

Irish Mountain Log

Issue 101 ■ Spring 2012 ■ €3.95 UK£3.40 ■ ISSN 0790 8008

The magazine for hillwalkers and climbers

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Book now for Val di Masino

SPRING MEET

Clonmel AGM weekend
a great success

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for new guide

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ISSUE 101

The Irish Mountain Log is the membership magazine of Mountaineering Ireland. The organisation promotes the interests of hillwalkers and climbers in Ireland.

Mountaineering Ireland

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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 Oiliúnt Sléibhe (BOS, The Irish Mountain Training Board) administers a range of training programmes for walkers and climbers.



Welcome

This is the 101st issue of the *Irish Mountain Log* and to mark this milestone we have, as you can see, redesigned the magazine, freshening its style and

appearance. We hope you will find the new format attractive. As always, we welcome comments and contributions to keep the editorial team in touch with reality. This is your magazine and we very much depend on your contributions for its content.

In this issue, we have reports from various meets that took place during the first quarter of the year and they reflect how active our members have been.

We have, for instance, a report from the very successful **Spring Gathering** in Clonmel, organised in March by the Peaks Mountaineering Club. As well as the wide range of activities members engaged in during that excellent weekend, Mountaineering Ireland also held its Annual General Meeting.

The report from the Gathering includes the Mountaineering Ireland accounts for 2011 which, although described as 'unexciting' by treasurer David Batt, reflect how the national governing body has managed to hold its own financially in a very difficult environment.

The members' fora at our meets are always interesting, allowing current concerns to be raised. One of the issues highlighted at the forum in Clonmel was

“

During our recent Annual General Meeting, many members voiced their concern about the possible sale of Coillte.”

our members' concerns about the possible impact of the proposed sale of Coillte on their access to the Irish uplands. However it is implemented, any sale of Coillte's estate or the trees on it is likely to affect negatively our access to the uplands.

Many others engaged in recreational pursuits are also dependent on access to Coillte's forests for their activities, so any sale would affect the recreational opportunities of a large number of people, not just hillwalkers and climbers. It will be important for us all to work together to fight this threat to our activities.

Patrick O'Sullivan

Patrick O'Sullivan, Editor



Write for the Log

Contributions and photographs for the *Irish Mountain Log* are always welcome and should be sent to the Editor at:
iml-editor@mountaineering.ie

Contributors' guidelines can be downloaded from the Mountaineering Ireland website, www.mountaineering.ie

To join Mountaineering Ireland and receive four issues of the *Irish Mountain Log* delivered to your door each year, please also go to the website, www.mountaineering.ie



ON THE COVER

Climbers on the Aiguille du Tour, Mont Blanc massif, on the French-Swiss border.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
ALUN RICHARDSON

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SPRING GATHERING
Clonmel meet a great success



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Uplands falcon

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HOWLING GREAT TIME
Carrauntoohil's Howling Ridge



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GETTING TO GRIPS WITH KLETTERSTEIGE
The 'via ferrata' of Germany



FAIR HEAD MEET

1-3 JUNE 2012

For the third successive year, Mountaineering Ireland will be hosting a climbing meet at Fair Head. Last year's event was a massive success, with over 150 climbers showing up over the weekend. This year's meet will be over the weekend of 1st-3rd June.

For those of you that haven't visited Fair Head, Co Antrim, yet, it is a Mecca for trad climbing. Tucked away on the north coast of Northern Ireland, it boasts many three-star routes ranging from VS to E8. Many of the routes follow crack lines, giving well-protected and strenuous climbing, but the crag also has its fair share of technical walls and steep, pumpy roofs. The pure size and scale of Fair Head will leave long-lasting memories and it is a must-visit destination for all climbers operating at these grades.

This year's Saturday night entertainment spot will be filled by Scottish hotshot Greg Boswell. He will give a slideshow and lecture in the now regular setting of Farmer Sean's barn. The slideshow will start when everyone is off the crag on the Saturday evening, at around 11 o'clock. Camping will be £5 per person per night.

► For further information, check out www.mountaineering.ie or contact **Paul Swail** on paul.swail@mountaineering.ie



Above: Stephen McGowan on a recent addition to the crag, the 58m Icarus Gun (E3, 6a).

Right: Sean Villaneuva O'Driscoll pulling hard on the first ascent of Once You Go Black You Never Go Back (E7).




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View of River Suir, Clonmel, from Hotel Minella.



Spring Gathering 2012

Special report by Karl Boyle, CEO, Mountaineering Ireland.

Peaks Mountaineering Club hosted a fantastic Mountaineering Ireland Spring Gathering in Hotel Minella in Clonmel, Co Tipperary, over the weekend of March 9-11, 2012.

The extensive programme commenced on Friday evening with Declan Cunningham and Rowan Kavanagh recounting their experiences on a recent expedition to Greenland and the challenges they encountered.

Saturday saw participants at the Gathering taking to the Comeraghs in balmy summer conditions. A variety of activities were organised including hillwalks of various grades, climbing on Coumshingaun and in Ballykeefe Quarry, workshops on GPS and Leadership, and a workshop for Club Environmental Officers.

Annual General Meeting

After the day's activities the Annual General Meeting of Mountaineering Ireland was held, at which a new Board of Directors was elected for a two-year term:

President: Ursula MacPherson
Hon Secretary: Sandra Kennedy

Hon Treasurer: David Batt
Board Members:

Paul Barron

Bridget Conway

Susan Jago

Ronan Lenihan

Stephen McMullan

Ross Millar

Patrick O'Sullivan



MAUREEN MAHER (Peaks Mountaineering Club)

Above Coumshingaun.

Events Policy

A new **Events Policy** was adopted following a very robust debate where, despite all being in favour of the policy, some members suggested some of the wording in the accompanying guidelines was too directive. A number of members spoke on the importance of the policy and the need for Mountaineering Ireland to now influence other organisations and funding bodies to adopt or formulate similar policies.

A **Members' Forum** followed. The topics discussed included the future of Coillte, memorials on the Irish Mountains, the state of the path on Camarahill, Co Wicklow, rubbish on the summit of Mount Leinster, and dealing with quad bikes on the Blackstairs Mountains.

The future of Coillte

The debate on the future of

Coillte was unanimously against any sale of the State's forests and particularly against any other form of sale which would endanger open access.

Members spoke on the need to educate our elected representatives on the huge importance of Coillte to the hundreds of thousands of outdoor recreation enthusiasts, in particular with respect to the access it

provides through informal routes, in virtually all of its estate, to Ireland's uplands. Members called for Mountaineering Ireland to forge alliances with other adventure sports on this issue and agree a single clear message demanding no change to the open access to this estate.

It was agreed that it was very important that members and clubs all around the

country keep themselves informed about any developments in the sale of Coillte or its estate and, as it becomes clearer what is happening, raise their concerns about the effects of loss of access to that estate with their local elected representatives.

Hillside memorials

An emotional debate followed on the presence of memorials on the mountains. Members spoke of the importance of some memorials, but agreed that many were wrongly placed. In summary, it was agreed that Mountaineering Ireland should draft a policy against the future placement of any memorials on Ireland's mountains.

Camarahill path

All agreed that the path on Camarahill, along one route to the Lug, had eroded significantly in recent times. Some suggested that this highlighted the importance of the new Events Policy, as this is a favoured route for many large-scale events.

Quad bikes

The issue of quad bikes is a very serious problem in the Blackstairs and on many

MAUREEN MAHER (Peaks Mountaineering Club)



Spring Gathering group on hillwalk led by Tom Dalton takes a break overlooking Crotty's Lake, Comeraghs.

MAUREEN MAHER (Peaks Mountaineering Club)



Sgilloge reflections. Tom Dalton's group heads for Nire Valley car park via the Sgilloge Lakes.



John Harding with Cnoc an Aifrinn to rear.

other mountains. It was reflected that currently the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) is inadequately resourced to deal with this. However, any illegal offroad vehicle activity should be reported to the local Garda stations who have a responsibility to deal with such reports.

Glenmacnass bridge

Under any other business, it was proposed that the bridge at Glenmacnass should be reinstated. A member of a mountain rescue team suggested that facilitating access in this type of scenario could simply add to the work of rescue teams by tempting people who might not have the skills to deal with certain terrain or be prepared for difficult conditions. It was agreed that there should be an analysis of its appropriateness, which should be followed by discussions with the landowner and a consideration of its positioning, should it be found to be appropriate.

Historical journal

Volume 3 of the *Journal of the Irish Mountaineering and Exploration Historical*

Society was launched on the Saturday night. Declan O'Keeffe, the journal's editor, introduced the volume, saying it was dedicated to Joss Lynam, editor of the previous two volumes. He also commended Gay Needham for the sterling work she had done in designing the layout, and Kevin Higgins, the current chair of the society, for his guidance. The journal is available from Mountaineering Ireland for €10. The launch was followed by an excellent dinner and a late, late night, for some at least!

Sunday sessions

The Sunday morning sessions included a discussion about training in clubs, and another about the new **Mountain Forums** in the Comeragh Mountains and in the Knockmealdown and Galtee Mountains.

These were followed by a presentation by Mountain Meitheal which sowed the seeds for the establishment of a **Munster Meitheal**. The first activity of the Munster Meitheal actually took place as part of Limerick Climbing Club's planned Galtee Mountain

Clean-up later in March.

Peter Britton of Rathgormack Climbing Club also gave an inspiring presentation on climbing in the Comeraghs and various other parts of the world, including some big wall climbing they are doing in Spain.

Overall, it was a wonderful weekend Gathering!

Acknowledgments

Mountaineering Ireland would like to thank all members who attended the Gathering for their contributions to the success of the weekend.

In particular, we would sincerely like to thank the Peaks Mountaineering Club for organising the Gathering, especially Chair, Michael Tobin; Meets Secretary, Niamh Barrett; and Club Secretary, Helen Shanahan, the driving force behind the event.

We would also like to thank all the others who helped organise and support the Gathering, including our guest speakers and the walk leaders.

Finally, our special thanks to the staff of **Hotel Minella** who looked after us all so well over the weekend ■

The organiser's weekend

The Spring Gathering in Clonmel was a great success. The Peaks Mountaineering Club rose to the occasion in the range of events that we laid on for our visitors, which included six walks and an organised rock climbing event. Mother Nature also smiled on us, turning her gentler side for the weekend.

On Friday night, we had a lecture on the IMC East Greenland Expedition 2011, and you could easily imagine yourself there, as the lecture was so interactive.

Hotel Minella served up excellent fare and the first night was rounded off with music and craic.

On Saturday morning, the Peaks' organised walks were off bright and early, with the participants being bused to the various start points. Given the weather and the company, walking in the Comeraghs was pleasure itself and, with walks varying from easy to hard, there was something for everyone.

Workshops are included in the organised events at a Mountaineering Ireland meet, and the choice was extensive. Peter Britton was on top form when he presented his experiences of rock climbing in the Comeraghs and on various mountains in Europe. The coums which we visit on our walks will be looked at with new interest next time, and images of Peter and his colleagues hanging by their fingernails on sheer rock will be remembered. Organising the Spring Gathering really made us realise how lucky the Peaks Mountaineering Club is to be based in this super range of climbable mountains.

The Gathering finally closed at lunchtime on Sunday after a very full weekend of climbing, learning and renewing of knowledge and friendships.

Helen Shanahan,
Club Secretary,
Peaks Mountaineering Club



Hotel Minella.

Workshop in progress at the Gathering.



Participants set out for hillwalk in the Comeraghs.



Financial Report 2011

The best way to describe the accounts for the financial year 2011 is as 'unexciting.' The organisation produced a small surplus and kept itself tightly in line with its budgets. The reduction in the Core Grant from the Irish Sports Council (ISC) is an ongoing concern and, whilst we fully acknowledge that the ISC has prioritised its support for participation sports, the current economic climate and 'fiscal corrections' in the Government budgets for the next couple of years mean that we do need to budget on this decreasing further in the coming years.

On the positive side, we have had an increase in membership and this does contribute valuable additional funds to the organisation.

2011 was the first year in which Mountaineering Ireland employed a full complement of staff for the entire year and, whilst this is reflected in higher costs (over 2010) in the accounts, we hope that the members are seeing the benefits as we further develop the programmes and projects outlined in the strategic plan.

The eagle-eyed amongst you will spot that some of the headings in the financial summary page have changed. We have changed them to be in line with our updated management accounts and the budgeting process, so as to avoid any confusion.

I would like to thank **Karl Boyle**, our Chief Executive Officer; and, more importantly, **Terry Canavan**, our Accounts Administrator, for their dedication and commitment to ensuring the smooth financial running of Mountaineering Ireland.

David Batt,
Honorary Treasurer

Mountaineering Ireland

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

Detailed Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 December 2011

Income	2011	2010
	€	€
Membership subscriptions	274,227	265,393
The Irish Mountain Log	55,925	67,093
Member meets and gatherings	40,023	21,726
Training	46,179	32,427
Northern Ireland Youth Development Programme	39,187	31,581
Publications	12,542	25,790
Lectures & Library	422	1,095
Talent development	13,175	12,405
Other income	7,738	7,548
Irish Sports Council grants	206,152	217,920
Sport Northern Ireland	76,086	85,433
Irish Sports Council Grant: Women in Sport	15,000	19,000
Environmental Defence Fund	1,981	2,130
Bank interest receivable	12,091	4,068
	800,728	793,609
Expenditure		
	€	€
Wages and salaries	253,615	193,310
Rent payable	19,188	18,525
Insurance	95,543	87,667
Marketing and guidebook production	2,640	11,197
Legal and professional	-	290
Audit	4,448	4,373
Bank charges	3,583	5,366
Bad debts	1,806	11,082
Administration expenses	25,754	21,142
Hillwalking, Access and Conservation	14,603	2,573
Member meets and gatherings	38,846	23,444
Board expenses	8,315	7,085
Training	40,993	47,830
Chief Officer	6,074	5,097
Expedition grants	3,625	3,500
Membership costs	5,358	7,067
The Irish Mountain Log	61,833	61,370
Northern Ireland Youth Development Programme	109,746	119,046
SDP enactment	13,635	1,336
Talent development	26,552	26,577
Lectures & library	6,132	3,179
Union Internationale des Associations d'Alpinisme (UIAA)	3,705	3,153
Women in Sport	22,546	11,996
Mountain Rescue Northern Ireland	306	14,207
Subscriptions	1,851	5,153
Depreciation	1,595	3,652
	772,292	699,217
Net surplus	28,436	94,392



Climbing Year 2011 in review

To describe 2011 as a *fantastic* year for climbing in Ireland would be an understatement. Following the sad passing of Joss Lynam, a gentleman and one of the sport's pioneers in Ireland, it was only apt that across all disciplines – traditional, bouldering, sport and alpine – significant milestones were passed. The great achievements of the last year only make me wonder what 2012 will bring!

The following list of achievements came about after an online post on my blog gave Stephen McMullan the inspiration to compile a list of the significant events of the past year. I'm sure there are things that have been missed, so apologies to anyone we didn't credit! Suffice it to say that

anyone who is out there and achieving things is an inspiration to the climbing scene. The one thing I have noticed is that it's tricky to find good photos of people engaged in their activities. Perhaps this is something to consider for the coming year?

JANUARY

■ The very sad passing of **Joss Lynam**, the grand old man of Irish climbing. He was one of "us" to the end.



Joss Lynam

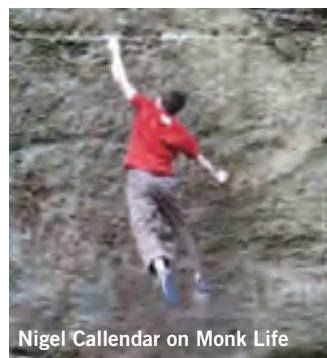
FEBRUARY

■ **Caroline Harney** (*below*) limbs the 8a sports route Destroyer in Spain.

■ **UCD** wins Intervarsity climbing competition.

■ **Nigel Callendar** (*right*) climbs the 8b+ boulder Monk Life at Kyloe in Northumberland.

■ **Dave Flanagan** publishes a fantastic new guide, *Bouldering in Ireland*.



Nigel Callendar on Monk Life

MARCH

■ **Dave Ayton** (*far right*), sport climbing like a mad thing, climbs more grade 8s than you can shake a sticky branch at!

■ **Jonny Argue** climbs an 8a boulder problem, John 3 16, in the Cooley Mountains.

APRIL

■ **Michael Duffy** puts up a new problem in Glendalough called People of the Sun at 8a+.

■ **Nigel Callendar** (*above*) repeats Working Class Font, 8a+, at Bowden Doors, Northumberland.

■ **Sean Villanueva O'Driscoll** and team win the Piolet D'Or for vertical-sailing up the big walls of Greenland.

■ Winners at the Irish Bouldering Championships are **Jonny Argue**, **Katie Maxwell**, **Dominic Burns** and **Vanessa Woods**.

■ **Andy Marshall** repeats An Bealach Eile, E8 6c, at Fair Head.

■ **Richard Creagh** produces a second edition of the *Gap of Dunloe Rock Climbing Guide*.

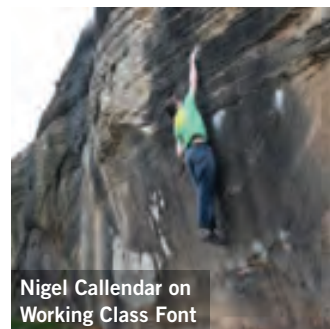
■ **Ricky Bell** and **Craig Hiller** put up new routes at Ben Crom, Mourne: Pigeon Walk, E5; The Big Bird Shuffle, E4; Golden Wonder, E2; The Great Bequeather, E5; and Octobaby, E3.



Caroline Harney on Destroyer, 8a, Alicante, Spain



Sean Villanueva O'Driscoll and team receive the Piolet D'Or in Chamonix



Nigel Callendar on Working Class Font

NAOMI HART



Ricky Bell climbs the Rathlin Effect at Fair Head

➔ MAY ■■■■■■

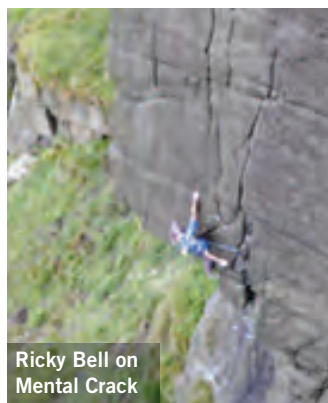
- **Nigel Callendar** boulders Sabotage, 8a, at Dumbarton Rock, Scotland.
- **John Howard** makes the third ascent of Leviathan, 8a, boulder problem at Portrane, Co Dublin.
- **Anselm Murphy** (*below*) makes the first Irish ascent of Kanchenjunga, 8586m.
- **Ricky Bell** (*top*) climbs The Rathlin Effect, E8 6c, at Fair Head.



Anselm Murphy below Kanchenjunga

➔ JUNE ■■■■■■

- **Jane Gallwey** big-wall solos The Prow, Yosemite.
- **Ricky Bell** climbs The Lost Forgotten, E7 6c, at Eagle Mountain in the Mournes.
- **Jonathan Redmond** repeats Lush, E7 6c, in Dalkey Quarry, Co Dublin.



Ricky Bell on Mental Crack

CRAIG HILLER



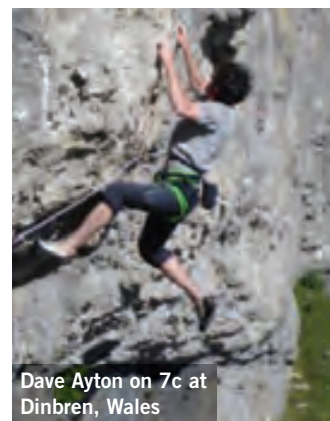
Caroline Harney at Sector Wild Side, Spain

➔ JULY ■■■■■■

- **Colm Shannon** repeats the deepwater solo, Power Of The Hobo, E7 6c, at Ailladie, Co Clare.
- **Nigel Callendar** finishes 14th at the bouldering World Cup in Sheffield.
- **Paul Swail** climbs Into The Dread, E7 6b/c, and **Ricky Bell** climbs Mental Crack, E7 6b/c, on Buzzard's Roost, in the Mournes.

➔ AUGUST ■■■■■■

- **Cork Youth Climbing Club** is formed.
- **Ronan Browner** climbs The Great Roof, E6 6c, on Luggala, Co Wicklow.



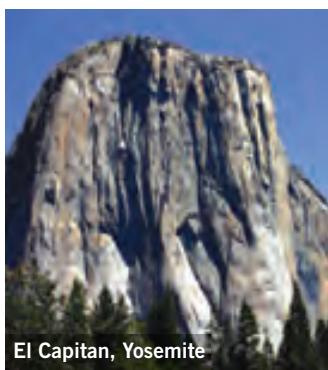
Dave Ayton on 7c at Dinbren, Wales

➔ DECEMBER ■■■■■■

- **James Gernon** and **Rhys McAllister** climb the Bonington-Whillans route on the Central Tower of Paine, in Patagonia.
- Lease signed on venue for **Cork Bouldering Co-op** (opened February 2012).
- **Dominic Burns** wins the British Open Youth Climbing Competition. **Lucy Mitchell** comes second.

➔ SEPTEMBER ■■■■■■

- Inaugural climbing meets are held in the **Comeraghs** and **Ballykeefe Quarry**.
- **Dominic Burns** finishes 6th in the European Cup in Munich and is ranked 14th in the world.
- **Jane Gallwey** (*below right*) big-wall solos Lurking Fear on El Capitan in Yosemite.



El Capitan, Yosemite

➔ OCTOBER ■■■■■■

- **Ricky Bell** climbs Krecik, E6 6c, on Spellack in the Mournes.
- **John Orr** and **John McCune** climb the Croz Spur on the Grandes Jorasses in Chamonix. They also climb the NE Spur Direct on Les Droites, and the Swiss Route on Les Courtes, in Chamonix, and the Brandler-Hasse Route on Cima Grande di Lavaredo in the Dolomites, during the course of the summer.
- Great performances by Irish climbers at the British Lead Climbing Championships:
 - Female Jnr:** Lucy Mitchell 1st
 - Male Yth A:** Andrew Colligan 3rd
 - Male Yth B:** Dominic Burns 2nd
 - Male Jnr Speed:** Dominic Burns 2nd
 - Male Veterans:** Eddie Cooper 1st
- *Bouldering in Ireland* is shortlisted for Banff Mountain Book Award 2011.

➔ NOVEMBER ■■■■■■

- **Gravity Climbing Centre** opens in Dublin.
- 2011 Irish Lead Climbing Champions are **Dominic Burns**, **Maggie Chojan** and **Niamh Hebblethwaite**.

