court Hotel. There is a bar area/restaurant in the hotel to grab something to eat when you arrive.

20.00 – Welcome from Jim Healy, Tyndall Mountain Club Chairperson

Our keynote speaker on Friday evening is Kevin Higgins, is a long standing member of Mountaineering Ireland and of Tyndall Mountain Club. In his talk 'Ireland's Neglected Heritage – Mountaineering' Kevin will look at the significant contribution Irish people have made to international mountaineering and not only during Alpinism's 'Golden Age'.

Saturday March 4th

Variety of walks, climbs and workshops departing from the Springhill Court Hotel. Please note that packed lunches (at €8.00 each) are available from the hotel for those staying there but must be ordered upon check in at the latest. Please ensure you have walking gear for all weathers with you including hiking boots with good ankle support as the terrain on some of the walks is steep and can be challenging.

We will have copies of the new Eastwest Map 1:25,000 of the Blackstairs for sale over the weekend at a price of €10.00

Choose from:

Click on the title of each walk/workshop to get the corresponding map and description.

Walk 1. 08.00

[Mount Leinster and Black Rock Mountain - Challenging](#)

This walk will begin in Scullogue Gap and follow a similar route to Cloroge Mor and Cloroge Beag. Then heading in the direction Ballycrystal Wood, taking in a stream crossing as we go and ascent to Black Mountain. From here we will follow a ridge to the top of Mt. Leinster (very boggy ground at top of Mt. Leinster). We will then descend Mt. Leinster to the base of Knockroe and contour around back to the track where the walk began.

Distance: 15.5 km. Height Gain: 882m. Duration: 5.5 hrs. Map # 68

- Walk 2.
08.00 [Mount Leinster \(via Knockroe\) - Challenging](#)
This walk will begin at the Scullogue Gap, with a short road walk. Walk along a track leading into Mt. Leinster, moving on to open ground taking in Cloroge Mor and Cloroge Beag. Then move across open ground and begin the ascent of Mt. Leinster, ascending to the top. From the top we will then trace our steps back down and cross to Knockroe and return by the laneway where the walk began.
Distance: 13.5 km. Height Gain: 882m Duration: 4.5hrs. Map # 68
- Walk 3.
08.00 [Coumshingaun Horseshoe \(Moderate - Challenging\)](#)
This walk will begin in Kilclooney car park, it will start with an initial walk through the forest, then onto open ground with a very steep ascent. There will also be some scrambling through rocky outcrops, with a steep slightly exposed ascent to the summit. Descent will be over very boggy terrain, where we will meet a stream and follow the course of the stream and a very steep descent back to Kilclooney car park.
Distance: 9.5km. Height Gain: 750m. Duration: 5.5hrs. Maps: # 75
- Walk 4.
08.00 [Blackstairs Mountain – Moderate - Challenging](#)
This is a Linear Walk, starting at Scullogue Gap. Initial short road walk to base of Backstairs Mt., then a long steep ascent to Backstairs Mt. on open ground. We will then have a long steep descent to the gap in the col at the far side of the summit. The route then follows a forest and ridge walk loop and finishes on quiet country roads to Ballymurphy Village.
Distance: 19 km. Height Gain of 562m. Duration 6hrs. Map # 68
- Walk 5.
08.00 [Coumshingaun Loop- Moderate](#)
Starting and finishing at Kilclooney car park, this walk follows the same ascent as Walk 3. The descent over Knockaunapeebra follows a more gradual route initially, becoming steeper for a short distance an easy walk back through forest to Kilclooney.
Distance: approx. 15km Height Gain: 680m. Duration: 5.5hrs Maps: # 75
- Walk 6.
08.30 [Slievenamon Loop – Easy to Moderate](#)
This walk will follow the existing track to the top of Slievenamon, then descend the back of Slievenamon on steepish ground and head to Carrickabrock over open ground. The route follows an easy descent over open ground to pick up a track which we will follow around the Base of Slievenamon and exit from it onto a forest track in to the village of Kilcash.
Distance: approx. 12.5 km. Height Gain: 600m. Duration: 4.5hrs. Map # 75

