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**Joss Lynam
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Horseshoe Glen (Powerscourt) seen from the Coillte forest on Long Hill, Co Wicklow.
Photo: Cólín MacLochláinn

The people's forests

Mountaineering Ireland calls on the Government to keep Coillte in public ownership

In the build-up to the general election in February, there was much talk about the sale of State assets and, to the alarm of Mountaineering Ireland, Coillte was included among those that might be sold off. In its proposals for the Programme for Government, Mountaineering Ireland sought a guarantee from the incoming Government for the continued public ownership of Coillte lands.

As the National Governing Body for the sport of mountaineering in Ireland, Mountaineering Ireland sought to highlight the public good delivered by Coillte and other public land-owning bodies, particularly in increasing opportunities for the enjoyment of outdoor recreation.

Mountaineering Ireland also noted that there had been a very significant investment by the State through Coillte in the development of nature trails, walking routes and recreational facilities throughout the country, coupled with an open access policy for recreational use. This investment will benefit the health of the population, while also supporting efforts to promote Ireland as a walking tourism destination.

As a result of these concerns, Mountaineering Ireland issued a press statement about Coillte, the full text of which can be seen on our website.

Coillte's role in the management of Ireland's natural resource base is strategically critical on a number of levels. Firstly, it is a core component for mass participation by ordinary Irish people in outdoor recreation. This includes not only walking and hillwalking but a range of outdoor activities including orienteering, cycling, mountain-biking, horse-riding, birdwatching, etc. The ecosystem services provided by the Coillte forests and lands are of immeasurable economic importance.

Secondly, given the work of Coillte over the past 20 years to protect and enhance native Irish woodlands, by targeting 15% of the overall estate where biodiversity is the primary objective, the Coillte estate is now regarded as a key component for the conservation of a great many habitats and species under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives. The estate is also of vital importance in tackling climate change and increased levels of CO₂ emissions.

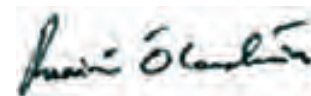
Thirdly, the Coillte lands, and the open access therein, are a critical product within Ireland's tourist industry. In many instances, Coillte lands provide informal access routes to Ireland's upland areas, relieving pressure on private landowners and reducing the potential for conflict.

Hikers, hillwalkers and walkers continue to be the largest segment of the Irish activity tourist market, and accounted for an estimated €494 million in revenue from overseas visitors in 2009.

The new Programme For Government 2011-2016 outlines the merger of Bord na Móna and Coillte to create a new company, BioEnergy Ireland. While Mountaineering Ireland does not support or oppose this merger, it fails to see the rationale behind the merger and calls for more details on BioEnergy Ireland, its core purpose and vision.

If the merger is to proceed, Mountaineering Ireland calls for a Government commitment that BioEnergy Ireland will be retained in public ownership and that Coillte's current open access policy on its estate will be maintained over the long term.

Members are urged to be alert to any developments in this merger and to make sure that their local TDs are aware of the importance of retaining Coillte's lands in public ownership.



**Ruairí Ó Conchúir, Chairperson,
Mountaineering Ireland**



WEI Co ME To ...

ISSUE 97

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Copy deadline for the Summer 2011 issue of the *Irish Mountain Log* is Friday, May 20th, 2011.

PARTICIPATION AND RISK

Readers of the *Irish Mountain Log* are reminded that hillwalking and climbing are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks, and be responsible for their own actions and involvement. Mountaineering Ireland publishes and promotes safety and good practice advice and through Bord   il  nt Sl  ibhe (BoS, The Irish Mountain Training Board) administers a range of training programmes for walkers and climbers.



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A celebration of Joss Lynam's life and the contribution he made to our sport

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People we can depend on

Two events in January highlighted for me our dependence as mountaineers on others.

The death of Joss I ynam on January 9th has brought into focus the significant contribution he made and continued to make to mountaineering in Ireland. Personally, I was privileged to work with him on the *Irish Mountain Log* and have depended on and benefited from his support and wise counsel over the years. He founded the *Irish Mountain Log* in 1979, edited it for more than 20 years and continued as Literary Editor until the time of his passing. In this issue of the *Log*, as mountaineers, we honour Joss' memory but we also celebrate the life of this doyen of Irish mountaineering (pages 29-40).

Out of respect, there is no Book Reviews section in this issue, but it is our intention to continue with this popular section in future issues.

The other event that emphasised to me my own reliance on the goodwill of my fellow mountaineers was when I had an accident while descending from Lugnaquilla in January the weekend after Joss' funeral. I was unfortunately unable to continue my descent unaided; it was about an hour to dusk and there was a cold breeze. I am very grateful to the others, who were on the hill that day and who stopped to assist me, for their kindness and selflessness. I am also very grateful to the members of the Glen of Imaal and the Dublin and Wicklow Mountain Rescue Teams who so readily responded to the call-out and came to my assistance on that Sunday afternoon. Finally, I must offer my sincere thanks to the crew of the helicopter that evacuated me from the hillside. These few words do not adequately reflect the depth of gratitude I feel for all of these kind individuals who assisted me in my hour of need.

Given what happened to me, it may sound disingenuous, but a fall is something that can happen so easily to anyone out for an otherwise enjoyable day on the hills. It has caused me to reflect on how much we may depend, as hillwalkers and mountaineers, on the goodwill of others and in particular on the members of the Mountain Rescue Teams, who provide a 24/7 service, to be there for us when we need them. A sincere and heartfelt thank you to all members of Mountain Rescue Ireland!



Patrick O'Sullivan
Editor, *Irish Mountain Log*

Patrick O'Sullivan

ON THE COVER: Lough Borheen seen from Galtybeg, Galtee Mountains, Co Tipperary. Photo: Jimmy Barry.

THIS PAGE: Upper Lake, Glendalough. Photo: Helen Lawless.



Mountaineering Ireland's Annual Review 2010 is now available on the website and hard copies may be obtained from the office.

News

Get all the latest news at www.mountaineering.ie

Spring Gathering and AGM

Aherlow House Hotel, March 4-6th 2011

DONALD GILL

Mountaineering Ireland's Spring Gathering and AGM was held in the Galtees in early March. Three member clubs, the Ballyhoura Bears, Galtee Walking Club and the Peaks Mountaineering Club, hosted what was a very enjoyable weekend based at Aherlow House Hotel in the Glen of Aherlow.

The Gathering commenced on Friday evening with an excellent presentation by Mountaineering Ireland's Training Officer, Alun Richardson, "The Alps are for Everyone," which was enjoyed by about seventy members.

The host clubs had organised an extensive programme of walks and workshops for the Saturday and more than eighty members headed to the Galtees and Slievenamuck in the morning on the different walks. The walks were led by members of the host clubs, who were able to provide unique insights into the mountains, their history, geology, etc. The three workshops that had also been organised, Club Walks Leaders, Environmental Officers and First Aid, also attracted more than forty participants.



AGM venue: Aherlow House Hotel.

Photo: Patrick O'Sullivan.

The AGM was held on Saturday evening and was encouragingly well attended. It was chaired by Ross Millar, as Company Secretary, who welcomed the participants and then went through the formal business, which included adoption of the agenda and the standing orders, and approval of the minutes for the 2010 AGM. In his address, Mountaineering Ireland's President, Alan Tees, commented on the successful year that



Participants on a lunchbreak during the Easy Walk.

Photo: Heather Johnston.

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*Galtymore and Galtybeg seen from Knockastkeen.
Photo: Jimmy Barry.*

2010 had been for the organisation before reflecting on the significant contribution that Joss I ynam, who sadly had passed away in January, had made to Mountaineering Ireland and to hillwalking and climbing nationally and internationally. He concluded:

“There are many serious issues to be resolved in this country at this time, and many people will face hardship over the next few years, but we will still have our mountains, ...and our job, the legacy of Joss and the priority of Mountaineering Ireland, must be to protect and keep them available to all.”

Following Alan’s stimulating address, Ross Millar, Honorary Secretary to the Board, gave a report on the activities that the Board had engaged in during the year to ensure that Mountaineering Ireland



*Members of the Board and staff of Mountaineering Ireland at the AGM.
Photo: Jimmy Barry.*



*Participants heading out for a walk from Aherlow House Hotel.
Photo: Jimmy Barry.*



*First-aid Workshop in progress.
Photo: Patrick O’Sullivan.*

Annual Accounts for January to December 2010

I CAN GUARDEDI Y SAY that 2010 was happily a good year financially for Mountaineering Ireland, despite the prevailing economic climate. Whilst our accounts do show a surplus of €90,324, the majority of this is due to savings on staff costs, with the Training officer on a part-time contract during the year and the Hillwalking, Access and Conservation officer's post only being filled in May, and the associated savings on the projected programme costs. We will, however, incur these costs in full in 2011. We did have a reduction in the Irish Sports Council Grant but also had an increase in the subscriptions received due to increased membership numbers.

In 2010, Mountaineering Ireland continued to strive to keep all costs under control and to deliver the best value for money on all of its projects. However, I would prefer to report that we are keeping within our budgets. This is important because the Irish Sports Council Grant for 2011 has been reduced by a further 5% and, whilst we have not got the figures yet, we have been told to expect a reduction in the grant we receive from Sport Northern Ireland. As both Governments are still only part way through a series of cuts, we are aware that we need to plan for further reductions in the grants we receive in future years.

The financial year was realigned to the calendar year from the beginning of 2010 and the deferred income and accruals were removed from the accounts. We also corrected the allocation of the historic reserves within the accounts, so that the Environmental Defence Fund, the Expedition Fund and a fund for Bo S were separated from the other reserves and are now ring fenced. The Board also took the decision to create a Strategic Reserve of €135,000. This is prudent corporate governance to give a reserve in case of a major collapse in funding.

In relation to the surplus from 2010, a decision was taken to create a 'Club Training Fund', which member clubs can apply to receive funding from in relation to club training. We also created a reserve of €10,000 to assist in the upgrading of the IT infrastructure of Mountaineering Ireland. In addition, a sum of €50,000 put aside for a potential Mountain Centre in the Dublin Mountains. This money has not been spent and there is no commitment yet to go ahead

with the project, but it sends a signal to our partners that we are serious about the project. There will be some initial expenditure on a feasibility study to see if there is a need for the Centre and, if so, whether it can be self-financing and not a drain on Mountaineering Ireland's limited resources.

In summary, Mountaineering Ireland's Reserves are as follows:

Environment Defence Fund	€20,776
Expedition Fund	€12,064
Bo S Training Fund	€6,000
Club Training Fund	€20,000
IT Infrastructure Fund	€10,000
Mountain Centre Reserve	€50,000
Strategic Reserve	€135,000
Operating Reserve	€27,316
Total	€281,156

A copy of the audited accounts will be available on the website. Finally, on a personal note, I would like to thank both the Chief officer, Karl Boyle, and the Accounts Administrator, Terry Canavan, for making my job as Honorary Treasurer much easier.

David Batt,
Honorary Treasurer

The Mountaineering Council of Ireland

(A company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital)

Income and Expenditure Account for the period ended 31 December 2010

	Dec 2010 €	14 months to Dec 2009 €
Income		
Membership subscriptions	281,894	355,226
Mountain Log	63,395	65,912
Member meets and gatherings	21,726	22,627
Bo S	32,427	38,242
Northern Ireland Youth Development Programme	31,581	35,931
Publications	25,790	12,744
Lectures & library	1,095	429
Coaching development	12,405	-
Other income	4,115	3,637
Irish Sports Council grants	236,920	276,850
Sport Northern Ireland	85,433	62,380
Sponsorship	3,433	4,520
Environmental Defence Fund	2,130	3,144
Bank Interest receivable	4,068	2,697
	806,412	884,339
Expenditure		
Wages	194,020	248,043
Rent payable	18,525	18,526
Marketing & exhibitions	2,779	3,426
Legal and professional	290	1,381
Audit	4,373	4,235
Bank charges	5,366	7,984
Bank debts provision	11,082	-
General expenses	1,688	928
Administration expenses	1,626	40,945
Access and Conservation	2,573	5,583
AGM	3,818	3,697
Member meets and gatherings	19,626	18,051
Area Meetings	-	1,271
Board expenses	17,835	30,357
Bo S	48,311	22,305
Chief officer	5,097	12,919
Climbing Wall & Bouldering League	-	2,114
Guide books	8,418	17,683
Expedition grants	3,500	2,000
Membership costs	107,537	125,687
Mountain Log	67,257	91,911
Northern Ireland Youth Development Programme	119,046	93,129
Special Projects	1,336	12,124
Coaching development	26,577	-
Lectures & library	3,179	2,701
Union International Alpinist Association	3,153	3,067
Girls Outside Programme	11,996	23,000
Mountain Rescue Northern Ireland	14,207	5,991
Subscriptions	5,153	3,413
Depreciation	3,652	3,731
	712,020	806,202
Net surplus/(deficit)	94,392	78,137



Mountaineering Ireland AGM in progress. Photo: Patrick O'Sullivan.

remained healthy financially and continued to be able to meet the members' needs and to protect the uplands. The Honorary Treasurer, David Batt, then presented the financial report for 2010, a year which had been surprisingly successful despite the economic climate. He proposed the audited accounts for the year for approval by the meeting, which they were, and then proposed that Mountaineering Ireland's Auditor, David Buggy, be reappointed for the coming year.

A number of clubs were subsequently elected to full membership of Mountaineering Ireland and the nominations of various representatives to other organisations were also approved by the meeting.

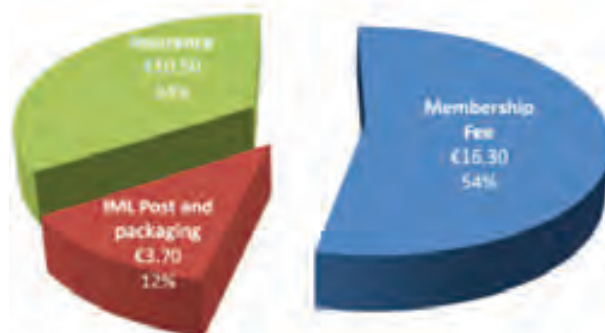
The Members' Forum was chaired by Mountaineering Ireland's Chairperson, Ruairí Ó Conchúir. Several important issues were raised by the members for discussion including:

- Risk assessments for events to satisfy Garda Síochána requests.
- Accidents reported to Mountaineering Ireland's insurers.
- Waymarked trails.
- Respect for landowners and the mountain environment.
- Approaching new Ministers and Mountaineering Ireland's proposal for the Programme for Government.
- Regulations prohibiting off-road vehicles and reporting quad bike activity.
- The Devil's ladder.
- Security in car parks.

A detailed report of the Members' Forum will be available on the website.

Finally, Mountaineering Ireland's Chief officer, Karl Boyle, thanked those present for attending the AGM and Members' Forum. He especially thanked the host clubs, the Ballyhoura Bears, Galtee Walking Club and the Peaks Mountaineering Club, for their support in organising the weekend, without which it could not have been the success it was. He also thanked the staff of Aherlow House Hotel, who had catered for Mountaineering Ireland so well. The excellent facilities and service there

Club Members fee €30.50



A figure from the Financial Accounts (for 12-month period to end of October 2010) showing breakdown of Mountaineering Ireland Club Membership fee.

contributed significantly to the success of the Gathering. A very enjoyable buffet and social evening then followed.

On Sunday morning, a number of workshops were held focused on club renewal and the recruitment of new walk leaders within clubs. The day was then rounded off by Richard Doubleday from Perkins Slade, who gave a briefing on Mountaineering Ireland's insurance schemes and answered questions about them, before members set off on their return journeys.

- Donald Gill is a member of the Wayfarers.

Christmas competitions winners

Christmas Book Competition

Winner of a copy of *Granite and Grit: a Walker's Guide to the Geology of the British Mountains* by Ronald Turnbull is:
Mike Jordan, Dromore West, Co Sligo.

Joss Books Competition

Winners of copies of the *Causeway Coast Way with Moyle Way* guidebook by Eoin o'Reilly, courtesy of the publishers Rucksack Readers, are:
Tina Ennis, Ballycullen, Dublin 24
Geraldine Mullany, Galway
Dick Waide, Ardsallagh, Co Waterford
Steven Meyen, Laghey, Co Donegal
Richard Casey, Cloyne, Co Cork

Congratulations to all our winners!



New life for Tiglin

KEITH FLYNN

TIGLIN, IN THE DEVIL'S GLEN, Ashford, Co Wicklow was previously the National Mountain and Whitewater Centre. It is now being used as a rehabilitation centre for men.

Tiglin is run by Teen Challenge Ireland, a charity which provides individuals with a solution to life-controlling problems, such as addiction, in order to enable them to become more productive members of society.

The work of Teen Challenge originally began in the 1950s with one man's dream to reach out to the gangs of New York. His work led to the opening of a rehabilitation house in that city for those caught up in the gang and drug cultures. That work subsequently spread across the US and to many other countries around the world.

Teen Challenge Ireland began in the late 1990s as a bus outreach in Dublin. An eight-bed rehabilitation centre for women was set up in 2002 in Newbridge, Co Kildare, with the addition of a 20-bed men's rehabilitation centre in 2008 at the former Tiglin Mountain Centre. Teen Challenge also still operates the Mobile Bus outreach.

Tiglin was initially part of an outhouse property of an old castle near Ashford. Teen Challenge purchased one half of this property, the old Mountain Centre, in 2008. Then, in February 2010, Teen Challenge purchased the remaining half of the property, the old An Óige Youth Hostel. This purchase will enable the organisation to expand operations in what is an idyllic and secluded property for its mission. Tiglin is currently operating as a residential rehabilitation and life-skills programme; this extension will allow the charity to further develop its 're-entry to society' phase, focusing on skills development, training and employment experience for students.

Tiglin is now a place that outreaches to homeless, addicted and destitute members of our society. It provides a 16-month rehabilitation programme during which residents undergo a complete life-changing experience based on becoming mentally sound, emotionally balanced, socially adjusted, physically well and spiritually alive. The programme's structure includes lectures, character development,



President Mary McAleese officially opens the Tiglin rehabilitation centre. Photo: Teen Challenge.

relational guidance, social skills and recreation. Residents are tutored in developing positive attitudes, trustworthiness, concern for others and a strong sense of responsibility. Teen Challenge strives to help the 'whole person,' not just the substance abuse. The Teen Challenge approach is to teach a whole new way of living by addressing family relationships, work attitudes, self image, peer pressure, temptation, community relationships and a variety of other life skills. This type of facility is in

short supply in Ireland, as highlighted in the National Drugs Strategy.

Teen Challenge Ireland is a registered charity which relies on continued support from both private and public bodies as well as individuals and community groups to remain operational. For further information, please visit our website www.teenchallenge.ie or email keith@teenchallenge.ie.

• Keith Flynn, 087-919 6429, keith@teenchallenge.ie.



The former An Óige hostel building at Tiglin. Photo: Teen Challenge.

Successful year for Dublin Mountains Partnership

KAREN WOODS

2010 WAS A hugely successful year for the Dublin Mountains Partnership (DMP). One of the partnership's flagship projects, the Dublin Mountains Way, was opened at the end of October. The route stretches from Shankill in the east to Tallaght in the west and is 43km in length. It offers the walker a variety of terrain, fantastic scenery and wonderful views over Dublin, and it will be over 54km when the Hell Fire Club /Massy's spur is included. The route is proving hugely popular and is encouraging many new visitors out onto the hills.

We also launched the *Dublin Mountains* map in 2010, in association with East West Mapping. It is widely available in book and outdoor shops, and on the web.

A number of new looped walks at Glenasmole, Tiknock and Hell Fire Club have been waymarked and new signage and mapboards will be installed in the coming months. Part of the route from Three Rock to Fairy's Castle was upgraded in partnership with Mountain Meitheal.

Work is progressing well on the new 8km mountain bike trail at Tiknock and it will be finished very shortly. The mountain bikers are really enjoying this challenging and exciting trail and hopefully it will keep them to the designated trails.

There are now five permanent orienteering courses in the Dublin



A string trail.

Mountains and maps can be downloaded from the www.dublinmountains.ie and from www.coillteoutdoors.

The volunteer ranger team is a great success and comprises 28 hard-working, enthusiastic volunteers. Hopefully you will regularly meet them out on the hills. We are also developing a new volunteer programme, **Adopt-a-Trail**, which enthusiastic walkers might be interested in. Again, details can be found on the website.

The Adopt-a-Trail programme is a cooperative effort between the Dublin Mountains Partnership and public landowners, primarily Coillte, over whose land the trails pass, and Mountain

Meitheal. A small group of two to three people can apply to Adopt-A-Trail. No previous experience is required, only an interest and ability to maintain trails by cutting back overgrown brush, cleaning drainage structures and checking and maintaining waymarking and signage. The aim is to keep the trail you adopt in the best possible condition for other hikers to use.

Plans for trail upgrades and other projects are currently being finalised and 2011 will be another busy and exciting year for the Dublin Mountains Partnership. A number of different events will be held during the year, including the Dublin Mountains Plod half-marathon (July 17th), forestry family fun days, volunteer ranger guided walks and events to mark National Trails Day (October 3rd). We are currently reviewing the Dublin Mountaineer bus service for 2011 and the research is suggesting that May and June are popular months to run this service. Please watch the website for more details and support this excellent service. There are many bus stops along the Dublin Mountains Way, making the service ideal for walking sections of the trail. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact me at info@dublinmountains.ie.

• Karen Woods, Dublin Mountains Partnership, www.dublinmountains.ie.



Families day-out on the Dublin Mountains Trail.



Tipperary club visits Morocco's Atlas Mountains

The Mid-Tipp Hillwalkers tackle the mighty Jebel Toubkal

DAN CONDREN

THE MID-TIPP HILLWALKERS have walked extensively in Ireland and the UK, and for the last three summers have visited Chamonix where fourteen members have summited on Mont Blanc.

In late October 2010, a large group of twenty-two from the club, led by the redoubtable John G O'Dwyer, headed to Morocco where their target was Jebel Toubkal, the highest peak in the Atlas Mountains and in North Africa.

As this was new territory, and to fit in with airline timetables, we left Dublin early on Tuesday, October 26th, and were due to return late on Saturday, October 29th. This gave us a narrow window of three days for the climb.