Jane Gallwey on big-wall solo in Yosemite



Jim O'Brien of the Hillwalking Radio Group with Tipperary Red Cross officers.



COMMUNICATIONS

Radio as a safety tool

Hillwalking Radio Group established in Tipperary.

The annual get-together of the recently established Hillwalking Radio Group took place at the Hermitage House bar and restaurant in Clogheen, Co Tipperary, on November 28th last.

The group, which is only active in the Galtees and the Knockmealdowns at present, is a voluntary organisation set up to promote the use of radio as a safety tool when hillwalking or orienteering.

The radio group was very active last year, promoting the use of the pan-European, licence-free radios as a safety measure for hillwalkers in the mountains.

Denis O'Dwyer, spokesperson for the group, said: "If you go hillwalking, your phone may not always work due to lack of coverage or interference from the surrounding hills. Weather conditions can change rapidly

on the mountain and, if you get separated or into difficulty, you can use a radio, rather than a phone, to contact your group, or you may be able to contact a volunteer base station.

"People should carry a PMR 446 walkie-talkie and tune it to channel 8, the national hillwalking channel. The radios are licence-free, cheap and easy to use, and can be purchased at Maplins, Argos or any good electronic store."

The Hillwalking Radio Group got a big boost last year when they were able to assist the



Galtee Walking Club to coordinate their winter and summer Hillwalking Festivals, and the Galtee Crossing. The radio group established base stations for the events and maintained constant contact with the walkers at all times. Other local groups have purchased radios for trips such as to Carrauntoohil.

The group has also provided radios for other events such as the Clonmel HeartSafe Programme demonstrations, when it was great to have the fire brigade, ambulance service and Red Cross all working on the same frequency. The small, low-powered walkie-talkies are ideal for on-site communications. **Jim O'Brien**

INFORMATION

- Contact Jim O'Brien, Ballyporeen, 087-249 0089
- Contact Denis O'Dwyer, Ballylanders, 087-669 2241
- Google 'Hillwalking Radio'
- Find the group on Twitter: twitter.com/#!/hillwalkingch8
- Find the group on Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Hillwalking-Radio/150832964969075?ref=ts

NEWS IN BRIEF



NATIONAL SPRING CLEAN 1-30 APRIL 2012

An Taisce is promoting this year's National Spring Clean in April with the slogan "Working Together, For Our Community!"

This is the 14th year of the National Spring Clean. Mountaineering Ireland clubs may already have activities planned for the National Spring Clean, but if you haven't, you can still register at the website nationalspringclean.org or by calling 01 400 22 20. If you register, you receive a free Clean-Up Kit.



EL HIERRO RE-OPENS FOR BUSINESS

The island of El Hierro in the Canaries, which is popular with Irish hillwalkers, has experienced volcanic eruptions for several months. One of our regular advertisers, Shane Gray, was evacuated from the island with a walking group last October. However, the island has now been declared open for business again and Shane is scheduling trips again. He continues to offer spring trips to the other "Hidden Canaries" – La Gomera and La Palma – as well as to Tenerife itself. (See advertisement, page 63.)

T BACHNER



Jamie Andrew on a Ben Nevis climb, 2002.

➔ PARTICIPATION

CHRIS HARLING (www.mountaininsense.co.uk)

Profile in courage

Disabled climber gains Mountain Leader Award.

Jamie Andrew, a Scotland-based mountaineer who had to have all his hands and feet amputated, recently gained his Mountain Leader Award (ML).

Jamie has continued to climb extensively since suffering horrific injuries when he was trapped by severe weather while climbing in the Alps. He was trapped for several days after completing the North Face of Les Droites, in Chamonix, in the winter of 1999, and subsequently lost both of his hands and his feet due to frostbite.

Jamie has had to relearn many of the basic skills to be able to get back into the hills safely. He now does this on a regular basis and last year he was successful in gaining his Mountain Leader Award. This is something that many mountaineers do but there can be few that would have had to adapt so much.

Gaining the award not only requires the personal mountaineering skills to look after yourself but also the skills, judgment and techniques to look after others in the hills as well.

After gaining the award, Jamie said:

"It's always been my belief that the mountains are for everyone. It's been a big challenge for me to attain my ML, on a level footing with able-bodied candidates, but, by gaining it, I hope not only to share my love of the outdoors with others but also to show that anyone can benefit from the outdoors and that mostly the challenges we face are just challenges of the mind."

The Mountain Leader Training new edition of Rock Climbing contains a chapter dealing specifically with people with disabilities. **Patrick O'Sullivan**



NEWS IN BRIEF



OPEN DAY HELD AT TROOPERSTOWN

The Glen of Imaal Red Cross Mountain Rescue Team held an Open Day at their new base in Trooperstown Wood on Sunday, March 25th. This was by way of thanks to all who had supported them in their many fundraising ventures these last few years as they struggled to realise their dream of a new purpose-built base. Members of the team were happy to be able to show supporters where all the money went and to give them an idea of how the base will be used. They also had the team's vehicles on show.



NORTHERN IRELAND YOUNG SPORTS PERSONALITY OF YEAR

Congratulations to Dominic Burns, winner of the Leading and Bouldering Championships (in both Junior and Senior categories) in the past six months. He has been named Northern Ireland Young Sports Personality of the Year for 2012 by Belfast City Council. The awards ceremony took place in Belfast City Hall in March.

Orange marks on Lugnaquilla.



UPLAND GRAFFITI

Don't spray it

Orange markers sprayed on Lugnaquilla.

On 25-26 February, Mountaineering Ireland became aware that semi-permanent orange spray paint had been used to mark routes through forestry and on the open mountain in the Glenmalur area of County Wicklow.

Mountaineering Ireland understands that the markers related to a proposed fundraising walk on Lugnaquilla. Mountaineering Ireland would like to thank the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Coillte, the Wicklow Way Partnership and the Gardaí who investigated and ensured that this matter was dealt with appropriately.

The marking of routes for an event with anything that cannot be removed immediately afterwards is unacceptable. Paint markers – which are effectively graffiti – change the character of the mountains, and for many people this detracts from their enjoyment of the outdoors.

Markers on the open mountain provide a false sense of security and can result in people, who may not be participating in the event, going beyond the range of their skills and experience.

Mountaineering Ireland has recently published a policy and guidelines document entitled "Organised Events in Ireland's Mountain Areas." This policy has been developed following wide consultation with members and in response to a big increase in the number of fundraisers, walking festivals and challenge events taking place in Ireland's upland areas.

While most events are very well organised, some have resulted in negative impacts such as damage to the natural environment or inconvenience for local residents. With good planning and a responsible attitude such negative impacts can be avoided. **Mountaineering Ireland**

Irish hill and mountain names

Their origin and meaning

Paul Tempan and Simon Stewart of the MountainViews website have kindly allowed Mountaineering Ireland to publish an updated version of a document on the origin and meaning of Irish hill and mountain names. The document, which can be downloaded from the link www.mountaineering.ie/accessandconservation/viewdetails.asp?ID=27, provides a rich source of information for hillwalkers; it will resolve many of those 'I wonder where that comes from?' questions. The compilation is based on the hill and mountain lists on the MountainViews website. The information is also published at <http://mountainviews.ie/resources/>.

► **Paul Tempan** would welcome comments from walkers who spot errors or who have information on their local hills, particularly minor hills which are unnamed on maps. Any feedback, please, to pdtempan@yahoo.co.uk.

Fix the maps

Help make good maps even better.

Barry Dalby from EastWest Mapping is seeking feedback from users of his series of detailed maps for the Dublin and Wicklow Mountains. It looks like EastWest will need to reprint two of the map sheets later this year, probably in the autumn:

(1) The Dublin & North Wicklow Mountains – it roughly covers from M50 to the Sally Gap.

(2) Lugnaquilla & Glendalough – it roughly covers from Wicklow Gap to Aughavannagh.

Between 2008-2011, Barry and his brother Clive travelled thousands of kilometres over the hills and through the forests, surveying the various features, but it's quite possible that they missed something and also that new tracks, roads and forest plantations have been created. It's common enough with forestry operations for old tracks to be upgraded or new roads made.

Many users of the EastWest maps have found the detail within forestry can be relied on as a guide in finding practical routes onto and off the hills. While Barry has been picking up changes and updates here and there over the past couple of years,



it's impossible to check everything.

Barry would greatly appreciate any feedback from the many other eyes and pairs of feet that might be using EastWest maps, with a view to improving the detail on same. An email, phone call or note in the post would be very useful, with brief details of the problem, perhaps marked on a scan or photocopy of the map. For those that use GPS and with technical capacity, waypoints and/or tracks in .gpx format, would be ideal. However, even a verbal pointer to the right place will enable EastWest to survey changes and update the map detail.

► **Barry Dalby** can be contacted at info@eastwestmapping.ie or Barry Dalby, EastWest Mapping, Clonegal, Enniscorthy, Co Wexford. Tel: 053 937 7835.



Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht Jimmy Deenihan TD (centre) launches the Strategic Plan in Kilkenny with the Heritage Council's chairman Conor Newman (left) and Michael Starrett (CEO).

HERITAGE PLAN

Mooted merger a threat to heritage body's ambitious plans

Heritage Council functions may be subsumed into Government department.

The Heritage Council has launched its Strategic Plan for 2012 to 2016. The plan has a focus on supporting employment, education and quality heritage tourism, but – most importantly – a commitment to continue its focus on working with a broad range of communities and networks to help them manage and conserve their natural and cultural heritage.

These communities include those working with local heritage officers, those which have derived benefits from its grants programmes and, of course, the numerous elements of heritage infrastructure which the Heritage Council supports around the country, from the Wicklow Uplands to the Burren, from Bere Island to Carlingford.

The Council is also supportive of the Irish Uplands Forum and the National Trails Office, and is a main funding partner in the Leave No Trace programme.

Community-based initiatives such as the Pilgrim Paths and the Beara Breifne Way were led by the Heritage Council, using an approach that has since spawned a wonderful network of local

looped walks around the country.

Launching its plan when the organisation itself is under critical review, with a view to its functions being subsumed by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, shows no lack of ambition.

Speaking to an audience of over 250 at the launch in Kilkenny on March 1st, Michael Starrett, the Heritage Council's CEO, said: "We are overwhelmed by this level of support. It sends out a strong message and we will feed off the collective energy it brings, to try to stick around and continue our work in support of you all. We may need your help to persuade others."

The Heritage Council considers that a merger into a government department would remove the very levers that have allowed it to develop a community-based approach to its work, namely an independence of thought and action, and flexible structures for implementation.

Currently, the Council is focused on communities and their heritage, and has no distraction from that purpose. It feels much of its work would be abandoned following any merger or, at the very least, accorded a very low priority.

Patrick O'Sullivan

NEWS IN BRIEF



GLENCAR CLEAN-UP

Sligo Mountaineering Club carried out a clean-up of the Glencar Waterfall area and Dooneen Trail on Sunday, March 11th. Thirty members, with permission from Leitrim County Council and Coillte, took part in the workday and successfully cleared the area of all unsightly litter.

"It's nice to be able to give something back to the areas we frequent," said Club Environmental Officer Joe Elliott, thanking the club members for their hard work. The club actively promotes the Leave No Trace message



'LEAVE NO TRACE' TRAINER COURSES

If you're interested in sharing the Leave No Trace message, consider attending one of the following LNT trainer courses at Tollymore Outdoor Centre, Co Down, this year:

■ 28th-29th April

■ 17th-18th November

The 16-hour-long trainer course (cost £110) is aimed at people with a basic knowledge of Leave No Trace and who are in a position to pass on the message and principles to others. It also provides an opportunity to learn more about Leave No Trace. To book a place on either of these courses, visit www.leavenotraceireland.org/training.

WALKING COUNTRY

WALKNI.COM

Must-do coastal walks

The dramatic cliffs of the Giant's Causeway Coast, stretching along the northern counties of Derry and Antrim, blend a unique mix of magnificent scenery with myth, legend and tangible heritage.

Sadly, visitors to this area of outstanding natural beauty rarely venture beyond the Giant's Causeway World Heritage Site itself. But there is a whole coastline of spectacular walking just waiting to be discovered!

With this in mind, I decided to spend a long spring weekend exploring some of the lesser-known walking opportunities along Northern Ireland's famous Causeway Coast.

Each year, our club organises a weekend trip to the Mourne, staying in holiday homes in Dundrum, Co Down. We also generally do a separate Sunday hike in the Silent Valley area. However, this was the first time I had ever walked along the Causeway Coast.

In conversations with other club members, I had been told of the natural beauty of north Antrim and about its major attractions, such as the Giant's Causeway and the Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge. However, I was also aware that few

people take advantage of the fantastic walking opportunities all along this spectacular coastline. Personally, I had never really considered it as a walking destination before, so I was really looking forward to the chance to explore it.

Accompanied by Walking & Talking in Ireland guide, Sean Mullan, with his local knowledge and expertise, I set off from Portbraddan and

walked along the 10km cliff-top path west towards the Giant's Causeway. This grassy path follows the headlands of Benbane and Bengore, with its highest point, Hamilton's Seat, at 100m, offering superb views out as far as the Mull of Kintyre.

The Causeway itself is certainly a must-see for anyone visiting the area. However, the stunning scenery of the dramatic headlands and cliffs around Dunseverick Castle along the cliff-top path should simply not be missed.

After overnighting in the Bayview Hotel in the village of Portballintrae, I boarded a passenger ferry departing from Ballycastle to explore another gem along this coastline, Rathlin Island. The ferry journey to Rathlin itself was stunning. The Irish Sea was as still as a pond, with seals popping up and down, set against a backdrop out to Scotland and back to the cliffs of Fair Head.

After the ferry docked at Church Bay, I set off on a 7km walk out to the West Lighthouse, past Knockans RSPB Reserve, and on to Kebble National Nature Reserve. Here, the breathtaking cliffs and stacks

support the largest seabird breeding colony in Northern Ireland. Imelda, from the Seabird Centre, was very informative and it was a delight to use the telescopes to get a closer look at the incredible variety of seabirds gathering with their mates on the cliffs. This was a truly memorable experience.

I visited the Causeway Coast with the view of perhaps organising a future club walking trip there and I was completely overwhelmed by what I found. Our club would often go to the west coast or south to Cork but from my own trip I found the Causeway Coast to be a wonderful alternative for a future club weekend, which I am sure will be thoroughly enjoyed by all.

From Celbridge (22km west of Dublin) it took me 3½ hours to get to the Causeway Coast. As one last piece of advice, I would urge other walkers visiting the area to bring a pair of binoculars, to get a closer look at the wildlife, and to make sure that they have plenty of memory and batteries for their cameras.

**Ian Kelly, Chairman,
Glenwalk Hillwalking Club**

SPECIAL OFFER

WalkNI.com has teamed up with walker-friendly accommodation providers throughout Northern Ireland to offer walkers the chance to avail of 10% off any accommodation bookings on future walking trips.

■ Visit WalkNI.com to download a free Walker's Guide to the North Coast and Glens of Antrim.

■ Contact Aideen Exley on +44 (0)28 9030 3930 for more information on planning your next walking trip to Northern Ireland.



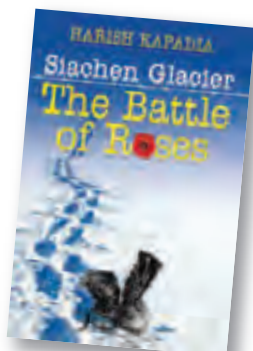
LYNAM LECTURE

Kapadia honoured

Harish Kapadia gives inaugural Lynam Lecture.

The first Lynam Lecture was given by distinguished Himalayan mountaineer Harish Kapadia on November 25th, 2011, in the Edmund Burke Theatre in Trinity College, Dublin.

His lecture, "The Battle of Roses," described the story of the Siachen Glacier at the eastern end of the Karakorum



in a disputed area of Kashmir.

Harish Kapadia, an Indian mountaineer, was an excellent choice for this biennial lecture set up in the memory of Joss Lynam, who died in January 2011. He was the editor of the *Himalayan Journal* and is the author of many books and a recipient of the Patron's Medal of the Royal Geographic Society.

Harish has explored the

Indian Himalaya extensively and few know the area like he does. This was also an area of great interest to Joss.

The name Siachen, which is attributed to Tom Longstaff, refers to a land with an abundance of roses. The "Battle of Roses" lecture focused on the history of the Siachen Glacier, which became the focus of a border dispute between India and Pakistan in the mid-1980s, when the high-altitude war to possess it began. There is now an ongoing initiative to have a Peace Park established there to rescue the glacier from war.

In his lecture, Harish introduced the early explorers of the glacier, brought those present through his own journeys and merged these into the experiences of the glacier's current occupant, the Indian Army. The personal importance of the Siachen Glacier was evident when Harish described the loss of his son, also a mountaineer, while serving in the region with the Indian Army.

Mountaineering Ireland would like to thank Trinity College Dublin for supporting this memorial lecture by providing the Edmund Burke Theatre on a biennial basis ■

MP3 audio guided walking tours

Explore parts of Dublin and Tara with the help of an audio guide.

Hillwalkers now have another way of exploring new areas: MP3 guided tours.

There is a growing range of audio tours available from **Ingenious Ireland**, which now includes three of interest to walkers: the Hill of Tara and its environs in Co Meath; Dublin's Royal Canal towpath; and a unique geology walking tour of Dublin.

Ingenious Ireland's audio tour of Tara has 80 minutes of entertaining and expert information.

'Dublin Rocks' is a two-hour audio-

guided walking tour of Dublin exploring all kinds of geology, building stones and fossils.

'Quaternions by the Royal Canal' is a podcast tour which explores a fascinating and pleasant stretch of the canal towpath, from Dunsink near Ashtown to Broome Bridge (approximately 4km).

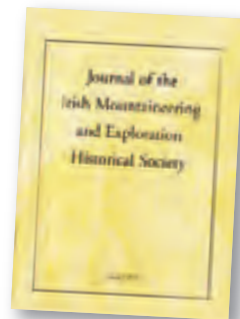
With an Ingenious Ireland audio guide, you will have as your guide Mary Mulvihill, a hillwalker herself, who has developed these audio tours. Mary is an award-winning heritage writer and she will help you to navigate your way around the sights ■



► Visit their website, <http://ingeniousireland.ie/>, to see the complete range of tours and to listen to sample tracks.



Karl Boyle addresses the launch. Behind him stands IM&EHS Journal editor Declan O'Keeffe.



one-time editor of *Irish Mountain Log* and veteran of many Mountaineering Ireland publications, has been involved in the composition of the journal since the start and is responsible for the very professional and attractive production. Kevin Higgins, a founder member and chairman of the Irish Mountaineering and Exploration Historical Society, was a generous and sage



Comte. Henri Russell – 'The man who married a mountain.' He was in Clongowes in 1851-52.

advisor on the composition of the journal as well as supplying a valuable piece of research on the career of yet another Irish alpinist, Valentine Ryan.

We are always interested in getting new material for the journal, so if you are interested in writing an article for the next issue (or have already have done so), please send it to the editor, Declan O'Keeffe, at caldeno@gmail.com. Copies of Volume 3 of the journal and its two predecessors (2001 and 2005) may be obtained from the offices of Mountaineering Ireland at +353 1 625 1115 or info@mountaineering.ie
Declan O'Keeffe

Volume 3 of historical journal launched

'The Man Who Married A Mountain' and other stories.

Volume 3 of the *Journal of the Irish Mountaineering and Exploration Historical Society* was launched at the Mountaineering Ireland Spring Gathering in Clonmel on March 10th.

The Irish Mountaineering and Exploration Historical Society (IM&EHS) was founded in 1998 to record and celebrate the achievements of Irish mountaineers and explorers at home and abroad.

The society published its first journal in 2001 to encourage new research into hitherto unexplored areas as well as to collect information that had already been published in other organs, including club journals, national newspapers and the *Irish Mountain Log*.

The first two issues of the journal were edited by the redoubtable, prolific and much-missed Joss Lynam, and the current volume is edited by Declan O'Keeffe, a former president of Mountaineering Ireland. As with its predecessors, the latest volume contains much of historical importance and includes fresh research as

well as articles published elsewhere in order that, in Joss' words, 'the *IM&EHS Journal*...be recognised as the best source of information on our history [and] that all important articles...be found in it.'

The volume features a wide array of topics ranging from the avalanches of 1867 in Wicklow to the exploits of the Irish in Himachal Pradesh, by way of the odyssey of Sir William Francis Butler in Canada and the story of Comte Henri Russell – 'The man who married a mountain.'

There are also pieces on the development of rock climbing in The Poisoned Glen, the now defunct mountain hut in the Bridia valley in Kerry, and a massacre in the hills above Glenmalure.

Appropriately, the first two articles were written by Joss Lynam – one detailing the early days of the Irish Mountaineering Club and the other recording the career of Ireland's first female mountaineer, Elizabeth Le Blond.

Thanks are due to all those who supplied articles and photographs as well as to the hidden hands behind the publication. Gay Needham,

NEWS IN BRIEF



IRELAND LYME CONFERENCE 2012

This two-day conference about Lyme disease (borelliosis) is taking place in Clontarf Castle, Dublin, on 5th-6th June.

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that is transmitted by a bite from a tick carrying the infection. The infection is generally mild, affecting only the skin, but can sometimes be more severe, leading to a more serious illness. Ticks are tiny, spider-like creatures that are commonly found in woodland, moorland and other grassy areas.

Day 1: Tuesday 5th June (half-day): "Protection and Prevention" tips, plus "Tick-borne Infections in Animals." Suitable for members of the public who enjoy walking, camping or hunting, pet owners, farmers, park rangers and vets.

Day 2: Wednesday 6th June (full day): "Lyme Disease in Humans," including testing, treatment and research. Suitable for patients of diagnosed or suspected tick-borne diseases, doctors, nurses and interested scientists.

► More details at: www.ticktalkireland.org/lymeconference/.



Clare O'Leary in training for her North Pole bid.

EXPEDITION

Polar trek abandoned

Irish North Pole team returns to solid land.

Clare O'Leary and Mike O'Shea made it safely back to solid land in early March after deciding to abandon their attempt to walk to the North Pole. While on the ice, the pair had endured some of the most severe weather the region has seen in more than 30 years. On average the area would be hit by just one or two storms per season. However, O'Leary and O'Shea had to battle through four storms in the space of a week. These storms caused the polar ice to drift, which in turn meant that the pair were losing up to two miles per day.