- Walk 7.**
08.30 [Slievenamon and Sheegouna Loop – Easy to Moderate](#)
Track up the path to the base of Slievenamon, then use a short forest track onto open ground at a low level. Eventually making way to the top of Slievenamon, using the existing track from the summit back down to our starting position.
Distance: 9 km. Height Gain: 509m. Duration: 4 hrs Map # 75 & 67
- Walk 8.**
08.00 [Brandon Hill - Moderate \(not difficult terrain but long walk\)](#)
This is a long Linear Walk, starting in Graiguenamanagh, with an initial road walk to the base of Brandon Hill, approx. 3 kms. We will then join a forest track to the summit of Brandon Hill, then descent over open ground to a rough path, contouring for approx. 2 kms on this track. Then onto open ground, eventually meeting up with part of the Leinster Way, which will lead us into the village of Inistioge.
Distance: approx 14km. Height Gain: 557m. Duration 5.5hrs. Map# 67
- Walk 9.**
10.00 [Inistioge and Woodstock Gardens \(easy\)](#)
A loop walk starting and finishing in Inistioge, following the Nore River path and taking in quiet roads, forest tracks and the grounds of the former Woodstock House before finishing back in Inistioge.
Distance: 12.2 km. Height Gain: 378m. Duration: 4 hrs
- 09.00** [Environmental Officers' Workshop](#)
The overall aim of the day is provide club representatives with an introduction to the historical features walkers and climbers may come across in the uplands by undertaking a short hillwalk in the Blackstairs Mountains, and to brief participants on Mountaineering Ireland's current work on access and conservation matters. The day will start in the Springhill Court Hotel, Kilkenny, followed by a field trip in the Blackstairs with archaeologist Séamus Ó Murchú.
- 09.30** **Club Training Officer's Workshop– Rope work for Mountaineering**
This workshop, delivered by Mountaineering Ireland Training Officer, Jane Carney, will look at various aspects of rope work used in mountaineering and scrambling. Please bring your own helmet and harness if you have them. Please let us know if you need to borrow equipment.

This workshop will be a mixture of indoor learning and practical outdoor sessions. Initially we will conduct a Q & A session looking at some suggested models for in-club training and what resources are available from Mountaineering Ireland to support club training. The outdoor session will focus on practical skills mountaineering and scrambling.
- 09.00** **Rock Climbing**
There will be the option to climb independently in the Ballykeefe Quarry area. Please bring your own equipment.

Mountaineering Ireland AGM and Member's Forum

The AGM and member's forum will be on Saturday evening. We hope that this will encourage good attendance and also allow for a longer programme of activities on Sunday morning. Mountaineering Ireland encourages all clubs to send a minimum of two delegates to the AGM. Individual members also have voting rights.

17.00	Meeting of Honorary and Individual members, if required
17.30 - 18:00	Registration for Mountaineering Ireland AGM (Coffee/tea/scones) (Kilkenny Suite lobby area)
18.00	Mountaineering Ireland AGM – Springhill Court Hotel (Kilkenny Suite 2)
18:45	Mountaineering Ireland Member's Forum (Kilkenny Suite 2)
20.00	Dinner in Springhill Court Hotel (Tara Suite) <i>After Dinner Speaker Special Guest - Pat Brennan, Swiss Alpine Club (Retired)</i>

Sunday March 5th

There will be a variety of workshops available from 10:00 to 13:00 on Sunday morning. Some workshops do incur a nominal additional fee which can be paid as part of the online booking facility (**click on 'additional items'**). Numbers are limited on the workshops so please remember to make your choice at the time of booking online to avoid disappointment.

- 1. Kilkenny Heritage Walk**

A leisurely cultural walk around Kilkenny City's landmarks including the castle grounds.

Cost: €5.00 per person (max. 10 people)
- 2. Tai Chi**
This ancient Chinese art of movement uses internal energy (chi) for good health, self-development and self-defence, concentrating on slow, relaxed flowing movement. Suitable for all abilities. Please wear loose, comfortable clothing.

Cost: €10.00 per person (max. 10 people)
- 3. Yoga**
A great way to stretch revitalise tired limbs and learn some simple everyday stretches.

Cost: €10.00 per person (max. 8 people)
- 4. Club Development Workshop**

This workshop is open to all club members and will look at a variety of current topics which affect all clubs. It is also an opportunity to bring

specific questions to the forum. If there is a particular area you would like to discuss or get information on please send an email to rozanne@mountaineering.ie beforehand so we can prepare the necessary material.

The workshop will include a presentation from one of our clubs –Out and About and their successful Path to Peak programme which helps to motivate members to progress their walking skills. Out and About will also talk about how they use digital media to reach and attract new members. This combined strategy has yielded a remarkable 300% increase in membership in the last 12 months.

As always, there is the option to walk or climb independently on Sunday morning.

13.00

Gathering Ends