We were uncertain of the weather there at that time of year and so we had to bring summer and winter gear. We were also concerned about the lack of time to acclimatise to the altitude. Decent maps were not easy to come by and the ones we did get contained different grids, none of which coincided with the readings on our GPSs.

Before departure we had pre-booked accommodation and also private bus transfer from Agadir to our destination, which made the whole trip hassle-free. Arriving in Agadir early on Tuesday morning, October 26th, most of the first

day was spent in the most memorable and terrifying bus journey any of us had ever undertaken. Crossing the Atlas Mountains on a narrow, twisty road, with steep mountain on one side and lethal drops on the other, was scary enough. Making it even more exciting was our bus driver who chatted the whole way, keeping us informed and entertained with much non-verbal communication by way of extravagant hand gestures. The steering wheel of the bus (like the mules we would later meet on Toubkal) seemed to find its own course, even when meeting on-coming lorries, with literally inches between us and oblivion.

It was also a journey of stunning beauty, through countryside where the Berber culture was unsullied by tourism. A stop for omelettes at Café Restaurant Le Haut vue, the highest point on the mountain pass at 2,100m, was most memorable.

We arrived in Imilil late that afternoon. This charismatic and authentic little Berber village at 1,700m, where mules provide the most important means of transport, was our base and starting point for the climb. We stayed in the Hotel Soleil, friendly and cheerful at €22 pp for dinner and B&B. Dinner that evening consisted of soup, a mouth-watering tagine (a stew of spiced meat and vegetables prepared by slow cooking in an earthenware dish), the ubiquitous mint tea and sliced oranges.

After a long day, with the village closed, no alcohol available and no heating in the hotel, it was a very early night for most of us, wrapped in our sleeping bags and wearing our thermals for warmth.

Wednesday morning was heralded long before cock-crow with the Muezzin call to prayer. After breakfast, we began our hike to the Mouflons Refuge 12km away at 3,200m. Most luggage was sent by mule, but it was still a fairly challenging day in the warm sunshine. A constant stream of mules ferried supplies, luggage and people up and down the path. The mules asserted their right of way at all times – it was more than diplomatic to stand aside.

The picturesque shrine at Sidi Chamarouch marks the half-way point. We stocked up there on water and bars, and there were other stalls also along the route. We reached the refuge in a leisurely six hours, late in the afternoon with the shadows lengthening and temperatures dropping. The refuge was far superior to the usual Alpine refuge – certainly in the Chamonix area – and again was very friendly, but very cold. A good dinner was followed by cards and a sing-song round the open fire and, for most of us, a sound sleep that night. The refuge cost approximately €25, including dinner and breakfast.

After breakfast, and tending to one of our party who was unwell and had to



descend, we set out at 6:30am. John G set a slow, steady pace for the whole climb with just a few stops so that the whole party remained together on the ascent. We met snow at about 3,500m. Most of us used crampons on the way up, but they were not essential. In fact, only a few wore them coming down, but I was sorry I had not done so. There were many other walkers also, but it was nothing like as busy as Mont Blanc, or the highest peaks in Ireland or Britain. There was a good deal of scree in the first hour and a half of the climb, but conditions were good after that. After daylight, temperatures rose, reaching about 20°C.

Tom Russell and Joan Quinn, two of the longest-serving and most respected members of the group, led the final hundred metres to the summit of Jebel Toubkal (4,167m) which we reached in a leisurely 4½ hours.

We were enveloped in a wave of emotion and fellow feeling that I think we will all remember for a long time. We spent an unhurried 45 minutes on the summit. *Slievenamon* – which has serenaded many

high peaks, as well as Croke Park! – was sung with gusto, led by tenor Tom Ryan; the Tipperary flag was unfurled; hugs and congratulations exchanged; lunch eaten and photos taken. All of this with crisp snow underfoot and a bright warm sun overhead, which made the summit of Toubkal in late October one of the most pleasant peaks any of us had experienced.

We descended to the col (approx 4,000m). We then headed in smaller groups for the refuge which was reached in times between two and three hours.

The descent to Imlil took between 2¾ and 3¼ hours by which time there were a lot of tired legs and people. Warm showers and another great dinner resuscitated us somewhat, but the cold of the evening (inside and out) sent us again early to our beds. One member was heard to remark that this was the first time since he was three years old that he had been in bed by 10:00pm three nights in a row!

With one day to spare on the trip, we went into Marrakech where we had a lovely day. That night was not an early one, with cards, singing and dancing in the

hotel, the merriment added to by the contribution of one of our waiters. On Saturday, we set out for Agadir and home but, by unanimous agreement, we went by motorway and not back over the Atlas. To have come that way was unforgettable, but to return the same way knowing what was ahead would have been masochistic.

The trip was a success in every way. We had been aware that the shortness of our trip left us vulnerable to the risk of bad weather, but we were lucky in that regard. Just a week earlier we would not have been so lucky as there were torrential rains which washed away part of the access road to Imlil. We were also concerned about lack of time to acclimatise to altitude and though some of us did feel breathlessness, the slow steady pace was crucial in enabling all to reach the summit. The combination of clear views, warm sunshine and snow underfoot made the summit itself probably the most pleasant I have been on. In addition, the opportunities we had to come into contact with the Berber culture made the trip all the more memorable.



Thank you, Mountaineering Ireland!

PAUL WHITING

SINCE THE LAST issue of the *Irish Mountain Log*, I have completed my fourth year as Development officer for Mountain Rescue Ireland. One of the pitfalls, when you have been with an organisation for some time, is that you can assume that the people around you know the same things that you do. Recently, I was at an event where some of the people were taking part in one of those "What did the Romans ever do for us?" discussions. It occurred to me that readers of the *Irish Mountain Log*, and some members of the mountain rescue community, might not be aware of the extent of the relationship that has developed between Mountaineering Ireland and Mountain Rescue Ireland in recent years. Here are just a few examples of the tremendous support that Mountaineering Ireland provides to Mountain Rescue Ireland (MRI):

- It provides HR support to the MRI Development officer in regards to managing pay and expenses.
- It provides the MRI Development officer with office facilities when visiting Dublin.
- It allows MRI to use the Mountaineering

Ireland mailing address as its own permanent mailing address.

- It promotes MRI on the Mountaineering Ireland website and through the dedicated MRI pages in the *Irish Mountain Log*.
- It works with MRI on issues of mountain safety. Examples of this include the safety statement on the new OSI Discovery Maps, the "Walk Safely" pamphlet and work on path erosion and safety issues in Mayo, the MacGillcuddy's Reeks and on Slieve Donard.
- It has recently started collecting donations directly from Mountaineering Ireland members who wish to support MRI. Last year, Mountaineering Ireland members donated directly to Mountain Rescue Ireland and, at a local level, many members and clubs supported our twelve member teams directly as well.

On behalf of Mountain Rescue Ireland, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the board, staff, clubs and individual members of Mountaineering Ireland for their support of our national body and, at a local level, for their direct support of our twelve rescue teams. We are very much aware that, in the current financial environment, money and resources are tight and we very much appreciate that you choose to assist us.



The "Walk Safely" pamphlet produced by Mountaineering Ireland in cooperation with Mountain Rescue Ireland and supported by Fáilte Ireland. It is available upon request from the Mountaineering Ireland office.



Fundraising event

Wee Adventure Film Festival

Mountain Rescue Ireland was fortunate to be chosen as the charity partner for this year's Wee Adventure Film Festival (www.waff.ie).

The festival, which is in its fourth year, was the brainchild of John Connolly and is Ireland's only adventure film festival. The event this year took place at Dublin's Sugarclub on Friday, February 4th, where seventeen films were shown on the night. We were fortunate to raise €826 at the event through a mixture of merchandise sales and donations. Thanks to the organisers, sponsors, film producers and fans that made the night a success, and thanks to everyone for their support on the night. A special 'thank you' to our MRI volunteers John, David and Thomas, who staffed the event for us.

Help support Mountain Rescue Ireland

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Annual Conference and AGM 2011



MOUNTAIN RESCUE
IREI AND held its
2011 Annual
Conference and
AGM over the
weekend of
January 21-23 at
the Radisson Blu
Hotel at Rosses
Point, Co Sligo.

The theme for the weekend was "Securing our Future," referring to the work that has been done since the end of the 2007-2009 Development Plan to create a new Development Plan for the next stage of the organisation's growth.

On the Saturday morning the conference delegates were welcomed by Fiona Gallagher, chair of the Sligo Leitrim Mountain Rescue Team, the hosts for the weekend. This was followed by a short opening speech by the chair of Mountain Rescue Ireland, Seamus Bradley.

The first session was a presentation of the work being done on the new Development Plan for 2011-2015. The delegates had the opportunity to review the contents of the plan and indicate their preferences on how certain initiatives should be prioritised.

After morning tea, Session Two consisted of two parallel discussions. The first was hosted by MRI Chair Seamus Bradley about "The development of a National Pre-Plan" to be used for an incident to which all teams needed to respond. On average, there is one incident a year of this scale.

The second discussion was hosted by MRI vice-chair Kenny Roberts, on "The Introduction of an MR Casualty Care Exam," based on the system which is currently being used in Scotland, England and Wales.

The session before lunch was a very interesting presentation by the Mourne Mountain Rescue Team on the dual helicopter crashes in the Mourne in October 2010.

Session Four after lunch consisted of two break-out sessions. The first, hosted by past chair Pat Holland, was on "Essential Contacts for MR Teams" and the second, convened by MRI Development officer Paul Whiting, was about "Online Application Development."

In order to secure its future, MRI has engaged a professional fundraising consultant to develop a national fundraising



Fiona Gallagher, chair of Sligo Leitrim MRT, welcomes delegates to the 2011 conference and AGM. Photo: Mountain Rescue Ireland.

plan. Session Five was a presentation from the consultant on the current progress to date and the next steps that need to be undertaken for this to be successful at a national level.

There was then a break for afternoon tea before heading into Session Six where there were two parallel tracks, the first a meeting for the Team Leaders and the second a presentation by the fundraising consultant to the teams on how they could fundraise at a local level.

In between these sessions, the delegates had an opportunity to visit the two trade stands at this year's conference – Keela, who manufacture quality personal protection clothing for mountain rescue teams, and Bond Safety, the local agent for German boot manufacturer Haix. Our thanks to these two companies for their support of the MRI conference.

The last session was "Something Different," where delegates got a chance to move around after sitting in a lecture theatre all day. This year, the local team organised team-building activities to allow delegates to get to know mountain rescue team members from across the island.

The day finished with a splendid three-course dinner and an after-dinner talk by Dr Fergal Hickey, the head of the Emergency Department at Sligo General Hospital and president of the Irish Association of Emergency Medicine. Dr Hickey gave a great presentation in which he encouraged

mountain rescue teams to get to know the staff of their local emergency department so that the staff could appreciate the conditions in which MRTs operate and the teams could find out what they could do to improve the quality of care they provided for their casualties.

On the Sunday morning, a workshop was held when the Training and Development Group discussed the calendar of courses they were providing in 2011. During the AGM that followed, the main officers and the team leaders presented a summary of their activities in the past year. Elections were then held for the positions of national Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Seamus Bradley of Donegal MRT was re-elected as Chair for his second year; Dave Goddard of Mourne MRT was elected as Secretary; and Dave Fahy of Mayo MRT was elected Treasurer. We wish them the best of luck in their roles for the coming year. Norman Purdy of Mourne MRT was thanked for his work over the past three years as the outgoing Treasurer. The conference closed just after mid-day.

Thanks to our hosts, the Sligo Leitrim MRT, and the staff of the Radisson Blu at Rosses Point for another great conference and AGM. We look forward to next year's conference which will be hosted by the North West MRT at a location yet to be determined.

• *Paul Whiting, Development Officer, Mountain Rescue Ireland.*

For more information about Mountain Rescue in Ireland, please visit www.mountainrescue.ie

Women's event in the Mourne

'Women with Altitude,' Tollymore, 8-10 April 2011

"Women with Altitude," an event specifically for girls and women, went ahead as planned in the Tollymore National outdoor Centre in the Mourne Mountains from 8-10 April. A wide range of talks and activities were held during the weekend for female hillwalkers and climbers of all levels of ability. A full report will be published in the Summer 2011 issue of the *Irish Mountain Log*.

Below, we present a review of a book published recently in Scotland to commemorate the centenary of the Ladies Scottish Climbing Club, a club which has supported and encouraged women there to progress in the sport of mountaineering.

Rita Connell of Blaney Ramblers in the Mourne during the Autumn Gathering 2010.
Photo: Margaret Tees.



Ladies climbing club celebrates first 100 years

Clare Sheridan



Rising to the Challenge: 100 Years of the Ladies Scottish Climbing Club

By Helen Steven
Scottish Mountaineering
Trust, 175pp
8pp colour photos
96pp b/w photos
£24.00
ISBN 978-1907233-12-8

The Ladies Scottish Climbing Club (L SCC) was set up in 1908 in the wake of The Ladies Alpine Club a year earlier. Together they

constituted a brave new departure in an era when women did not yet have the vote. The idea of women choosing to venture into the mountains without their menfolk must have seemed shocking to many at that time, while others probably dismissed it as yet another outlandish eccentricity of the wealthy, and these ladies were wealthy. There were occasions when their forays into the hills were supported by the services of a chauffeur and a housekeeper bearing a picnic hamper. Nevertheless, it was a very consciously pioneering group of women who attended the club's first meet, resplendent in broad-brimmed hats, matching woollens and heavy (removable) skirts. They actually already had quite a lot of climbing experience between them, having accompanied their husbands on various guided climbs in the Swiss Alps during previous summers. The realisation that Scotland could also be a playground for serious mountaineering must have excited them greatly and helped motivate them to found the club.

Their entry requirements – a specific number of rock climbs and snow routes over a three-year period – show that they wished to attract and support serious female mountaineers. They aspired to the same climbing standards as the ambitious male

climbers of their day. Did the club maintain these high standards? Would it have survived as a club if it had?

Helen Steven, the author of this history of the Scottish Ladies Climbing Club, is a long-standing member of that club, having herself been trained-in by one of the founder members. She gives a detailed account of the club's history, drawing from its extensive archive and peppering her record with the first-person accounts of generations of club members. This is clearly a labour of love and you get a definite sense of Steven not wanting to leave anyone out.

Having survived two world wars, the L SCC was probably at its peak in the fifties when it fielded the first ever all-women's Himalayan expedition. In this decade, too, some of its members, inspired by joint meets with the Swiss Women's Alpine Club, had a number of very good Alpine seasons. Some of their climbs were done with guides (common enough at the time) and others were undertaken independently. One woman comments on being in the only cordée feminine on a peak in the Dauphiné – she'd probably be surprised to know that cordées féminines are as rare on Alpine peaks now as they were half a century ago.

Other expeditions over the decades included trips to Norway, Greenland, Peru and Bolivia, but the enduring yardstick of active club membership – "a general all-round competence on rock and snow in all kinds of conditions" – seems to have ensured a broadly-based membership of fit Munroists more at home on the Cullin Ridge than on a modern rock route.

Helen Steven has done her club a great service. The atmosphere of club huts, meets, bothies, singsongs – all the friendliness and fun that clubs in the last century had to offer – beams off the pages. She has produced a comprehensive history of considerable interest to the Scottish mountaineering fraternity, though its appeal will be limited elsewhere in these islands. The book does, however, throw up the question of the role of climbing clubs in the 21st century. Nostalgia, by the way, is the reason given for retaining the quaint "Ladies" in the title and, indeed, nostalgia, history and tradition continue to have appeal for those who join clubs...but is there a future for a club like the L SCC as a club for climbers? Only time will tell.

Scottish Winter Meet 2011



Descending off Coire nan Lochan, Glen Coe.
Photo: Sean Walsh.

SEAN WALSH

THIS YEAR'S Mountaineering Ireland Winter Meet was based at Inchree in the Scottish Highlands from February 18th to 28th.

It was to be my first taste of winter mountaineering and, for me, it began with an alpine start when we set out from Dublin at 4:00am to catch the early ferry from Belfast.

We reached Inchree by the afternoon; it is located about half-way between Glen Coe and Ben Nevis.

The Meet itself kicked off at 8:00pm that night in the Bunkhouse, where we met the instructors and the rest of the participants.

We went through our gear with the instructors to make sure everything was in order for the next three days in the hills.

There were ten participants on the various courses running in the first half of the week. Three were on the winter mountaineering course that I was doing, with Clive Roberts as the instructor.

On the first day of this course, Clive took us up the Zig Zags on the Three Sisters of Glen Coe where we practiced moving

together on a rope. At the top of the Zig Zags we reached the snow-line and then continued along the ridge up to Stob Corie Nan I ochan with crampons and ice axes in fine winter condition. Despite the strong winds, we made the summit and then quickly dropped back down into the Coire, out of the wind and on back into the glen.

That night, as with the rest of the week, we had a nice big meal in the Inchree restaurant while warming ourselves around the fire and catching up with what the other groups had been up to. Back in the Bunkhouse, we learned some of the

intricacies of Scottish wind slab with an avalanche awareness talk.

Day 2

On day two, we headed up to Beinn a Chaorainn, following

a ridge broken by iced-up rock steps, my first experience of rock-climbing in crampons! Near white-out conditions at the top meant map and compass were needed to navigate off the top, but as we dropped below the clouds we got a taste of the amazing Scottish scenery. After one of the finest ridges I've ever climbed, we headed back to Inchree where the evening's entertainment was a slide-show about Clive Roberts's time in Antarctica.



Ice axes on summit cairn of Beinn a Chaorainn.
Photo: Sean Walsh.

Day 3

On the third day, we headed back to Glen Coe where a relatively short hike brought us to the col on the Buachaille Etive Beag, where we did some winter skills work, digging avalanche pits, bucket seats, ice-axe belays and snow bollards.

We then headed up towards Stob Dubh, some good snow conditions on the way giving us a chance to try step-cutting on some of the steeper slopes. A short ridge walk later brought us to the peak of our third Munro in three days. Unfortunately, more cloudy conditions meant we didn't see the spectacular views we were assured were there.

That night, we all settled down in the pub to rest our tired limbs and compare notes. It had been a great three days and we had all learned a lot and got to experience some great routes.

It was my first time in Scotland but it will definitely not be my last. Mountaineering Ireland's Winter Meet was certainly a great introduction to winter mountaineering.

• Sean Walsh is a member of the DCU Rock Climbing Club.

Our instructor, Clive Roberts, and Paul Gibbons climbing a rock step on Beinn a Chaorainn. Photo: Sean Walsh.



Celebrating 10 years of holidaying in the Canaries!

Congratulations to Shane Gray, who is celebrating 10 years of taking Irish groups walking in the Canaries.

Shane Gray is a long-standing advertiser in the *Irish Mountain Log*. He escorts groups on walking holidays on the island of El Hierro in the Canaries, as well as on I a Gomera and I a Palma. He describes these islands as the "three little hidden Canaries."

Shane's escorted trips are very popular and, since 2001, he has taken more than 110 groups of walkers to El Hierro. It does sound like a great job to have!

To celebrate this milestone, Shane is offering a **10% discount** on the price of these holidays, which covers all transfers and local transport, ferries, accommodation and five days' guided walking (see advert, page 67). This price does not include the cost of the flights to Tenerife. However, both Aer Lingus and Ryanair fly to Tenerife and there are often bargains to be had, if flights are booked well in advance.

Shane waxes lyrical about the pleasures of walking in the Canaries, saying that El Hierro is a gem of an island, utterly unspoilt and undiscovered, with an amazing diversity of scenery, very friendly people and a benign climate. Certainly, from their comments, his clients, some of whom have returned repeatedly, do seem to enjoy these holidays!

Walking in El Hierro.
Photo: Antonia (Mijas, Spain).



Bouldering League 2010/2011

NICOLE MULLEN



THIS YEAR, the Irish Bouldering League (IBL) was kindly sponsored by **Patagonia**. The rounds took place in four different locations around Ireland, as follows:

Round 1: Tollymore Mountain Centre, Co Down, 23rd October 2010

Round 2: DCU, 20th November 2010

Round 3: St Colman's Community College, Middleton, Cork, 15th January 2011

Round 4: NUI, Galway, 12th February 2011

There was great competition at these events and congratulations must go to all who entered. Special congratulations go to the overall winners in each category, as follows:

Junior Female:

1st: Vanessa Woods

2nd: Eleanor Lawrence

Triple 3rd: Victoria Colligan, Sarah Hoare and Grace Willcock

Female:

Joint 1st: Beatriz Baselga Pascual and Joan Mulloy

Joint 3rd: Tara O'Neill and Claire Comiskey

Junior Male:

1st: Daragh O'Connor

patagonia®

2nd: Niall O'Rourke

3rd: David Cossen

Male:

1st: Louis Mulloy

2nd: Michael Walsh

3rd: Richard Sands

Full results for all the rounds and the overall league results can be found at www.climbing.ie.

About the Irish Bouldering League

The Irish Bouldering League (IBL) is an indoor bouldering competition that is open for anyone to enter. You do not have to be a member of a club or have membership of Mountaineering Ireland. Although the league is conducted over several rounds, you can enter an individual event at any stage of the competition. The competition is perhaps not suitable for complete beginners but certainly novice and inexperienced climbers are more than welcome. There are climbs ranging from reasonably easy to very hard, so there should be something for everyone.

The IBL is a fun and relaxed competition where you will find you will get a lot of support and encouragement from your fellow competitors. There is always plenty of craic at each round, good music – oh, and free food!

How does it work?

There are 15-20 boulder problems set at the venue, ranging from reasonably easy to very hard. You get points for climbing each problem in under three attempts, more points if you take the least number of goes. Whoever has the most points at the end of the day is the winner. There are separate competitions for women, men and juniors (under 16 years of age, born 1st January 1995 or later). For the league ranking, your best three results out of the four rounds count toward your league placing.

Are there prizes?

There are per-round prizes for first, second and third in each category (Male, Female, Junior) as well as spot prizes. Then, of course, there are overall league prizes for first, second and third in each category (Male, Female, Junior) based on three best scores out of the four events.

Must-have guide

New guide to bouldering in Ireland

A NEW GUIDEBOOK, *Bouldering in Ireland*, has been published by David Flanagan. The comprehensive and well-illustrated guide is available from his website, www.theshortspan.com. The book is priced very reasonably at €15.00 plus €3 postage and packaging to Ireland/UK, or €7.50 to the rest of the world. It will also be available from outdoor shops across the country.