Dr Clare O'Leary and Mike O'Shea were hoping to become the first Irish team to reach the Geographic North Pole by foot. The duo left Cape Discovery in Canada at the end of February. The distance, as the crow flies, from Cape Discovery to the North Pole is 778km, but several kilometres per day may be added due to the drift of the Arctic Ocean which almost always pushes in a southerly direction. The pair travelled on skis, hauling sleds weighing approximately 90kg, on which they carried all their supplies, including food, fuel and equipment.

Only 182 people have reached the North Pole compared with the approximately 6,500 who have summited on Everest. The extreme cold, the rough terrain and open stretches of water in the ice field are the main difficulties encountered. Temperatures can vary from between -20°C and -60°C.

If Clare O'Leary had reached the North Pole, she would have been only the 13th female to do so in the world. She has previously climbed Everest, the seven summits and skied to the South Pole. She would also become one of only two women in the world to complete the seven summits and reach the two poles. Mike O'Shea has also travelled extensively around the world and is an experienced skier and climber.

Dr Clare O'Leary and Mike O'Shea made the difficult decision to turn back on Friday 9 March when it became apparent that it would be impossible to complete the challenge. Their plan to share charter logistics with other teams had fallen apart, leaving them with a potential bill of €120,000 to €180,000 to fund their resupplies and pick-up, should they have continued.

Patrick O'Sullivan

Mt Leinster sighting

Mary White, TD turned eco-walking guide, sent us this delightful account of a recent bird sighting.



I have been living and walking in the Blackstairs for many a year and feel I know the range well. I have been up on White Mountain and Mount Leinster on all sorts of days, from glorious to grim. When snow blows across the open side of Knockroe, you could think you were high in the Alps.

One of my biggest surprises in the Blackstairs was in late January, when I was walking up the back of White Mountain from the Walshes-town side. It was a beautiful

still day, with very little wind and not a cloud in the sky. My husband Robert had taken a wide detour to see a Short-eared Owl and I was resting quite near the top when I saw a most enchanting little bird. At first I could not believe how tame it was, running around the scree, perching on top of rocks and looking quizzically at me. I suddenly realised I was looking at my first ever Snow Bunting!

This lovely little bird, quite chunky in appearance, was so unconcerned about our presence that it was almost comical and I began to worry a bit about it. Would it be caught? Would it be in danger from a predator?

The Snow Bunting spends most of its time on the ground, seldom perching in trees. It has a swift and undulating flight and is usually seen in flocks. It's a winter visitor, coming all the way from Iceland or Scandinavia. For over an hour it kept me entranced.

When you are up in the Blackstairs keep an eye out for these charming little birds and let me know if you see one.



Snow Bunting. A visitor from the High Arctic, it can be unfamiliar with humans.

WINTER MIGRANT

LINK www.blackstairsecotrails.ie

Wildfire in extensive gorse, Mangerton Mountain, Killarney, Easter Sunday, 2007.



➔ UPLAND MANAGEMENT

Fire warning

Mountain users are asked to be fire-wise this spring.

Everybody has a part to play in protecting our unique rural landscapes, habitats, communities and forest resources from the threats posed by wildfire.

When utilised correctly, fire is an important and legitimate tool for upland management, restoring habitat structure, removing older, coarse vegetation, and permitting fresh and more palatable young vegetation to establish itself again. However, when applied in the wrong circumstances or under unsuitable weather conditions, fire can have catastrophic impacts on upland habitats and rural communities. Most worrying of all, illegal and irresponsible

fire activity diverts emergency services from their main tasks of saving lives. This places rural communities at greater risk where emergency response times to traffic accidents and other types of incidents are concerned.

Hillwalkers, mountaineers and other recreational upland users are especially asked to support landowners and the emergency services by following the advice given below to reduce both the risks of fire and the risks posed to recreational users themselves when fires occur.

● **Do not light fires in or near woodland** – You will be responsible, if fire spreads from a campfire or barbeque. Use only designated barbeque points, where available. Thoroughly soak BBQ embers

after use and take them home with your rubbish.

● **Do not block forest entrances or roads when parking** – Access may be required by the fire service or forestry personnel in the event of an emergency. Their jobs will be made easier if the roads are clear.

● **Be prepared** – Every responsible walking party should have the equipment and the skills to provide very accurate location information about fire incidents to the emergency services, using tools such as mobile phones, maps and a GPS.

● **Report any fires you see immediately to the emergency services** – Dial 999 or 112. Give clear details as regards location, where at all possible using a national grid reference and any other useful information such as the size of the fire, wind direction, proximity to dwellings or forestry, etc. You will not be billed by the fire service or local authority for

making the call.

● **Report any illegal and suspicious activity to the Gardai.**

● **Do not approach fires** – Wildfires can be extremely dangerous and can rapidly change direction and behaviour without notice. Avoid traversing uphill above fires, as in suitable conditions fires can travel uphill faster than you can run. Smoke can be highly disorienting and damaging to health. Avoid passing through smoke.

● **Do not attempt to extinguish fires yourself** – Fire-fighting is dangerous work and should be left to suitably equipped and trained personnel.

The Forest Service would like to sincerely thank the mountaineering community for their assistance in the past in protecting resources and it wishes all forest users a very safe and enjoyable season ahead. **Ciaran Nugent**

Be Prepared. Be Vigilant. Stamp Out Forest Fires



Participants on Wicklow Upland Council and Irish Upland Forum study visit to Djouce, October 2011, to look at heather.

CARA DOYLE

UPLAND MANAGEMENT

Managing heather

Wicklow Uplands Council are to identify best practice for management of upland habitats.

Despite current economic constraints and changes in its personnel (see box), Wicklow Uplands Council is continuing with its work. Its current focus is the development of a project to identify best practice on how to manage upland habitats and vegetation, while supporting upland farmers in making a living.

The proposed project is a partnership between Wicklow Uplands Council and the Irish Uplands Forum, working closely with local farmers, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and Teagasc.

The project aims to address some of the issues created by uncontrolled vegetation (mainly heather and gorse), including the threat of wildfires to property owners and upland dwellers, restricted access for walkers, reduced grazing for livestock and the loss of biodiversity.

The project partners are currently exploring funding options, including the EU Life programme. Given approval, the project will explore the delicate balance between farming and conservation which must be achieved to optimise and enhance the cherished landscape of the Wicklow Mountains and to ensure its survival for future generations.

PERSONNEL CHANGES

■ Last summer, Wicklow Uplands Council bid farewell to its long-serving director, **Colin Murphy MBE**. Colin had worked tirelessly for the Council from its inception in 1997. His dedication and creativity ensured the continuing development and success of the organisation in representing the shared interests of the uplands through consensus and partnership.

■ Following Colin Murphy's retirement, Wicklow Uplands Council appointed **Cara Doyle** to co-ordinate its activities. Cara had recently returned to Ireland from New Zealand, where she had been working for four years for Queenstown Lakes District Council on the management of parks, reserves and recreational trails. No stranger to the work of the Wicklow Uplands Council, Cara had previously worked on recreational trail projects in Wicklow, developing access routes in high-amenity areas in co-operation with private landowners, and worked on the development and management of existing routes.

The priorities of the UIAA

A new president will be elected at the General Assembly in October.

The main role of the International Mountaineering & Climbing Federation (UIAA) is to represent mountaineering and climbing associations worldwide; Mountaineering Ireland is a member. Mountaineers have a responsibility to develop a close relationship with the mountains and the people who live in the mountains, and to promote nature

conservation. The UIAA has identified the following priorities:

- improving the UIAA financial situation;
- developing Training Standards courses for UIAA members;
- Approving the UIAA Strategic Plan for 2013-2016, which will be presented at the next General Assembly in Amsterdam in October.

Other important projects are:

- The mountain protection label
- A marketing and sponsorship plan.



Jordi Colomer, Acting President of UIAA.



Glen River path erosion.

➔ CONSERVATION

Trail repair in Mournes

Erosion control at Glen River in the Mourne Mountains.

The Mourne Heritage Trust has started erosion control work on the Glen River path above Donard Wood, the main access route to Slieve Donard. The project has been funded through the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

The site is within the Eastern Mournes Special Area of Conservation (a European level of habitat protection) and an Area of Special Scientific Interest.

The path had become extremely eroded, with gullies and a rocky path surface pushing people across a wider area and into the adjacent forest, causing further damage. Eroded material was also washing into the Glen River, an important freshwater habitat.

The path repair work project aims to mitigate erosion and aid habitat recovery, whilst maintaining the challenge of the mountain environment. This will be achieved through careful selection of sustainable routes and, where required, the establishment of a robust path.

At the Glen River, a path team will work by hand and with a machine (such as a three-tonne mini-digger) to repair and establish a route through the eroded corridor. Techniques include 'benching' and other methods to make the paths blend in better with the natural contours, and to shed water. Much of the work

involves landscaping the areas alongside the path to direct the flow of people, aid habitat recovery and mitigate visual impact.

The path work team will be on site until the end of April this year. The Mourne Heritage Trust apologises for any inconvenience and for the ground disturbance and visual impact during works, but the end result should protect the designated landscape and sustain use.

The Trust welcomes feedback on this work and can make presentations or site visits with any group interested in finding out more (see box for contact details).

The Trust is also carrying out a Strategic Path Review in the Mourne and Slieve Croob area. It is expected that the review will provide an overview of recreation patterns within the area and enable the Trust to prioritise future path works ■

➔ MOURNE VOLUNTEERS ■■■■■■■■

The **Mourne Upland Path Volunteers** are continuing handwork to repair eroded sections of the path from Ben Crom to the Binnian/Lamagan col. This is an essential part of efforts to mitigate erosion and contributes greatly to a 'stitch in time' approach to upland management.

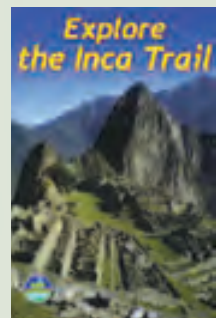
■ If you would like to assist with this work, contact the Mourne Upland Trust on mht@mourne.co.uk, 028 4372 4059, or visit www.activelifestyles.org.

NEWS IN BRIEF

JOSS BOOKS COMPETITION WINNERS

The answer to the competition question "In which country is Machu Picchu located?" was: **Peru**. The winners of a copy of the guidebook, "Explore the Inca Trail," by Jacquetta Megarry & Roy Davies, and published by Rucksack Readers, were:

1. Tom Kenny, Portmarnock, Co Dublin. 2. Olive Harrington, Mullingar, Co Westmeath. 3. Declan O'Grady, Cork, Co Cork. 4. Con O'Shea, Knocklyon, Dublin 16. 5. Adam de Eyto, Bell Harbour, Co Clare.



CHRISTMAS COMPETITION WINNERS

The answer to the question "Who wrote the tour guide that was reviewed in Issue No 99 of the Irish Mountain Log?" was: **Hugh Carthy**. The winners of the four new guidebooks from publishers Collins Press in Cork, were:

1. Mary-Rose Bogan, Killorglin, Co Kerry. 2. Deirdre Fitzpatrick, Kilfinane, Co Limerick. 3. Gilly Carey, Enniskerry, Co Wicklow. 4. Mitch Miller, Mervue, Galway, Co Galway.



Mountain Meitheal volunteers at work in Glendalough Upper.



MOUNTAIN MEITHEAL

➔ CONSERVATION

Repairs to take one year

Work continues on flood- damaged trail at Miners' Village, Glendalough.

Last September, work began in Glendalough on the repair of damage caused by the destructive flooding of 2010.

Wicklow Mountains National Park brought in machinery to move the hundreds of tons of rock which had surged down the Glenealo River, altering its course. Much of the displaced rock was used to shore up the river banks and redirect the river to its pre-flood course.

Along with the damage to the river, the zig-zag track which runs parallel to the river above the Miners' Village at the head of the Upper Glendalough valley was also damaged.

Following discussions with the park authorities, Mountain Meitheal undertook to repair the zig-zag track. It is estimated that the track, which is part of the national park's White Route (the Spinc and Glenealo Valley), currently gets 50,000 visitors a year.

It may sound like bringing coals to Newcastle, but thirty-six tons of local granite had to be flown in by helicopter to repair the flood damage in the upper

valley. Stone in the vicinity of the track is in short supply as any that was easily accessible had already been used in the building of the original path and its subsequent upgrade and repairs in the mid-00s by the national park.

Mountain Meitheal, a member club of Mountaineering Ireland, is a group of volunteers – people drawn from a wide range of outdoor backgrounds – who undertake hands-on trail projects on our mountains and in our forests with the aim of protecting the environment and promoting sustainable outdoor recreation.

Mountain Meitheal volunteers will be working at this site above Glendalough once a fortnight for the rest of this year. Workdays will inevitably cause some inconvenience to walkers but, with a little forbearance on the part of everybody, the repairs can be carried out in a sensitive and sustainable way.

This project will provide Mountain Meitheal volunteers with an opportunity to work in the magnificent setting of Glendalough valley. Mountain Meitheal welcomes new volunteers. The dates for workdays may be found on its website www.pathsavers.org. **Mountain Meitheal**

NEWS IN BRIEF



CLIMBFEST 2012, DONEGAL, 5-7 MAY

Climbfest 2012 will be based in Glencolmcille, Co Donegal. This year, the festival will take place over the weekend of 5th-7th May 2012.

It is likely that the festival campsite will be in the GAA grounds, where there are toilets, access to the beach and an independent hostel for those who want to avoid tenting. It is planned to camp in a more intimate and sheltered area than last time, to encourage a higher level of social intercourse and ensure that the craic is mighty.

The nearby crags of Malinbeg, Skelpoonagh, Sail Rock and Muckcross will provide a variety of routes and difficulties to suit all tastes and, if you are really unlucky, you could get to go to one of Iain Millar's sea stacks!

The camping fee for the weekend will be just €10. It is hoped to have a jumble sale of used gear and outdoor clothing, so bring along that pair of boots that you don't like, or that rucksack that was too big, or that pair of rock shoes that you can't get on without a local anaesthetic...you might find a buyer.

And let's pray for good weather!

Vehicle security

Prevention is the key.

Mountaineering Ireland recently met with the **County Wicklow Joint Policing Committee** to discuss break-ins to vehicles parked in the Wicklow Mountains and to clarify how hillwalkers and climbers can reduce their risk of being affected by this crime.

On behalf of Mountaineering Ireland, Helen Lawless outlined the impact that such break-ins have on Mountaineering Ireland's members and on other visitors to the Wicklow uplands. The implications for local businesses were highlighted and possible solutions were discussed with the committee. Suggestions included car parks with CCTV and the belief that small enterprises operating in car parks would reduce the incidence of anti-social behaviour.

Chief Superintendent Thomas Conway

outlined the progress that has been made through Operation Uplands, a joint initiative between the three policing districts in Wicklow to tackle this problem. As detection is difficult, the Gardaí are focusing on prevention. Patrols (marked and unmarked cars) and checkpoints have been put in place over the last year. The number of break-ins to vehicles parked in the Wicklow uplands over the first eight months of 2011 was 227, reduced from 238 for the same period in 2010.

Car crime in the uplands is typically opportunistic and fast, with most incidents taking place in the afternoons between Thursday and Sunday. The Gardaí have appealed to people parking in the uplands to take the following measures to protect their vehicles:

- Avoid leaving bags, clothing, etc, on view within the vehicle.

- Open the glove compartment and, where possible, the lid on the boot, to show there is nothing in the vehicle.
- Remove portable sat navs including cradles and suction pads; also wipe any suction marks off the windscreen.
- If you must leave valuables in the boot, put them in before you arrive at the parking location.;
- Secure the vehicle (23% of the thefts last year were from unlocked vehicles).
- Report all break-ins or damage to vehicles.
- Watch for and report any suspicious activity by dialling 999.

In addition, Mountaineering Ireland reminds groups and clubs that car-pooling reduces exposure to this crime and eases the pressure for space in small or busy car parks. Mountaineering Ireland appeals to hillwalkers and climbers to follow this advice and pass it on to others. By doing so, we will be playing our part in reducing this type of crime. **Helen Lawless**

Q. If you get into difficulties in the mountains, who do you call? A. Mountain Rescue

Mountain Rescue Ireland (MRI) is the representative body for the twelve national Mountain Rescue Teams in Ireland. Please support Mountain Rescue Ireland so that its teams can continue to provide life-saving emergency services when they are needed.

Irish Mountain Rescue Teams provide life-saving emergency services seven days a week, 365 days a year, in all weathers. Funds are needed to continue to develop the teams and to help to cover their ongoing costs, such as insurance and training. There are a number of ways that you can help:

- Become a Supporter and receive regular updates including MRI's quarterly *Call Out* magazine. You can pay by direct debit or pay your subscription annually.
- Participate in one of MRI's national fundraising events.
- Organise your own fundraising event – simply request a fundraising pack.

- Make a donation through our online Paypal facility.
- If or when the time is right for you to include a charity in your will, consider a legacy to Mountain Rescue Ireland.



Photo courtesy of Valerie O'Sullivan

Go to www.mountainrescue.ie to find out more, or contact the **MRI Fundraising Officer**, phone: (085) 259 0290, email: fundraising@mountainrescue.ie

Mountain Rescue Ireland
'Saving Lives in the Mountains'

Registered Charity Number CHY 10412
Sport HQ, 13 Joyce Way, Parkwest Business Park, Dublin 12
www.mountainrescue.ie

Mountain Photography Competition

Coumfea Loughs, the Comeraghs.
Photo: Mike Wall.

PHOTOGRAPHY

As part of Mountaineering Ireland's hillwalking guidebook project, we are offering €1,000 in cash prizes in this photography competition to help source photographs of all of the peaks identified for inclusion in this publication.

FIRST PRIZE €200
RUNNERS-UP (6) €100 each
NEXT-BEST PHOTOS (8) ... €25 each

All entries will be considered for inclusion in the guidebook. You are required to submit photographs of not less than 1Mb and not more than 5Mb for the purposes of the competition. We would request that you retain any higher resolutions of the entries that you have, in case they are required for publication.

There is no hard and fast criteria for

entries, but photographs that clearly identify one of the mountains, or a feature of one of the mountains, would be appropriate.

An activity or action photograph of someone on a ridge (for example), preferably with a substantial portion of the mountain or neighbouring mountain in the background, would also be an appropriate entry.

Photos with individuals in the foreground (e.g. a picture of someone easily identifiable, posing with the mountain in the background) would not be regarded as appropriate.

The most frequently visited mountains are likely to attract the greatest number of entries so, in order to encourage submission of photographs of the less

**PRIZES
TOTAL
€1,000**

popular mountains, a weighting will be applied based on the number of entries received per mountain (e.g. if multiple entries are received for Croagh Patrick and only one for Slieve Snaght, the Slieve Snaght entry will get preferential consideration).

The decision of the Mountaineering Ireland judging panel will be final. The panel will select the most impactful photographs for inclusion in the guidebook. Entrants whose photographs are published in the guidebook will receive a complimentary copy.

Entries

All entries should be emailed to: photocomp@mountaineering.ie.

► For further details, please see www.mountaineering.ie.

ADVERTORIAL

Kerry Outdoor Sports

One of the newest outdoor shops in the southwest recently clocked up its first birthday... and the celebrations are still ongoing!

Kerry Outdoor Sports was opened in October 2010 in the Killarney Outlet Centre by Aoife Smith, Sarah Seery and Eileen Daly (pictured), three ladies with 20 years' outdoor retail experience between them. They were made redundant in August 2010 and, after much soul-searching, opened their own shop seven weeks later!

The store is stylish, practical and fun and the staff have a wealth of experience between them, from hillwalking in Ireland

to expeditions in far-flung lands.

The store incorporates all aspects of the outdoor industry, from providing the best clothing available in the world to giving advice about local hikes and walks, kayak trips and biking routes and providing information on local guides and instructors. It also provides a personal shopping service to anyone starting off in the outdoors or heading off to more exotic climes!

Kerry Outdoor Sports is very pro-active within the local outdoor community with input into the award-winning **Killarney Adventure Race**; the **Irish Ironman** event; The **Killarney**

Kids Adventure Race and **Do It The Kerry Way** (two new and upcoming events for 2012); and further afield with the **Chernobyl Abseil 1000** in the Aviva Stadium; and an **overseas trip** that can't be talked about yet in case someone steals the idea!

Kerry Outdoor Sports also works closely with the **Irish Explorers Trust** – set up to keep memorabilia from Tom Crean, Ernest Shackleton, Patrick Keohane and others in Ireland – and with **Haven Partnership**, building houses in Haiti ■



Fifty years a-going!

I suppose it all began for me in 1961 when, as a ten-year-old, I was taken up Muckish by my two older brothers.

by **Alan Tees**
Immediate Past-President, Mountaineering Ireland



Alan Tees (10) on Muckish in 1961: his first Irish summit.



JIMMY TEES. Below: MARGARET TEES.

156 Separate Mountains already and, remarkably, Margaret's "ticks" and mine were pretty much the same.

Eventually, a compromise was reached: we would climb all of the Separate Mountains (or "Irish Peaks," as we will refer to them). It also occurred to me that if I could finish them by July 2011 I might have a record of some sort, having taken merely 50 years to complete the 156 summits.

We finished on schedule in Dingle, on the summit of Banogue North, with some good friends from Tralee MC, Colmcille Climbers, the Walkers Association and a magnum of cheap champagne. It was great!

There are many lists of the mountains of Ireland in existence, ably promoted by the Mountain Views website, but, with the passing of Joss Lynam, the Board of Mountaineering Ireland felt that a guidebook to Joss's and the Rev. Vandeleur's original list of the Irish summits that

were 2,000 feet or greater in height would be an appropriate tribute. It was felt that we could also utilise the expertise of our membership in the provision of high-quality, access problem-free routes up each of the Irish Peaks.

So far, the response has been magnificent, with over 100 peaks allocated. Ulster and Connaught are pretty much booked up, Leinster is almost there, but there is still some work to be done with Cork and Kerry.

The poor weather in recent times will have made it difficult for contributors to obtain quality photos, so we would like to appeal to our membership to submit any photos you might have of any of the Irish Peaks on the list on the Mountaineering Ireland website (see **Photographic Competition**, page 25). The more choices we have, the better the publication will look! **Alan Tees**

Winding the clock forward somewhat (about 48 years, in fact), I was passing a camper-van evening in a forestry clearing somewhere in Kerry, and idly looking through Claud Wall's book, *Mountaineering in Ireland* (1976), and my wife Margaret, having recently completed her Munros, was showing an unhealthy interest in the Vandeleur-Lynam list at the back of the book and I was, as usual, looking for an easy way out.

The list, totalling some 256 tops, was divided into Separate Mountains and Subsidiary Tops, and it occurred to me that the former might be an achievable and tolerable objective, as I must have already done many of them over the years.

In the event, it turned out I had climbed over 100 of the

Alan Tees (far right) completes the last of his Irish Peaks – Banogue North, Dingle, Co Kerry – with some good friends, in July 2011.