The book describes the bouldering areas currently in use throughout the island of Ireland. These include bouldering areas in Glendalough and the Wicklow Mountains, the Reeks, the Burren, Connemara, northwest Donegal, the Inishowen peninsula, Fair Head and the Mourne.

In all, more than 1,700 problems in ninety areas are described, ranging in grade from Font 3 to 8b and on a wide variety of rock types. The guide is very well illustrated with numerous coloured photos of the main problems, maps and topos.

This definitive guidebook to bouldering in Ireland will be a must-have possession for anyone wishing to explore the full range of bouldering problems available on the island of Ireland.



Can I volunteer to help out?

Yes, please! The whole crew work for the IBI on a voluntary basis. You can volunteer to be a route setter and we give you a small amount to compensate for having to take time off work, college, etc, to set the wall on the day before the competition.

We also need help on the organisation behind the scenes. There is a different committee every year, so the people who step down need to be replaced – we are very grateful for all offers. Of course, at any event we always need help with registration, counting up score cards at the end, cleaning up and lots of other small jobs.

visit www.climbing.ie or contact ibl@climbing.ie for further information about the IBI. Hopefully, we will see you at the next competition! ■

Volunteer ranger programme in Northern Ireland

For over 10 years the Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN) has been actively working to improve recreational facilities in Northern Ireland's outdoors. Back in the early days of CAAN, one of the main objectives was to improve the walking trails in the North by introducing a 'Quality Walk' scheme, which graded the various walking routes and waymarked ways throughout the countryside, assessing them for facilities, signage and percentage of routes off-road, etc. Under this scheme, as well as the nine waymarked ways, two hundred other routes have also been given CAAN's 'Quality Walk' stamp of approval. With the launch of this scheme, CAAN decided to develop a volunteer Ranger Programme designed to train passionate and enthusiastic walkers who would then audit these walks twice a year.

The ranger programme itself was established in 2007 and has been hugely successful, involving local walkers in the process of maintaining and developing sustainable trails across the province. Here, **Diane Patterson**, Development Executive for CAAN, explains how the volunteer scheme works and the reasons for its success.

* * * * *

Q. Why was the Volunteer Ranger Programme introduced in Northern Ireland?

A. In order for public liability insurance to be provided for all the quality waymarked ways established here, a bi-annual, independent audit of these routes was necessary and a volunteer ranger programme was the ideal way in which to do this. Volunteers were then also asked to audit the two hundred 'Quality Walks' in Northern Ireland, so that CAAN could be confident that the routes were adequately signed and maintained for members of the public to use.

Q. How many volunteers have signed up to this scheme?

A. CAAN currently has 149 volunteers Rangers in the scheme, with over 70% of those volunteers each allocated a section of walking trail to oversee. Their role involves an



Volunteer Ranger social event on Rathlin Island.
Photo: CAAN.

autumn audit, to check that all features such as signage and countryside furniture along the allocated route are present and fit for purpose. Any maintenance that is required is then fed back to CAAN, which informs the relevant land managers such as local District Councils, the National Trust, etc. A follow up audit is then carried out in the spring by the volunteer to check that any previous issues have been adequately addressed.

Q. What role will these volunteer rangers play in the future?

A. We are currently analysing the accessibility of each of our Quality Walks. Our volunteers provided invaluable information about each walk after having carried out accessibility audits on them throughout the summer of 2010. This information includes path types, surfaces and gradients, as well as details about accessible facilities available at the start and finish points of each walk. Over the winter, we hope to collate all this information and display an accessibility grading system for the walks on www.WalkNI.com by early 2011.

Q. Why has CAAN's Volunteer Ranger Programme been so successful?

A. It is quite simple. Local people audit the trails in their local areas. Unquestionably, having a widespread geographical presence of volunteer rangers has proved invaluable to the success of this scheme. The volunteers are passionate about their patches and want to look after walks that they can ultimately be proud of. We also make sure that it isn't all work and no play. There are plenty of perks for being a volunteer ranger including discounts from local outdoor stores and opportunities for seasonal trips and walking events with other like-minded rangers from across the country.

* * * * *

So, since its launch in 2007, this voluntary scheme has accomplished targets invaluable to a small organisation such as CAAN. The Ranger Programme is a great example of the worth of volunteer programmes and what can be achieved when keen walkers and individuals who care about sustainable recreation all pull together in the same direction. The scheme helps to insure walking trails in Northern Ireland are fit for purpose and remain of a high standard for everyone to enjoy.

• *Chris Armstrong, Countryside Access and Activities Network, 028 90 306 941, c.armstrong@countrysidecreation.com.*



Inishowen Way established in Donegal

ALAN TEES

The report below appeared in The Irish Times on December 7th last:

Walkers out on Inishowen Way

"o vERC oMING HoRRIFIC road conditions to get there, about 20 walkers set out on Sunday, December 5th, from Dunree towards Clonmany, on Stage 2 of the proposed Inishowen Way. The group was mainly made up of members of North West Mountaineering Club and Muff Scout Troop, and they enjoyed bright sunshine and fine views across the Swilly to the snow-clad Donegal highlands, as they crossed the beach at Crummies Bay towards the bottom of the Urris Hills.

The route then followed the line of the old track that used to connect the Forts of Dunree and Lennan along the north-western flanks of the Urris Hills. After a short steep climb to a col, lunch was had, enjoying stunning views on all sides, with blue seas to the north and west, and snow-capped hills behind, before the group visited the crash site of the WW2 Wellington bomber. Continuing north-east, the group then picked up the cart track coming from Lennan. The original plan had been to

walk through to Clonmany via Butler's Glen, but taking into account the lethally icy road conditions, it was decided to double back, over the hills to Dunree. Young legs broke trail through the snow up to the hidden lakes and soon the group was romping down the Urris Ridge, into the glory of a winter Swilly sunset.

It is planned to walk the next section of the Inishowen Way, from Clonmany to the Isle of Doagh, on Sunday, January 30th, meeting at Butler's Glen at 11:00am; all welcome. In February, we intend to walk Stage 4, Malin Town to Malin Head; in March, Malin Head to Culdaff; in April, Tremone to Greencastle; and in May, do the whole trail from Greencastle back to Buncrana on seven consecutive days."

The idea of setting up a long-distance trail came from an appeal in the Autumn 2010 edition of the *Irish Mountain Log* to "Get out there" and walk one of our national trails on National Trails Day, October 3rd, 2010. A quick perusal of the map on page 19 of the *Log* made me aware of the fact that there was absolutely nothing on our native Inishowen peninsula, despite having an extraordinarily spectacular coastline, some very fine hills,

and Ireland's most northerly point!

Since then, we have spent numerous days walking along the coast, checking out possible trails, talking to people and, once a month, walking an entire section with interested individuals. A community radio broadcast either side of the walk has helped to keep it high profile, and has invited comment/suggestions/objections from local people.

It is anticipated that the walk from Moville to Buncrana will take seven days and could form an Inishowen section of the Ulster Way (which already has a link to Magilligan, connected to Greencastle by ferry).

The same issue of the *Irish Mountain Log* carried a commitment between Mountaineering Ireland and Scouting Ireland, so it is spectacularly appropriate that a scout troop, the Muff Scout Troop, and a hillwalking club, the North West Mountaineering Club, should have joint involvement in this initiative.

To follow the progress of Ireland's newest and best long-distance trail, log on to www.inishowenway.com.

• Alan Tees is a member of North West Mountaineering Club and President of Mountaineering Ireland.

Seeking volunteer guides

Hilltoptreks is looking for volunteer guides to assist in some of their walks. The volunteers will gain some wonderful real experience in guiding groups around various parts of the country.

Hilltoptreks is also looking for qualified guides – either WGI or MI qualified with a D1 licence for minibus – to provide tours and lead groups.

Contact <http://www.hilltoptreks.ie>

Email: info@hilltoptreks.ie

or phone Terry on 087 7849 599.



New Wicklow East map now available

EastWest Mapping has published a new map, *Wicklow East: 1:30,000 Detailed Map*. It covers from Bray to Wicklow town and inland from the coast to Sally Gap. The retail price is €9.95 and it is available from larger bookstores and outdoor shops. It is also available from their website, www.eastwestmapping.ie, with an additional charge for p&p. It is possible to order the full set of four Dublin and Wicklow maps from the website for €35, including p&p.



UIAA News

INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAINEERING AND CLIMBING FEDERATION
UNION INTERNATIONALE DES ASSOCIATIONS D'ALPINISME



Mick Fowler is elected president of Alpine Club

WEI I -KNo WN BRITISH climber Mick Fowler has been elected President of the Alpine Club, following what is thought to be the first contested election for this prestigious post in the Club's 153-year history. Fowler exemplifies the style of exploratory mountaineering championed by the Alpine Club and is expected to devote his three years as President to attracting more active alpinists into the club.

Earlier this year Fowler returned from a first ascent with Paul Ramsden of the north face of Sulamar (c5380m) in the Chinese Tien Shan. He has been acclaimed as the "mountaineers' mountaineer" and his 2002 ascent of Siguniang netted him and Ramsden the Piolet d'or and US Golden Piton. Fowler's expertise as a taxman is also likely to prove useful overseeing the Alpine Club's administration and challenging finances.

Fowler's competition for the post came from Henry Day, a retired colonel with a fine expeditioning record, who was

climbing leader of an Army Mountaineering Association team that made an ascent of 8091m Annapurna in Nepal in 1970.

Ice Climbing World Cup 2011

A NEW ERA is beginning in ice climbing. On January 8-9, the UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup 2011 season got underway with Lead and Speed competitions in Cheongsong, Korea, the first time the competition has been held in Asia.

Koreans are no strangers to ice climbing. In the final event of the 2010 World Cup season, athletes Shin Woon Seon and Hee Yong Park won the Lead competitions in the women's and men's events respectively. Ice climbing is like a national sport in Korea and lead competitions take place all over the country throughout the winter season.

UIAA recognises ice climbing as a competitive sport and is responsible for organisation and promotion of the Ice Climbing World Cup and International Championships. There are two ice climbing disciplines, speed and lead. In speed, athletes race up an ice face for the best time. In lead competitions, the climbers' ability to master a difficult route in a given time is tested.

Further 2011 World Cup events were subsequently held in Saas Fee, Switzerland, Busteni in Roumania and Kirov in Russia.

In its commitment to developing the sport, the UIAA plans to expand the circuit with the intention of show-casing ice climbing competitions in Sochi, Russia, at the same time as the 2014 Winter Olympics.



Ice climbing in Cheongsong, Korea.

PURE project removes 1,500 tonnes of rubbish

IAN DAVIS

The PURE (Protecting Uplands & Rural Environments) Project, which was launched in 2006, is a partnership project. It is the first of its kind in Ireland that incorporates statutory and non-statutory organisations, including Wicklow County Council; Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council; Coillte; National Parks & Wildlife Service; Fáilte Ireland and the Wicklow Uplands Council. The project was established to combat illegal dumping and fly-tipping in the Wicklow/Dublin uplands.

Since the establishment of the PURE Project and the 10-Call phone-line 1850 365 121, the PURE office has received over 3,700 reports about illegal dumping, resulting in over 3,600 collections and the removal of approximately 1,500 tonnes of rubbish from the landscape. That is equivalent to over 214,000 standard household bags of rubbish.

Due to the current economic downturn, PURE has seen an increase in small-scale illegal dumping in Wicklow, in particular of domestic rubbish bags. However, it would appear that the historic sites for the dumping of larger amounts of rubbish have been removed from the county.

A continuing problem for the project is householders and businesses handing over their waste to illegal waste collectors. In January, the PURE Project featured on the RTE programme 'Ear to the Ground,' appealing to the general public to check that waste collectors have a waste collection permit before handing over their rubbish to them. In 2010, there had been some success in this respect with a number of people being convicted and fined for handing over waste to unauthorised collectors. Additionally, a court case in October 2010 saw the conviction of a bogus waste collector, who collected waste from a business in Arklow and then dumped it just outside Arklow town, at the viewing point in Kilcara.

Last year, the project launched an environmental initiative entitled **The PURE Mile**, which aimed to foster a greater appreciation of our country roadscapes by acknowledging and rewarding local community groups who adopt a mile of road in their area. The competition was a great success and over 17 communities



are now involved in the 2010/2011 PURE Mile. PURE also launched and distributed the 2011 PURE Mile Calendar, which depicts the areas which participated in the 2009/2010 PURE Mile competition.

• *Ian Davis, PURE Project, 0404 45547, 087 2518064, info@pureproject.ie, www.pureproject.ie.*

• **Note:** To report dumpers and dumping, **Lo-Call 1850 365 121**. Please put this number in your mobile so that you can report any illegal dumping you see. The number is valid anywhere in the Republic but in Wicklow, with the PURE Project, the litter is likely to be removed faster.

Glenmalure footbridge repaired



| Photo: Helen Lawless.

Wicklow walkers will be glad to learn that Coillte has reinstated the footbridge just above the Baravore ford in the Glenmalure valley, Co Wicklow. The footbridge was damaged and washed to one side during a day of intense rainfall last September. The bridge, which spans the Avonbeg River, has been raised a couple of feet in the hope of avoiding future damage.

Viewpoint: Philie Sheehan

In praise of hillwalking clubs

I HAVE FREQUENTLY said to prospective members of my hillwalking club, “If there is one activity that brings benefits to all aspects of your life, it is going walking with friends in the hills.”

I have also frequently thanked the powers that be for the day I first went to the Sunday meeting place and met the people who were to become my friends and companions on the road of life.

We have shared such happy times – great holidays, conversations, discussions, arguments, parties, dancing, swimming, snowball fights and so on. We have been to the summits and to the depths together. We have attended weddings, funerals, divorces, birthdays, book launches and pond parties. We are an instant ‘rent a crowd,’ always there and always willing and able to support each other, whatever the occasion.

We have often joked, when someone is gone for a while, that “their life had more exciting things to offer,” but we were always there with open minds to listen if they returned to report trials and tribulations.

There are few situations in our adult lives where we can ‘just play’ in a social setting. However, when we are together, it is completely acceptable to be ourselves, to joke and to have a laugh. Social niceties and political correctness take second place, a welcome respite from life in the wider world.

Many times, departing for a walk, my heart has been heavy but always, on the return journey, the load has felt so much lighter. It matters little to me where I’ve been or what we’ve climbed, as the air, the scenery, the exercise and the camaraderie work their magic to remind me that life is best lived in the present.

There are leaders in the club, the people who take responsibility for our safety and well-being. They invest their time and energy in selecting different and interesting walks. They organise training and up-skilling sessions for those interested in developing their skills. We

have a social secretary focused on our social and cultural development. We have actors, writers and photographers in our

“I love hillwalking and I love my hillwalking club!”

midst. These interests and abilities have grown and developed during the years of their club membership, and we share in their achievements and their plans.

We know each other out of the social arena. We are often unaware of each other’s ‘employment status.’ We see each other in old clothes, often in a dirty, unkempt and dishevelled state. We see our tiredness, our frustrations and our ageing. We listen to each other’s stories and silences. We are each our own person and are accommodated in our idiosyncracies. There are no rules other than to keep safe; there are no expectations other than to walk; and there is no competition other than to be there.

There are many joys and pleasurable activities in life but few, in my opinion, are as enduring and uncomplicated as joining friends in a walking club for a day on the hills!

**Philie Sheehan,
Marley Hillwalking Club,
Dublin**



Thanks for the Memory The Peaks of Knockanafrin Ridge, Comeragh Mountains, in winter snow, 1975. Pat Brennan and dog in centre. Photo: Tony o’Brien.

Hillwalkers on the 'A' Walk during a previous Tinahely Trailwalking Festival.

Tinahely Trailwalking Festival

May 2011 Bank Holiday Weekend

NESTLING AMIDST the rolling hills of south Wicklow, close to the borders of counties Carlow and Wexford and just an hour from south Dublin, the charming village of Tinahely is one of Wicklow's best-kept secrets. Known to many as the venue for one of Ireland's top agricultural shows, which is held on the August Bank Holiday, Tinahely is a gateway to the Wicklow hills and the rolling green fields of Coolattin Country.

In 2009, Tinahely was one of a number of towns selected by Fáilte Ireland as a hub, in a pilot programme, for the promotion of walking tourism. Among the reasons for Tinahely's selection were the strength of the local community and the need to offer walkers in Wicklow an alternative focal point to the heavily used Laragh/Glendalough area.

Tinahely has always had a great tradition of community activity, as evidenced already by the development of the Tinahely Railway Walk and the routes in Tomnafinnoge Wood. So, with great enthusiasm, the local development committee rose to the challenge and developed three new looped walks – named after the townlands of Mangans, Kyle and Ballycumber, which they cross – in time for Tinahely's first ever Trailwalking Festival, which was held in 2010.

The festival was a huge success and it was decided that it should be an annual event. The 2011 festival is scheduled for the May Bank Holiday weekend and promises to be even better!

During the past year, a walking club has been established in Tinahely. It has joined Mountaineering Ireland and has almost fifty members to date. In addition to a schedule of weekly walks, the Tinahely Walking Club organised a very successful Haunted Walk through Tomnafinnoge Woods at Hallowe'en. The club is putting its weight behind the organisation of the festival this year, providing leaders for the walks and planning the routes, as well as ensuring that the festival complies with best practice in minimising the impact on the local environment.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the campaign to save Coolattin Woods, which were one of the few remaining native oakwoods in the county. The campaign attracted great publicity at the time and was supported by many high-profile personalities. It succeeded in saving Tomnafinnoge Wood, which is now a wonderful amenity for Tinahely and Co Wicklow. The campaign will be remembered in an **evening of reminiscences** in Tinahely Courthouse Arts Centre on Friday, April 29th, which will be the opening event of the festival weekend.

Tinahely's proximity to the mountains makes it synonymous

with sheep-rearing and, with this in mind, the Tinahely Artists Group has been working on a major public art project to coincide with the Trailwalking Festival. The Tinahely Sheep Flock will comprise approximately thirty two-dimensional metal sheep customised by individual artists. This installation will celebrate Tinahely's history as a vibrant market town and will be unveiled at a central location on Friday, April 29th.

Walkers will be well-catered for over the weekend of the Tinahely Trailwalking Festival. On Saturday, April 30th, there will be a choice of walks. Walkers will be transported by bus to the start point for the "A" walk, which is an ascent of Croghan, which straddles the Wicklow/Wexford border and offers terrific views, while the "B" and "C" walks will take in the Ballycumber and Mangans loop walks respectively. On Sunday, May 1st, the "A" walk combines the best of the Kyle and Ballycumber loop walks, and a family walk is also planned.

The festival will draw to a close on Monday with a walk which takes in Tomnafinnoge Wood and finishes back in Tinahely. There will also be a Duathlon (running and cycling) this year, which will start and finish in Tinahely on Sunday, May 1st. Throughout the weekend there will be a full programme of entertainment in Tinahely.

Full details of the festival, photography competition, accommodation and so on are available on www.tinahely.ie (download free brochure). It will be updated regularly.

Hillwalkers during a previous Tinahely Trailwalking Festival.



Donegal guidebook appeal

A new guidebook to climbs in Donegal is being compiled, **writes Peter Cooper.** Climbers are requested to submit information about their new routes in Donegal to The Colmcille Climbers Club's website, www.colmcilleclimbers.com. Climbers may also make any comments they wish to make about existing routes. Old photos and reminiscences about climbing in Donegal would be gratefully received.

UCD club celebrates 50th anniversary

UCD Mountaineering Club will celebrate its first half-century later this year. They marked their 25th anniversary in 1993 but it has since been discovered that a mountaineering club existed in the college from 1961, when an initial meet was held in Dalkey Quarry (under the tutelage of the IMC). The 1961 meet was followed by subsequent regular climbing and hiking trips. However, the club was not officially recognised until 1967, hence the 25th celebrations in 1993.

A celebratory dinner will take place on Saturday, November 12th, 2011, and there will be a revival of the club's Alpine Meet in the summer of 2012.

If you wish to be kept informed of plans for the celebrations, please contact Declan O'Keeffe on caldeno@gmail.com or call 087-248 3170.

Tom O'Keeffe on Fairy Castle, near Two Rock in the Dublin Mountains.
Photo: Declan O'Keeffe.



Volunteer Focus: Tom O'Keeffe

Tom O'KEEFFE, Mountaineering Ireland's archivist, first began archiving documents of historical interest at the request of the late Joss Lynham in September 2001.

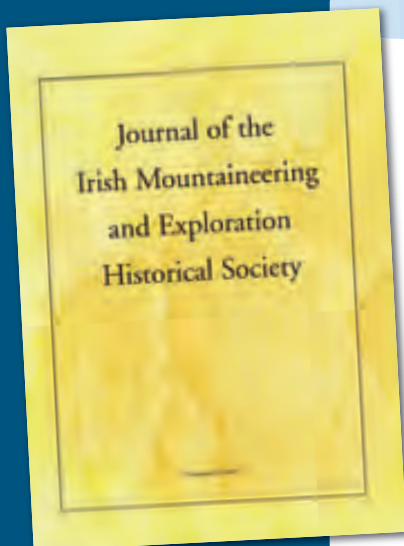
Tom is 83 years old now and for the past 10 years has been steadily working through material that was given to him, in order to establish its possible relevance and value and to catalogue it.

Material that has been processed is put into storage at the National Archives in Bishop Street, Dublin 8. They see the material as having a clear value for people who may at a later date have an interest in

understanding the development of our sport. The material in the National Archives is accessible by arrangement through the Mountaineering Ireland office.

Mountaineering Ireland is grateful to Tom for all his work, including indexing the *Irish Mountain Log*. However, Tom feels it would be appropriate at this stage for someone else to take over the role of archivist for Mountaineering Ireland.

Anyone who would be interested in continuing this important work should contact Chief officer, Karl Boyle. Tom will be happy to brief any candidates about the role.



Volume 3 of historical journal

IN MAY 2000, the Irish Mountaineering and Exploration Historical Society was founded by members of the Mountaineering Council of Ireland (now Mountaineering Ireland) in order to further interest in the rich history of Irish mountaineering and exploration.

The society was led by Kevin Higgins of Tyndall Mountaineering Club (Kilkenny) and it published two issues of its eponymous journal, in 2002

and 2003. The journal, which was edited by the late Joss Lynham and produced by Gay Needham, was well received and contained much information of historical importance.

Mountaineering Ireland now plans to revive the journal, in part as a tribute to Joss, and it hopes to produce the next issue of it by the end of this year. If you are interested in writing an article for it on an appropriate subject, please contact Declan O'Keeffe at caldeno@gmail.com with a brief outline of your topic.

Joss Lynam
at eighty-two.
Photo:
Colm Wright
Photography.

Joss Lynam, mountaineering visionary

Joss Lynam, one of Ireland's foremost mountaineers, died peacefully in January, at the age of 86, after a short illness. His funeral was held in Dublin and his ashes were later scattered on Knocknarea in Co Sligo, the first mountain he ever climbed. Here, we celebrate the life of a committed mountaineer, with a vision of what was necessary to continue developing all aspects of our sport, and who was a true gentleman. The material for the Obituary pages was originally collated by Frank Nugent and Declan O'Keeffe with contributions from many others.

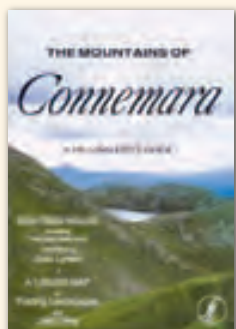
Joss Lynam





Joss and his wife Nora at Dalkey Quarry in June 2004 on the occasion of his 80th birthday climb of Paradise Lost.

The Mountains of Connemara, a map with accompanying guidebook published by Joss in 1988.



Joss Lynam, a civil engineer by profession, was an enthusiastic mountaineer, orienteer and writer. He made an outstanding voluntary contribution to the development of mountaineering and other adventure sports in Ireland, and he played a key role in promoting measures to ensure continued access to the upland areas. He also took part in many mountaineering expeditions to the Alps and the Greater Ranges, and published several books about walking and climbing in Ireland. He established the *Irish Mountain Log*, which he edited for many years. Joss was subsequently Literary Editor of the *Log* until the time of his death and he made the *Book Reviews* one of the most popular sections in the magazine.

Joss was born in London, in 1924, to parents who were originally from Galway. His father was curator of maps at the British Museum and wrote a number of books about maps and mapmaking. Both of his parents loved the outdoors and, when back in Ireland, went on trips to Connemara, on one of which Joss climbed his first mountain, Knocknarea in Co Sligo.

In 1942, at the age of 18, Joss was sent to India with the Royal Engineers, where he learned to speak Hindi and spent time in the Himalayan foothills. He had a “quiet” Second World War and was demobbed before the Indian partition.

He subsequently studied engineering at Trinity College Dublin. In 1948, Joss and a fellow student, the late Bill Perrott, founded the Irish Mountaineering Club (IMC), making an appeal for members through the letters page of *The Irish Times*. They were on Luggala in Wicklow when their appeal was published and returned to find a pile of messages waiting for them. One of the first IMC members was his future wife, Nora Gorevan, whom he married after his graduation in 1951.

Joss’ work as a civil engineer brought the couple to work in a number of different mountainous areas, including Wales, the English Lake District and northern India. By then he had already been climbing in the Alps and had undertaken his first international mountaineering expedition to Mount Kolahoi in Kashmir at the end of the war.

In 1961, Joss made the first ascent of Shigri Parbat, a 6,526m peak in the Indian Himalayas. He was deputy leader on the first major mountaineering trip by an all-Irish group, an expedition to Rakaposhi in 1964, led by Paddy O’Leary. Subsequently, Joss was leader or deputy leader of expeditions to Greenland, the Andes, Kashmir, Tien Shan, Garhwal Tibet, including the 1987 expedition to Chang-tse (7,543m), which was the forerunner of the successful first Irish ascent of

Everest in 1993. He was joint leader with British climber Mike Banks of a veteran mountaineering trip to the 6,632m-high Jaonli peak in India in 1991.

His sound mountaineering judgment, knowledge of different ranges, route-finding and navigation skills, and understanding of the mountain environment, all contributed to his considerable leadership skills. He brought this experience to bear in his role as President of the Union Internationale des Associations d’Alpinisme’s Expeditions Commission in the 1990s, where he was instrumental in making the case for greater involvement of the “host” countries, such as India and Pakistan.

One of Joss’ greatest legacies was the formation with others of a number of organisations supporting adventure sports in Ireland, including the Federation of Mountaineering Clubs in Ireland (FMCI), the Association for Adventure Sports (AFAS), the Irish Orienteers, Bord Oilíúint Sléibhte, Tiglin – the National Outdoor Training Centre in Co Wicklow – and Outdoor Education Ireland. His vision of a representative body for hillwalking and mountaineering was realised in what is now Mountaineering Ireland (previously FMCI and then MCI), which has grown from a small voluntary organisation to the present-day National Governing Body with 10,500 members and several professional staff.

Joss served on Cospóir, the national sports council, from 1974 to 1984, and advised on curriculums for outdoor pursuits courses and the organisation of outdoor education centres run by VECs. As Chair of the National Waymarked Ways Advisory Committee from 1984 to 2007, Joss was a driving force in developing a national network of waymarked trails, extending now to more than 3,000 kilometres of trails in more than 40 routes around the country.

The early 1980s were a difficult time for Joss and his family; he was made redundant in 1983, but said afterwards that it was the “best thing that could have happened,” as he undertook consultancy work, lectured in Bolton Street and produced a number of walking guides for Gill and Macmillan, while also editing the *Irish Mountain Log*, which he had founded in 1979. In 1986, he had a coronary bypass operation. Tragically, his son, Nicholas, died the following year.

Dissatisfied with Ordnance Survey maps of Connacht at the time, he re-surveyed the region's mountains in 1988 and published *The Mountains of Connemara*.

Joss continued his civil engineering work, working with the Office of Public Works at the Skellig Michael World Heritage site off Co Kerry, and on a number of pier and harbour schemes.

In recognition of his extraordinary voluntary work and achievements, an honorary doctorate was conferred on Joss by Trinity College Dublin in 2001 and he received the Irish Sports Council's inaugural Sport Volunteer of the Year Award in 2005.

Joss believed that access for hillwalkers to upland areas in Ireland could only be ensured by working with landowners and addressing their reasonable concerns. He was known for his incredible energy, his endless enthusiasm and as an inspirational mountaineer who followed the fortunes of younger climbers and kept meticulous records of Irish ascents at home and abroad. Nora, his selfless partner, supported his activities while rearing their family and maintaining an open door for the many visitors to their Dublin home.

Joss' passion for mountaineering was life-long. He engaged in his sport at the highest levels but, as he got older, was happy to lower his sights, if only

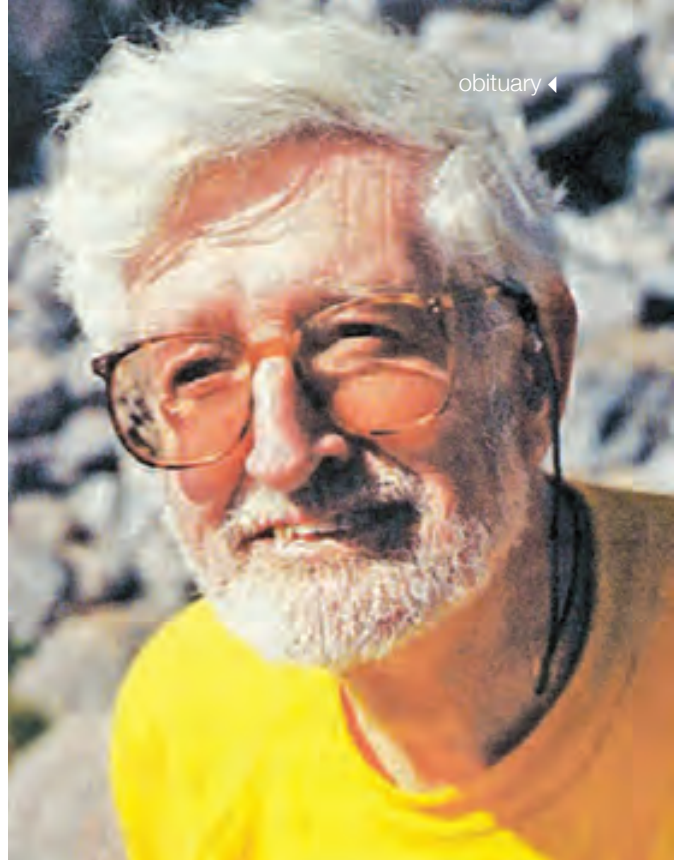
slightly. He celebrated his 80th birthday by climbing the Paradise Lost route in Dalkey Quarry and he abseiled down Winder's Slab there on his 82nd birthday, both to raise money for cancer research, which he had had treatment for himself. Weeks before he died, Joss attended the opening of another of his beloved waymarked trails, the Hymany Way in Co Galway, accompanied as so often before by Nora, who had shared his passion throughout their life together.

His passion for mountaineering was matched by his passion for mountaineering literature. Joss wrote several books about Irish mountains and walking in Ireland. His book *Best Irish Walks* became a standard text for generations of Irish hillwalkers and went to several editions. His eye for detail in these various walking guides was legendary. In his latter years, as he lowered his sights, so the books he produced mirrored that, with *Easy Walks near Dublin* and then *Leisurely Walks near Dublin*. At the same time, he was also involved in publishing several rockclimbing guides for the then Mountaineering Council of Ireland.

Joss maintained a comprehensive personal collection of mountaineering journals and books, many of which were kept in the attic of his house and, in the various tributes paid to Joss, many have said how privileged they felt to be invited into that hallowed space. One of the achievements Joss most valued was the establishment of the *Irish Mountain Log*, which he continued to contribute to right up to the end. He believed that Irish achievements in mountaineering should be recorded in detail and that there should be a respected national journal in which reports of those achievements could be published.

The *Log's* Editorial Team certainly valued Joss' continued contributions and have tried to live up to the very high standards he set. They met in his house before each issue, where he and Nora were always such gracious hosts.

The meetings were part social, where information would be exchanged about developments in the mountaineering world, and part business, where the contents of the forthcoming *Log* would be discussed. The information about recent developments most often came from Joss, who maintained a global network of mountaineering contacts right up to the end. Joss always said, "The Editor's decision is final," but we always knew



who the real Editor was!

Joss is survived by his wife Nora and his daughters, Ruth and Clodagh, to whom the Board of Mountaineering Ireland offer their sincere condolences.

May he rest in peace among his beloved hills.

**Patrick O'Sullivan,
Editor, *Irish Mountain Log***

Joss Lynam, born June 29th, 1924; died January 9th, 2011.

Joss Lynam on a veteran mountaineering trip to Jaonli Peak in India in 1991.

Below:
Mt Kolahoi and the Kolahoi glacier in Kashmir.
Photo: Patrick O'Sullivan.



Messages of condolence

Extracts from the messages of condolence on the website, <http://ourmemoryof.com/JossLynam/condolences>, set up by Mountaineering Ireland after Joss Lynam's death on January 9th, 2011.



Ruth Lynam scatters Joss' ashes on the summit of Knocknarea, Co Sligo, in February.

"Joss Lynam, laoch ar lár ... Joss Lynam played a pivotal role in reaching agreement, within Comhairle na Tuaithe and outside it, on issues that had often caused conflict and discord. He played a key role in assisting people with different viewpoints to work together on developing hillwalking, hiking and rural recreation for the mutual benefit of walkers and local communities alike.

... He earned and commanded respect and people listened when Joss spoke, but respect and attention were things Joss extended to all of us that were privileged to know and work with him. He set about getting things done in a gentlemanly but firm way and his work on mediating disputes and developing rural recreation will have a positive impact and significant influence in the years ahead."

Éamon Ó Cuív TD, then Minister for Social Protection

"... He contributed a huge amount to mountaineering and was always friendly and cheerful with a lovely sense of humour backed by considerable wisdom. He contributed a huge amount to our wonderful game of climbing."

Chris Bonington

"... I recollect an enjoyable time that I shared with Joss at Flagstaff, Arizona, a couple of years ago and also in Dublin in early February, 2009."

Tom Nakamura

"Joss was a wonderfully articulate, enthusiastic and hospitable individual whose influence crossed the boundaries of nations. We'll see few like him again."

Cameron McNeish

"The long friendship of 27 years has drawn to an end. Joss is no more and I cannot get used to the idea of not getting his mail, not hearing his voice. He and I climbed over many an ice wall, through many a moraine, ascended a couple of peaks and, in all those years, I never saw him short-tempered. He taught me to smile. He was forever gentle, tall in character and unobtrusively helpful. I have lost in him my most cherished friend."

Ravichandra Chittampalli

"A true Irish mountain man who had a vision on the way mountaineering in Ireland could be enjoyed for all and still keep the local people, farmers and landholders happy! Not bad. I remember a quote he said to me once: 'The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy' (Martin Luther King Jr)"

Banjo Bannon

"The breadth of Joss' achievements is such that it is impossible to tabulate. All I can note is the honour felt in participation with him in various endeavours – initiation of FMCI (now Mountaineering Ireland), AFAS, the project leading to Cappanalea OEC, development of long-distance walking routes, guidebooks. His achievements will live on. Mile bhuíochas, a chara."

Sean Ó Súilleabháin

"I was among the fortunate people to have met Joss Lynam during the UIAA meetings. I admired his determination, willingness to help and mountaineering ethos. A real loss."

Maya Fourioti, Hellenic Federation of Mountaineering and Climbing



Right:
Joss Lynam with Japanese explorer Tom Nakamura in Dublin in February 2009.
Photo: Patrick O'Sullivan.

"...a founder member of the Irish Mountaineering Club, a founding member of the Federation of Mountaineering Clubs Ireland (now Mountaineering Ireland) and Ireland's best known mountaineer, whose achievements included many mountaineering expeditions to the Greater Ranges and an outstanding voluntary contribution to adventure sports in Ireland."

Bojan Rotovnik, President, Alpine Association of Slovenia

"I have lost a friend. We met for the first time at the occasion of the 1992 UIAA General Assembly in Japan and have been working together during about a decade and spending good time together beside the meetings. A fair man, a right man, a passionate man! A great loss for the mountaineering community worldwide!"

Pierre Humblet

"...Thanks to his help and his perfect knowledge of mountaineering, I learnt a lot from him. He was one of the biggest wise man for all of us in the UIAA Federations. I will never forget you, Joss."

André Stoop, Climbing & Mountaineering Belgium

"Joss lived a full life and achieved more than most of us dream about. He meant so much to so many in the world of climbing and the outdoors. Among the members of the Irish Mountaineering Club he will be specially remembered for above all else he was a mountaineer and the IMC was his spiritual base. We rejoice in remembering Joss and our thoughts are especially with Nora who was such a constant support to him. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam."

Kevin Byrne

"Too many shared endeavours to recount here but my particular memory is of Joss's last climb in a major range when he climbed a peak in the Bogda Ola in 1995 and brought a young man's enthusiasm to the solving of various exploration and mountaineering problems."

Paddy O'Leary

"Joss was a truly remarkable man. I count myself honoured to have known and worked with him over the last decade. Joss had a deep sense of the beauty and potential of the outdoors to challenge and recreate us in a fast-changing world. Joss was always a gentleman, offering encouragement to all, and will be remembered not only for his mountaineering skills but for his vision and wisdom which has done much to advance the cause of outdoor recreation in Ireland. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis."

Bill Murphy, Recreation Team, Coillte

"Joss was greatly encouraging and I know from speaking to others that he was delighted to see a conservation group like Mountain Meitheal becoming a reality and achieving its aims. We in Meitheal will remember Joss and carry on the work which he believed was important."

Robert Grandon, Mountain Meitheal

"...He was a lovely man and epitomised all that is admirable in mountaineers who have achieved a great deal in their lives and share their experiences humbly with others. His enormous legacy will live on and I've no doubt he will always be fondly remembered by all hillwalkers and climbers in Ireland and abroad. I will miss his great reviews in the *Log*. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis."

John O'Callaghan



"Joss worked over decades to improve all aspects of recreation in the uplands. His chairmanship of many groups aiming for that end was inspirational. Those who walk in his footsteps must strive to be worthy of his legacy."

Milo Kane

"It will be a very long time, if ever, before I truly realise the extent of the contribution Joss made to mountaineering, mountains and all areas associated. Joss had vision, and as one who had the overview he also attended to the detail – a rare gift. Those of us in outdoor education gratefully remember his contribution to its development; his freely given time, knowledge and advice; his seemingly endless energy; and his great humour. Rest in peace, Joss."

Ursula MacPherson

Joss Lynam abseils down Winder's Slab in Dalkey Quarry on 29th June 2006, to raise money for cancer research.

Below:

Frank Nugent giving a moving rendition of Ewan McColl's song *The Joy of Living* at the scattering of the ashes on Knocknarea in February. Photo: Ruairí Ó Conchúir.



Joss Lynam and the Irish Sports Council

JOHN TREACY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, IRISH SPORTS COUNCIL



Joss Lynam with John Treacy at a national conference on waymarked ways in 2002. Photo: Irish Sports Council.

I first met Joss Lynam in 1999, when the Irish Sports Council (ISC) was established and the functions of the National Long Distance Walking Routes Committee under Cospóir transferred to the ISC. Little did I know that, at that point in his life, Joss had already been involved with the development of outdoor adventure sports in Ireland for over fifty years.

Joss was one of the moving forces behind the establishment of the Association for Adventure Sports (AFAS), of Tiglin, the National Mountain and Whitewater Centre, and of the Centre Standards Board, the first approving authority for outdoor activity centres in Ireland. For many years Joss was also heavily involved with the Department of Education in the structuring of the curricula for the outdoor pursuits courses of the VECs. His passion for the outdoors was very obvious and his desire to see people, young and old, being able to access and enjoy the great outdoors was his great mission.

Joss's involvement with the ISC in recent years focused primarily on the development of waymarked walking routes in Ireland and he chaired the National Waymarked Ways Advisory Committee for the Council. Joss was of the opinion, before many people,

that walking was one of the simplest and easiest ways for people to enjoy the outdoors, and to be active and healthy. He maintained that, by creating waymarked walking trails throughout the country, this would make it much easier for people to be active in the great outdoors. From my perspective, having benefited from an active outdoor lifestyle all my own life, this message was one that I whole-heartedly supported. Needless to say, Joss wasted no time in outlining what was required to progress this. With his steady guidance, determination and commitment, the area has developed very well over the years, with many walking and cycling trails now established throughout the country, and with more people becoming active and involved in outdoor recreation.

In recent years, Joss guided a new Irish Trails Strategy for the Council, which pushed the area of trail

development even further, aiming to establish a world-class system of recreational trails in Ireland over the next decade. This is an example again of his forward-thinking perspective and his vision for outdoor recreation in Ireland in the future.

Through my involvement with sport over the years, I have met many people with passion, enthusiasm and drive to see their sport develop and improve. However, I think that Joss Lynam was one of the most outstanding, not only for his passion and determination but also for his forward-thinking approach and his ability to bring people together and to get things done. With this in mind, I was personally delighted when Joss received the Irish Sport Volunteer of the Year award in 2005 for his 50 years of unstinting and enthusiastic voluntary service to Irish sport.

Joss Lynam will be dearly missed by many, but his vision and hope for outdoor adventure sports in Ireland and sport for all will be his legacy for others now to advance.



Right: Joss Lynam (at 85 years) with John O'Shea (Goal director) completing the charity Goal Mile at the athletics track in UCD, Belfield, on Christmas Day, 2009. Photo: Ray McManus/SPORTSFILE.



Joss Lynam and Mountaineering Ireland

ALAN TEES, PRESIDENT, MOUNTAINEERING IRELAND

I first came across Joss Lynam's name in the early seventies when he published a letter in the British mountaineering magazine *Climber and Rambler* in reply to an article by Joey Glover regarding the number of 2,000-foot tops in Ireland. Although Joss must have been considerably younger than Joey at the time, Joey immediately deferred to his superior knowledge. As a rookie in his twenties, who considered Joey to be the source of all wisdom relating to the hills, I was suitably impressed!

I didn't actually meet Joss until 1979, at an early FMCI AGM chaired by Joe Rotherham in Glendalough, in which Joss was central to proceedings. This was a position he retained, in whatever role he occupied, throughout the FMCI's history and in the organisation's subsequent rebirths as the Mountaineering Council of Ireland and then as Mountaineering Ireland. Executive members came and went over the years but Joss was always there to provide wise counsel or indeed occasionally a curt put-down, as Joss did not tolerate fools gladly and was quick to let you know if you didn't have your facts right.

Joss' involvement not only spanned

many decades but almost every facet of our sport. He was a walker, a climber, an alpinist, an expeditionary, an author, a map-maker, a one-man bookshop, a conservationist and an historian. He was responsible, amongst other things, for the publication of the first set of walking guides to Ireland, a map of his favourite mountain area in Ireland (Connemara), a selected walking guide to Ireland and many climbing guides, and he had a long involvement with the *Irish Mountain Log*, which he established and was Editor of for many years and of which he was Literary Editor until his last illness.

He was not only well known nationally but also internationally, largely through his prominent role in the UIAA and his involvement in many expeditions to the Greater Ranges. I realised during my recent trip to Spiti that his was the only Irish name that seemed to be recognised by Indian mountaineers.

My last interaction with Joss was very recently when I sent him what I thought was a pretty comprehensive list of Irish expeditions that I had extracted from the back issues of the *Irish Mountain Log*. I asked him to add

any that he might know about, that I had missed. I got six pages back!

Hillwalkers and mountaineers spanning several decades gathered, first in Dublin, then on Knocknarea in Sligo, to celebrate his long and fruitful life. Sadness was tinged with joy, as old friends were reunited in their shared memories of Joss. There was no shortage of material!

Others, more qualified than me, have listed and evaluated Joss's achievements and his contribution to Irish mountaineering. Many tributes have been paid but none more moving than Frank Nugent's memorable rendition on Knocknarea of Ewan McColl's song *The Joy of Living*, the last verse of which could have been written especially for Joss:

*Take me to some high place of heather, rock and ley
Scatter my dust and ashes, feed me to the wind
So that I will be part of all you see,
the air that you are breathing.
I'll be part of the curlew's cry, and the soaring hawk
The blue milkwort, and the sundew hung with diamonds.
I'll be riding the gentle wind that blows through your hair
Reminding you of how we shared in
The Joy of living.*

No one is irreplaceable, but Joss is, as near as dammit!