MOUNTAINEERING IRELAND GUIDE TO IRELAND’S 2,000FT MOUNTAINS

Sample contribution No 4: Coumfea Mountain, and Coumfea South Top, the Comeraghs, Co Waterford

MIKE WALL

Names of mountains:
(i) Coumfea (Cúm Fiadha, i.e. Hollow of the Deer); also known as Coumalocha (Hollow of the Lake). (ii) Coumfea South Top.

Heights:
774m (2,441ft) and 711m (2,340ft).

Grid references:
S 295 097 and S 281 095

Ordnance Survey (OS) sheet number:
Sheet No 75

Introduction:
Coumfea sits on the western side of the Comeraghs, forming a backdrop to Coumfea Loch. The loch is the highest lake in the Nire Valley, at 520m. Identification and nomenclature of summits is problematic in the Comeraghs, not only due to the rather indistinct nature of the plateau (in comparison to the spectacular corries), but the names given generally refer to the height above the coum, and these can vary from map to map, as there is commonly more than one height above each coum. In this case, Coumfea is marked on the 1:50,000 as 711m, with the higher (744m) point unnamed. Other sources name point 744m as Coumalocha.

Route description:
This is a looped walk. To get to the start of the walk you take the R671 from Clonmel (or the R672 from Dungarvan) until you reach the village of Ballymacarbry (R 197 128). At Melody’s pub you exit the R671, taking the Nire Road for 5km to reach the Nire Bridge junction. Turn right and continue for almost another 5km, passing Nire Church, until you reach the Nire layby (S 276 128), which accommodates 15-20 cars, with parking spaces also available further down the road.
Beginning from here, walk back down the road for approx 500m until you reach a gate on your left. Go through this gateway and follow the track, which takes you down to and across the Nire River by what is locally known as the ‘trailerbridge.’ This make-shift bridge is in fact an old trailer used by local farmers to access flocks under Coumfea. Continue on the track for about 300m, then you will come to an obvious clearing leading to stepping stones across another stream. There is no official name for this stream but it forms one of the three main sources of the Nire River, with its origins at the Coumalochas and Coumfea lakes.
After crossing, you follow the track for about 150m, passing an old kiln at S271 124 on the left, and then turn sharply left. This track leads through an old gate, then steeply up a field until you meet a fence. Follow this fence to your left until you come to the end of the fencing (S272 112) at

around a height of 380m. You are now on Lyre Mountain which leads on to Coumfea. Lyre Mountain derives its name from the Irish ‘ladhar,’ meaning a fork formed by rivers or glens, and this area is within a fork in the Nire River formed by its meeting with a significant tributary called Glenastackaun Stream.
Continuing your climb up Lyre Mountain, keep towards the centre of the shoulder as this will make for an easier ascent. The natural instinct is to keep left and, while this will give you early views of Coumfea Loch, which are spectacular, it will also make the ascent steeper and possibly more dangerous as it takes you close to the edge.
At about 600m height, the walk will start to level out, and you will now begin to enjoy great views over Coumfea and the Coumalochas. On reaching the spur between the lakes and spot height 711m, you will have arrived at the peak named ‘Coumfea’ on the map (2hrs, 5km, 505m ascent). Directly across to the north you will, weather permitting, enjoy views to the Knockanaffrin (Cnoc an Aifrin, i.e. ‘The Mass Hill’) ridge and beyond the ridge to Slievenamon.
Continue your walk along the top of Coumfea, ascending very slightly as you follow the ridge anti-clockwise around the Coumalochas, to reach the unnamed summit at 744m, previously known as ‘Coumalocha’ after the lakes below (2hrs 30mins, 7km, 560m ascent).
You will now start to descend in a northwesterly direction, following a bearing of 320°, which will take you down towards a man-made track, which you should meet around the height of 600m. Continuing on this bearing will bring you down onto the track, which is very visible as you descend, through a gateway and past the ruins of an old homestead, now only in use as a sheepyard. Follow on the track as it winds its way back down to the trailerbridge, taking you back to the Nire layby.

Total time, distance, ascent and type of terrain:
5 hours; 13km; 630m ascent.
Terrain: open mountain. Expect it to be quiet firm in summer months, but depending on the amount of rainfall it can be a little soft in places, especially on the lower slopes of Lyre Mountain.

Access advice and issues:
This is a well-walked route and there are no access issues. The walk around the ridge above the lakes is fairly well defined. However, the first 500m of descent from point 744m, until you reach the track, is not clearly marked. This track has been made only recently and will not appear on current OS map.
Parking: good.

Contributed by:
Mike Wall (Nire Valley Bogtrotters)

Women with Altitude held a week of winter mountaineering in the Cairngorms in March.

First women's Scottish meet a huge success



Ursula MacPherson and Josie McGee practice the bucket seat belay and snow anchors.

SAM LEARY

The first Women with Altitude mountaineering weekend was held in the Mourne in April 2011 and was a Mountaineering Ireland initiative run in conjunction with Gartan OEC. The purpose of that weekend was to give women hillwalkers and climbers a forum to share ideas, learn new skills and develop their mountaineering experience. As a result of that very full weekend of varied mountaineering activity, discussion, slideshows and workshops, the Women with Altitude coordinating group developed a programme of informal meets and more formal training events for 2011/2012.

As part of that programme, Sandra Kennedy, now Mountaineering Ireland's Honorary Secretary, organised a week of winter mountaineering in the Scottish Cairngorms for a small group of women in mid-March 2012.

Previous experience of winter mountaineering within the group ranged from none at all to those with several years' winter climbing experience.

From examining the various weather reports it was evident well beforehand that the snow and ice conditions in the Cairngorms (and Scotland generally) were very poor. However, the excellent local knowledge provided by both Heather Morning (Mountain Safety Advisor with Mountaineering Council of Scotland) and Samantha Leary ensured that we made best use of areas of consolidated snow hidden high on the east faces of the corries.

Both Heather and Sam (with Ursula MacPherson, the new President of Mountaineering Ireland) provided a thoroughly comprehensive programme of winter skills training. Participants, including those who had never worn crampons before, threw themselves headlong and backwards down snow slopes, mastering the art of ice axe braking in every imaginable way. We secured each other with safety ropes and various snow belays on steeply angled slopes, and were often reluctant to leave the relative security of the 'bucket seat' belay from

which we were enjoying panoramic views under blue skies and in glorious sunshine – nothing beats it!

Milly, Heather's bright, lively SARDA rescue dog, provided delightful company and distraction while keeping a watchful eye on all activity.

Four members of the group, intent on completing their Mountain Leadership (ML) assessment later this year, had, by virtue of the

heading towards Ben Macdui.

While variable, the weather conditions always seemed somehow to conspire to meet the needs of the particular activity we were engaged in. Even the sky at night obliged with real clarity for constellation identification on the first evening.

One experienced member of our group enjoyed a day on her own in the Cairngorms mountain range covering a very impressive distance over rock ridge and plateau.

Glenmore Lodge, the Scottish National Outdoor Training Centre, provided an excellent base from which to work. The accommodation was first-class, with good food. Gorgeous cream teas on return from the hills at 5:00pm every day meant everyone was well rested and prepared for the next long day of mountain activity. We also fully availed of the indoor climbing wall and attended various evening lectures on winter skills and avalanche awareness.

Over the final two days of this excellent week, some of the group went rock climbing on the sea stacks and seaside crag at Cummington,

The weekend was to give women hillwalkers and climbers a forum to share skills and ideas

conditions, an excellent opportunity to refresh their skills and learn new skills, under the excellent guidance of both Heather and Sam. The group scrambled over steep ground, practised ML rope work and navigated across the plateau with pinpoint accuracy in the low cloud



Helen Gibbs, Ursula Timmins and Sandra Kennedy (together with SARDA rescue dog Milly) on a navigation day, heading for the low clouds over Ben Macdui.



HEATHER MORNING

overlooking the Moray Firth, while others explored the superb western and northern Cairngorms tracks and trails on mountain bikes, again in glorious sunshine.

One memorable, unplanned moment of our trip was the arrival of the RAF, who dropped into Glenmore Lodge on our second last evening in a Sea King twin engine rescue helicopter. The captain

(female) of this rescue aircraft provided our group with a full tour of the chopper and an explanation of the very impressive capabilities of both crew and machine!

On our final evening, we joined BOS representative Alun Richardson (Mountain-eering Ireland Training Officer) and members of MLTUK, Dawson Stelfox (MI representative), Trevor Fisher and Davy Campbell (MLTNI representatives), assembled in Glenmore Lodge for one of MLT's quarterly meetings. The evening also marked the retirement of Allan Fyffe MBE, who held the post of Executive Secretary of Mountain Leader Training Scotland, and is a well known and respected mountain instructor and guide (though with fearsome reputation on assessments).

Overall, this was a wonderful week of mountaineering activity, training and fun in a perfect location ■

OTHER WWA EVENTS IIII

- Women with Altitude Weekend 19/20-22 April 2012, Gartan OEC, Donegal
- ML Refresher Weekend 25-27 May 2012, Donegal
- Mountain Skills Assessment: 11-13 May (Location to be confirmed)
- Mountaineering Ireland Alpine Meet July 2012
- Scottish Winter Mountaineering, February 2013
- For full details of events and information see WWA website at www.womenwithaltitude.ie or find us on Facebook.

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BMC Scottish Winter Meet

Brian Seery represented Mountaineering Ireland at BMC's international meet in the Cairngorms in January.

Scotland is unique, stunningly beautiful and, in winter, fickle, wild, harsh and unforgiving. For these reasons, it is also one of the most rewarding places to climb.

Will Sim, who has made some recent impressive ascents there with Greg Boswell, describes Scottish winter climbing as "one of the most time consuming and energy-absorbing types of climbing I know of metre for metre". If you have ever done any, you'd have to agree!

I was off to Glenmore Lodge in the heart of the Cairngorms to meet eighty other individuals from various countries who were keen to get stuck in and brave the Scottish weather at the British Mountaineering Council's international winter meet. Upon arrival at the airport, we were greeted by Rob Dyer (my climbing partner for the first two days) and Rob Adie from the BMC. We, the collective international rabble, were then whisked off to Glenmore Lodge where we were greeted by BMC Events Officer, Becky McGovern, who had organised the meet, and the BMC's Deputy CEO, climbing legend Nick Colton.

After this, I had a quick meeting with my roommate for the week, Aleksandar Spasic from Serbia, when we decided unpacking was best left till later. We agreed that we had better see what food was on offer. Later that night, after a presentation on Scottish winter climbing by Simon Richardson, Rob and I formed a plan to head into Coire an Lochain the



Loch Morlich, looking towards the northern corries, Cairngorms.

BRIAN SEERY

following day.

Monday morning, Rob took me in the direction of Sidewinder, a route with a tricky first pitch. First pitch complete and with a vague description of the second pitch, I decided that maybe Rob should continue leading as there was no point in me doing something stupid on the first day. We ended up on Western Route and Rob put in a great performance leading through some tough ground. Some awkward moves and amazing hooks later, I emerged at the top and we headed down, arriving at the car in the dark. That night we were given a presentation by Simon Yearsley about trying to mountain bike into remote corries. His tales of success, failure and massively long days were highly entertaining and really captured for me what climbing is all about.

The next day saw me get on lead on another route in Coire an Lochain called Milky Way. A

tricky first step led to some easier ground which I "protected" with a bulldog. It only went in half way, so I was just waiting to slip and shoot by Rob at the belay with the token bulldog at my waist. After what felt like ages, I found some glory gear in a purple hex, which I wasted no time in placing and giving a good whack.

Moving up, I suddenly found that I'd pinned myself by clipping the gear over the leash of my axe, which was now at my waist. Not good. Disaster! I took the axe out and let it dangle. The adze wrapped itself up in the tiny gap in the loop of the sling. I couldn't have done it if I'd wanted. "This is bad," was all I could think. Problem solving went out the window. All I could do was get all of my weight onto the axe placement I had, reach down and tug desperately on the leash to the tangled axe. It came free! Relief! Scottish winter climbing, always exciting when your

incompetence shines through!

This near disaster was followed some considerable distance later by some tat sticking out of a frozen, snowed up corner. I told myself not to dig and reveal the horrors. However, I dug... I shouldn't have. "Why did I have to look," I thought as I pulled into the corner with images of slipping and ripping the small, mashed, rusted, frozen wire and speeding down the ramp and ending up in the lake. A few moves later I was pulling onto the belay ledge, happy to put on my belay jacket and bring Rob up. Rob finished out the route and from the top we were lucky enough to have clear weather with views all over the Cairngorms.

Over to the right Bayard Russell, Jen Olson and Nick Bullock were putting on an impressive show on Daddy Long Legs, so we stayed to watch for a while.

Jen Olson was up to present

on Tuesday night and showed us some of the delights on offer in the Canadian Rockies. It's really great to see what's going on in other parts of the world and Jen was certainly an inspiring speaker. With a massive thaw forecast for the next day, there was an inevitable charge to the bar after her talk to sample the fine local ales.

Wednesday was, as predicted, warm. The buttresses in the distance were black and people either went dry tooling at Newtyle, down to Aviemore or hung around the lodge. I took the last option and hit the climbing wall and the dry tooling wall to pass the time. That night Nick Bullock gave a hilarious, highly entertaining presentation on all aspects of his climbing from winter to rock and expeditions.

With the cold back on Thursday, my new partner Dave Amos and I headed into Coire an Lochain. I fancied a go at the Vent. As we got closer I fancied it less and less and Dave fancied it more and more. At the bottom another host, Gwilym Lynn, said



Tower Ridge (left), Number 4 Gully (centre) and Trident Buttress (right).

it looked spicy. I soon found out what he meant! Still not one to back down I gave it a go. With no gear and a really awkward move stumping me, I retreated to the belay. Dave quickly dispatched it and brought me up. Right, round two. "I'll get this next bit", I was thinking. Round two again went to the route, with Dave again showing me how it was done. Still early in the day, we headed down the goat track into Coire an t-Sneachda. A solo of a quite lean Jacobs Ladder with some nice

ice sections and frozen rocky steps was a nice ending to the day.

That night Greg Boswell and Will Sim teamed up to present some of the things they'd been up to. The highlight had to be their ascent of Stone Temple Pilots on Shelterstone just before Christmas. It involved a 2 am start on one of the shortest days of the year and a finish well into the night.

Friday was a big day out. My new partner, Gwilym Lynn, who had done a great job at psyching me out of the Vent the previous day, and I were headed for the Ben. 04:45 out of bed and on the bus at 05:30. We were walking in as the sun rose. It was a lovely clear day and Ben Nevis loomed large in the distance. Gearing up at the CIC hut, Greg told us he was going for a repeat of Don't Die of Ignorance. We wished him luck and headed off up the snow slopes to our objective of Trident Buttress North. My legs were really feeling the sapping snow. The thoughts of Ueli Steck's mantra in my head rapidly wore off and I managed a slow struggle up to Gwilym.

The route was quite short by Ben standards but it really was a mixed bag. Some short steep mixed sections, questionable ice and snow swimming later and we were at the top of the route. The wind slab build-up meant descending by Number Five gully was too dangerous, so we

roped up and continued to the top of Trident Buttress, Gwilym in front, me following, hoping the whole slope wasn't about to disappear with us on it. All was fine though and I even encountered my first cornice! Gwilym had the non-enviable task of digging the way through! A quick descent by Number Four gully and we were on the way out. I took the time to glance behind and see the moon rising over Tower Ridge in a shimmering purple orange sky. It was a beautiful sight in an amazing location. That night, after another amazing dinner, Magnus Kastengren gave us a presentation on his recent trip to Tibet and some of the new routes he did there.

I had a bit of a non-event of a day on Saturday as my knee was acting up. However, overall going to the BMC's meet was a fantastic experience. It was made all the more special by the people who were there and the friends I made. The importance of meets like this should not be underestimated. It introduced an international audience to the principles and ethics of Scottish winter climbing, which are essentially the same ethics of traditional climbing that we practice over here.

► Brian Seery is a member of UCD Mountaineering Club and has been climbing for four years. He recently has moved to north Wales ■

Brian Seery about to descend via Number 4 Gully.

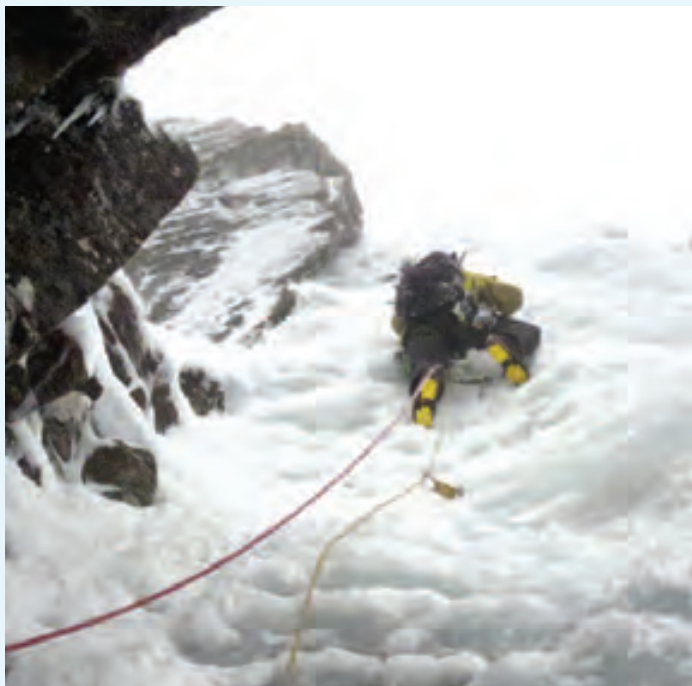




Winter Meet 2012

Mountaineering Ireland Training Officer **Alun Richardson** led our Winter Meet in Glencoe, Scotland, in February.

All photos: ALUN RICHARDSON



"I hate all those weathermen, too, who tell you that rain is bad weather. There's no such thing as bad weather, just the wrong clothing, so get yourself a sexy raincoat and live a little." – **Billy Connolly**

During the week of the 18th to 26th February, between fifty and sixty Mountaineering Ireland members met at Inchree chalets and bunkhouse in Glencoe, bursting with enthusiasm to sample the delights of a Scottish winter.

Scotland lived up to its reputation and gave the invasion of the Irish a warm welcome...too warm, in fact! The weather started perfectly, clear and cold with many mountains and routes in condition, but then it decided to have some fun with us. Within a day it had changed from cold and clear to very warm, very wet, very windy and very snowless weather. The mountains took on a

spring-like feel. It was certainly a good test of whether we could, as Billy Connolly put it, "live a little." It tested everyone's fortitude and ability to smile in the face of adversity, a test that I am happy to say everyone passed with flying colours. As I returned each day, wet to my underpants, it was great to see and hear so many people returning wet and windswept, but with a smile on their face and tales of derring-do to tell. Stories about swollen rivers and horizontal rain, of rubbing noses with the mountain weather and of lessons learned and tired limbs were all exchanged over a pint or two.

Mountains such as Ben Nevis, Buachaille Etive Mór, Stob Coire nan Lochan and Beinn a'Chaoruinn were climbed, and routes such as Curved Ridge II/III and Green Gully IV were some of the ones ascended.

The evening entertainment was provided by a series of well-attended lectures – "Avalanches" and "Antarctica" by Clive Roberts; "Winter Skills" by the SMC; "Greenland" by Matt Spenceley; "Everest" by Andy Chapman of Jagged Globe; and "A Life of Reilly" by me.

Thanks must go to Paddy, Dave and staff at Inchree chalets who welcomed us with open arms, a warm fire and a place to rest our tired limbs. Thanks to all the instructors who worked really hard to make the meet a success despite the weather. Thanks to the two musicians who played violin, guitar and whistle in the bar. Commiserations must go to Simon whose car was written off by the vagaries of the bendy roads in Scotland.

Finally, thanks to all the meet participants. Was it worth it? I guess I would have to ask everyone at the meet to properly answer that, but from my point of view it definitely was. You win some and lose some in the mountains and, if every experience you have in life is easily won, then life would be boring. Bring on next year's meet! ■





Aspirants' Winter Skills Meet

During the Scottish Winter Meet in February, nine young enthusiasts took to the hills as part of the Aspirants' Winter Skills course, from 19th-24th February. This was a follow-up to a weekend of navigational skills training in the Mourne in January. **Maeve Johnston** reports

Under the guidance of Paul Swail, Paul Kellagher, Ronnie Smith and Simon Patton, we college students were given a taste of what a Scottish winter has to offer and a chance to further develop our mountain skills in a snow-filled environment. After a long day's travelling up to Glencoe, there was no rest as we had to organise our gear for the week in the Inchree chalets at Onich, in light of the instruction that we were 'leaving at five tomorrow morning.'

The first part of our four-day adventure took us to Coire an t-Sneachda, where we got our first taste of snow and ice climbing, and use of crampons and ice axes. In smaller groups, we climbed Spiral Gully (grade II), Crotched Gully (grade II), Invernookie (grade III/4), and The Seam (grade IV/5), the last of which was undertaken by the more experienced climbers.

On the Tuesday, our second day, we were put through our paces on Stob Coire nan Lochan, where we practiced winter skills; walking with crampons; testing out winter boots; practicing ice axe arrests, learned to gather information from the landscape; and, of course, the inner child in us all was released as we practiced slipping and sliding recoveries.

Unfortunately, poor weather conditions meant that the hills were a no-go zone on Wednesday. Fortunately, the Ice Factor in Lochaber was a dry option. The world's biggest indoor ice climbing wall certainly lived up to expectations, with a large climbing and bouldering wall making it a great day in for everyone.

Glen Nevis hosted our last day on the hills, where we were again met by wind and rain. However, spirits remained high as we practiced setting up anchors, placing gear and exploring belay options for climbing in both series and parallel.

After our exciting but tiring days in the hills, the Inchree Centre at Onich offered a wonderfully welcoming environment, where the smell of drying wet gear and sizzling sausages filled most of the chalets. In the evenings, we joined the others at the meet, listening attentively to the inspiring stories of climbing adventures told by Andy Chapman and Clive Roberts.

Despite the weather, the week was a great success and I would certainly recommend the course to other young mountain enthusiasts who want to improve their winter skills ■

Photos: ALUN RICHARDSON





Summer Alpine Meet 2012

For walkers, climbers, alpinists: Val di Masino, Italy, 1st-15th July 2012

The location for Mountaineering Ireland's Summer Alpine Meet this year is the Italian side of the Bregaglia Alps. We will be based in the village of Val di Masino, which gives access to great **walking, bouldering and mountaineering**.

As is normal for all our meets, it is for *everyone* – walkers, rock climbers and alpinists of all ages. This is a wonderful opportunity for all members, new and old, to meet old friends and make new ones; and go walking, mountaineering and climbing in one of the world's most beautiful locations.

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.

The meet is a wonderful opportunity to share information, learn techniques and develop skills, discover new climbing partners, join in hikes and generally share in the exploration of an alpine area.

Many people return to the meet every year, whilst others may be visiting the Alps for the first time, joining more experienced friends or taking part in one of the Mountaineering Ireland **courses** that supplement the meet.

The meet has a huge, informal, social aspect, and musicians, dancers and singers are encouraged to bring their voices, legs and musical instruments to the **legendary parties**.

The formal courses are designed to introduce you to the **skills** required for walking and climbing in the Alps, but with the long-term aim of enabling you to walk and climb independently in alpine areas.

There are also courses for people who want to refresh or upgrade the skills learnt on previous meets. A natural progression is for people to participate in a course in the first few years and then return to the meet as an independent walker or climber.

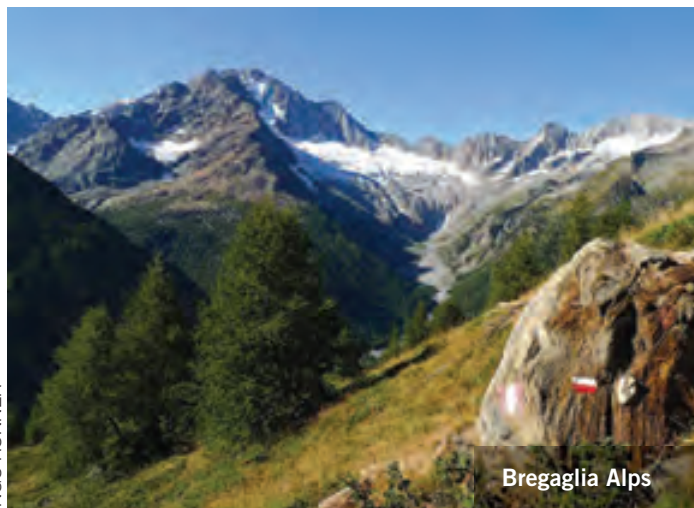
Our qualified Mountain Guides and Walking Leaders will be at the meet not only to run training courses but also to share information with everyone on mountain conditions and recommended routes and walks in the area.

If you do not wish to do a course, you can simply come along to hike or climb, do your own thing, or take part in half-day and full-day workshops.

The main emphasis of the meet is to **have fun**, make contact with fellow Mountaineering Ireland members, and **develop skills** through getting out in the mountains independently or on one of the Mountaineering Ireland climbing or walking courses.

Pre-Alpine Day in Wicklow

If you want to do some pre-alpine training, look at rope work and gear, the Training Officer, Alun Richardson, is running a Pre-Alpine Day in Wicklow on 15th June, cost €40 (maximum eight people). If more want to attend, a further day will be added.



Bregaglia Alps



On a glacier at last year's Alpine Meet in Mt Blanc region. Photo: Alun Richardson.



by **Nicole Mullen**
Training Administrator, Mountaineering Ireland

- Simple rescues for rock climbs (full-day workshop for those with climbing experience). *Ratio* 1:4
- Movement skills for rock climbing (half-day or full-day for beginner to intermediate – some climbing experience required). *Ratio* 1:8

Courses

5-day Sentiero Roma Trek

This fantastic multi-day hut-to-hut walk across the mountain range will be led by a qualified International Mountain Leader and will take you across a truly spectacular variety of terrains.

5-day Introduction to Alpine Mountaineering

This course aims to introduce the basics of Alpine mountaineering. By the end of the week you will be familiar with how to safely travel through glaciers, rocky ridges, rock faces and steep snow slopes. Weather permitting, you will climb several Alpine peaks and spend at least one night in a mountain hut. All those booking on this course must have a good level of fitness. Some climbing experience is helpful, but not essential.

5-day Intermediate Alpine Mountaineering

This course is run at a ratio of 1:2 to allow participants undertake more *technical* routes. The aim is to improve your existing mountaineering skills, focusing on safety, efficiency and independence in the mountains. The course will include

efficient rope work and quick movement on Alpine terrain and navigation. All participants must have experience with crampons, ice-axe and a basic knowledge of rope work. Some rock climbing experience and a high level of fitness are essential.

5-day Advanced Alpine Mountaineering

This course is run at a ratio of 1:2 to allow participants to undertake more *technical* routes. It is essential that participants have previous Alpine experience and sound knowledge of rope work and belays. Scottish winter mountaineering experience would also be an advantage. We would hope to progress onto multi-pitch climbs on rock, snow and ice at grades of AD to TD.

3-day Climbing for the over 50s

An opportunity for those of us who want to go at a slower pace and share some time in the mountains with people of our own age, walking, climbing and mountaineering.

Please note: the booking deadline is 30th April 2012. We need to know well in advance the numbers for courses so that we can get good guides booked in time. Any bookings after this date cannot be guaranteed.

Full course information and pricing can be found on the website.

10% Early Booking Discount if you book before 30th April ■

Events

- Day walk led by the Mountaineering Ireland Training Officer
- Workshops on alpinism and climbing
- Performance coaching of movement
- Bouldering competition
- Slack-lining competition
- Barbeque, music and dancing

Workshops

These were very popular last year. Mountaineering Ireland will again be offering a series of half-day and full-day workshops, to refresh some of the skills needed to mountaineer safely. These are not meant to replace the full courses and will possibly require some previous knowledge and experience.

- Learn to climb, for first-time climbers (full-day workshop)
- Crevasse rescue (half-day workshop for those with previous experience who want a refresher)
- Multi-pitch climbing (an opportunity for climbers to do a long route as an independent team with the training officer there to offer advice). *Ratio* 1:4



ALUN RICHARDSON

Mysterious merlin

Merlin habitat.
Glensoulan, Co Wicklow.
Photo: Patrick O'Sullivan.

If you have explored the Irish uplands during the spring or summer, it is quite likely you have unknowingly wandered through the territory of a merlin.

Sightings of this small and secretive falcon are rare during the breeding season. However, although you may have been totally unaware of their presence, you can rest assured that your movements were being vigilantly monitored by the resident merlin from a discreet vantage point.

The name 'merlin' has no connection with the King Arthur legend; rather, it is derived from an old French word, *esmerillon*, which means "stone-falcon."

This description is particularly apt for the male of the species, also known as the tiercel, which has slate bluish-grey upperparts, in comparison to the more uniformly brown female.

Only slightly larger than a thrush, this compact dashing falcon is Ireland's smallest bird of prey. However, the merlin's diminutive size masks an impressively efficient and highly adapted predator. Their amazing agility on the wing while in relentless and

lightning-fast aerial pursuit of their quarry is a phenomenal spectacle to witness.

However, the merlin's true character is best revealed when it is observed fearlessly defending its nest from potential assailants, as it ferociously and repeatedly dive-bombs significantly larger birds, such as ravens, with supreme and nimble confidence.

Sightings of merlin are most frequent during the winter months, when the birds are visibly less wary than when breeding. A large proportion of merlin reside along our coasts, estuaries and wetlands at this time of year. A flock of waders suddenly bursting into a panicked frenzy can often signal their presence, followed by a brief glimpse of a merlin rocketing past on fast, rapid wing-beats.

Numbers in Ireland swell during the autumn and winter, when they are

augmented by the arrival of Icelandic birds. However, with the onset of spring, these additions to the population return north. At the same time, our resident Irish birds

depart the wetlands and coasts in favour of their upland nesting areas.

During the breeding season they inhabit remote upland habitats such as moorland, mountain and blanket bog. The population is thinly distributed in such habitats across the country, with western counties and also the Wicklow Mountains likely to be the strongholds.

In Ireland, merlin traditionally nested on the ground in heather moorland. However, due to the loss of suitable heather cover across large parts of their breeding range, the disused nests of hooded crows at the edge of

forestry plantations are now the most popular nesting sites.

In Connemara, birds are also known to nest on small, densely vegetated islands in the lakes that are scattered over the vast areas of bog. These relatively inaccessible nesting locations, coupled with the merlin's highly elusive nature, mean that they can be an extremely difficult species to locate.

For this reason, our knowledge of their population status and their ecological requirements in Ireland is limited.

Two previous studies, which have contributed greatly to our understanding of this falcon, were carried out in the Wicklow Mountains and Connemara. Both studies required painstaking effort and patience.

More recently, in 2010, BirdWatch Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service initiated a pilot survey to assess the best means of determining the status of the merlin's national population. The findings of this survey further confirmed the difficulties associated with monitoring merlin.

In the absence of basic information on abundance and



We know little about the impacts of wind farms or forestry on merlin.



Merlin (male)

VIC SHARP

How you can help

Members of Mountaineering Ireland are well placed to encounter merlin in the uplands during the breeding season. Merlin research would greatly benefit from any information on merlin breeding sites that you might come across or any sightings of this falcon that you might have when out hillwalking during the spring and summer.

► John Lusby, Raptor Conservation Officer with BirdWatch Ireland, would appreciate any relevant information. Email him at jlusby@birdwatchireland.ie.



trends, the requirement for conservation action or indeed the direction of such action is not fully understood.

Elsewhere, merlin are known to have suffered heavily from pesticide poisoning during the 1950s and 1960s. Currently, there is limited information on the impact of factors such as wind farm developments and forestry management practices on what is likely to be a fragile breeding population.

The research also suggests that Irish merlin have quite a unique ecology. As merlin are an Annex I species of the European Birds Directive, it is essential to determine the status of their population and also the factors which influence their conservation. BirdWatch Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife Service are continuing and expanding research and monitoring efforts to achieve this.

Connemara is one of the key monitoring areas where it is hoped intensive monitoring will lead to an intimate knowledge of the local population, from which necessary information can be derived.

Aonghus Ó Dónaill, Conservation Ranger with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, commented: “Although surveying for merlin can be disheartening and even frustrating at times, the elusiveness of these falcons has to be admired, and not used as an excuse for us to ignore them from a conservation or monitoring point of view, even though they may require more effort than other birds of prey.”

One of the best means of locating merlin is by searching, not directly for the birds themselves but for the plucking remains of their prey. Although merlin will take moths and dragonflies, their main prey is small birds such as meadow pipits and skylarks, which are generally caught

after high-speed but sometimes quite drawn-out and exhaustive ‘tail-chases.’

After a successful capture, merlin will take their prey to a prominent feature in the landscape such as a boulder, hummock or fence post. Even here they remain on guard and always choose a perch which affords a good view over the surrounding landscape in order to maintain a dutiful watch for potential predators. Prey will be plucked on these perches prior to consumption or before delivery back to the nest to feed voracious chicks.

Investigation of these perches can reveal evidence of several recent kills, and many such plucking perches can be found in suitable habitat, indicating the potential presence of an active nest nearby.

Even if a nest is located, however, there is nothing to guarantee that it will be occupied the following year. As merlin do not build a nest of their own, they are dependent on using the old stick-nests of other species. If the nest from the previous year is no longer suitably intact, they tend to relocate to another suitable nest site.

In an effort to facilitate monitoring and also as a direct conservation measure, BirdWatch Ireland and the National Parks and Wildlife



Merlin (female)

SHAY CONNOLLY

Service have established a nest-basket scheme in Connemara whereby modified baskets, resembling natural nest sites, are provided in suitable habitat and at traditional breeding areas for merlin (see picture).

John Lusby, Raptor Conservation Officer with BirdWatch Ireland, said: “We spent the early part of this year installing nest baskets and we will return to check all these

sites during the early breeding season, to see if any are occupied.

“The intention is that, if merlin take to the baskets, monitoring as well as aspects such as tracking studies will be more feasible. This is the type of research we really need to undertake in order to understand more about how our merlin are faring and how we can effectively conserve them” ■



Connemara nest-basket scheme

If merlins take to the baskets, it will be possible to monitor their activities.

JOHN LUSBY

A person wearing a white helmet and dark clothing is climbing a steep, rocky mountain ridge. The climber is positioned on the right side of the frame, leaning forward and reaching out with their hands to grip the rock. A rope is visible hanging down from the climber. The background shows a vast, hilly landscape with green fields and distant mountains under a cloudy sky. The overall scene is one of adventure and outdoor recreation.

Howling great time

Corrán Tuathail by Howling Ridge is one of the finest Irish mountaineering routes. **BRIDGET BROWNE** takes it on with two female companions.



The second pitch of Howling Ridge.

Last pitch up to the Finger.



Clockwise from top left: RICHARD CREAIGH, ALLISTER GERRARD, BRIDGET BROWNE COLLECTION

Left to right: Mary Power, Winnie Flynn and Bridget Browne at the start of the climb.



There are a great number of climbs of varying levels in Ballykeefe Quarry and since my initiation in 2009 we have had plenty of climbing practice there. Last

summer, we concentrated on improving our lead-climbing skills.

HEAVENLY GATES

Even with our heavier bags we made short work of the walk in to the base of the Heavenly Gates and overtook a number of large groups along the way. The weather, as always in Kerry, was very changeable: wonderful sunshine, then misty and cloudy with poor visibility but then clearing again just as quickly.

There was some apprehension about the condition of the rock, which we discussed as we gained height. We felt more assured, however, when we reached the mountain refuge and got a call from John G to say "Go ahead! You can do it, but use plenty of gear and take your time."

Encouraged by this, we carried on up the steep scramble to the top of the Gates where we were greeted by views of Lough Gouragh and Lough Callee below us. For a short while the Eastern Reeks were also visible to Cruach Mhór.

Now it was time for the serious work to begin. We had all climbed Howling Ridge before, so the ledge we now found ourselves gearing up on was not alien to us. In dry summer conditions the ridge is graded Very Difficult. Today, the rock was wet and, after two severe winters, we knew we could encounter loose rock. Never before had any Mid Tippers been to this stage of the climb without some of the more experienced men in our group with them. For us, this was new and dangerous territory, but we tried not to dwell too much on that point.

Just as we finished gearing up, a small group came up onto the ledge, so we allowed ourselves to be distracted long enough to have some photos taken before we set off again.

It began to drizzle a little as we moved to the right to begin scrambling. It was greasy, as we expected, so we

LEADING UP TO THE FINGER, I FELT VERY EXPOSED FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE I HAD STARTED CLIMBING TWO YEARS BEFORE.

INFORMATION

- **CLIMB:** Corrán Tuathail by Howling Ridge.
- **COMMENTS:** One of the classic Irish mountaineering routes. Steep, exhilarating!
- **GRADE:** Very Diff. to Severe. Some previous rockclimbing experience required.
- **TIME:** 4 hrs approximately.
- **ASCENT:** 430m. (Summit: 1,038m.)

made sure that any rock we grasped to pull ourselves up on was secure before we committed to it, calling out if anything was loose or untrustworthy. In this way we made our way safely to the first pitch of the day. Mary set up her belay point and Winnie began to climb. We continued in this way without incident and Mary and I could only admire Winnie as she made her way without too much difficulty up the first and second pitches.

The third pitch, which leads up to the Tower, presented the first really challenging crux. I warmed up as I belayed Winnie easily up the first part of the climb on this pitch but she then called out that she was going to play safe and place some gear. This was understandable as the rock leans out at this point. It would be safe enough when the rock is dry but not in that day's greasy conditions. She studied the rock for a few minutes and then she was up in a couple of moves.

After tying in, she top-roped Mary who found the overhanging rock tricky to negotiate but got over it with little difficulty. While Mary was climbing, I free-climbed the first part of this section and then tied in and made my way to the top of the pitch safely.

OPPORTUNITY TO LEAD

My opportunity to lead came on the last pitch, which leads up to the Finger. I had climbed Howling Ridge once before, under the watchful eye of Dan Condren, some weeks earlier when it was dry. I tried not to think too much about it as I clipped in, making sure that my karabiner was locked. The first bit of climbing on the wet, greasy rock certainly focused the mind. My clunky boots did little to reassure me. It was completely different to climbing on dry rock, and although I'd consider myself a strong and confident climber, I felt very exposed for the first time since I had started climbing two years ago. Although I was tied in with Winnie belaying me, I was in essence free-climbing, so if I fell I could seriously injure myself. However, I had no intention of backing down now!

As soon as I could cling to the rock securely I set about placing some gear and was fortunate enough to pick the right size first time. I yanked on it several times to make sure it was set. Then, with huge relief, I shouted "Slack!" to Winnie, pulled up the rope and clipped it in.

Phew, it was time for a breather! At least now if I fell, I had some protection in and so the rest of the climb was less challenging, at least psychologically. I placed a second piece of gear and, once I reached the top, just

Bridget belaying at the top of the last pitch, June 2011.



BIDGET BROWNE COLLECTION

below a sloping and now very greasy exposed section of rock, I belayed.

Once I had tied in safely I went about setting up my belay. I could neither see nor hear my companions below but I remembered another of our experienced climbers, John F Kennedy, telling me once that you should be able to belay an out-of-sight partner by the feel of the rope. So, following this advice, the others came up without any problems.

Once we sorted out the gear we made our way very carefully across the greasy slabs of the Bridge and scrambled up to the last pitch of the day, the Upper Pinnacle. This is a huge rock leaning out towards the climber, making it a little tricky to cross over to the other side. As the rock was wet we used a sling for safety and then crossed the tiny "footbridge" from where we scrambled and climbed in poor visibility to the top of Corrán Tuathail (1,038m). We had left the Heavenly Gates at 12:10pm and reached the top of our almost 430m climb at 4:00pm. No speed records broken, but we felt hugely satisfied with our achievement.

As we neared the cross, we could hear somewhere to our right the distinctive sound of John G. We called out to him in the mist and he shouted back to us. He was climbing Curved Gully with fellow Mid Tippers Dan Condren, Joan Quinn and Josephine Tobin.

There were congratulations all round when we met at the top, with the requisite photo-shoot taken in the mist. Next to congratulate us was the legendary Tim Murphy of Kerry Mountain Rescue, who was out for an afternoon stroll!

Following a quick lunch, we headed back down in joyous mood via the Devil's Ladder. I have an intense dislike of loose scree and shale, particularly when it's wet, so I was not looking forward to this descent. As always, John G chose this time to rattle on about how most people who die on the mountains do so on their descent – thanks very much, John! Mary offered me her walking poles, which I gratefully accepted.

We all made it down, as the Norwegian climber, Rolf Bauer, who died on K2 with Ger McDonnell in 2008, used to say, "to get home, remain friends and achieve your goal" ■

THE AUTHOR

Bridget Browne is a member of the Mid-Tipperary Hillwalkers Club (website: www.midtipperhillwalkers.ie), which she joined in 2007. She was new to the sport at that time but is now addicted. She walks in the Galtees, Comeraghs or Knockmealdowns every Sunday and has climbed Ben Nevis, Mount Toubkal, Kilimanjaro and in the Dolomites.

High season



Kuffner Arête/Frontier Ridge, Mount Maudit.

NIALL EWEN takes on some classic climbs in Chamonix.

“The crack goes across here and then up there.” Not a route description, but rather a nurse showing me an x-ray of my broken finger after coming off my mountain bike a week before I was due to leave for the Alps. However, a couple of hours spent pulling my finger back into alignment and getting it into a cast, a few calls to find an XXL mitt that I could get my cast into and we were good to go.

WE WORKED OUR WAY THROUGH A MAZE OF CREVASSES, INCLUDING JUMPING ONE OF THE SCARIEST BERGSCHRUNDS I'D EVER SEEN.

On June 8th, 2011, Liam Brophy and I left Ireland on one-way tickets to Geneva with just a bag of climbing gear and a tent. After we arrived in Chamonix we camped for a few days before finding a studio apartment for less than the price of a place in the campsite.

The Arête du Cosmique is a short mixed route finishing at the Aiguille du Midi téléphérique station. Its easy access, comfortable grade and altitude make it an excellent route for acclimatisation. As we had only climbed trad routes together, this also gave Liam and I a chance to get used to moving together and operating in an alpine environment.

FORBES ARÊTE

About a week later we met some Swedish aspirant guides coming down off the Midi Plan traverse who recommended the Forbes Arête on the Aiguille Chardonnet (3,824m). We chatted to the guides in the guides' office. They had had no reports from the area so far, as it seemed nobody had been on the route that season. We checked the weather and took the bus up to Le Tour. From there we hiked up past the Glacier du Tour to the Albert Premier hut. We cooked in the picnic room and then found a nice spot about twenty minutes away for our tent.



After an alpine start and a long glacier walk in, we reached the base of the Forbes Arête ridge. Climbing steeply up snow slopes we reached a band of crevasses which we crossed after a short traverse and some exposed climbing on snow to reach the base of one of the many gendarmes.

Having established ourselves on the ridge, we found the conditions there to be less than favourable for us. The deep, loose snow we had battled with on the snow slopes below was no more consolidated on the ridge; it formed large cornices and clung to the gendarmes like skirts. We found this snow made rounding the gendarmes very difficult as often large slabs of snow would slide off, leaving a hard layer of ice underneath. To overcome this, we often found ourselves climbing the gendarmes and abseiling off, racking up a total of fourteen abseils, with seven being on the ascent.

The thick cloud that formed on the summit ridge did not help the climbing, but after several false summits we found ourselves on the top of the Forbes Arête at 21:00.

In hopes of reaching the Col Adams Reilly, we descended from the summit via the NW ridge. As it was becoming dark we decided to cut a ledge and bivi for the night, rather than risk taking the wrong descent gully.

In the morning, we brewed up and began the series of abseils down to the col before having to carefully work our way through a maze of crevasses, including jumping one of the scariest bergschrunds I'd ever seen. We made it back down to the valley that day, racking up a total of 45 hours since we'd left.

After that, the weather came down. The Chamonix valley closes in on itself, trapping you between its sides. With no space to escape upwards we sat back and waited for another weather window. My cast also came off, meaning I could now use both ice axes. ➤



THE AUTHOR

Niall Ewen is captain of DIT Mountaineering Club in DIT, where he is studying furniture design. He has been spending time in the mountains all his life and took up climbing in a big way three years ago.



Kuffner Route, Italian side.



KUFFNER ROUTE

About a week later, we were sitting in the Bivouac de la Fourche, looking up at the Kuffner route on the Frontier Ridge (on Mount Maudit). From the bivouac, we made quick progress across the narrow ridge to the Pointe de l'Androsace. We passed it by, descending to the left and climbing a long, snow gully to re-establish ourselves on the ridge.

The ridge became a little more technical here and we followed it through bands of rock to the cornices, which we were able to slip around without any difficulty before making the easy descent back to the Midi station.