Above: Joss Lynam with then Minister Éamon Ó Cuív (right) and Eddie Davitt (IFA) on a Comhairle na Tuaithe study visit to the Seanbhóthar, on the Mount Gable Walk, Clonbur, Co Galway.

Joss Lynam and the Irish Waymarked Ways

JEAN BOYDELL & CORMAC MacDONNELL, NATIONAL TRAILS OFFICE

Joss Lynam was a central figure in the planning and development of walking trails such as the Wicklow Way, the Kerry Way and many others over the past 30 years. Joss first became interested in the area of walking trail development after the Ulster Way was put in place, when he saw how successful and well-used walking trails were in the UK and Europe, and the lack of waymarked walking trails in Ireland.

From the start, Joss led the way, looking at proposals and options for trail development and happily meeting and advising local enthusiasts. Initially he advised and walked sections of the Wicklow, Kerry, Slieve Bloom and South Leinster Ways, moving on to others over the years. We recall these trail-finding expeditions fondly, for the sense of adventure and challenge as

well as the humour that was always present. Many a day was spent route-finding in various locations around the country, including over the Knockmealdowns for the East Munster Way, looking for off-road options on the Galway section of the Western Way (also with Nora) and around Brandon Mountain on the Dingle Way with Jimmy Murphy.

Joss attended most of the launches of the Ways, assisted with the writing of guidebooks and other publications, and frequently performed opening ceremonies, often accompanied by Nora. Many may not be aware that today there are over 43 long-distance waymarked walking trails in Ireland, extending to over 3,000km, with additional links and shorter trails. A large number of these would not have been developed without input and

guidance from Joss. His last such engagement, only weeks before his passing, was the opening of the Hymany Way in County Galway, where he and Nora stayed a couple of nights, celebrating the completion of this new Way along the banks of the Shannon from Portumna to Aghrim.

Joss recently referred to the National Waymarked Trails as his “children,” evidence of his involvement from their inception, through development to opening. He was knowledgeable about all the trails, keeping himself informed long after he could no longer walk them himself. Many of those involved with National Waymarked Ways around the country, as well as all the staff within the Sports Council’s National Trails Office, have much to thank Joss for and will retain fond memories of him and carry on his work into the future.



Joss Lynam and hillwalking

SIMON STEWART, PUBLISHER, MOUNTAINVIEWS.IE

Joss Lynam with Charlie Bird and Cormac MacDonnell at the halfway point on the Wicklow Way in Glenmalur during the Wicklow 400 celebrations in 2006.
Photo: National Trails Office.

I would like to mention some of what Joss Lynam did for hillwalking in Ireland. Established hillwalkers will appreciate that the list of Ireland’s 600m summits in common use was originally developed by Joss with a contact of his, Rev CRP Vandeleur, long before any other Irish-originated list existed. An ancestor list was incorporated into one of the books

Joss re-published in the early 1970s, Claud Wall’s *Mountaineering in Ireland*, at that time the only book setting out to describe all of the hill areas of Ireland. This was one of the main inspirations for the website, MountainViews.ie, which promotes the same walking themes of discovery and classification. (At Joss’s express request, the “Vandeleur-Lynam” list that MountainViews publishes will continue with the same specification as to prominence: 15m.)

Joss was always fascinated by maps. He created the first Irish five-colour orienteering map in the 1970s and he trained map-makers. He also created his own maps such as by his collaboration with Tim Robinson on an improved Connemara map. He consulted with OSI to improve their maps. As recently as 2009, he was again talking to them in the Walkers Association of Ireland (WAI) consultation about the reprint of the 1:50,000 series, helping mitigate risks in some early proposals.

Joss understood the value of infrastructure for sports bodies. To me, his greatest achievements lay in his

seemingly easy excellence in the techniques of voluntary and non-profit organisations: confidence, self-motivation, consultation, leverage, chairmanship, negotiation, infrastructural detail, alliances – his life was a master-class for organisers and his legacy for walkers a series of enduring institutions in training, in trail management, publication and, above all, inspiration.

Personally, I had the privilege of experiencing many of the great thrills of Irish hillwalking with Joss, starting in the early ‘70s. From the Reeks Walk, over Mweelrea, Brandon, many of the Bens, Wicklow and the Lug Walk, he taught me his style of skilled, hard walking. Perhaps most memorable was the second Maamturks Walk in 1976, a challenge we started at nearly the same time but did solo in atrocious weather, navigating with the small, inaccurate ½ inch map. I treasure the one hole-in-the-mist glimpse I had of Joss striding along near Letterbreckau. Joss was one of four to finish on that gruelling day. The last time he did the ‘Turks was in 1993, when he finished in under 12 hours, exceptional for someone who was nearly seventy.





Joss with English mountaineer Chris Bonington at the Sugarloaf, Co Wicklow, in 2007.

Joss Lynam and mountaineering history

KEVIN HIGGINS, I.M.E.H.S.

In 1981, in Kilkenny, the newly formed Tyndall MC was on the lookout for interesting items to add to its programme. Joss agreed to recount some of his mountaineering experiences in one of his inimitable slide presentations. We were impressed by this white-haired gent's tales of the Alps and 'Himawlias'; such was his reputation that we had a 'sell-out' attendance not equalled for many years.

In the pub chat afterwards, we discovered that Joss had a particular regard for John Tyndall, who, he claimed, was Ireland's first 'Great Mountaineer.' Joss was pleased that he was being remembered as such. Joss also had family connections with Leighlinbridge, Tyndall's birthplace.

Joss visited Kilkenny a number of times in the same capacity in subsequent years and his interest gave encouragement to us and particularly to one interested in the history of Irish mountaineering. In discussing some of the historical Irish mountaineering figures, Joss was to the fore in promoting the suggestion that they be remembered on a more formal basis.

The result was the foundation of the IMEHS (a necessary abbreviation for the Irish Mountaineering and Exploration Historical Society) in Kilkenny in May 2000, as a subcommittee of the MCI. Members had a wide geographical spread – from Canada to the UK – and the Society's



aims were promoted through its *Irish Mountaineering and Exploration Historical Society Journal*, edited by Joss, and through various lectures and events. He was one of a number who travelled on the Barrow towpath from Leighlinbridge on a walk in Tyndall's footsteps.

The journal struggled through two editions to become an occasional rather than annual publication, and now an interested group intends to produce a third edition in memory of this distinguished Irish mountaineer who, sadly, is no longer with us.

Below: Joss Lynam at the launch of the Irish Mountaineering and Exploration Historical Society in Kilkenny in May 2000 with (left to right): Máire O'Connor (Tyndall MC), Tony Patterson (Mayor of Kilkenny), Frank Nugent and Pat Dowling (Tyndall MC).





Joss Lynam and the Greater Ranges

DAWSON STELFOX, EVEREST CLIMBER

Lynam Peak (5,796m), an unclimbed Himalayan mountain on the rim of the Singekang Valley in the Lahul and Spiti District of NE Himachal Pradesh, India. Photo: Alan Tees collection.

I first met Joss in 1978 when, as a representative of Queen's University Belfast (QUB) Mountaineering Club, I ventured south to attend the AGM of the Federation of Mountaineering Clubs of Ireland (FMCI). Joss was in his late fifties then and already the 'father figure' of Irish mountaineering, a font of knowledge and wisdom, and a giver of sage advice, all based on deep experience.

Of course, being young meant we ignored all that, not believing, or willing to accept, that anyone from a previous generation, especially someone with a white beard, could tell us anything useful about climbing. So we just went off and bumped into the mountains, the Alps, the Andes, the Himalaya, learning the hard way, learning the way Joss had himself in his early expeditions to the Indian Himalaya in the 1940s and '50s.

It was not until 1983, already with three expeditions behind me and having reached the ripe old age of 25, that I deigned to ask Joss for help in identifying a suitable objective in the Nepalese Himalaya for a trip the following year. In doing so, I gained access to the famous attic library and study at No 7 Sorbonne for the first time. In the same way that he had welcomed us to the FMCI and encouraged us ever since, Joss guided, helped and supported me in planning that trip, just as he did for countless other Irish climbers before and since.

It is hard now to understand just how difficult obtaining information about 'Greater Ranges' climbing was in the pre-internet era. The chief sources were the club journals – Alpine, American Alpine, Himalayan, the *Indian Mountaineer* and sporadic notes

in *Mountain* magazine. Joss had full sets of all of these and much more besides. Through his contacts in the UIAA (Union Internationale des Associations d'Alpinisme), Joss had access to a wide range of sources of information, not just from the myriad of expedition reports he was sent but, especially in the long period in the 1990s when he chaired the Expeditions Commission of the UIAA, in direct information from the 'host' countries – India, Pakistan, Nepal, etc – with which he developed long-standing and close relationships.

In short, Joss had all the information to identify what had been climbed, and therefore what had not, which, combined with the lists of what mountains permits could be obtained for, narrowed down the possible objectives.

So it was that in 1983 four of us chose to attempt an unclimbed face on a remote 7500m peak in western Nepal, based on a spectacular photograph found in Joss's attic. Predictably, we failed to get to the summit of Churen Himal and, although we all came back safely, it was a lesson to me on the realities of high altitude climbing. We discovered the bodies of a German expedition on the face, who had been avalanched on the previous year. This reminded us of the seriousness of the mountain, and the two week walk-in emphasised its remoteness in the days before satellite phones and access to helicopter rescue.

This was just one small part of a gradual build-up in Irish experience of high mountains that Joss was gently guiding and observing. His own long apprenticeship started from early climbs in India, the 1964 Irish expedition to Rakaposhi and the 1978

Kishtwar expedition, which led him to put together the Irish Zhangzi (or Changste) expedition in 1987. This was itself part of Joss's ambition that there should one day be an Irish expedition to Everest. Changste is the north peak of Everest, the other side of the famous North Col. With Tibet opening up to expeditions in the early 1980s, Joss, who was recovering from a heart bypass operation, linked the Irish connection to the first Everest reconnaissance in 1921 to put together the first Irish mountaineering expedition to receive any degree of public interest. Whilst some climbers were uncomfortable about mountaineers moving into the public domain, there is no doubt that the Changste expedition, though unsuccessful, laid the foundations for the first Irish ascent of Everest in 1993.

By the time that came around, Joss wasn't up to climbing at high altitude and, typically, he had no interest in a role as base camp manager. He was nonetheless a highly valuable supporter and enabler. When the news of our success reached Ireland, Joss was the first to be told, whilst he was attending a UIAA meeting at Plas y Brenin, a coincidence that gave him great delight and pride.

Joss was a rare mountaineer – passionate, knowledgeable and with a well defined mountain sense – but also with a desire to assist young climbers, and the capacity and achievements of Irish mountaineering in the greater ranges. He remained scathing of commercial expeditions but always willing to support small independent groups to challenge themselves, explore new places and extend the scope of Irish mountain experience. His parting leaves a legacy but also a gap, which it will take a long time to fill.

Joss Lynam: a personal reflection

FRANK NUGENT, CLIMBER AND ADVENTURER

My friendship with Joss began when, as a teenager in the mid-1960s, I joined the Irish Mountaineering Club (IMC) and attended its winter lectures and rock-climbing course at Dalkey Quarry. Joss was one of the prime movers in the IMC at the time and his warm welcome and enthusiasm for climbing made him very accessible. When I made my first visit to the Alps in 1967, Joss was the one who provided the Chamonix guidebook and map.

I parted with the IMC on the formation of the Spillikin Club and, as a member of that club, I attended some of the early meetings which led to the formation of the Federation of Mountaineering Clubs of Ireland (FMCI), which became the all-Ireland body for hillwalking and mountaineering, evolving into today's Mountaineering Ireland.

This was early in Joss's great journey as perhaps Irish adventure sport's greatest volunteer. But Joss was more than that; he was a lifelong active mountaineer and orienteer, a family man, a friend, confidante and a thoughtful mentor. The Association for Adventure Sports (AFAS) became the scaffolding for the growth and development of many adventure sports such as canoeing, orienteering, caving and mountaineering. Joss, with Paddy O'Leary and others, had the vision and leadership to guide our sport and other adventure sports through the aegis of AFAS, Tiglin, FMCI and BOS to grow into effective national governing bodies.

The training and development of leaders and instructors and the development of award structures and training infrastructure was the key to their strategy and to ensure the receipt of state funding for adventure sport.

In his spare time Joss produced an FMCI newsletter that evolved into the *Irish Mountain Log*, which he edited for more than 20 years. When, during my chairmanship (1997-2000), the time became right for the MCI to uncouple from AFAS, Joss – always open to change – accepted the transfer of the administration of MCI affairs to its own resources.

Joss led the Irish Zhang-tse Tibet Expedition 1987 which was delayed by

a year to allow himself (aged 63) time to recover from cardiac bypass surgery. I was his deputy leader. In difficult deep powder-snow conditions, Joss, with huge resolve and determination, reached the Lho-La Pass and camped above 20,000 feet at our camp 3. Many of the team climbed the Chang-la and I reached 7,200 metres on the south ridge of Chang-tse.

The experience provided the impetus for two further Himalayan expeditions – Manaslu in 1991 and success on Everest in 1993. Joss, as President of the UIAA's Expeditions Commission at that time, took great pride in Dawson's achievement.

In recent years, we both were involved in the Irish Upland Forum whose aim is to promote sustainability and partnership in the management of upland districts. His home was the venue for many of our board meetings where Nora, his wife, always made us feel very welcome. Joss was our greatest asset. His integrity, communication and negotiation skills helped achieve much co-operation between recreational users, farming

and tourism interests in the management of our upland countryside and also in relating our concerns to government departments. As a representative of walkers, Joss had the vision to realise that access could only be sustainable in an Irish context through working with landowners and addressing their reasonable concerns. He was Mountaineering Ireland's representative on Comhairle na Tuaithe.

I will personally miss his sound judgement and wisdom as well as the energy and enthusiasm he brought to every discussion and event. May his volunteer spirit serve as an example to us all of what can be achieved by any individual motivated to serve the common good. May it live on.

At base camp looking over the Rombuk glacier towards Chang-tse during the Irish Chang-tse Tibet Expedition in 1987. Photo: Frank Nugent.

Joss Lynam (fifth from left) with members of the Irish Zhang-tse Tibet Expedition team in 1987. Photo: Frank Nugent collection.



Joss Lynam: access and conservation

RUAIRÍ Ó CONCHÚIR, CHAIRMAN, MOUNTAINEERING IRELAND

We truly follow in the steps of a Giant of a Mountain Man. It was when I first took to the Irish hills and mountains in a serious way more than 25 years ago that I came across Joss Lynam through the discovery of his guidebooks. However, it was only in the last eight years or so that I got to know the man personally through my involvement with Mountaineering Ireland. From the very outset, one could sense the huge respect in which he was held within the widest and most diverse circle of people imaginable. This was also most notable when Joss's family, colleagues and friends, young and old, gathered for the scattering of Joss' ashes on Knocknarea in Sligo, the first mountain he climbed as a child. It was a privilege to have worked alongside Joss and to have benefited from his wise counsel and practical common sense.

Joss was a great advocate for Ireland's uplands and truly wild places.

He had great empathy and understanding for the farming community, and those who care for and manage the high nature value upland areas, which we all treasure. He held a deep belief in the common good, in seeking a resolution to disputes through dialogue and partnership. He worked tirelessly on access and conservation issues and was Mountaineering Ireland's representative on Comhairle na Tuaithe. There he made many friends and won over many others including Minister Éamon Ó Cuív. The former minister publicly stated that the depth of Joss's knowledge and the breadth of his experience were invaluable to him as a Government minister and that he will always be grateful to Joss for his dedication and assistance. Like the former minister, those of us who were lucky enough to share time in his company will treasure his wit and his

stories. I will always remember the support and guidance he gave to me on Mountaineering Ireland's Access and Conservation Committee.

His passing is a great loss to his family and friends. Joss will be greatly missed, not only by the 10,000 plus members of Mountaineering Ireland but by tens of thousands of others who take to the hills and crags week-in, week-out. His vast contribution to promoting the sport of mountaineering and developing rural recreation in Ireland has had a very positive impact throughout the country, and this will continue. It is a fitting legacy to the memory of Joss Lynam that Irish people, with varying viewpoints, continue to work together to develop the sport of mountaineering in all its forms. Upland access, a key concern of Joss's, will now hopefully be comprehensively addressed for the mutual benefit of landowners, hillwalkers and local communities alike. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam uasal.

Below:
Joss Lynam
breasts the rim
of Paradist Lost,
Dalkey Quarry,
on his 80th
birthday in
June 2004,
completing a
sponsored
charity climb for
cancer research.



Joss

DECLAN O'KEEFFE

*There are Hillarys, Messners and Boningtons too,
There are walkers and climbers – a whole motley crew
There are Alpinists: mountaineers all of a sort
In this rambling, wandering, evergreen sport.
And there's Joss.*

*From the birth of the IMC back in the days
Which to most of us are only seen through a haze,
Through the MCI, AFAS (he always helped out)
To the launch of the Mountain Log where, there's no doubt
He was boss.*

*For the growth of the Log over all of the years
That he edited took quite some blood, sweat and tears,
Not to mention the time and emotional debt
That would leave many lesser men addled and bet,
But not Joss.*

*Guidebook author, promoter of long way-marked ways,
And the doyen of hill-walkers down through the days,
His experiences ranged all the way to sublime
From the Wicklow hills where he had first learnt to climb
To the top.*

*He'd been all round the world from the Alps to Tibet,
From the Andes to Greenland (we haven't done yet),
From high Chomolungma to Africa's shores,
As to ranges of mountains at home – he'd explored
The whole lot.*

*And now he's not with us – least not we can say,
But he'll still be amongst us in so many ways,
Not a face in a picture, a name on a book,
But an absence, a presence, the ghost of a look,
Will be him.*

*And it's not in the photos, it's not in the lines
That people will write about all the good times,
But in Wicklow or Dalkey or running the hills,
Or the myriad places where he's roaming still
He'll be found.*

*It's in stories and memories many and fond
Told by fam'ly and friends that will go round and round;
And in hearts and in minds of the people he touched
And who every day love him and miss him so much,
Will be Joss.*

Aiguille du Chardonnet
from the Albert Premier hut.
Photo: Alun Richardson.

Summer Alpine Meet 2011



Bookings being taken now!

Argentière, France, July 2nd to 17th

THIS YEAR'S Alpine Meet will take place from 2nd to 17th July in Argentière, France. This small village is at the head of the Chamonix valley, 8km from Chamonix town itself and with easy access to some of the best walking and mountaineering in the valley. The Chamonix valley is undoubtedly the 'jewel in the crown' of the Alpine region with some of the best walking, climbing and mountaineering in the world, including the highest mountain in the Alps, Mont Blanc.

Who is the meet for?

The meet is for everyone – walkers, rock climbers and alpinists of all ages. This is a wonderful opportunity for Mountaineering Ireland's members to meet old friends and make new friends, and to go walking, climbing or mountaineering in some of France's most beautiful scenery. The purpose of the meet is to gather like-minded people together in an Alpine area where they can walk, rock-climb, boulder and climb snow-covered and rocky Alpine peaks. Walking and mountaineering clubs are particularly welcome to come and use the experience and knowledge of the mountain guides at the meet to plan their walks and explore the area.

Courses at the 2011 meet

- Glacier Crossing and Crevasse Rescue
- Multi-pitch Climbing Techniques
- Simple Rescues for Rock Climbs
- Movement Skills for Rock Climbing (level 1)
- Movement Skills for Rock Climbing (level 2)
- Moving Fast in the Alps
- 5-day Alpine Adventure Walking
- 5-day Introduction to Alpine Mountaineering
- 5-day Intermediate Alpine Mountaineering
- 5-day Advanced Alpine Mountaineering
- 3-day climbing for the over 50s
- 3-day Mont Blanc Extension

Events at the meet

- Day-walk led by Mountaineering Ireland's Training officer
- Performance coaching of movement
- Lecture on Alpine mountaineering
- Lecture on climbing further afield
- Bouldering competition
- Slack-lining competition
- Barbeque, music and dancing
- Photo competition

For more information, visit www.mountaineering.ie or contact the office on (01) 625 1117

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Recovery strategies

By Karen Doyle and Andy McMullan

Karen Doyle (centre) explains recovery strategies to participants at the Autumn Gathering. Photo: Ruairí Ó Conchúir.

At Mountaineering Ireland's Autumn Gathering last October, physical therapist Karen Doyle and physiotherapist Andy McMullan gave a workshop on recovery methods for people engaging in outdoor sports. In this article, they share the information from that workshop with the wider Mountaineering Ireland membership. This is general information about recovery and should not be substituted for proper examination by a qualified person, should you suspect you have an injury as opposed to exercise-related soreness.

When we talk about recovery, most people will say they have recovered from an activity when the feelings of pain and stiffness are gone. The pain and stiffness experienced is called delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS) and it often occurs after taking part in a new activity, a strenuous activity, or a harder training session or hike than normal.

The DOMS can peak 2-3 days after exercise and can take up to 8-10 days after exercise to dissipate. This pain and stiffness is caused by inflammation of damaged muscle and/or connective tissue.

After strenuous activity, a small amount of muscle injury will occur, as during strenuous or new exercise, micro-tears occur in the muscle. As the body repairs this micro-trauma, it adapts to tolerate the exercise, should it recur. This is the body's way of helping muscles to become accustomed to the new or increased intensity of the exercise. These micro-tears cause:

- decreases in strength
- decreases in flexibility.
- slight inflammation, which puts pressure on the nerves, causing pain

During exercise, blood is pumped around the body with increasing force by the heart as the rate of its contractions increases. The blood is assisted in its return to the heart by contraction of the exercising muscles, e.g. in the calves.

These pumping actions bring oxygen, energy, healing factors and nutrients to the muscles and help remove the waste. When exercise stops, the pumping action also ceases and, as a result, blood accumulates or pools in the muscles.

All of the strategies outlined in this article focus on the principle of pumping blood from the periphery to the centre, moving waste products back to the organs so that they can be eliminated from the body, and bringing re-oxygenated blood, containing healing factors, to the sore, damaged areas.

The goal of recovery is to limit or reduce the amount of muscle damage, tenderness and stiffness, and to get you back to your sport as soon as possible.

Recovery strategies:

1. Water-based strategies

Please note that, if you have problems with circulation to your extremities or with feeling changes in temperature, for example from Reynaud's disease or diabetes, these water-based recovery strategies may not be suitable for you, so please check with your doctor before undertaking these strategies.

Contrast-bathing

Contrast-bathing is the alternate soaking of an affected body area in hot (40-42°C) and cold (8-10°C) water. It is thought to work by the pumping action created by increasing the blood flow to the area when it is immersed in the hot water (vasodilatation) and reducing the blood flow to the area when it is immersed in cold water (vasoconstriction). It has been found to be beneficial in reducing swelling and post-exercise soreness.

To do this at home, use two buckets of hot and cold water and immerse your affected leg or arm in them alternately. Keep an eye on the temperature of the water. It will be hard to keep it constant, as the hot water will cool and the cool water will warm up due to body temperature from the limb. Alternatively, consider using a sauna for ten minutes, followed by a dip in a cold plunge-pool or cold shower. Be careful if you have a heart condition or another condition, which may be affected by a sudden change in temperature, as the sudden shock of going from hot to cold has been known to trigger heart attacks.

Instructions: Start with the hot water. Soak for four minutes in the hot water (40-42°C), then soak in the cold water (10°C) for one minute. Alternate between the hot and the cold water for fifteen minutes, and finish in the cold water.

Cold-water immersion

Soaking in cold water has been shown to reduce the perception of general fatigue and leg soreness, and facilitate a more rapid return to performance, but it does not affect rate of recovery from muscle damage. In some studies, it was found to be more effective than contrast-bathing. You can do this by having a cold bath at home for your legs, or using basins



of cold water for your arms. If having a bath, make sure to keep the upper body warm by wearing warm clothes on your torso.

You can also build it into your day's activity by taking a dip in a river, sea or lake after exercise, or by just going home for a cold bath! Be careful, as cold water has been known to cause muscle cramps after exercise, so make sure you can get out of the water easily, don't get into deep water, and have friends keep an eye on you.

Instructions: Soak in water at 10°C for 5-10 minutes. Wear warm clothes on the upper body to keep the trunk warm, if you are soaking legs only.

Hot-water immersion

A soak in a hot bath is very pleasant and has been shown to be good for recovery of strength after exercise. However, it has not been found to be as good as contrast-bathing or cold-water immersion for recovery from pain, restoring dynamic power, or reducing swelling. It works by increasing the blood flow to the extremities, which can be evidenced visibly by the redness of your skin after a hot bath.

Instructions: Have a warm bath or visit a sauna or steam room. Drink water with this therapy, as you may dehydrate due to sweating from the heat.

2. Whole-body cryotherapy

Whole-body cryotherapy was in the news when Brian O'Driscoll and Gordon D'Arcy were sent to Poland for cryotherapy after injuries they received in 2005. The therapy consists of exposure to very cold air that is maintained at -110°C to -140°C in special temperature-controlled cryochambers, generally for two minutes. Skin temperature can drop to 5-12°C.

Cryotherapy has been found good for a variety of conditions such as arthritis and has been reported to be beneficial for sports injuries and recovery. There is currently a lot of scientific research being done to see how it works, but the full mechanism is not yet known. There are now a few cryochambers around Ireland, if you'd like to investigate this therapy for yourself.

3. Compression garments

Compression garments are not a new idea, having previously been used in medicine to enhance blood flow from the peripheries back to the heart, e.g. flight socks. In recent years they have made an entry to the world of sport and there is a huge amount of interest and marketing around them. They have been worn by the HTC Columbia cycle team and Rory McIlroy in the US PGA Championships. They come in a

Andy MacMullan demonstrates a self-massage recovery technique.
Photo: Ruairí Ó Conchúir.



Participants at Autumn Gathering practice self-massage.

Photo: Ruairí Ó Conchúir.

variety of forms such as leggings, tops, calf covers and arm covers, and are stocked in some sport, cycling and outdoor shops.

A lot of research is being carried out to determine whether compression garments assist recovery and performance. From the studies reviewed, it looks like they are beneficial for reducing soreness after sport but that they may not affect the rate of muscle recovery.

In addition to recovery, there have been two studies that showed wearing compression garments during exercise can help increase performance over long distances, e.g. in cycling, but they have not been found to help performance over short distances, e.g. in sprinting or jumping. They might be something to experiment with prior to doing a long hike such as the Maamturks walk?

4. Active recovery

Active recovery consists of doing light exercise immediately after sporting exertion to cool down. The continuing activity may help improve blood flow, which flushes the system of the enzymes involved in muscle damage. It has been found to be beneficial in assisting the rate of recovery and in reducing soreness after exercise.

We were asked a lot about stretching as part of recovery at the Mountaineering Ireland Autumn Meet workshop. Stretching is a valuable part of your exercise routine, but it is

generally a static activity, i.e. you stand still and stretch a muscle. For this reason it does not fall into the category of recovery methods as, when we are describing such strategies, we are talking about methods that assist your recovery through actively pumping blood to and from the muscles.

Instructions: Do 10-20 minutes of light exercise at the end of an exercise session, e.g. stationary cycling, walking after a run, moving fingers, wrists and shoulders after climbing, or finish the last part of a hike more slowly rather than racing for a warm bowl of soup or other form of liquid nourishment in the pub!

5. Massage

Studies into massage have found that massage is beneficial for reducing the soreness from DOMS, if it is received shortly after exercise. The mechanism of how it works is not fully understood, but it is thought to work by increasing blood flow around the muscles which may help in the removal of elements from the body that cause inflammation, and assist in the reduction of swelling.

Self-massage can be performed using tools called foam rollers. These are cylinders of firm foam approximately 6 inches in diameter and from 2 to 4 feet long. They were a big hit at the Mountaineering Ireland Autumn Meet with many participants

trying them out and liking them. To explain how they work, we will use the concept of massaging the front of your thigh. For this, you place the foam roller on the floor and lie face down, placing the front of your thigh on the foam roller. Then you use your arms to roll your body back and forth on the foam roller.

A quick Google search for foam roller exercises will bring up lots of pictures and videos on how to use them. They are widely available to buy on the internet, e.g. from Amazon, and from some sports shops for about €18. If you suffer from back pain or have an existing injury, please consult your doctor or physiotherapist before using a foam roller, as they may aggravate the problem that you have. Don't over-do it; a minute 2-3 times a week on a muscle is more than enough.

Tennis balls can also be used to perform self-massage. If you have been climbing and your forearms are pumped, try using a tennis ball to massage them out. They can be used to work out the forearm by placing the tennis ball on a firm surface and placing your forearm on top of it. Apply some pressure onto the tennis ball and move the arm back and forth on it.

If you have any questions on the methods in this article, please feel free to contact us at info@mapleclinic.ie or andy@performancelogic.co.uk ■

Karen Doyle is a physical therapist (MIAPT) based in Dublin. Most weekends, Karen can be found out in the hills, hill-walking, climbing or hill-running. Her holidays are spent climbing ice in winter and in the Alps in summer. She offers a 10% discount off treatment for Mountaineering Ireland members in her clinic and can be contacted via her website www.mapleclinic.ie or by phone on 01-544 1225.

Andy McMullan is a physiotherapist based in Belfast. He has a special interest in climbing and climbing injuries, in addition to general sporting performance. Often he can be found wandering on the hills or marshalling at fell races. He can be contacted by email at andy@performancelogic.co.uk or on 07872 022 773.



The Burren Way

Mary Keaveney and Frank Murphy walk the Burren Way from Corofin to Lahinch

The Burren Way is a 123km walking route that goes through the heart of Co Clare. It generally takes five days to complete the entire trail. Mary Keaveney and Frank Murphy report on their Burren journey, which they made in September this year.

Day 1: Corofin to Carron (18km)

We left from Corofin Country House, the B&B where we had stayed the night and where they had kindly agreed to mind our car.

We stocked up with sandwiches in Corofin and an early morning walker insisted that we side-track up a steep incline to get a good view of Inchiquin Lough with its island and castle. It was well worth the extra effort, even as the rain threatened and with the day's walking still ahead of us. We climbed the road around the lake wrapped in heavy vegetation and then dropped down to cross the River Fergus at Kilnaboy, just escaping the route of the car rally, which was on that day.

Tim Robinson's magnificent map starts at Kilnaboy and details the wonders of the Burren, if bemoaning

the disappearance of some precious features lost to what he calls 'agri-vandalism.' There was no missing Parknabinnia's wedge tomb standing majestic in a green field beside the road. Blocks of grey stone assembled together with a flat stone overall, now covered with a green, grassy cushion.

There were no cars as we carried on along the straight road with stony fields on both sides. We found a dry stone to sit on near Castletown River and took out the flask for lunch, having blackberries picked on the roadside for dessert.

There was no distance marking for the Burren Perfumery on the sign so we opted to go to Cassidy's for refreshments, but their '500 metres' proved a little imaginative too! We passed NUIG's Field Research Centre before reaching Carron.

Michael Cusack Hall was closed on All-Ireland Final day but we could have been sitting in his stand at Croke Park as the TV in Cassidy's had Cork overcoming Down. In the lounge we were introduced to the owner of Magouhy House with whom we were able to book our accommodation for the night.

It was quite something, after our 18km walk, to be sitting drinking a glass in this old Royal Irish

Constabulary station, which had been burned down by the volunteers and later converted into a Garda barracks for the new State, but was now a welcome hostelry overlooking the 200-acre turlough.

Day 2: Carron to Ballyvaughan (23km)

We were kindly driven to our starting point in Carron after a fine breakfast finished off by blueberry Vancouver pancakes, which were to fuel us for the long trek to Ballyvaughan. We began with a steep climb out of the village. We were even offered a lift up the hill but on only our second day's start we were still strong enough of wind and limb to maintain a rigid discipline.

Another magnificent straight road walk with nothing to disturb our enjoyment of the countryside. Passing close to Caherconnell, a 'gateway to the forts and tombs of the Burren,' including the Poulmabrone dolmen, even the Caves of the Wild Horses didn't stop our onward march.

However, as a three-judge High Court was being assembled in the Four Courts to adjudicate on NAMA, we couldn't resist the call of the 500-year-old law school at Cahermacnaughten where the

On the Burren Way in September of this year. Photo: Mary Keaveney & Frank Murphy.



Classical limestone pavement along the Burren Way.
Photo: Ruairí Ó Conchúir.

O'Dabhoireanns were in charge of the proceedings.

Standing in the middle of this simple round stone fort, which is reputed to have once held its own law library, with the OPW wooden entrance and no pillars, no round hall, no locked gates and no security check, there was nothing to interfere with contemplation of the long and winding road Irish law had travelled in the five centuries to today's Commercial Court.

Parknabinnia Wedge Tomb in the Burren, September 2010.
Photo: Mary Keaveney & Frank Murphy.

After the new Burren Court Holiday Homes, we crossed the N67 and were asked by two tourists in their hire car where all the stone was. Some of it was certainly hidden beside us by the growth in the field.

In the forest, a loaded timber lorry squeezed past from their clearing

where they had the cuttings stacked in neat piles. Then on into the bog where it was difficult to locate a dry resting place until a stray pallet came into view.

We came to a T-junction with no marker and continued to a gate with a stile, but again with no marker. We decided to double back to check but still could not see any markers, so we continued on along a green road until we came to a stile with a marker, and realised we were not lost.

On the zigzags down from Poulacapple, the cows being herded along were reluctant to pass us but we stepped into the ditch and they did. The farmer was interested to hear where we were going and said the cattle ahead were used to walkers, but we were still slightly anxious at the

sight of what looked like a bull. However, we made it through and along by the Rathborne River onto the road.

We met two women herding more cattle along the road and then came out on the main road at Bóthar Buí Cross. We should have gone up by Newtown Castle and the Burren College of Art, but we were getting tired so we stuck to the main road. If the traffic was hairy at times, at least we were treated to sight of a fine pig-sty and a gaggle of geese.

It was good to see Ballyvaughan and better still to have Hyland's Burren Hotel there straight in front of us on arrival with a welcome for walkers on the door. It was over six hours since we had left Carron and we reckoned we had roughly covered 23km, so Fulacht Fia was a delight.

We were halfway there now, so we rested the next day in Ballyvaughan. We still couldn't get a copy of the *Burren Way Guide* but a member of the local walking group in Ryan's recalled her recent three-peaks adventure on Ben Nevis, Scafell and Snowdon. We enjoyed a swim off the pier and a visit to the truly magnificent Tea and Garden Rooms with a dessert table to die for. There was a goldfish pond which the herons did not seem to need to prey on because of all the other rich pickings on the shore. We ourselves later had a bowl of the local mussels in Hyland's washed down by a welcome pint of stout.

Day 3: Ballyvaughan to Doolin (18km)

To save having to retrace our steps we booked a cab for 9:15am to take us back to our starting point on the Burren Way. Thomas O'Connor did that and more by taking us to the end of the road where the mass path comes in from Gleninagh and treated us to a potted local history as well.

The € fare made us feel like latter-day highway robbers, but we were grateful as we climbed up the side of the mountain, passing Cathair an Aird Rois, the Mass House and shebeen.

We dropped down into Fermoy, crossing the Caher River and heading up the track towards Slieve Elva, which we went around on a green road way up beyond Fanore where cattle and goats grazed. As the rain began, we met a farmer who does a lot of walking. He said that he never had any problems with walkers on his land.

It got wetter and wetter and we got



no views from the townland of O'Heany, except of the men feeding the horses in the nearby field, but as we descended it cleared. The sun came out and we could see Inisheer, sparkling across the water.

Ballynalackan Castle came into view and again we veered off the Way, choosing the more direct route. This brought us to the Doolin Caves, where we had some leek and potato soup before descending into the limestone to see the great 7.3m stalactite.

Energised, we took the road to Doolin, looking back over the green-roofed, environmentally friendly centre. Minutes later, the cave guide pulled over and offered us a lift to Doolin, which we gratefully accepted.

David in Paddy's Doolin Hostel gave us a room for the night with a sea view. Across the road we could browse in the second-hand bookshop, buy chocolate made in Tuamgraney and enjoy fish and chips, and ceoil in O'Connors.

Day 4: Doolin to Lahinch (18km)

In the morning, the kitchen in the hostel was alive with over twenty German students. They even had a birthday cake with candles for one of their group. For once we tucked into the healthy option of fruit, yoghurt and coffee, as opposed to a full Irish. David had already had his swim when we got our € key deposit back and hit the road.

What we thought was going to be a fast pace was in fact slowed down by the beautiful blackberries glistening in the sun, which we filled up on as we went along, passing the castle and the Liscannor Stone works. Despite the OS map having the old Burren Way by the cliffs, the new path in fact takes you sensibly off the main road and away from the Cliffs of Moher altogether but, wanting to have a look at the Cliffs, we took the main road, which is not at all suitable for walkers.

Not knowing the ins and outs of all the local agitation and not having to pay to park our feet, we liked the new Visitor Centre built into the hillside as it is. If the new shops were different from the old stalls, at least there was still one solitary busker keeping up the tradition, welcoming the morning with his music, and the coffee, brown bread and buns were good.

It is a pity that the old cliff walk is gone but here's hoping the land wars can be resolved with the old way being restored and everyone's interests



being looked after.

We had to head back onto the busy main road. We were not alone, as a group of young visitors were ahead of us on the road. We wondered why their dress suggested they were not walkers, but some half mile down the road we saw them getting into their hired car, parked in a gap in the fence.

Fortunately, we were able to escape the main road and head back into the quiet countryside, where there was a holy well at the side of the road. We then passed by the Moher Hill Open Farm, complete with Betty the Llama and Ossie the Ostrich.

We were glad to be off the busy road and found a flat wall in a deserted house to take out the flask. We met two walking visitors there who had done the Burren loops.

It wasn't long until we were back on the Way and had to encounter just a small bit of the busy main road again before escaping to the safety of Lahinch strand. There was a pitch scratched out on the sand, but the footballers had all gone as we hoped for a Kilfenora win at the weekend. The markers brought us beautifully by the surf-filled sea to end our Burren Way.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank all those who created, maintain and support this wonderful way. In particular, we remember our late brother-in-law, Paul Theasby of Cahersherkin, who was a great defender of the Burren. May he rest in peace in his beloved Clare. ■

Mary Keaveney is a founder member of the Tuesday Evening Hillwalkers Group. Frank Murphy was a member of the Irish Mountain Running Association but has been on the injured list for a number of years.

Cathair an Aird Rois in the Burren, September 2010.
Photo: Mary Keaveney & Frank Murphy.

Information

Where

The Burren Way is best accessed from one of the six trailheads at Lahinch, Doolin, Lisdoonvarna, Ballyvaughan, Carron and Corofin. You can start wherever you want; we chose Corofin.

Maps

See www.shannonregiontrails.ie. Tim Robinson's *The Burren* (1999) is essential but unfortunately doesn't cover all of the area. Ordnance Survey Map Sheets 51 and 57. *The Irish Examiner*: "The Burren: Selected Day Walks."

Distance

The Burren Way is 123km with loops and links. We walked around 80km but also got a couple of lifts.

Time

The complete walk takes five days. We did a shorter route in four days of walking.

Where we stayed

- Corofin Country House 065-6837791 corofincountryhouse@eircom.net
- Magouhy House, Carron 065-7089136 www.magouhyhouse.com
- Hyland's Burren Hotel, Ballyvaughan 065-7077037, www.hylandsburren.com
- Paddy's Doolin Hostel 065-7074421 www.doolinhostel.com
- Atlantic Hotel, Lahinch 065-7081049 www.atlantichotel.ie



Dazzled by the ‘Range of Light’

By Kevin Higgins

Snow in the desert en route from Las Vegas.
Photo: Kevin Higgins.

The ‘Range of Light’ is John Muir’s phrase to describe eastern California’s Sierra Nevada. He felt that ‘The Range of Snow’ was a poor description for these mountains which lost most of their snow cover by summertime, only to reveal the light-coloured granite, sparkling white at midday or glowing rose in the morning alpenglow. Such quality of light was an inspiration for photographers like Ansel Adams and Galen Rowel, and Muir’s suggestion is sometimes preferred.

Yosemite Valley is probably the most well-known part of the Sierra Nevada and even those with only a passing interest in rockclimbing will have some awareness of its most famous features of El Capitan and Half Dome. Irish climbers have been testing themselves on routes there since the mid-1970s, if not earlier (see *IML3*, Clare Sheridan). It’s the busiest national park in the US, with about three million visitors per year, mostly in the summer months since it is snowbound in winter. The valley is sometimes crowded, but spectacular never-the-less.

It has lots to offer the general hiker, with numerous trails leading steeply from the valley floor to various high points on the rim. The vistas must have been awe-inspiring for the early explorers who happened upon such immense, glaciated rock-faces.

The work of two of these pioneers

was, indirectly, the reason for our visit as members of Tyndall Mountain Club. Clarence King and Richard Cotter were members of the Geological Survey of California in the mid-19th century and were among the first to visit the region. In their work they made many first ascents of the Sierra summits, one of which they named ‘Mount Tyndall.’ It seems that their climb took place around the time of John Tyndall’s American lecture tour. King was familiar with Tyndall’s mountaineering exploits and writings and named the peak in his honour. Did the fact that Cotter had been born in Ireland have any bearing on the choice of name, I wonder?

Mt Tyndall is the tenth highest on the list of thirteen of California’s 14,000ft summits and a visitor to Kilkenny, from the West Coast of the US, knew of the mountain and had issued an invitation which was

*Right: View of
Yosemite Valley.
Photo: Kevin
Higgins.*

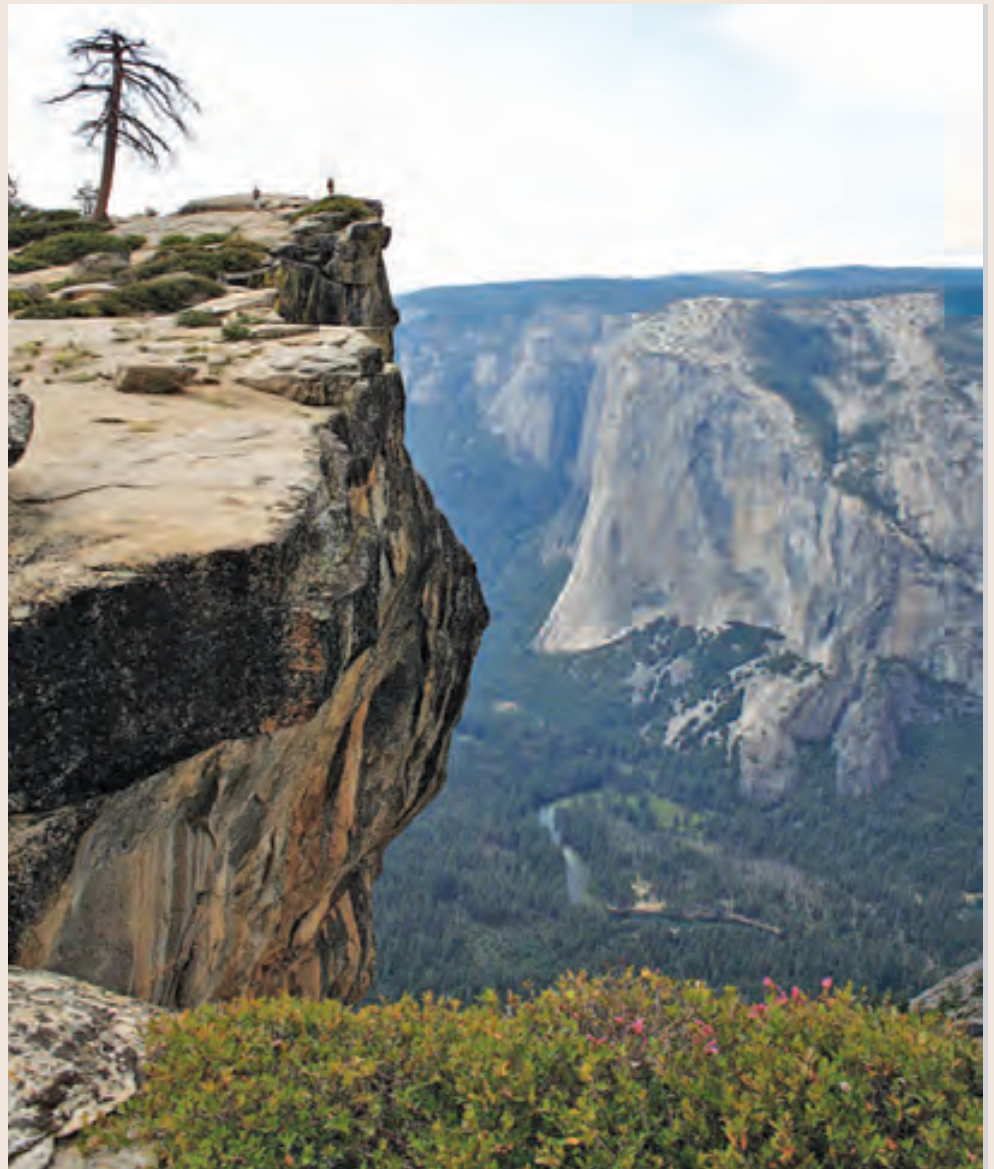
*Below right: Mt
Tyndall from
below Shepherd
Pass.
Photo: Kevin
Higgins.*

accepted by a couple of us. As a result, we were in Yosemite Valley for a few days to 'acclimate' by doing some steep hikes.