MONT BLANC

The weather remained good for the next while. As we were now well acclimatised, we took this opportunity to take in Mont Blanc. It was not the most technical of ascents but it seemed like a good idea since we were in the area. We took the train down to Les Houches and the Bellevue téléphérique at 1,801m, before following the tracks and path to the Tête Rousse hut at 3,167m.

There was a lot of rockfall on the Grand Couloir but we both crossed without incident and then followed the cable-strewn ridge to the Goûter hut at 3,817m.

We cooked in a nicely-formed snowhole between the hut and the side of the mountain, although the hut staff came out and chased us off when we tried to sleep there, so we slept in a snow pit, which was actually very comfortable.

I woke to find a line of head torch-wearing climbers from the hut being led past by their guides. We listened to some music before eventually deciding it was time to get out of our snow pit. We caught the main group of climbers attempting the summit and were able to pass them as they zigzagged up the Dôme du Goûter.

Once we crossed this point the winds became strong, and visibility was obscured by spindrift, from time to time. We went to the Vallot bivouac to try to melt some more snow, but our stove was being uncooperative. We continued on up the Bosses Ridge. The wind at this point was blowing our rope straight out between us, keeping it off the ground.

Conditions at the top of Mt Blanc were very cold, but visibility was excellent, giving us incredible views over France, Italy and into Switzerland.

We trudged all the way back down to the Bellevue téléphérique that day and got the bus home. It had been a long but very satisfying day.

FRENDO SPUR

When you take the téléphérique to the Aiguille du Midi, the Frendo Spur rises up to meet you. We'd spent a few weeks looking at the route and decided that it was good for the next weather window. When the time came, we spent the night on the moraine near the route, watching the evening heat melt rocks from the mountain and sending them tumbling down the gully to the left of the route.

The next morning, an alpine start had us third on the route as climbers appeared from their bivi spots

Frendo Spur, Aiguille du Midi.





Swiss route, Grand Capuchin.

among the boulders. We climbed in big boots, removing the crampons after crossing the bergschrund and climbing the lower verglas-covered section. Progress was fast and conditions were excellent.

We reached the rocky platform just before the snow ridge in good time and, as the ice-slopes to the right of the rock buttress were still in shade, we stopped to refuel. A guide soloed past us with one walking axe just before we started off up the snow ridge. When we got to the top of the ridge, we found him coming back, having decided the right-hand ice slopes were too difficult. We offered him the middle of our rope but he said he would try to climb the rock buttress.

We met the same guide again, standing on a rock mid-way up the right-hand ice slope, and he asked us if he could still accept the offer of a spot on our rope. We finished up the ice slope, glad to finally take the weight off our front points and relax.

GRAND CAPUCHIN

Mountaineering Ireland's Alpine Meet brought plenty of our friends to the valley, and over a beer at the BBQ, we decided to attempt the Swiss route on the Grand Capuchin.

Four of us bivouacked in a very comfortable spot near the Helbronner téléphérique station. When we arrived at the base of the Grand Capuchin it seemed like everyone had started at the same time, which meant approximately eleven climbers all heading for the same route.

Climbing in two pairs, we made slow progress through the first free stages of the route, being held up by slower climbers and the tangle of ropes. We met two other Irish climbers on the route, bringing the number to five Irishmen on one route – I'm not sure if I've ever seen that in Ireland but it's very normal in France. Many of the teams backed off below the roof aid pitch but, once they had, it gave us a clear run to the top. Our friends abseiled past us on the final pitch, giving us some nice encouragement to get to the top.

The descent was hampered by three stuck ropes and the gathering darkness, but we made it back to our boots, stashed at the bottom. Glad to be out of tight rock-shoes, we made our way back through the glacier in the dark to our bivi site and a warm cuppa waiting for us.

Shortly after our ascent of the Grand Capuchin the weather broke and conditions remained mixed for some time. We both left the valley and Liam returned to Ireland. I remained in the valley, finishing off my Alpine season, and climbing rock routes between storms, before returning home overland ■

WE CAUGHT THE MAIN GROUP ATTEMPTING THE SUMMIT AND PASSED THEM AS THEY ZIGZAGGED UP THE DÔME DU GOÛTER.



Rotspitze (2,033m), Allgäu Alps, Germany.



Getting to grips with klettersteige



THE AUTHOR

Karen Jones has hillwalked extensively in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Italy, Austria, Germany and Spain. Her father, Richard Jones, is a member of Cork Mountaineering Club.

Karen Jones goes scrambling in Germany's Allgäu Alps.

In August of last year my father Richard Jones and I set off to go climbing in the Allgäu Alps in southern Germany. I had just received my Leaving Certificate results and wasn't due to start university until the following month, so I was the ideal climbing companion for my father as I was free to go with him at that time.

He had, of course, been planning the trip for some time by reading the Cicerone Press book *Klettersteig: Scrambles in the Northern Limestone Alps*. Our aim was to climb some klettersteige (via ferratas in Italian) in the Alps south of Memmingen in southern Germany.

We flew from Dublin to Memmingen on Friday, August 26th. After hiring a rental car, we drove for

about an hour to Oberstdorf in the Allgäu Alps and found apartment accommodation in the Hotel Bergland. There was no climbing the next day as the rain came down heavily. We spent the day in Kempten and visited the Alpine Museum, which chronicles the development of skiing and mountaineering from the early 20th century up to the present day. There were also exhibits on mountain geology, ecosystems, glaciation, etc. It was a good place to spend some time on a rainy day.

ROTSPIITZE

On Sunday, we set off for our first peak. We began early that morning. Our plan was to climb the Rotspitze (2,033m) and the Breitenberg (1,887m),



two peaks on a horseshoe ridge. The initial ascent was steep. We made our way through a forest of trees up to a fork at the Häbelesgundalp, an alpine meadow where we met a man tending his grazing cows.

We walked a well-trodden path leading to the Rotspitze. The path consisted of a series of hairpins cut into the north ridge just right of the summit. Once we passed above this, we were able to climb over the rock to reach the cross on the summit. It took us three and a half hours to get there. From the top, we could see the ridge we had to walk along to reach Breitenberg.

BREITENBERG

After a short break, we continued along the ridge and over crags. There were several wire ropes located along the route as well as a ladder to assist climbers. The scrambling ended just 30 minutes before the summit of Breitenberg. From here, it was an easy walk to the cross on the summit. We could see the Alps to the south and the flat plains of southern Germany to the north. It had taken us three hours from the Rotspitze.

At the summit cross, we had completed the ridge. We then descended to the alpine meadow, where we said hello again to the grazing cows and then went on down to the valley floor via a shady path through the forest. I felt tired when we reached the bottom but the day had been enjoyable, taking us a total of 8½ hours to complete our route.

FIDEREPASS HUT

The next day, we crossed over into Austria and travelled up the Kanzelwand cableway from Rielzern. From here we went down, then up to the Fiderepass Hut (2,065m). As the cloud descended and enveloped

Karen Jones on the Mindelheim Klettersteig.



The Fiderepass Hut.

On the Hiddelanger
Klettersteig.



the surrounding peaks, it became clear that it would not be wise to ascend further. We booked into the hut for the night and were shown to a large communal dormitory, or *lager* in German. Great!

We were first in, so from experience we took two places by the window. When sleeping in an alpine hut, there can be anything up to forty mountaineers in a room, so you should always get a place by the window for fresh air at night, and don't forget your ear plugs! We stayed in the hut for the rest of the day, reading our books. We had dinner there in the evening and went to the *lager* at 10:00pm.

MINDELHEIM

We woke early the next morning and had breakfast. In the comfort of the hut, we put on our helmets and harnesses, complete with shock absorbers and karabiners for clipping into the steel cables on our proposed route. We left the hut at 8:00am.

There was cloud for most of the morning, but apart from this the weather remained fine. It took us about three-quarters of an hour to reach the start of the Mindelheim Klettersteig.

At the plaque announcing the start of the klettersteig, we met the first steel cables and clipped in. We were now faced with following a ridge using a series of ropes, ladders and one bridge. The route was tough in places and I was forced to wear gloves due to the roughness of the steel ropes. However, the challenges that the klettersteig presented were enjoyable, and when the cloud rose we had spectacular views of the terrain surrounding us. The highest point on the ridge was the Mittlerer Scafalpenkopf (2,302m).

We reached the Mindelheimer Hut (2,058m), at the end of the route, after a total of 6½ hours. After a short break there for hot chocolate, we made a 3½-hour descent back to the valley floor at Rielzern, where our car was parked from the previous day.

HIDDELANGER

Next morning, we took the Nebelhornbahn cable car from Oberstdorf to the top of the Nebelhorn (2,224m). Our plan was to traverse the Hiddelanger Klettersteig. On with helmets and harnesses, and we set out at 10:30am.

It was a tough route, full of ups and downs, in some parts aided by steel ladders. On some stretches the ridge was very exposed, with steep drops down the cliffs on both sides, and it was necessary to remain attached to the cables at all times.

The climbing was mostly Grade 1, with some Grade 2 in parts. The distance on the map was 5km, and with all the ups and downs it took us five hours. At the finish there was quite a scramble down to a path below the ridge.

We took in the scenery and commented on our climb on the Hiddelanger ridge, now visible from below as we walked back to the cable-car station.

The last cable car was at 5:00pm, but it was not in our plan to catch it. There is an alpine hut next to the cable station, so we stayed there that night. The Edmund-Probst-Haus (1,925m) provided us with evening meal, bed in a bedroom-for-four and breakfast for €45 each. As a bonus, there was a wonderful sunset.

The next morning, we took the cable car down in the rain – and that was it! The forecast for the area did not look promising, so we had to change our plans. Instead of climbing, we went cycling around Lake Constance for three days.

Of course, my father had his nose back in the guidebook on the way home – planning for next year, no doubt. The Allgäu Alps in Germany are easy to get to for a short trip and, as the guidebook says, the klettersteige compare favourably with the best that the via ferratas in the Dolomites can offer ■



On the steel ladder of the Hiddelanger Klettersteig.



After the Ark

Derek Fanning climbs Mount Ararat in Turkey.

Rising above the brown landscape of eastern Turkey, the great snow-capped peak of Mount Ararat (5,137m, 16,854ft) is a magnificent sight. It has drawn admiration from passers-by such as Marco Polo for millennia and has enticed many adventurous and brave souls to explore its slopes.

The first man to climb Mount Ararat was a German scientist in 1829, doing something that was considered wildly eccentric at the time – mountaineering. At that time, mountaineering was very definitely a highly unusual pursuit, but that was to change somewhat in the coming decades with the dawn of the golden age of climbing in the European Alps.

Because Ararat is a free-standing volcano, it dominates the landscape for many miles around. It is a dormant stratovolcano, which means it is a tall, conical volcano built up of many layers (strata) of solidified pumice, tephra, lava and volcanic ash.

Stratovolcanoes are among the most common types of volcanoes, and Krakatoa and Vesuvius are two famous examples. When Krakatoa exploded in 1883, it killed about 40,000 people and the explosion is said to have been the loudest sound ever heard in modern history, with people saying they heard it 3,000 miles

away. The eruption was four times the yield of the Tsar Bomba, which was the largest nuclear device ever detonated.

When you walk on Ararat's slopes you can see the mountains of Iran nearby. You will also meet Kurdish muleteers and shepherds chatting away to each other. They bid you 'Good day' as they zoom past, going up and down the slopes at speeds that I and most other trekkers could never hope to match. They also do this wearing footwear that would have been madness for me to wear – light plimsoll things which wouldn't have given any grip and would have put me on my bottom in the blink of an eye!

From the slopes of Ararat we looked down on the large town of Doğubeyazıt, which was an ugly place of unfinished buildings and poverty. The guidebooks had told us that western Turkey was affluent and like Europe in ambience, whereas eastern Turkey was impoverished, ignored and North African in atmosphere...and now we could see that for ourselves.

Along with the poverty and ugliness of the town, the women of Doğubeyazıt are a million miles away in their appearance from their counterparts in Istanbul. The women of Istanbul display their beauty unashamedly, as the women of Europe do, whereas



THE AUTHOR

Derek Fanning, from Birr, works as a journalist for The Midland Tribune. He has a profound love of travelling and has visited and climbed in many parts of the world. He spends his weekends under canvas, exploring different parts of Ireland.

On the last couple of hundred yards into Base Camp.



in Doğubeyazıt they hide themselves behind long coats and headscarves. Travelling back from eastern Turkey to Istanbul felt like a release from restriction, a stepping into a land of freedom, an embracing of liberality.

Doğubeyazıt is not only impoverished, ugly and repressed but there is also a heavy military presence, a presence which I didn't like either. I don't like being in places where there are uniformed men with guns, endless strands of barbed wire, sandbags and tanks being put through their paces. The reason for the military presence was twofold: firstly, it was near Iran, and secondly, the Turks don't trust the Kurds, whose extremist organization, the PKK, is still active.

The Kurds we met in Doğubeyazıt and on the slopes of Ararat were warm and friendly. At night, I read in my guidebook about the ethnic tension between Turks and Kurds, which made me reflect on our own tension between culturally different peoples here in Ireland. If culture is the enrichment of mankind, it can also sometimes lead to people focusing on their differences from others. There is hope, thankfully, that this tension in eastern Turkey will reach an amicable conclusion, that the two peoples will be able to forgive and forget, and live together in a peaceful, democratic Turkey.

On our first day slogging up the steep, stony flanks of Ararat in August it was 40° Celsius and my shirt was sodden with sweat. As usual, the other trekkers in my group were a good distance ahead of me and I was on my own. I stopped regularly, sitting down on the rocks to drink some of my four litres of water and gazing out across the brown plains and mountains. I thought about philosophy: I had been reading about Descartes, whose ideas resonated with me.

As I sat, a lone trekker approached. He was perhaps sixty and had a grey beard. There was a friendly twinkle in his eye and he exuded openness and companionship. He was American and we said hello to each other. He looked very content. We only said



Nomadic family's tent near Base Camp.

hello, but I instinctively felt he was the kind of guy I might be happy to spend a few hours with over a few beers in a bar, having a good chat.

Later that evening as we ate our vegetable soup in our Base Camp mess tent, our Turkish guide told me that the American I had met was a scientist and was spending five weeks on Ararat. "He was here last year and spent two months on the mountain looking for Noah's Ark. I can arrange an interview with him, if you like." I agreed to do an interview, as my profession is journalism and it would have made a good story.

As it turned out, we never met the scientist again and the interview never happened. I also read on the internet that he's a Christian evangelist and that there's been a steady stream of Christian evangelists to the mountain over the years looking for Noah's Ark. Suddenly, a few hours chatting with this scientist in a bar didn't seem such an enticing prospect after all.

Camp 2, high on the slopes of Mount Ararat, was not a pleasant place to be. The air was thin up there and the tents were pitched amidst a field of boulders. Negotiating these boulders was time-consuming and had to be done carefully as some of the boulders were unstable, which could have led to injuries. There were no toilets up there nor any washing facilities. This was serious mountaineering, where personal hygiene became an important matter, as contracting a stomach bug would have been all too easy.

The scenery was magnificent, with a gigantic chasm to our right into which a glacier flowed and down which a very high waterfall descended. Above this chasm rose the snow-capped summit of Ararat.

SUMMIT DAY

Nobody looks forward to summit days on high mountains like Ararat, because they are exhausting, unpleasant and dangerous. However, it's wonderful when you do reach the summit, and when you've returned safely to camp there's a great feeling of achievement.

To climb Ararat, we rose at half past midnight on August 4th. I had been lying in my tent for the previous six hours, trying to get some sleep, but without success. For breakfast, all I could manage was a few sips of tea because I knew there was a danger of vomiting if I ate anything. We set off at 1:30am, joining a queue of about sixty other climbers.

The climb was a steep, exhausting walk over difficult, rocky, slippery terrain. Far away beneath us we could see Doğubeyazıt with its hundreds of lights looking like a fairy encampment in a fantasy story. There were millions of stars in the heavens and dawn was four hours away. It wasn't that cold, perhaps 5° Celsius.

I soon realised that I was probably the slowest member of the group of sixty climbers, slowly snaking its way up the steep slopes of the stratovolcano. Soon, I was 20 or 30 metres below the tail-end of the climbers, but throughout the day I never lost sight of them and was never more than a few minutes behind.

The climbing was steep and the scree stones were tiring to negotiate. We were at about 14 or 15,000 feet and it was 2:30am. I felt really unpleasant, stopped, leaned over and began to vomit, but it was a dry vomit as my stomach was empty. This happened a few more times over the next thirty minutes and then, thankfully, it subsided.

As I walked along I was immersed in daydreaming and in negative and positive emotions. One of my beliefs is that when we daydream we are connecting directly to the Being which created the Universe and, when we are connected to this Being, we feel happy, content, blissful. We are imbued with transcendence; the possibility of being curmudgeonly or, in a more extreme form, evil, is swept away and we go through life as decent, reasonable and charitable human beings. So, as I was climbing up the steep volcanic slopes of this sacred mountain in eastern Turkey, I was focusing on negative feelings and feeling anger, and then images of beautiful things would flood my mind: I would feel this deeply enough for tears to well in my eyes.

At about five o'clock in the morning, it became noticeably colder as the wind picked up, becoming quite strong. I kept going, but eventually after 15 or 20 minutes the cold became too penetrating to ignore and I had to stop and put on more garments. As I put on a fleece a slender orange band on the horizon announced the coming of dawn, something you always look forward to on a summit day.

After half an hour the light had increased to



Some of the many tents at boulder-strewn Camp Two. In the distance is the sun-hazed plain of Doğubeyazıt.

such a level that our head torches were unnecessary. A short while later we were putting on our crampons to make the final climb across the snow slopes and up the summit dome. I noticed here that a few people were ascending without crampons, which was really foolhardy because, no matter how good a climber you are, mistakes and slips are always possible. To our right, only a few yards away, was a ferocious cliff, falling away for hundreds of feet. One slip could have had you hurtling down into the abyss. The thought was horrible and I pushed it from my mind.

At 7:00am, I reached the highest point of this stunning, magnificent mountain, a summit which is the highest point in Turkey. Sadly, there was a haze on the horizon and I could only see across the brown landscape for about 20 miles. On a clear day, it is possible to see the Caucasus, including Elbrus, the highest mountain in the Caucasus, which I had climbed in August 1998 with a group of ten Irish people.

Two hours later, we were safely back in our tents, tired but happy ■



Pictured on the summit of Mt Ararat: Derek Fanning (left) and Nick Miller.



Books

Literary editor **Peter O'Neill** presents reviews of some recent publications

BEN RUDIAK GOULD

The Burren near Ballyvaughan.



BURREN COUNTRY: TRAVELS THROUGH AN IRISH LIMESTONE LANDSCAPE

By Paul Clements

Collins Press (2011), 248pp, many photographs, one b&w map, ISBN 978184889939, €12.99

In his frequent visits to the Burren over the past two decades, Paul Clements has explored the region on foot, by bicycle and by car, returning time and again to favourite spots including the Flaggy Shore, Ballyvaughan, Sheshymore and Mullaghmore. This book documents many of his meanderings, discoveries and musings, and could be described as a well-researched eulogy to the Burren.

In his precise, evocative way, Clements describes, from a very personal perspective, the many facets of this unique place: the natural history, the weather, the light, the remoteness, the limestone pavement, the music, the place names, the people, the past; and how they assail his senses. The varying colours of the Burren get a chapter to themselves. Another chapter details a whiskey-smelling session in a bar. The level of detail in the writing is

such that Clements takes a paragraph to describe the shade of blue of the spring gentian petals and another for the industrious web-spinning of a spider he observes in a gryke.

His transcriptions of the overheard conversations of tourists make amusing reading, while his interviews with some of the well-known writers and artists who have settled in the Burren provide absorbing insights as to what it is about the Burren that inspires their creativity. He reflects critically on the ill-fated government proposal to build an interpretative centre at Mullaghmore and the impact this might have had on the area. However, the author barely touches on the significant relationship between farming and the Burren and makes little reference to the farming community.

Clements is an accomplished writer who constructs every sentence carefully, and whose choice of words occasionally has one reaching for the dictionary. He frequently quotes from other well-known writers and has included a helpful glossary, a bibliography and an index. However, a larger map with more detail including some roads and topography would have been more useful for reference than the tiny map he provides.

This book is an up-to-the-minute, affectionate, scrupulously accurate and eloquent depiction of the Burren in all seasons. It most certainly does justice to its subject and is likely to either awaken or rekindle in the reader a passion for this exquisitely beautiful region.

Penny Bartlett Mountaineer, member of IMC.



UPCOMING TITLES

GER McDONNELL BIOGRAPHY

The Collins Press is publishing a biography of Ger McDonnell, the Irish mountaineer who died while descending on K2 in August 2008 after making the first successful Irish ascent of that "savage mountain," as it is called:

THE TIME HAS COME: GER McDONNELL: HIS LIFE AND HIS DEATH ON K2

By Damien O'Brien

Written by his brother-in-law, Damien O'Brien, the book is about Ger's final trip, as well as containing stories from his life in Ireland and Alaska. Ger's story is told through the words of family and friends, and in Ger's own words from his diaries.

The book was launched in Ger's hometown of Kilcornan, Co Limerick, at the end of March and will be reviewed in a future issue of the *Irish Mountain Log*.

TWO LONG-DISTANCE WALKS IN SCOTLAND

Rucksack Readers are publishing two new books about two of Scotland's finest long-distance walks, which will be available shortly:

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS WAY

By Paul Prescott

This new route crosses central Scotland from coast to coast, running for 107 miles (172km) from Arrochar on Loch Long to St Andrews on the Fife coast, and passing through many places strongly linked with Mary Queen of Scots.

THE ROB ROY WAY

By Jacquetta Megarry

This third edition is a guide to a popular long-distance trail which runs for 77 miles from Drymen to Pitlochry, passing through several villages which have strong links with Rob Roy MacGregor, Scotland's most famous outlaw. This route was recognised in March 2012 as one of Scotland's Great Trails.



Arduous wall-climb in Canadian Arctic

Amazing photos from expedition to climb Mt Asgard on Baffin Island

BAFFIN ISLAND: THE ASCENT OF MOUNT ASGARD

By Alastair Lee

Frances Lincoln, 120pp, many colour photographs, ISBN 9780712232211 (hb), £25.00

This is a large-format photographic book with 120 pages of colour photography. The narrative is told through the photo captions, which relate the story of a six-week wall-climbing expedition to the Canadian Arctic in 2009.

Their quest to free-climb the Bavarian Route on the north face of Mount Asgard – which translates from Norse legend as ‘the home of the warrior gods’ – is graphically related with stunning action shots and bleak pictures of the climbers suffering through harsh freezing out of sun conditions.