Our host was a member of the Tullamore Dew Running Club, named in the hope of getting sponsorship from the makers of the brew, and a typical event of theirs was a run from the rim of the Grand Canyon to its floor and back again to the rim! After three good days on hikes in The Valley, we had shown that we were capable of dealing with more than Comeragh peat-hags and so set out on a long drive via Tuolumne Meadows and Tioga Pass, recently cleared of winter snow, to the eastern side of the range. Then south on I 395 to Independence where we registered with the Forest Service and rented 'bear barrels' before heading west for about ten miles on a rutted, unpaved desert track to the trailhead at Inyo National Forest. A bear barrel is a strong, plastic barrel for storing food. It's kept well away from one's tent and can resist the attempts of a bear to open it.

Two days on the Shepherd Pass trail and we were in sight of Mt Tyndall from below the pass, where we located a camp-site with difficulty because of the rocky nature of the terrain. Our route was to be the NW ridge, which is the easiest and involves some simple scrambling. This was not the route taken on the first ascent, which from the contemporary account seems to have been something of an epic. It was from the vantage point of this summit, believing it to be the highest, that Cotter and King realised that there were higher peaks in the region, one of which was later named Mt Whitney. Another, lower mountain in the Sierras was later named Mt Cotter, in memory of this intrepid mountaineer.

A little above our camp-site was a snowfield which we crossed next morning to get to Shepherd Pass from





Above left: Hiking to top of Yosemite Falls. Photo: Kevin Higgins.

Above right: Petroglyphs in the eastern Sierra Nevada. Photo: Kevin Higgins.

Left: On the Shepherd Pass trail to Mt Tyndall. Photo: Kevin Higgins.



where we were soon on the NW flank of Mt Tyndall. A broad depression on the west of the ridge took us over snow patches towards the final scrambling part of the NW ridge. As we got closer to the top, one of the Sierra's afternoon storms rolled in and we retreated from the worsening weather to our camp below Shepherd Pass.

The next day was sunny but our hosts had a tight schedule, which required us to hike out to the trailhead. This we accomplished in one day, compared to two days to hike in. The temperature at the trailhead was about 30°C but this was counteracted somewhat by the beers we had cached in the nearby stream. From here a long drive took us from the sands of the Owen's Valley to the sand of Venice Beach in Los Angeles.

The eastern Sierras are usually approached from the west, from the cities of San Francisco or Los Angeles. However, to approach from the east, via Las Vegas, it's possible to take in the extremes of the North American

continent. Badwater Basin, in Death Valley, at 85m below sea level, is the lowest point in North America and is less than 150km from Mt Whitney, the highest point in the contiguous states. Springtime provides wonderful hiking in the valley's canyons and the desert can blossom unexpectedly with a profusion of wild flowers. Here, too, and in the Sierra's eastern foothills can be found ancient petroglyphs, different from but equally as enigmatic as those found on monoliths at Irish sites.

Even after a short visit one comes away pleasantly surprised, if not quite dazzled, at the range of possibilities for climbing and hiking in this region of the Range of Light. ■

• **King's account of the Mt Tyndall ascent is included in his *Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada of 1872* (read it online at www.archive.org/details/mountaineeringin02king).**

• ***Early days in the Range of Light* recounts how Daniel Arnold repeats the climbs of the pioneers, including the ascent of Mt Tyndall, in such detail as wearing the same clothing and carrying the same food and equipment.**

Kevin Higgins is a member of Tyndall Mountaineering Club and a member of the Irish Mountaineering and Exploration Historical Society.

climbing the Diamond

The East (Diamond)
Face of Longs Peak
in the Colorado
Rockies, seen from
Chasm Lake.
Photo:
Sheridan/Torrans
collection.

Clare Sheridan reports on an impressive route in the Rockies that she climbed last summer with her partner, Calvin Torrans....



Clare Sheridan at the bivy site at Chasm View, on the Diamond.
Photo: Sheridan/Torrans collection.

Below:
A marmot on the lower slopes.
Photo: Sheridan/Torrans collection.



The Colorado Rockies are a bit dull-looking, truth be told, when viewed from the Boulder to Estes Park highway. Their bap-shaped summits rise from forested skirts just like Scottish hills. Even with the odd snow-patch they don't have the dramatic appearance you would expect, given that they were the first great barrier for the wagons rolling in from the plains.

They are deceptive, though, and have a fine array of alpine rockwalls above their hidden corries and canyons. It seems fitting that Longs Peak (14,255ft), Colorado's highest mountain, should present the most impressive of all those walls – the Diamond.

The approach is a long slog but the trail is good and as well as cheerful hikers there are elk, squirrels and marmots to spot. High on the northeast shoulder you eventually reach Boulderfield – a massive shallow rockstrewn cwm where hikers are permitted to camp en route for the summit. At this point we headed left off the trail and up steepening ground to the



Clare on the traverse of the East Face.
Photo: Sheridan/Torrans collection.

ridge, where the east face came into view.

We were glad to dump our heavy sacks at a flat spot and scramble the last few feet to the edge. There it was, all revealed – the whole, sudden expanse of the Diamond. A thousand feet high and a third of a mile wide, it looked close and scary, and there was not a single climber on it. Thirty-eight routes on that blank wall? Ours was somewhere in the middle and it took time for the guidebook details to begin to appear as vague features. You think you can see the line, linking a pillar to a crack, a crack to a corner, but then you blink and it fades to undifferentiated rock again.

Chasm View, our spot on the ridge, seemed justly named, now that we were perched on it. The drop really did gape, hundreds of feet down to Broadway Ledge and hundreds more to Mill's Glacier. It was reassuring to see the double bolts of the first abseil within easy reach for the next morning, but now we had those minor bivy tasks to keep us distracted – sorting the gear, putting on a brew, melting snow and trying to read the directions on those fiddly little water purification bottles. One thing we didn't have to worry about was keeping our food secure from the wild things – 13,500ft is too high for the bears and even the marmots.

In the morning, three long abseils got us down to Broadway but even as we were coiling our ropes, another party was almost on our heels, a second appeared in Indian file on the ridge and we could hear a third labouring up North Gully, the alternative approach. The race was on!

I shot up the first pitch (a lot easier than it looked from up above) and headed for some belay tat, except that it wasn't our first pitch at all and it wasn't that easy either, just loose and dirty. By the time I had down-climbed, two guys had passed us and got started at the right spot just beyond. Nobody wants to be delayed on a big face, particularly not here where afternoon thunderstorms are common and, at this altitude, there are few places to hide.

When we did get going, Calvin made up lost time by running the first few pitches together before taking a hanging belay in a crack. From there we viewed the key traverse. It's worth sussing this pitch out as it can be anything from 5.7 to run-out 5.10c, depending on the line you take. After



Calvin starting up the crux pitch. The red dot in the distance marks the first abseil from Chasm View. Photo: Sheridan/Torrans collection.

some scouting around and with a few old pegs for protection, I got across to the bottom of a flared groove and another hanging belay – it was a steep wall alright.

Calvin swarmed up the groove and, with a bit of climbing together, we reached a stance at the foot of a fine corner. This turned out to be a great pitch – a full rope-length of classic Fair Head jamming and bridging. Early afternoon, the sun was gone and we were high on the big face, heading for the crux. This was a tricky pitch, from the first move to the last. The initial technical groove was followed by a tight chimney – where all the wrong things jammed and we had to haul our little day-sack – and after that the actual crux crack seemed straightforward. The final pitch was an airy traverse left to easy ground. From there the scramble up and over the top and then down via the Cables Route abseils to the bivy site was handy enough.

What a route! The best of trad climbing on an intimidatingly steep face, finishing at 14,000ft, and not a bad pitch on it. The Casual Route must rank as one of the best alpine climbs of its grade in the world! ■

Clare Sheridan is a leading female climber in Ireland and has put up many new routes. She has climbed extensively here and abroad, and the route she has most enjoyed so far has been the Bonatti Pillar on the Dru in Chamonix.

General information

The Casual Route, The Diamond, Longs Peak: 1,000ft, 5.10a, First Ascent 1977

Guidebook

Rocky Mountain National Park: High Peaks: The Climber's Guide, by Bernard Gillett

Airport

Denver, Colorado

Accommodation & services

Estes Park, a small resort town, has all facilities but campsites tend to be booked out on summer weekends.

Bureaucracy

Longs Peak is in the Rocky Mountains National Park. Bivouac permits (mandatory) are available from RMNP HQ in Estes Park or office at Longs Peak trailhead.

Climbing alternatives

Highly recommended alpine rock routes on Spearhead, Hallett's Peak and Petit Grepon.

The granite crags of Lumpy Ridge at the northern edge of Estes Park will put manners on you and, if you're craving bolts after all that character-building trad climbing, the new Boulder Canyon guide features some excellent newly developed sport crags, sixty miles to the south.

Local colour

For a slice of Americana, the Estes Park rodeo in early July is worth an evening – just be ready to salute the flag and to see all vegetarians, greens and animal protection activists as enemies of the people!



Crossing the Hardangervidda

Frances and Peter Wilson describe their ski tour across Norway's Hardanger plateau

Photo 1:
Preparing to
leave Sandhaug
on another
brilliant day.
Photo:
Peter Wilson.

Each Easter, for many years now, we have taken our cross-country touring skis to Norway. Initially, mountain hotels served as a base from which to explore the surrounding terrain but, as experience grew, so too did our desire to move on each day and ski through the mountains. We then joined the DNT (Den Norske Turistforening – the Norwegian Mountain Touring Association) and began to tour using their network of huts for overnighing.

DNT membership is not cheap, but it gives reductions on overnight fees and meals in serviced huts. It also carries the promise of not being turned away; if all bed spaces are taken, a mattress and floor space will be provided – an important consideration when, at 5:00pm, the next nearest accommodation is 25km away, the temperature is falling fast, the wind is picking up, snow is starting to fall and daylight has almost gone. On such occasions, a mattress in a corridor or a corner of the dining room floor is not to be sniffed at.

We flew Belfast-Newcastle-Bergen and then travelled on by bus to Haukeliseter on the southern edge of the Hardangervidda. Two nights at this large, serviced hut gave us a day and a half to re-acquaint ourselves with skis, boots, heavy packs and the various techniques to keep us vertical whilst moving at speed downhill.

The Hardangervidda is Norway's most extensive mountain plateau. It covers about 7,500 km² and has an

average height of 1,000-1,200m, although several summits exceed 1,500m. It is strewn with lakes and rivers (see map, page 56). We planned a seven-day south-north crossing following a waymarked route (birch branches planted in the snow) and using a different hut each night. We would ski the best part of 150km, crossing only one road prior to reaching DNT Finse at the highest point of Bergensbanen (the Oslo-Bergen railway).

Day 1: Haukeliseter to Hellevassbu

Even with the 'correct' ski wax (Photo 3), we struggled on the steep ascents, so we slapped on the skins (strips of nylon that adhere to the ski base and provide grip when ascending) for the climb up from the hut. Only on reaching typically more gently undulating terrain did we remove them and trust the wax. A clear and sunny day, but the cold wind did not encourage us to linger

too long. At Årnotvatni, we found shelter behind a fisherman's cabin and enjoyed the sun and our lunch.

From here on, the route took us across ice-bound lakes and through linking valleys below the summits of Midnutane and Simletind to the slope above Hellevassbu. With a series of traverses and snowplough turns we reached the lake by which the hut is located and, because it was only mid-afternoon, were able to secure beds. We expected the hut to fill up later but only a few others arrived.

Day 2: Hellevassbu to Litlos

The hut guardian warned us that the weather would deteriorate from the south as the day progressed, with strong winds and snow expected. Although the route on to Litlos was shorter than yesterday, it turned out to be a more challenging. It was overcast with a rising wind as we set out, but thankfully the wind was behind us. Easy terrain and the wind made for rapid initial progress but the poor light made it difficult to judge the slope and descents had to be controlled.

After a couple of hours, we met southgoing Norwegians who complained about the conditions – it must have been bad! We had to side-step down the steep descent to Kvennsjøen, by this time not being able to see much beyond our ski tips, but eventually we reached the lake and only a flat 5km lay between us and the hut. It was only 1:30pm when we arrived, but the hut could not have come soon enough.

Day 3: Litlos

The wind strengthened overnight to such an extent that for the first time in 17 years of skiing we were forced to 'cabin-up' (stay put). Most of the Norwegians did the same, indicating how bad the conditions were; only a few hardy souls departed and arrived that day. We spent the day drinking expensive cups of tea and looking at the pictures in all the books and magazines in the lounge, being unable to read the words!

Occasional trips had to be made to the outside toilet, which, although only 30 metres from the front door, could not actually be seen. It necessitated donning full outdoor clothing and following a 'sticked' route through the spindrift. We retired to bed early, hoping for an improvement in the weather.

Day 4: Litlos to Sandhaug

We were not disappointed. The horrendous night, with the gale threatening to remove the hut from its foundations, gave way to a magnificent dawn – a cloudless blue sky with not a breath of wind. These conditions remained for the rest of our trip and we had the Hardangervidda to ourselves, as most of the Norwegians were now back at work.

The thermometer was showing -23°C , so we started on polar wax, changing to green and then blue as the day progressed and the temperature rose. Skiing northeast, we were able to admire the wonderful views of the plateau, including Hårteigen, a prominent peak 20km to the north (Photo 7). The sun was warming as we made our way through the undulating landscape, over and around low hills and across innumerable small lakes, arriving at Sandhaug by mid-afternoon for welcome hot chocolate and showers. What a contrast to the day to Litlos.

Day 5: Sandhaug to Rauhellere

We were now in the centre of the Hardanger on easy terrain at about 1,200m and, as long as the weather held, we were quietly confident about reaching Finse (Photo 1). Again we enjoyed near perfect conditions for our journey and, although the ascents and descents were relatively minor, we felt fit, the rucksacks and boots were comfortable, the snow was perfect and the skis and wax were working well.

The Norwegians always build snow-walls and shelters for their lunch break when out skiing and position them into the sun. We were fortunate to find such a wall as lunchtime approached, and with a bit of re-shaping soon had perfectly aligned seating for two and enjoyed an extensive sunbathe before the final leg of the journey alongside Langesjøen to Rauhellere. There were only four of us in the hut that night, but even so, the guardian produced a magnificent spread at both dinner and breakfast.

Day 6: Rauhellere to Tuva

Another quite superb day as we continued our northerly progress. Our objective was a private hut, Tuva, so from Sandhaug we had phoned to pre-book. We had stayed at Tuva on a previous trip to the northern Hardanger and our main memory was of a waffle pinned to the noticeboard, presumably so that you knew what



ski-mountaineering ◀

you were ordering. We wondered how often it was changed and were relieved when we were served freshly-made ones.

The route was another long one but again without too much ascent and we made good progress. We passed the private hut at Heinseter but it had closed the previous day so we had to forego the hot chocolate that we had been treating ourselves to each day. The suspension bridge across the

Photo 2: Departing Haukelisetter. Photo: Peter Wilson collection.

Below: Photo 3: Wax thermometer. The type of wax needed is determined by temperature. Photo: Peter Wilson.





done to be enjoying such wonderful weather as we rubbed in the factor 25 for the fourth morning in a row. A deviation from the stickied route took us up to the summit of Monsbunuten from where we looked north to the vast rock walls and rolling plateau of Hallingskarvet above the villages of Ustaoset and Haugastøl. An enjoyable long run down in excellent snow followed and we re-joined the marked route. Lunch was taken behind a boathouse, at which point we thought Frances' bindings had broken – fortunately they hadn't, they were just frozen solid and could not be adjusted.

A distant but constant droning had been with us since mid-morning and shortly after lunch we discovered its source – snowploughs keeping the highest stretch of the Geilo-Bergen road open from wind-drifted snow. A convoy of cars and lorries followed each plough. The ploughs were extremely efficient – we had to remove our skis and walk across. We sped on across two large hydro lakes to Krækkja, where we received a warm welcome from the guardian, having stayed several times before.

Day 8: Krækkja to Finse

On a previous trip we had been unable to ski this route due to strong northerly winds and had to ski out alongside the road to Haugastøl and take the train to Finse. There was no such problem this time – the weather Gods were smiling again – and we set off early knowing that a long, hard day lay ahead. The snow was in perfect condition and we made good time. Only part of the top suspension

Our route across the Hardanger-vidda.

Right: Photo 4: Skiing across the Heinseter suspension bridge. Photo: Peter Wilson.

nearby 'river' seemed rather incongruous, with no visible water beneath (Photo 4). Just after our sandwich stop in the col between Grasnuten and Grønenutan, Tuva came into view and we expected to arrive early. However, it was one of those times when the destination never seemed to get any nearer and it was 4:00pm by the time we were sitting in the lounge with hot chocolate and cream and jam waffles in front of us. A very comfortable evening was followed by an excellent night's sleep beneath thick duvets.

Day 7: Tuva to Krækkja

We began to wonder what we had



rope of the bridge above Dragøyfjorden was visible above the snow and the steep descent to Finnsbergvatnet was exhilarating.

A long gradual ascent to Midnutvatnet followed and, just as our stomachs began to protest, we came upon a snow-wall, which meant another extended sunbathe over lunch. The route continued to ascend and, on topping the final rise, we were able to see Finse about 5km away and downhill! We were soon checking in for a two-night stay and ordering the inevitable hot chocolates.

Day 9: Hardangerjökulen

In spite of losing a day at Litlos, we still had one to spare and no visit to Finse would be complete without a traverse of the Hardangerjökul (glacier), which towers above it (*Photo 6*). With the forecast in our favour, the decision was made for us. Finse is at 1,220m, the top of the glacier is 1,840m, so an ascent of 600m, mostly on skins, is called for. The ascent began in earnest at Appelsinhytta, about 3km south of Finse: first along the flanks of Middalsbreen, then around the shoulder of the crag-girt Kongsnuten to the steep upper slopes of Blåisen.

At the small emergency shelter of Jøkulhytta the gradient eased and shortly afterwards a tiny rock protrusion indicated we had reached the summit. The views included the peaks of Rondane and Jotunheimen – everywhere brilliant white against the deep blue of the sky. From the summit we skied northwest across the ice plateau. Then a long, long descent on wide, open slopes brought us into the valley west of Finse, and so along the lake to the hut.

It was with great reluctance that we took the train to Bergen the next day. During the journey the weather changed from clear and sunny to overcast with falling snow. We walked from the station to our hotel in a blizzard, carrying the skis. But this being Norway, the receptionist never raised an eyebrow at our dishevelled appearance or the pools of water collecting at our feet and booked us in without comment! ■

Frances and Peter Wilson live in Portstewart and are members of Bannside Rambling Club.



Photo 6:
The large DNT hut
at Finse with the
Hardangerjökul on
the high ground
beyond. In the
foreground is a snow
tunnel over
Bergensbanen.
Photo:
Peter Wilson.



Photo 7:
Above Litlos en
route to Sandhaug.
The sticked route
leads away from the
centre of the photo.
Photo:
Peter Wilson.



Training news presented by Training Officer Alun Richardson

New Year resolutions



ALUN RICHARDSON

"If I seem to see further it is because I stand on the shoulders of giants" – Sir Isaac Newton

CHRISTMAS APPEARED and went as rapidly as the snow and ice in Ireland. I spent the New Year climbing on Mount Kenya before returning to Ireland. Spending Christmas and the New Year in a tent gave me some time to think about what I hoped to achieve in my work as Mountaineering Ireland's Training officer during 2011. Here are some of the thoughts I came up with:

- To sustain and improve the support to walking and climbing clubs.
- To help those entering the exciting world of leading and instructing to fulfil their goals, whether they want to do it within their club or as a job.
- To stimulate debate among mountaineers and make people think about what they do and how they do it.
- To have a greater involvement with university and college clubs.
- To develop a Rock Climbing Skills scheme to sit alongside the increasingly popular Mountain Skills scheme.
- To develop Day Mountain and Hill Walking Leadership Awards.
- To fulfil our obligations to Coaching Ireland and the Adventure Framework.
- To make Mountaineering Ireland meet the envy of the rest of the mountaineering world.
- To organise a Providers' Conference to exchange ideas and improve the support available.
- To explore more of Ireland's mountains and cliffs.
- To maintain my 100% (just) record of not getting wet in Ireland's hills.

Many of the above are already well on their way thanks to the previous Training officer and the many volunteers who have supported Mountaineering Ireland over the decades. These are the unsung heroes of mountain training in Ireland and anything I achieve will be built upon their achievements.



On the Club Training Officers Workshop in Petersburg, Galway. Photo: Helen Lawless.

Club Training Officers (CTOs) meet in Galway

In December, eight Club Training officers from various Mountaineering Ireland clubs met at Petersburg in Co Galway to examine the best ways to transfer navigation skills back to their clubs. The course was directed by Dave Gaughran, assisted by Helen Lawless. The next CTO course will be run on 12th-13th November 2011.

Club talk

On January 18th, Collette Mahon of Wexford Hillwalking Club invited me to talk about "Leadership within Clubs." The talk was well-attended and prompted some interesting discussion on progressing from a club walker to a club walks leader. The debate ranged from problems with new members and poor footwear to the responsibility attached to being

a club walks leader and how to gain confidence. It was followed by a slide-show about why I have spent all of my adult life in the outdoors. Thanks to Collette for the invitation.

Mountain Skills syllabus and logbook

During January, the Training office combined the syllabus and logbook for the Mountain Skills scheme. This saves a lot of time and energy on compiling the logbooks to send out to people. There has been no change to the syllabus, with one exception: environmental awareness and access and conservation have been strengthened within the syllabus. The next print-run of the logbook will encompass these syllabus changes, so please give your feedback on the new syllabus to the Training officer.

On an MLA workshop in Donegal looking towards Errigal.
Photo: Alun Richardson.

MLTUK

The Training officer has presented a discussion document on Bord oiliúint Sléibhe (Bo S), the Irish Mountain Training Board, becoming a full member of MI TUK, to the board. This is currently under consideration and the Training officer will report back as soon as there are any developments.

Mountain Tutor Training, a.k.a. 'Training the Trainers'

Eight potential providers attended the latest course at Petersburg along with John Garside, representing the BMC. Overall, the feedback was great and the slow but inevitable introduction of a Providers' Training Course in the UK comes ever closer. Many thanks to Aodhnait Carroll for tackling the access and conservation section of the course in the absence of Helen Lawless.

Provider renewals 2011

Most providers will need to renew their agreement before the end of 2011. To do this, they will have to show evidence of attendance at a 'Continual Professional Development' workshop. To maintain the validity of our awards throughout Europe, we must be seen to maintain the standards of the training and assessment schemes that Bo S provides. CPD is part of that process along with our continual auditing of course reports and moderation of providers.

Increase in provider fees

Bo S has raised the fee to €100 per award for the three-year provider agreement term, with a maximum fee of €200.

Providers: please support BOS and Mountaineering Ireland

There are a large number of providers of Mountain Skills and other Bo S awards who make no mention of Mountaineering Ireland or Bo S when advertising the Bo S awards. The provider fee brings in circa €3,000 per year for the office, which doesn't come anywhere near reflecting the amount of work the office does, and the

stickers and logbooks simply cover their costs. So, come on, providers, the least you can do is show your support for Mountaineering Ireland and Bo S by promoting the awards as Bo S and Mountaineering Ireland. In fact, it is part of the new provider agreement that you will eventually sign up to as a provider. Centres are not given provider status and, if they advertise MS courses or any other course, they should ensure that they name the provider they are using to organise the award for them, even if it is a member of staff.

Coaching Ireland and the Adventure Framework update

Mountaineering Ireland is on the verge of creating a "Way Forward" with Coaching Ireland that will enable us to fulfill the requirements of the Adventure Framework. This will require providers who deliver the SPA, MI or WGI to attend a two-day Mountain Tutor course run by Coaching Ireland. The course is free and will fulfill the provider's CPD requirements. This will eventually become a compulsory requirement for providers wanting to deliver the SPA, MI or WGI in the future.

Scottish Winter Meet and Ski & Snowshoe Meet

The Scottish Meet had twelve participants at the time of going to press. Clive Roberts and Darach Ó Murchú were running the week. The Ski Mountaineering & Snowshoeing Meet was held by the Training officer in Chamonix in late March for a small team of Irish ski mountaineers.

Multi Pitch Award

The Multi Pitch Award is still under review by Bo S. Anyone able to provide feedback should get in contact with the Training officer.

Contact

If you have any comments or feedback, or have an idea but are not sure how to get it off the ground, contact the Training Officer, Alun Richardson, at alun@mountaineering.ie, or on his mobile phone: 087-412 2278.

Course Calendar 2011

Summer Alpine Meet

Argentière, 2nd-17th July 2011

Assessment courses

Mountain Leader assessment

16th-18th April

8th-10th October

29th April to 1st May

Volunteer Training Workshop

12th-13th November

Proposed CPD dates:

MS: Tuesday 10th May

MI /WGI : Thursday 22nd September

MS: Friday 23rd September

Trainers go training in Galway

PHIL FITZPATRICK

ON A CHILLY Friday evening in late November, eight hardy souls made their way to Galway to participate in Mountaineering Ireland's Club Training officer Workshop. The participants came from clubs in Galway, Cork, Donegal, Dublin, Kildare and Laois. Co Galway vEC's wonderful Petersburg vEC, on the shores of beautiful Lough Mask, provided a very comfortable base for the weekend's activities.

After a late arrival at Petersburg, there was just time to meet the other participants and instructors before eyelids began to droop and cosy beds beckoned. This was just as well, because there was an early start the next day with an indoor discussion and information session. This ranged across leadership styles, teaching and learning styles, practical application of training within a club, group safety, participant responsibility, risk assessment and management, to name some. We learned a lot from each other's experiences during this session.

The various formal mountaineering qualifications were explained and valuable information was given on accessing training grants. The goal of the weekend was to develop our ability to pass on and teach the hill skills we already possessed to other members of our clubs and we were encouraged to incorporate the principles of Leave No Trace into any training programme. Our eventual aim was to develop training action plans for our clubs.

We spent the rest of Saturday outdoors on the hill, where the real learning took place. We were able to reassure our instructors that, yes, we did know what a re-entrant was, we could identify cols, spurs and cliffs by relating map to ground and we could take accurate bearings backed up by timing and pacing. Then it was time to consider how we would impart these skills to others.

Excellent guidance was provided by our able instructor, who demonstrated some newer methods of teaching practical skills. We learned to watch out for "teachable

Dave Gaughran discussing techniques for teaching navigation with participants in the Club Training Officers Workshop.
Photo: Helen Lawless.



moments" in even an ordinary hill day. Again, sharing experiences and exchanging ideas added to our learning. Some extra chattering was produced by the cold, which led us to consider that most important aspect of mountaineering planning – the weather.

Saturday evening provided us with the opportunity of reviewing our newly-acquired tips, strategies and ideas over a convivial meal in the nearby village of Clonbur. Some of us even began to hatch our Club Training Action Plans over dessert!

Sunday was another hard-working day, with a practical hill session on steep ground. Amidst stunning Connemara scenery, our instructor guided us through some useful techniques for developing walkers' confidence on steep ground, in order to enable them to undertake more challenging routes.

Towards mid-afternoon, we gathered indoors to reflect on the weekend's learning and to identify the training needs within our own clubs. There is no expectation that a Club Training officer would actually provide all the training; in many instances the services of an external expert would be essential. Our instructor provided valuable guidance in sourcing training providers and indicated that, whenever possible, Mountaineering

Ireland's officers will accept invitations to speak to clubs.

Many clubs are currently enjoying a boom in membership and there is a perception that hillwalking is a low-risk activity. Clubs need to motivate their members to acquire the skills to become safe and self-sufficient hillwalkers.

Four clear areas emerged as common training needs in our clubs and will form the basis of our Club Training Action Plans:

- Map reading and compass skills
- First Aid
- Mountain Safety
- Environmental Awareness

The Club Training officer Workshop was excellent, and delivered in an easy, non-threatening style, which still provided all the necessary information and opportunities for learning. All eight of us left Petersburg on the Sunday evening with a solid body of information, an enhanced repertoire of skills and a renewed belief in the value of ongoing training to take back to our clubs.

Phil Fitzpatrick has been an active hillwalker and a member of Cork Mountaineering Club since the 1980s. She is currently on the club's committee as Membership Secretary.

A coastal panorama in the west of Ireland.
Photo: Alun Richardson.

Beware of ticks!

DR. PATRICK O'SULLIVAN

SPRING IS HERE and so are the ticks, which pose an increasing threat to people engaging in outdoor activities.

Tick-borne diseases are continuing to increase in Ireland and are a potential risk for people who engage in outdoor activities such as walking or climbing here and in the rest of Europe.

Lyme disease is the most common of these tick-borne diseases and it can result in a chronic debilitating illness if it is not recognised and treated effectively at an early stage. 50-100 cases of Lyme disease are diagnosed in Ireland each year now.

Lyme disease or *borreliosis* is a bacterial infection that is spread by the bite of an infected tick. Ticks are small, spider-like insects that are increasingly found in woodland, moorland and other grassy areas, where they live close to the ground. They feed on the blood of small animals such as mice and insects. Climate change in Ireland in recent years has improved the habitats for these insects by increasing the growth of vegetation.

Following a tick bite, one of the tell-tale signs of having contracted Lyme disease is a rash, sometimes showing as a bull's-eye ring around the bite. This can develop 3-30 days after the tick bite. However, this rash is not always present in everyone who is infected and it may even appear away from the site of the bite. Some patients may develop flu-like symptoms and a fever, which will also indicate possible infection.

Untreated, a more serious form of the disease may develop in which the heart, joints or nervous system can be affected. Some cases may go on to develop an illness which is similar to the chronic fatigue syndrome.

Lyme disease can be treated effectively with antibiotics, if it is recognised at an early stage. If you have recently been bitten by a tick and develop a rash, you should get checked out by your doctor.

Prevention is better than cure and there are simple measures walkers and climbers can take to reduce the risk of infection. These include:

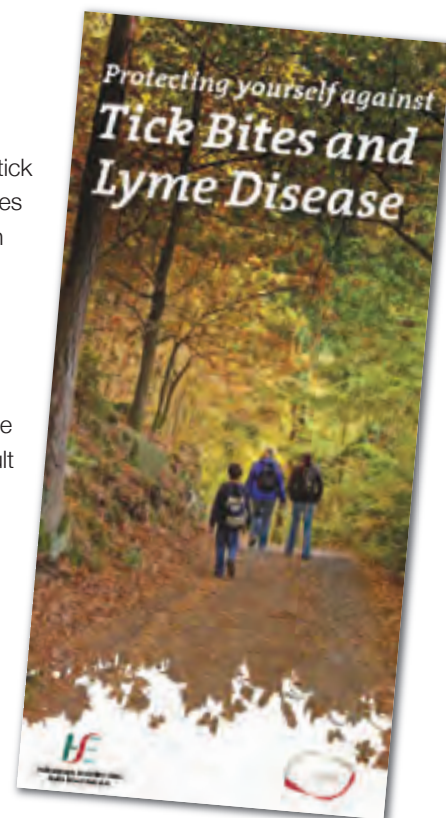
- Wear long trousers, tucked into your socks or boots, and long-sleeved shirts, when walking in grassy, bushy or wooded areas.
- Apply a DEET-containing tick repellent to any exposed areas of your skin and spray it onto your outer clothing before any activities in the countryside.
- Inspect the skin and clothing for ticks after walking in grassy, bushy or wooded areas.
- Remove a tick as soon as possible after being bitten by grasping it as close to the skin as possible.



- If the area where the tick was attached becomes inflamed, consult with your doctor.

In conclusion, the best advice is that, if you are bitten by a tick and develop a rash or become unwell, you should consult with your doctor and let him/her know that you have been bitten by a tick.

For more information, there is a leaflet that can be downloaded from the Health Protection Surveillance Centre's website, www.hpsc.ie/A-Z/LymeDisease/, or through Mountaineering Ireland's website, www.mountaineering.ie.



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The latest news from Helen Lawless, Hillwalking, Access & Conservation Officer

Organised events in the mountains

Updating Mountaineering Ireland's policy



Helen Lawless

Mountaineering Ireland has a responsibility to promote the conservation and responsible use of the mountain environment. To provide a better basis for engaging with event organisers and to set a clear standard for best practice in the organisation of events in the mountains, Mountaineering Ireland is reviewing its current environmental policy on such events.

A concern about our current policy is that it does not clearly emphasise the importance of choosing more robust routes for events involving large numbers. Consultation with landowners and planning well in advance should also be included.

In recent years, there has been a marked increase in the number of walking festivals, fundraising and challenge events taking place in the mountains. Some of these events are organised by Mountaineering Ireland member clubs; many are not. Some are organised with great care for Ireland's mountains and consideration towards local residents; unfortunately, some are not. **Helen Lawless reports**

There may also be a need for Mountaineering Ireland to provide guidance on how to assess the environmental impact of an event.

We would encourage all members, particularly affiliated clubs, to discuss Mountaineering Ireland's current policy and put forward their views as to how it should be updated. In considering this matter, please think about how we can continue to enjoy the Irish mountains sustainably – in a way that causes least damage and will allow future generations to have experiences similar to ours.

Members are asked to submit their comments and suggestions on this policy,

by post to the Mountaineering Ireland office or by email to events@mountaineering.ie, by Monday 13th June 2011. Based on the responses received, Mountaineering Ireland will draft a revised policy for consultation with members. This will be published on www.mountaineering.ie in August.

During the autumn, Mountaineering Ireland will host a series of regional meetings to enable all members to respond to the draft policy, propose amendments and make recommendations as to how Mountaineering Ireland should implement the updated policy. Dates and locations for these meetings will be published on www.mountaineering.ie in August and in the next issue of the *Irish Mountain Log*.

Pending this review of current policy, Mountaineering Ireland will only publicise events in the mountains that are organised by our member clubs and managed in accordance with Mountaineering Ireland's current Environmental Policy and the Leave No Trace principles.

If you have any queries regarding this policy review, please contact the Mountaineering Ireland office or email events@mountaineering.ie. It is important that Mountaineering Ireland's policy is informed by a wide range of members; we urge all affiliated club to discuss this matter and we look forward to your input.

Policy on organised events in the mountains

(Last updated 2005)

Mountaineering Ireland recognises the social, community and financial value and increasing popularity of organised walks, walking festivals, charity walks and challenge events in the mountains. It believes the current level of such activities is environmentally unsustainable and recommends that 'best practice' principles are adopted by event organisers. Where Mountaineering Ireland members or affiliated clubs organise such events or are requested to assist in a local or charitable event, they should:

- Examine the environmental impact,



Mountaineering Ireland National Trails Day Walk, Glendalough.
Photo: Helen Lawless.

particularly erosion, of any route proposed.

- Take into account the level of use of the area (an area that has little activity throughout the year will recover better from the impact of one large event than an area that is subject to heavy use on a regular basis).
- Where proposed routes traverse protected areas (SAC, NHA, etc) or National Parks, consult with National Parks & Wildlife Service or the appropriate management body.
- Take measures to limit the number of participants in the event (e.g. by using pre-booking).
- Consider alternative event formats with reduced impact on vulnerable terrain.
- vary the route, e.g. arrange a number of different walks in the area; change the route from year to year.
- Consider scheduling the event for later in the year to avoid damage during the peak growth season.
- Use the event to increase awareness of environmental issues in the uplands.
- Promote Mountaineering Ireland's Good Practice Guide for Walkers & Climbers to all participants.
- Ensure all litter and markers are removed after the event.
- After the event, examine the damage caused by the event and seek solutions to minimise this, if future events are planned.
- Aside from environmental concerns, carefully consider all safety aspects involved in bringing participants to remote places. This is particularly important for events involving inexperienced walkers or where there is a time pressure on participants.

This is one of a number of Mountaineering Ireland Environmental Policy papers. The full policy is available on www.mountaineering.ie/accessandconservation/viewdetails.asp.



MOUNT KENYA SOLIO CHALLENGE

October 1st – October 10th 2011

Join **MOVING MOUNTAINS** this October
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This inspiring and rewarding trip combines a magnificent adventure trek to the summit of Mount Kenya (Point Lenana, 4985m) with first-hand experience of development work with Moving Mountains, an NGO with more than fifteen years' experience in Kenya. Our ten-day trip will leave you with amazing memories of a wonderful country, its landscapes and people and direct experience of working with disadvantaged communities in Kenya.

Find out more at: www.movingmountainstrust.com/challenge

**ADVENTURE
ALTERNATIVE**



Glendalough valley from Derrybawn.
Photo: Ilona O'Duffy.



Glendalough plan

Tourism and land-use

Mo UNTAINEERING IREI AND has welcomed the preparation by Wicklow County Council of a tourism and land use plan for the L aragh/Glendalough area.

L aragh/Glendalough is an iconic destination for walkers and climbers, and for domestic and international tourists. As an area with a rich ecclesiastical heritage, set in a magnificent natural environment, it is vital that the future growth of the area is managed in a way that respects and protects the environment, and delivers benefits for the local residents. Improved traffic management and investment in trail infrastructure are both essential if L aragh/Glendalough is to deliver on its potential.

In February 2011, Mountaineering Ireland made a detailed submission to the initial public consultation phase, providing many practical suggestions for sustainable management of this important area.

It is expected that the draft plan will be published on the council website, www.wicklow.ie, during April. Members who are interested in contributing to Mountaineering Ireland's response to the next stage in this process should contact helen@mountaineering.ie or the Mountaineering Ireland office.

Upper Lake, Glendalough.
Photo: Helen Lawless.



Zig-Zags Agreed Access Route,
Glenmalure, Co Wicklow.
Photo: Helen Lawless.

Problems with dogs

Avoid taking dogs on the hills

HELEN LAWLESS

ALTHOUGH THE vast majority of Mountaineering Ireland clubs don't allow dogs on club outings, there has been a notable increase in the number of individual walkers and small groups taking dogs into the hills. With most of our uplands used for sheep grazing and in some cases cattle being present, this can cause problems.

Dogs can chase sheep, sometimes causing injury to the fleeing animals. When chased, sheep will run into areas where they would not otherwise go, sometimes becoming caught in briars or getting separated from the flock. The presence of a dog on the hill is likely to cause anxiety within a flock of sheep. Around cattle, dogs can pose a risk to their owners as cattle tend to chase dogs. In Britain, dog owners have been killed and injured by stampeding cattle. Even well-controlled dogs can be an issue, as their presence in an area is a signal to less responsible dog owners that it's okay to have a dog there.

Within the last six months, Mountaineering Ireland has received a clear message in upland areas right across the country that dogs are not welcome on the hills. This issue came to a head during February in the western part of the Cooley Mountains, where Mountaineering Ireland chaired a meeting between farmers, representatives from local walking clubs, cyclists and the NPWS

Ranger for Co Louth. The farmers expressed their frustration with the disturbance to sheep caused by dogs, motor-bikes and quad-bikes. Despite signs asking for dogs to be kept on a lead, dogs are regularly seen off the lead there. The walking clubs that attended the meeting, from counties Louth, Down, Monaghan, Meath and Armagh, supported the farmers' request for dogs and motorised bikes not to be taken onto the hills at any time.

Mountaineering Ireland has since issued an appeal to walkers not to take dogs onto the hills, at any time of year and in any part of the country, other than where you have the landowner's permission to do so. Members should also consider passing this message on to people they meet with dogs on the hills. While the response may not always be positive, hopefully those people will think twice before taking their dog onto the hill again.

Green Tip

Smart parking

Many of the mountain areas we visit are remote and don't have car parks. By car-pooling we can reduce emissions and relieve the pressure for parking space. Park carefully, so as to avoid wasting space between cars or blocking gateways. Remember that farmers work at weekends and that farm machinery and the emergency services may need a wide space to turn into a laneway or field.

Consider hiring a mini-bus or small coach. It will probably be cheaper, it's more sociable and it will open up opportunities for linear walks. Try it for one walk and see how it goes!

Lough Easky Loop, Co Sligo.
Photo: Deirdre Kennedy.





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Scholar and explorer

Con O'Leary

Co N o 'I EARY, a committed mountaineer who spent most of his life exploring Ireland's uplands and other mountainous areas in Europe and beyond, died peacefully in Cork in June 2010 at the age of 84 years.

While teaching in Dublin in the early 1950s, Con was a member of Na Fánaíthe, an active hillwalking club which explored the Wicklow hills using the An Óige hostels as bases. When Na Fánaíthe members visited Kerry and the Reeks, Con already knew the mountains there very well and even referred to JC Coleman as Jack!

Subsequently, Con o 'I eary was a member of the Cork Mountaineering Club (CMC), which he joined at its inception in 1975.

He brought with him a lifetime of mountaineering experience, having, for example, climbed the Matterhorn with a guide in the late 1960s and having otherwise climbed extensively in the French and Swiss Alps, in the Pyrenees, in Crete and in Morocco's Atlas Mountains. His great knowledge of Greek and Roman history and of philosophy led him to travel widely in Italy and Greece, and he once spent a total of eight weeks in Turkey. In fact, I wonder if Con first ventured into the mountains because he thought it was his duty as a scholar to explore the world?

He served on the first CMC committee in 1976-'77 and was CMC's Chairperson from 1978-1980. In his real-life capacity as a lecturer in mathematics at UCC, Con added a valuable dimension to UCC's regular mountaineering slide-shows and talks by providing hospitality for the many well-known climbers who graced these occasions. This hospitality was eagerly sought-after to gain access to Con's wonderful personal collection of mountaineering literature.

Con was essentially an explorer. He taught himself mountain skills in order to be able to venture far and see more. The fact that Con learned these skills at a time when mountaineering was a minority activity, indulged in only by a few eccentrics, makes his achievements all the greater. He was also an accomplished skier, displaying again the fine balance and poise which turned his rockclimbing into poetry in motion. He continued to ski regularly until he was well into his seventies.

While Con frequently expressed the desire to remain in his "mountaineering comfort zone," his modesty tended to hide the fact that this zone was impressively extensive. He was, in fact, a gifted mountaineer, at home both in Irish hills and in the Alps, on rock, on snow and on steep ground. He completed all the major walks and peaks in Ireland, Wales, Scotland and the Lake District. His navigation skills were sure, if not very precise. If you asked for a



Con O'Leary in the Reeks with friends.
Photo: Helen O'Brien.

bearing, you were likely to be told NNE but the only occasions that he was ever lost were when he ended up following someone else who "needed the navigation practice."

He enjoyed meeting people and was a willing mentor to new club members throughout the years, whether encouraging people to participate in the Reeks Walk, to try a day's rockclimbing at the old Head of Kinsale, to spend a summer's evening rockclimbing at the Quarry in UCC, or to plan mountaineering trips abroad. Con (with some friends) pioneered rockclimbing at the old Head of Kinsale in the early 1960s and later compiled the rockclimbing guide to the area.

Con was always good fun to be with. In recent years he loved to spend time with members of CMC in Kerry and to join CMC social occasions, where we will miss his fine rendition of "Sliabh na mBan" as *Gaeilge*.

Farewell, Con. May you have found more mountains to explore and discovered even greater wonders to see.
Ní bheidh do leithéid arís ann.



Photo by
Heather Johnston

Máire Ní Mhurchú
Cork Mountaineering Club

Con O'Leary, born February 22nd, 1926; died June 21st, 2010

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