The team used a chartered Douglas DC 3 to air-drop their gear and food to the foot of Mount Asgard. The three-man climbing team then sky-dived in to establish their base camp. The film crew took seven days

to trek there from the township of Pangnirtung, starting with a 30km voyage in a fishing boat up the fiord of the same name. A feature of their trek up the Weasel Valley was their use of a series of emergency shelters (polar bear-proofed) for the protection of trekkers.

The climbing difficulties and bivouac situations on the route look so perilous; it would be challenging to describe them adequately without such vivid pictures. Due to the extreme cold conditions, the team were forced to aid-climb a number of pitches in the middle of the route. One of the free pitches was graded E6 6b before they resorted to aid-climbing the blanker mid-section to reach the summit in deteriorating weather.

The three-man climbing team was backed up by two riggers and two cameramen who produced film footage and still shots of the most remarkable and daring standards. The climbing team



Mount Asgard, Baffin Island, Canada.

MACZ-OUT (JAMIE MCINTYRE)

consisted of Sean ‘Stanley’ Leary, an American; Carlos Suarez, a Spaniard; and the remarkable expedition leader, Leo Houlding, from the English Lake District. Houlding and Leary had previously combined to climb both El Capitan and Half Dome in a single 24-hour push. As a warm-up, the team made a four-hour speed ascent of Doug Scott’s 1972 route up the north-east face.

This book is essentially a print version of what would make a most fascinating slide presentation, as the photography is of the highest

standards in terms of recording the extreme climbing and bivouac situations as well as the majesty and moods of the mountains in all lights and weather. The captions provide the narrative to what is essentially a coffee-table book. A dazzling display of the magic of the northern lights is also captured by the photographers. As a view of modern mountaineering at its cutting edge, this book is both informative and illuminating.

Frank Nugent Mountaineer, explorer, author of *Seek the Frozen Lands: Irish Polar Explorers 1740-1922*.



SKYE SEA CLIFFS AND OUTCROPS

By Mark Hudson

Scottish Mountaineering Club, 335pp, many colour illustrations plus many b&w illustrations, maps and sketches ISBN 978-0-907233-14-2, £25.00

In the last issue of the *Irish Mountain Log* we reviewed the Scottish Mountaineering Club’s guides to scrambling on the Isle of Skye and to rock climbing in the Cuillins. Now the set is completed by this guide to climbing on Skye’s sea cliffs and outcrops.

The presentation is similar to that of the Cuillin guide and cannot be praised too highly. Almost 1,200 routes are listed. A welcome inclusion is an index of bouldering areas and another of sea-stacks and pinnacles.

Climbers visiting the Cuillins of Skye are always subject to

the vagaries of mountain weather. However, this will not be a problem for a climber armed with this guide because a huge number of low-level venues are listed here, which enjoy more consistently favourable weather. Because these routes are in locations in every part of the island, it is possible to pick a place which is sheltered from any wind on any given day.

Rock types vary from sandstone to gneiss to dolerite and a small amount of granite. Some of the dolerite is columnar, as at Fair Head. Venues range from abseil-

in/climb-out sea-cliffs to outcrops with short routes and easy descents to multi-pitch routes with a mountain flavour and longer walk-ins.

This set of guidebooks from the Scottish Mountaineering Club confirms that Skye is an excellent climbing location which should be on every climber’s list of things to do, and that is before you factor in the friendly Scots, and their food and drink, which add further dimensions to the experience.

Sé O’Hanlon Rock climber, past Secretary of MCI, member of IMC.



Books

A photographic tribute to the Galtees

Well-known Tipperary hillwalker Jimmy Barry knows the Galtees like the back of his hand. He has now self-published a collection of his own evocative photographs, taken in the Galtees over many years.



UNDER GALTEE SKIES: A PICTORIAL JOURNEY THROUGH THE GALTEE MOUNTAINS

By Jimmy Barry

58pp, many colour illustrations, ISBN 9780957038301, €15.00

In the normal course of events, it would be wrong to judge a book by its cover. It could be equally argued that it would be a mistake to review a book based on the attendance at the official launch. However, in the case of Jimmy Barry's *Under Galtee Skies*, the front cover image of the magnificent Galtee Wall is but one of the multitude of wonderful images that take the reader on a pictorial journey through the Galtees.

The official launch late last year in the ballroom of the Aherlow House Hotel was a truly remarkable event. More than three hundred people from all over Ireland packed into the 'ballroom of romance' to learn about one man's love of the Galtees. Showing their support were representatives from walking clubs throughout Ireland, alongside the South Eastern Mountain Rescue Association, the Irish Coast Guard Service, the Civil Defence, the Red Cross, members of local community and voluntary groups, family and friends. The large attendance reflected perfectly on the life of the author – a life of giving, caring and sharing – and the event, much like the book, was a celebration of the Galtees.

The author is a great ambassador for the Galtees. His enthusiasm leaps out from the pages as he gives a very personal account of the local history and outlines the cultural, built and natural heritage of the Galtees. His deep insight is an accumulation of over thirty years' experience of walking in the Galtees in sun, wind, rain, hail and snow. The accounts of the various place names, the local built heritage, including booley huts, and the cultural memorials, including the Galtymore cross, are an inspiration to all to set off afresh and rediscover the Galtees and all their hidden treasures.

Jimmy's understanding of the local flora and fauna and his passion for the high mountains is on display for all to see in the fascinating collection of photographs in the book. The images have been distilled down from a collection of several thousand taken by the author over the years. Those contained in the lavishly illustrated full-colour book are a wonderful representation of the Galtees. The images capture nature and everyday features that many of us walk past without ever noticing. The author's photographic eye for light is especially evident in images taken in the uplands and in winter scenes.

Under Galtee Skies is not meant as a guidebook: it does not contain a description of routes or walks. It is, however, an invaluable 'insider's guide' that will equip anyone visiting the area, including mountain leaders, with a deeper insight to the wonders of the Galtees. As the author himself outlines in the book, the Galtees "have been a place of refuge, a place to bury the dead, to be closer to God or gods, a place to be alone."

To quote San Diego song-writer John Kelly, "the true measure of a man is how much love he leaves behind, after he moves on." Thankfully, the author, Jimmy Barry, is a long way from moving on. He has given us a beautiful, personal and reflective publication which in many respects is a measure of his love of the Galtees and will certainly entice many hillwalkers and non-hillwalkers alike to the area.

Ruairí Ó Conchúir Mountaineer, environmentalist and past Chairman of Mountaineering Ireland.



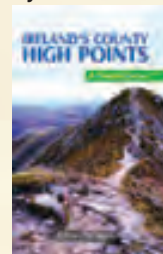
UPCOMING TITLES

IRISH WALKING GUIDES

The Collins Press will be launching a number of Irish walking guides in the coming months:

IRELAND'S COUNTY HIGH POINTS: A WALKING GUIDE

By Kieron Gribbon



This guide explains what you need to know before setting out to climb the highest mountain (or sometimes hill) in each county. Each county-focused chapter contains a brief county profile and detailed walking route

descriptions accompanied by easy-to-read maps.

SCENIC WALKS IN KILLARNEY: A WALKING GUIDE

By Jim Ryan

This guide describes eighteen of Killarney's most interesting low-level walks – through the town of Killarney; out to Muckross and Torc; down to Ross Island; and peaceful strolls in the countryside.

TIPPERARY & WATERFORD: A WALKING GUIDE

By John G O'Dwyer

A comprehensive guide to some of the most captivating walks in Tipperary and Waterford, from the rugged Comeragh coums to the peaks of the Galtees, and from the myth-laden hills of Slievenamagh to the Devil's Bit.

DONEGAL, SLIGO & LEITRIM: MOUNTAIN AND COASTAL HILLWALKS

By Adrian Hendroff

In this guide, Adrian Hendroff describes twenty-seven walks of various grades in the northwest of Ireland. This area has a diversity of walks, from the wild, untamed landscapes of Donegal to the gentler hills and valleys of Sligo and Leitrim.

NORTHERN IRELAND: A WALKING GUIDE

By Helen Fairbairn

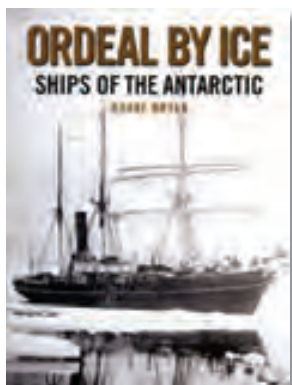
This revised edition describes walking routes in every part of Northern Ireland, from the Mountains of Mourne to the Giant's Causeway, and from Fermanagh's 'Lake District' to the rolling Sperrins.

➔ BUY IT NOW

■ Copies of *Under Galtee Skies* are available from www.mountaineering.ie and from the Mountaineering Ireland office (01 625 1115) at a reduced rate of €13 plus €2 postage.



The RRS James Clark Ross.



ORDEAL BY ICE: SHIPS OF THE ANTARCTIC

By Rorke Bryan

The Collins Press (2011), 536pp, 262 pics & dwgs (78 colour), 21 maps, ISBN 13: 978-1-84889-040-4, €39.99

Dubliner Rorke Bryan, son of a merchant sea captain, spent most of his working life with British Antarctic Survey (BAS) and in this finely presented hardback book he has covered not only the ships which journeyed to the Antarctic, but the purpose of the journeys, be they commercial sealing/whaling, expeditionary or tourist/scientific.

For nautical enthusiasts, Arctic or Antarctic, this must be *the* book.

But it is much more. As a description of the expeditions, it is the best that I have seen. They all are here and well described, with good maps; from the early sea reconnaissances of James Cook, American Palmer and Estonian Bellinghausen, to the first overwintering by Borchgrevink at Cape Adare, to the masochists of the 'heroic age' (including our own).

Rorke draws on his own experience of the international scientific community. He is not enamoured with the effect on the pristine environment of latter-day tourism and is mildly critical of the adventurers' beaten path to Mount Vinson.

His bibliography is all-encompassing, though naturally English-language dominant. The book nonetheless is inclusive of the endeavours of all nationalities, a rare enough quality. This is a book to be savoured.

Paddy Barry Sailor, polar explorer.



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Wild flowers *of the uplands*



Walkers in the Galtees, heading towards Galtymore.

HELEN LAWLESS

LITTLE MOUNTAIN BEAUTIES

Following on from the article on heathers in *Irish Mountain Log* No 98, this article introduces you to some of the wild flowers commonly found on the Irish mountains in late spring and over the summer. All are small, low-growing plants but their beauty rewards the effort required to spot them.



Lousewort with its ragged leaves and hooded, pale pink flowers, photographed at Keadeen, Co Wicklow.

Lousewort

Lus an ghiolla *Pedicularis sylvatica*

Lousewort flowers from April to July and is one of the first flowers you will come across on the hills each year. It is a low, creeping plant with ragged, reddish leaves that look a bit like Lollo Rosso lettuce.

Despite its unattractive name, Lousewort produces beautiful pale-pink flowers, up to 2cm long. Lousewort is a semi-parasitic plant that attaches to the roots of host plants (usually grasses and heathers) to compensate for the poor supply of nutrients in its bog and heath habitats.

Lousewort was believed to spread lice to sheep and other animals, and while this is the origin of the plant's name, it remains unproven. However, it has been shown that Lousewort could possibly be involved in the transmission of liver fluke, as Lousewort grows in wet areas where in winter small snails that can carry liver fluke embryos cling to plants. These could be transferred to sheep that graze over the land. Sheep afflicted by liver fluke are almost sure to have lice too.¹

Tormentil

Néalfartach *Potentilla erecta*

If there's one flower you'll definitely come across on the Irish hills, it is Tormentil. Its bright-yellow, four-petalled flowers dot the slopes from May to September, and often into October. Tormentil flowers are small, typically 7-11mm in diameter.

Tormentil is both widespread and abundant and will be found growing in grassy places, on heaths and bogs. The



Tormentil's cheerful yellow flowers dot the hills for almost six months of the year.

ecologist Tony Whilde commented that Tormentil's adaptability to such a wide range of soil and climatic conditions is as noteworthy as the specialisation found in many other upland plants.²

The thick roots of Tormentil contain a lot of tannin, a plant compound normally derived from tree bark, that is used

© ZÖE DEVLIN



Heath Milkwort growing among grass on the slopes above Doolough, Co Mayo.

extensively for tanning leather. During the 18th century, Ireland was particularly lacking in trees, and in 1727 the Irish Parliament awarded £200 to William Maples for discovering that leather could be tanned using Tormentil roots. Maples published his findings in a pamphlet entitled *A Method of Tanning Without Bark*, in 1729. This contained an illustration of a Tormentil plant and has the distinction of being the first illustrated botanical work to be published in Ireland.³

Tormentil also had a range of medicinal uses, mainly to do with the digestive system. Its roots were boiled in milk and the milk then given to calves and children to cure them of colic. The name 'Tormentil' reflects this as it comes from the Latin *tormentum*, which means both torment and the pains of colic.⁴ Tormentil is still used in many herbal remedies to treat digestive problems and toothache.

Heath Milkwort

Na deirfiúríní *Polygala serpyllifolia*

Heath Milkwort is a slender, inconspicuous plant with dark leaves. Its flowers are most often deep blue in colour, but you will also find mauve, pink and even white versions. Milkwort's colour variations account for its folk-name, 'four sisters,' which is reflected in the plant's Irish name, na deirfiúríní.⁴

Heath Milkwort flowers from May to September, but I have come across flowers as late as December in the Maumturks and

the Wicklow Mountains. These little flowers (5-6mm long) are really beautiful and best appreciated through a hand lens.

Heath Milkwort is a native perennial of heaths and grassy places. It grows among grass, to a height of about 15cm, so can be easily overlooked. It is very similar to Common Milkwort, which is found on less acidic ground. Heath Milkwort has lanceolate or spear-shaped narrow leaves. The lower leaves are always in opposite pairs (unlike Common Milkwort).

Milkwort's Latin name, *Polygala*, means 'much milk' and Classical authors recommended it to nursing mothers for promoting the flow of milk after childbirth. However, there seems to be little evidence of its success in folklore.⁵

Heath Spotted-Orchid

Na circíní *Dactylorhiza maculata*

Heath Spotted-Orchid is Ireland's most common orchid⁶ and one of our most delightful upland flowers. Heath Spotted-Orchids will be found from May to August, growing in damp acid grassland, wet heath and other boggy areas. It is sometimes found alongside Cross-Leaved Heath and Bog Asphodel.

Like many of its relatives, Heath Spotted-Orchid is variable in colour, but the flowers are most often pale pink with purple streaks and spots. It has narrow, pointed leaves, usually with dark spots. Heath Spotted-Orchid is an upright plant (10-30cm) with a dense flower spike that is attractive to bees, which in turn pollinate the flowers. The lower lip of the flower has three lobes, with the centre usually smaller than the other two. This, together with its peaty habitat, distinguishes Heath Spotted-Orchid from the similar Common Spotted-Orchid. If it's growing on acidic ground, then it's likely to be Heath Spotted-Orchid.

Orchids are particularly slow-growing plants and may take several years to reach flowering stage. Orchid seeds are amongst the smallest in the plant kingdom. The tiny seeds, which are scattered by the wind, have no food reserves. Germination relies on the presence of a fungus, which the orchid exploits for nutrients. Orchids are dormant in winter, with tubers, stems and buds all underground.

Common Butterwort

Bodán meascáin *Pinguicula vulgaris*

Common Butterwort is one of our most distinctive upland plants – its rosette of



The beautiful upright spikes of Heath Spotted-orchid, growing below Ballinaddan, Co Wicklow.

yellow-green leaves (about 5cm across) clings to the ground in a star shape. The violet flowers appear between May and July each year, as a single flower (about 1cm across) on a leafless stem of 5-10cm in height. Common Butterwort is found on wet heaths and bogs, usually on bare ground and where water seeps from crags and rocks.

.....Continued next page ➤



The bright yellow-green leaves of Common Butterwort, growing in their distinctive star shape on the lower slopes of Ben Bury, Co Mayo.



Wild flowers *of the uplands*



Close-up of Round-leaved Sundew with trapped insect. This plant often grows on bare peat.

Butterwort, like Sundew (below), survives in a nutrient-poor environment by supplementing its food supply with an insect-based diet. Butterwort's tongue-shaped leaves are covered in microscopic glands that exude a sticky substance. If the glands are touched by a drop of rain, or a grain of sand, nothing happens, but if they come in contact with any nitrogenous material such as the body of an insect, the glands discharge an acid fluid that dissolves the insect. The resulting solution, which includes mineral salts, nitrates and phosphates, is then absorbed by the plant. The edges of Butterwort leaves are curled slightly inwards; if an insect alights near the margins, the leaf slowly curls a bit more, bringing additional glands in contact with the prey and thus hastening its absorption.⁶

A related species, Large-flowered Butterwort (*Pinguicula grandiflora*), is found mainly in Kerry and west Cork. Its rosette of leaves can be 10cm or more in

diameter, with a flower up to 2cm across. The spur at the back of the flower is notably longer than on Common Butterwort. Large-flowered Butterwort is not found in Britain; it is one of our Lusitanian species, with its next nearest location in the mountains of northern Spain and southern France.

A third species, Pale Butterwort (*Pinguicula lusitanica*), is found mainly in the west of Ireland. It has small, greyish rosettes (1-3cm wide) and much smaller, pale pink flowers.⁷

Butterwort is also known as bog violet and in Ulster is known as St Patrick's Staff, due to the resemblance of the shape of the flower to a staff. It was said that one of the flowers sprang up wherever St Patrick's own staff touched the ground on his travels over the bogs.⁴

In common with other plants such as Bog Asphodel and Sundew, which grow in the same habitat, Butterwort was believed to cause ill-health in sheep and cattle.³

Round-leaved Sundew

Druchtín móna *Drosera rotundifolia*

The small white flower of Round-leaved Sundew opens only briefly in sunshine, and it is more often seen in bud form. The plant's appearance and its dietary habits are more remarkable than its flower. Like Butterwort, Sundew is an insectivorous plant. Round-leaved Sundew has circular leaves (up to 1cm across) that are hairy – 'all whiskery like a bee's leg,' as a Connemara man described it to Robert Lloyd Praeger.⁶ The 'hairs' are tentacles that secrete sticky, digestive juices as in the Butterwort, but they are also extraordinarily responsive to animal substances, closing in around the prey till the leaf is like a shut fist. Praeger observed that the sundews seemed to be more efficient hunters than the butterworts, with their leaves showing plenty of trapped insects, not only little ones but sometimes a small dragonfly or even a wasp.⁶

Sundews are found on heaths and bogs, often on bare peat or amongst Sphagnum mosses. The plants can be very small, and due to their reddish colour are at first difficult to spot. Like some of the other flowers mentioned earlier, it is well worth the effort of getting down low, and getting your knees wet, to have a good look at this fascinating plant. A hand lens, or even the



The more unusual Oblong-leaved Sundew is found mainly in the west, as in this example from the Poisoned Glen, Co Donegal.

HELEN LAWLESS



5 minute interview

Colin Gibbon – climber, outdoor enthusiast

Colin Gibbon is an avid climber and outdoor enthusiast. He is the head of Shielbaggan Outdoor Education Centre in New Ross, Co Wexford, and he is also a member of BOS (Bord Oiliúint Sléibhe).

What did you do for your last holiday?

Two weeks skiing in Chamonix

Where is your next holiday to be?

Family holiday to the Scilly Isles

If you could climb any mountain what would it be?

Salathe wall on El Capitan

Why do you love walking in the Irish hills?

Great vistas, because there are no trees

Where is your favourite place to walk in Ireland?

Hook Head or Mweelrea

Where is your favourite place outside of Ireland?

Acadia National Park, Maine

What is your favourite piece of outdoor equipment?

Waterproof Canon camera

What is your favourite hill food?

Malt loaf

Have you ever been lost?

Oh yeah!

Have you ever been scared in the mountains?

Yes. When exposed to a savage rockfall in the Dru Couloir, Chamonix

What does adventure mean to you?

When you can't just say 'I've had enough' and go home

Water bottle or bladder system?

Water bottle. I have passed a certain age

Frosties or muesli?

Neither

Beer or lager?

Lager

Who do you most admire in the outdoor world?

Ranulph Fiennes. Because anything is possible

Who has inspired you most in the outdoor world?

Robert Park – a teacher in school who got me into the outdoors

What is the greatest threat to walking and climbing in Ireland?

People with the unshakable belief that it is okay to walk a dog anywhere

Photograph: Xxxxxx??

magnifying lens on a compass, will bring out its vivid colours and stunning detail.

The glistening droplet at the end of each tentacle was mistaken for dew by early observers, who assumed that this plant, unlike almost all others, was capable of retaining its dew in full sunlight. So, the Sundew got its name, and a reputation for magical properties.¹ This, perhaps, led to Sundew's use for medicinal purposes, with Irish folklore records showing its reputation as a cure for asthma and whooping cough.⁵ *Drosera* is also a commonly used homeopathic remedy for a dry cough.

There are two less common sundew species found in Ireland, mainly in the west: Oblong-leaved Sundew (*Drosera intermedia*) and the larger Great Sundew (*Drosera anglica*), both of which have oblong leaves.

Find out more

In the same way that the Irish mountains, while not the highest in the world, are rich in their scenic quality, the flowering plants that grow on our hills, while mainly small, are amongst the most beautiful we have. Many have also made ingenious adaptations to cope with life in harsh and nutrient-poor environments.

Having a little knowledge about the plants we see will add to the joy of a day on the hills. There's no better time to share this information with others than over the summer while these plants are in flower.

This article has covered a few flowers you are likely to come across. For those who would like to learn more, there are some excellent online guides to Irish wildflowers, most notably Zoë Devlin's www.wildflowersofireland.net and Jenny Seawright's www.irishwildflowers.ie.

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Your insurance in summary

One of the subjects that Mountaineering Ireland is most frequently asked is about is our members' insurance policy. This article is intended to give members an understanding of the insurance cover that part (€10.50, or £8.90) of their Mountaineering Ireland membership fee goes towards paying.

Below, we try to present the information in clear, non-technical language. If you need more information, please contact the Mountaineering Ireland office.

There is little doubt that Mountaineering Ireland could find a cheaper insurance policy but, like all insurance policies, you get what you pay for. This policy has been developed to provide members and clubs with appropriate cover, should it be needed. Equally, Mountaineering Ireland remains committed to providing value to the membership, and frequent reviews of the insurance cover on offer will continue to take place.

Mountaineering Ireland provides insurance for club and individual members. The critical focus of the Mountaineering Ireland insurance is the Civil Liability cover – this protects you if another person sues you because they are injured or their property is damaged. In addition, a limited Personal Accident cover is also provided in case you suffer a permanent injury.

What is the claims history?

Clubs should make all participants aware of the risks inherent in our activities, and stress the ethos of personal responsibility that our sport is founded on. This ethos perhaps explains why Mountaineering Ireland's policy has historically benefited from a negligible claims history. However, a number of claims arose in 2009.

Without going into the individual cases, the claims were all related to the Personal Accident policy. Three members sadly died in the mountains and a fourth suffered an injury that resulted in a prolonged hospital stay. All bar the hospitalisation occurred while hillwalking. To date, €24,000 has been awarded to the three deceased members' estates and less than €1,000 to the other party.

So what do you get for your money?

- **Civil Liability** – covers you for damages and legal costs arising out of a third party loss, injury or damage.



"Mountaineering Ireland recognises that hillwalking, climbing and rambling 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 Participation Statement – It's on your membership card!

- **Personal Accident** – regardless of who is responsible, the insurers agree to pay a stated amount in the event of one of a list of injuries.
- **Excesses** – Mountaineering Ireland members benefit from a zero excess on all liabilities covered.

Civil Liability explained

Basically, liability insurance covers you for claims made against you for third party injury or damage caused. It protects you (and your assets) if somebody takes you to

court – for example if you dislodge a rock causing injury to somebody else and that person sues you.

Civil Liability includes **Public Liability** (injury or damage to third party property or persons); **Professional Indemnity** (Errors and Omissions, e.g. providing advice, even simple route advice, or failure to act); **Directors' and Officers' Protection** (cover for bad decisions while acting as an executive of a club or association, without which personal assets could be at stake); **Libel and Slander** (if clubs or individuals are sued for unintentional libel/slander, e.g. emails, published material and websites) and all other matters under Civil Law.

Members should note that this Professional Indemnity does not extend to situations where payment is received for the provision of a service or activity.

Personal Accident explained

Personal Accident cover provides you with a fixed benefit, if you are unfortunate enough to suffer a permanent injury while engaging in one of the activities covered by our policy.

Mountaineering Ireland's Personal Accident policy also covers injuries sustained while travelling to or from an insured activity in Great Britain or Ireland.

The benefit for permanent disability or total loss of limbs, eyes, speech or hearing is €74,960. This does not necessarily require the physical loss of the limb (e.g., severance); it also covers loss of use.

The main thing that is covered under this policy is "Permanent and total disablement from your employment for which you are fitted by education or training or knowledge."

The Personal Accident policy also

Mountaineering Ireland Insurance and Benefits

Public Liability	£10m any one occurrence
Professional Indemnity	£5m any one occurrence
Directors & Officers	£5m any one claim and aggregate any one policy year
Libel and Slander	£5m any one occurrence
Personal Accident Insurance	
Death.....	€7,496
Permanent & Total Disablement from your employment for which you are fitted by education/training/knowledge....	€74,960
Loss of limbs/sight.....	€74,960
Permanent loss of speech/hearing in both ears.....	€74,960
Loss of hearing in one ear.....	€18,740
Emergency dental treatment following accident.....	€750
Medical expenses sustained in a claim detailed above.....	€5,000



Mountain rescue team in training, Glenmalur, Co Wicklow.

by **Karl Boyle**
CEO, Mountaineering Ireland



includes €750 dental benefit for dental expenses if you damage your teeth.

There is death benefit under Mountaineering Ireland's Personal Accident policy of €7,496, and Medical Expenses sustained in a claim detailed above. There is no cover for recoverable injuries such as broken limbs.

What activities are covered?

Hillwalking, rock climbing, rambling, bouldering, fell-running, scrambling, alpinism and all other recognised aspects of mountaineering, including path repair. Additionally, activities such as downhill skiing, ski mountaineering, cycling, kayaking and caving are covered, provided the activities are non-competitive and not the main activities of the club.

This cover is on a worldwide basis, but it should be pointed out that your Mountaineering Ireland insurance is not travel insurance – it doesn't cover you for baggage loss, emergency medical expenses, repatriation, cancellation, etc.

Reporting an incident

All incidents involving injury or damage to a Mountaineering Ireland member or a third party must be reported to our brokers (Perkins Slade) as soon as possible and within 21 days at the latest. This is a requirement under the Civil Justice System in the UK (our insurers are UK-based).

If you, or your club, are involved in any incident that could lead to a court case, play safe and report it immediately. In the case of a possible liability claim, the incident must be notified to the insurers by the party likely to be sued (e.g., the club, leader, etc) rather than the injured party. With Personal Accident claims the injured party is the claimant and they should report the incident to the insurers.

In the event of a claim:

- You must report every claim and any incident that is likely to give rise to a claim in the future. Please contact **Perkins Slade Ltd** on 0044 121 698 8040 and complete the necessary report and claim form as soon as possible to avoid prejudicing your claim. A copy of your notification must be forwarded to the Mountaineering Ireland office.

- The insurers state that no admission, offer, promise or indemnity must be made by the insured in the event of a claim. Do not admit liability; do not make an offer or promise to pay.

Negligence

While it is advisable to report all incidents to the insurers, it is useful to know what an injured party would need to prove to succeed in suing you for negligence. There are three stages to this:

1. The injured party must prove that you owed them a duty of care. You owe a duty of care to any person who could foreseeably be affected by your actions, and the standard of that care can vary for a host of reasons, e.g. your experience and the experience of the others involved. If you are in charge of minors, you owe a greater duty of care – that of a responsible parent.
2. The injured party must show that the duty of care was breached.
3. The injured party must prove that actual injury, loss or damage arose from that breach of the duty of care.

Each case will be different. For example, there could be contributory negligence – where the injured person is partly responsible for the injury (e.g., by not wearing their helmet). We should remember, too, that injuries in the mountains are not always the result of negligence – accidents do happen. Risk cannot be eliminated from mountaineering; it is there at some level in every aspect of our activity. Hillwalking and climbing activities are rooted in a spirit of self-reliance, and with current societal concerns about liability, safety, insurance, etc, it's easy to lose sight of that personal responsibility.

Including Mountaineering Ireland's participation statement in your membership form or club newsletter is an important way of reinforcing this.

Extra information for clubs

Other club activities such as social events are covered by your Mountaineering Ireland insurance. Club events such as

Recent incident

An accident occurred on Saturday, 10th March 2012, on Mweelrea, Co Mayo. On the descent, the injured party slipped and fell 300 feet. Mayo Mountain Rescue was called but, due to mist, was unable to evacuate until 9:00am on 11th March. The injured party spent 20 hours on the mountain. The injured party was transported to A&E at University College Hospital, Galway, and discharged the next day. Other than severe bruising and swelling, the injured party should be fine in time. We all wish him a speedy recovery.

challenge walks which adhere to Mountaineering Ireland's Events Policy are also covered.

New members are insured from the day they pay membership to the club, provided that the club clearly records the date of payment (e.g., by using a receipt book) and that the money and member's details are passed on to Mountaineering Ireland within four weeks.

Individuals (guests, visitors, etc) who may be interested in joining a club are covered for a maximum of three initial taster sessions. For cover to apply it is essential that their name is properly recorded and the documents retained. They must be affiliated to Mountaineering Ireland on their fourth visit.

Prospective members or visitors have no insurance cover (they haven't paid any premium) but the club is covered for any liability claim that might arise from a prospective member or visitor getting injured in the course of a club activity. For the liability cover to apply, it is essential that the name of the prospective members or visitor is properly recorded and that the documents are retained.

Contact details

Mountaineering Ireland's insurance brokers are: **Perkins Slade Ltd**, 3 Broadway, Broad Street, Birmingham B15 1BQ, UK. Phone: 0044 121 698 8000. Fax: 0044 121 625 9000. If you have any queries on Mountaineering Ireland's insurance cover, please email info@mountaineering.ie.

This article is intended to help clubs and members understand the insurance cover that is available through Mountaineering Ireland. We have deliberately tried to use clear, non-technical language. This article is not intended as a legal interpretation of Mountaineering Ireland's insurance scheme and should not be used as such.



SEÁN CRYAN

LEGAL NEGLIGENCE

Mountaineers should be aware of their legal 'duty of care' for others in the mountains

A man in Austria has been convicted of the negligent manslaughter of his wife, who was killed in an avalanche. The man received a three-month suspended sentence.

The couple were cross-country skiing when the avalanche happened. The judge felt the verdict was justified because the husband was an experienced mountaineer and his wife was not. The court heard evidence that there were visible signs of the wind and a prevailing level 3 avalanche warning (significant) at the time. Both skiers had transceivers (location beepers) but they were switched off. The judge said that the wife's death by asphyxiation could have been avoided if the transceivers were turned on.

Because of the discrepancy in their experience, the man was accused of causing his wife's death through negligence by leading her onto a dangerous slope and by failing to ensure that their transceivers were being used properly.

Hillwalkers and mountaineers in Ireland may be concerned that this judgment will affect Irish law by imposing a higher legal onus in the mountains on those who are more experienced to be legally responsible for those who are less experienced.

Mountaineers should be aware that there is a difference in law between being legally responsible and being criminally liable. Legal responsibility refers to people owing a 'duty of care' to others. If a person fails to provide the required level of care and another person suffers an injury as a result, then the injured person could claim financial compensation from the person who neglected their duty of care. A person's legal duty of care towards others can be reduced by the other people voluntarily accepting a risk.

This happened in the Poppleton case in England, where the claimant wound up tetraplegic as a result of a bouldering accident. The claimant argued that the activity centre had been negligent in that



Gross negligence in Ireland is very rare and involves a grave degree of negligence."

it had failed to supervise him properly and/or to warn him of the risks of the activity.

The Court of Appeal rejected the argument that the centre could be held to have a duty to supervise or instruct a person who did not want instruction and who had voluntarily participated in a risk-fraught activity with tragic results. However, the situation would be different where the risks of an activity were hidden or the premises themselves were dangerous. In those circumstances, if there was an accident, the duty of care would have been breached and the injured person would be eligible for financial compensation.

Criminal liability, on the other hand, is when the Government sets certain standards in the public interest. If a person breaches these standards, they are punished by the State by a fine payable to the Government and/or imprisonment.

The Austrian case was about criminal liability, to determine whether the husband was criminally liable for the offence of the negligent manslaughter of his wife and to impose a punishment, if he was.

In Ireland, we have a similar law of involuntary manslaughter, which is manslaughter by gross negligence involving a high risk that substantial personal injury will follow the accused's negligent act or omission.

As a result, everyone in Ireland has a duty not to be grossly negligent. This applies regardless of whether the gross negligence occurs in the mountains, when driving a car or when making dinner at home.

Therefore, if a person is grossly negligent and that negligence results in the death of another person, then the person who was grossly negligent is criminally liable. The onus applies to all people regardless of whether they are a guide, a client, a club leader or a club member.

The question that a jury would be asked to consider is: was the person acting grossly negligently? Gross negligence involves a lot more than being ordinarily negligent, and a person who is ordinarily negligent will not be criminally liable, even if their ordinarily negligent behaviour results in the death of another person.

Gross negligence in Ireland is very rare and involves a grave degree of negligence that will be determined by looking at all of the circumstances of the event. These circumstances would include, as in the Austrian case, the level of risk incurred, the potential consequences of incurring that risk and the assumed dependence of one person on another.

The Austrian judgment does not change the law in Ireland by increasing the onus of responsibility of more experienced mountaineers, but it does give some insight into what other jurisdictions consider to be grossly negligent behaviour and how they might apply the law, should an accident occur within their jurisdiction.

The Austrian judgment is under appeal to a higher court ■

Seán Cryan is an avid hillwalker and rock climber. He is a solicitor experienced in criminal law and negligence law.

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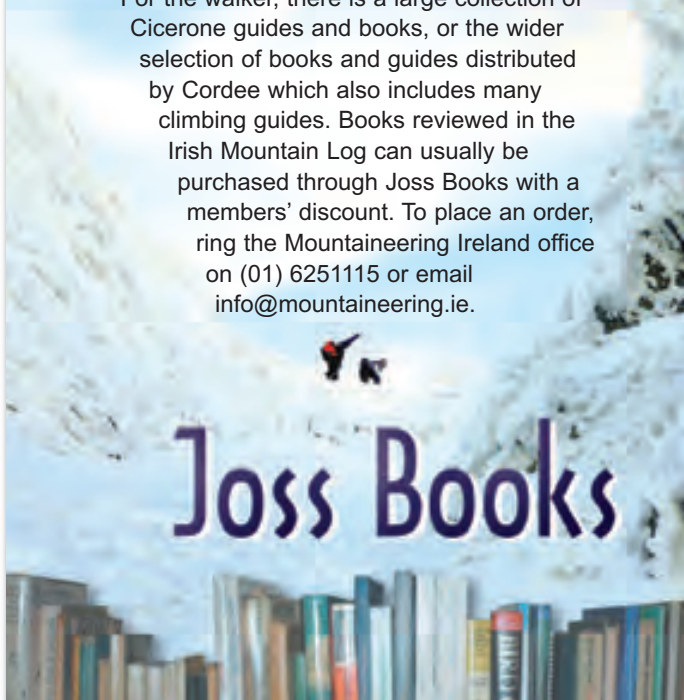
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ALUN RICHARDSON

THE JOYS OF SPRING

Alun Richardson with the latest on developments in mountain training.

"If I were a man who had no dreams, I would feel very sorry for myself" –

Reinhold Messner

I am not sure I would be completely happy living in the tropics, where each day is pretty much the same... sunny.

Okay, a bit more sunshine and less rain would be nice, but I actually like the changing seasons that bring a new look to the hills and mountains. Depending on your perspective, luckily the winter of 2012 passed us by without too much confrontation and spring has appeared early.

Notwithstanding the concerns for our wildlife as plants and animals become out of sync with each other, I look forward to the joys of spring. The lighter nights and the brighter mornings allow for longer days, with walks and climbs squeezed in at the end of a hard day's work.

Summer Alpine Meet

2012 is an exciting year for mountain training in Ireland. We hope to build on the success of the 2011 Mountaineering Ireland meets and, with fifty plus people on the 2012 Winter Meet in February, we have made a good start.

If you haven't thought about the summer yet, the Alpine Meet in July is now live on the website...book early for a 10% discount and to help Mountaineering Ireland ensure we can get good guides.

Workshops

We have initiated a series of workshops that are planned to upskill Club Training Officers (CTOs) and Mountaineering Ireland members in scrambling, GPS and climbing movement (see panel). These are responding to requests from members and clubs, so book early with Nicole to avoid disappointment.

They are designed so that one or two



We're looking forward to the Summer Meet already! L'Alpe Scermondone, Bregaglia Alps.

MICHELE MONDORA

more experienced club members from each club can attend, ask questions, discuss issues and practice techniques around walking, scrambling and climbing; and then return to their clubs with good information to pass on.

Climbing wall awards

The Climbing Wall Award and Climbing Wall Leaders Award should be available by the summer, and interested providers are requested to contact the office.

On 26th April, Steve Long will be conducting a Climbing Wall Award workshop for anyone wanting to provide the award in Ireland. The workshop is open to MIAs with substantial climbing wall experience.

* * * * *

Being involved with mountain training is exciting for me because the systems of training constantly need to adapt to the participants and the changing

perceptions of a society that wants leaders and instructors to be trained and 'qualified.' To forge a system of training and assessment that is fit for the future will require an open mind from everyone – existing instructors, new instructors, interested onlookers; in fact, everyone.

Coaching Climbing

Neal McQuaid, Mountaineering Ireland's Talent Development Officer, and I attended a Fundamentals course with Eddie Cooper that stimulated much discussion about the future for coaching climbers. The coaching awards have been a long time coming – Neal discusses the current state of coaching awards in Ireland on the website.

Coaching Ireland

Twelve of our providers attended a Coaching Ireland three-day Tutor Trainer assimilation course and now have to be observed working in the field to become



The workshops are designed so that more experienced club members can return to their clubs with good information to pass on."

Course dates

- **Workshop on using GPS**
Wicklow 20th May
Connemara 16th September
- **Scrambling for Mountaineering Ireland members and Club Training Officers**
Kerry 19th May
Wicklow 21st May
Donegal & Galway 16th June
- **Summer Alpine Meet Information Evening** 17th April
- **Pre-Alpine Day in Wicklow** 15th June
- **Train the Trainers Workshop** 21st & 22nd April
- **WGL Assessment** 28th-30th April
- **Summer Alpine Meet** 1st-15th July
- **WGL Assessment** 28th-30th September
- **ML Assessment** 27th-29th October
- **Club Training Officers Workshop** 2nd & 4th November
- **Workshop on Movement Skills for Climbers and Instructors** Price €25 including entry to Gravity Wall (March 14th and April 24th) and Tollymore (May 29th)
- **Ropework: "What to teach to club members"**
Dalkey 16th April
Kerry 20th May
Tollymore 28th May
Dalkey 22nd May
Donegal & Galway 17th June
- **Rope Work Workshop** (half-day) at the Fair Head Meet, 1st June. *It's free*, but you have to book in advance.

an accredited Coaching Ireland Tutor Trainer. I (Alun Richardson) have been accredited as a Coaching Ireland approved assessor.

Accreditation of outdoor businesses

In response to questions in Dáil Éireann and a request from a TD to Coaching Ireland, members of the Adventure Framework, including Mountaineering Ireland, met to discuss the licensing and accreditation of outdoor activity businesses.

It was felt by the group that it was better to have a system in place that was voluntary and all-Ireland rather than to resurrect the 'Activity Centres Bill' of 1998. A working group is set to meet in March and report back to the group...watch this space!

Minimum ratios for Mountain Skills 1&2

At the recent BOS meeting it was agreed to reduce the minimum course ratios from 1:4 to 1:2, although it was recognised that more students make for a better course.

2012 Coaching Sessions



24th April @ Gravity, Dublin
29th May @ Hot Rock, Tollymore

An all-day session with Mountaineering Ireland staff, covering the various components of climbing movement. Learn the secrets of climbing harder or helping others to climb harder. Don't miss this all-day workshop with Neal McQuaid (8a climber) and Alun Richardson (IFMGA).

€25 (incl wall entry) for MI members
€40 (incl wall entry) for non-MI members



Jono Redmond on the way to his Interschools win.

Winter Meet

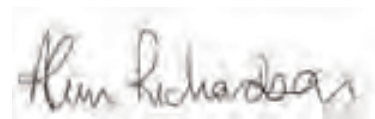
By the time you read this, around fifty people will have attended the Winter Meet in Glencoe, Scotland. A fantastic turnout, it shows the continuing growth in popularity of Mountaineering Ireland's meets.

Training opportunities

The Training Office has set up a number of training workshops for Club Training Officers (CTOs) and Mountaineering Ireland members around the country (see Course Dates panel). These are designed for CTO and members to come and ask questions and try out new things and then to disseminate the ideas and information to their clubs.

Finally...

Congratulations to Sinead Pollock and Tim Orr on the birth of their daughter; and to Calvin Torrans who is making a remarkable recovery from his broken ankles and has been seen rock climbing and ice climbing.



Alun Richardson is the Training Officer with Mountaineering Ireland.

Calvert Moore

Memories of 'The Big Lad'

Calvert Moore, a significant figure in the development of rockclimbing in the Mourne and founder of Glenfaffy Climbing Club (GFCC), died recently in Canada. The following are memories of Calvert from some of the climbers he introduced to the world of new routing.

Willie Jenkins remembers:

Calvert Moore was known as 'The Big Lad.' He was 6ft 5" and 16-18 stone when he was fit. An ex-rugby player and one-time semi-professional cyclist, he had a big bushy red beard and was like something the Vikings had left behind.

I first met Calvert in 1963 when I was training for the Ulster Expedition to the Taurus Mountains. Soon after I got back from that trip he invited me and William 'Marty' Martin down to the Glenfaffy Climbing Club in Newcastle, Co Down.

In the early 1960s, climbing was such that, especially in GFCC (a workingman's club), once you bought your black workingman's boots from Smithfield Market, a thirty-bob No.4 rope from Belfast Rope Works, 30 foot of hemp waistline, a builder's helmet, a crab, you made your own jammers from drilled-out nuts tied through with whatever bits of fallen-on rope you could get your hands on, then that was you set to conquer the world. In 1963, Calvert also brought along a tenon saw, chisels, a hammer, a drill and bits, some thin nylon rope and a tape measure, and proceeded to climb Flaggermusset, a new A2 on Lower Cove, in the Mourne.

Also in 1963, while climbing at Lower Cove, club member Billy Gillmore fell and broke his pelvis. The rescue seemed to take ages and after that Calvert decided that GFCC should be self-sufficient, so he raised funds, bought a Thomas stretcher and formed a mountain rescue team within the club.

Calvert's constant quest for the next big route had him leading an expedition to the Atlas Mountains in 1965 as well as organising trips to the Alps, Wales, Scotland, Lough Barra, the Poisoned Glen and Glendalough.

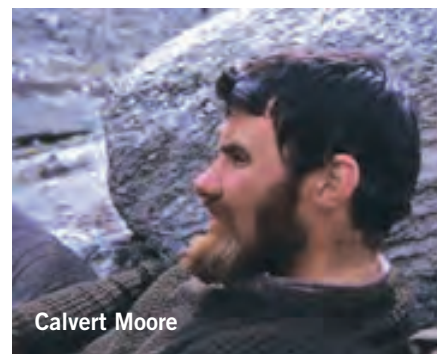
Ballygalley Head got his attention, too, and then Fair Head. Following Earnshaw's Chimney, the pioneering route that he put up there with Geoff Earnshaw in 1966 that opened up the crag, Calvert persuaded the rest of Glenfaffy Club to have a meet at Fair Head in 1967 – and the rest is history.

On another occasion, he dragged us off to Slieve League to look at a direct route up the face, but found that the loose rock there was just too much of an accident waiting to happen.

David Bruce remembers:

Calvert put up his first new route in the Mourne on November 8th, 1962, when he climbed Starlight with Davey Dick. His last was on April 16th, 1967, when he climbed Musical Cracks with Calvin Torrains. Along with other members of GFCC, Calvert pushed Mourne climbing to new levels on Pigeon Rock, Eagle Rocks, Cove, Beg and Eagle Mountain, putting up over forty routes. In particular, he made Pigeon Rock his own with great routes like Virgo.

Younger climbers were introduced to Calvert and Davey Dick at the Mourne School of Mountaineering, which was based in Slieve na Garragh Cottage at Bloody Bridge. This was probably the first commercial climbing centre in Ireland and was soon better known as the 'Foff hut.' It became home to climbers from all over Ireland and was Calvert's seat of influence, right down to his ban on transistor radios for fear they would erode the folk music tradition.



Calvert Moore

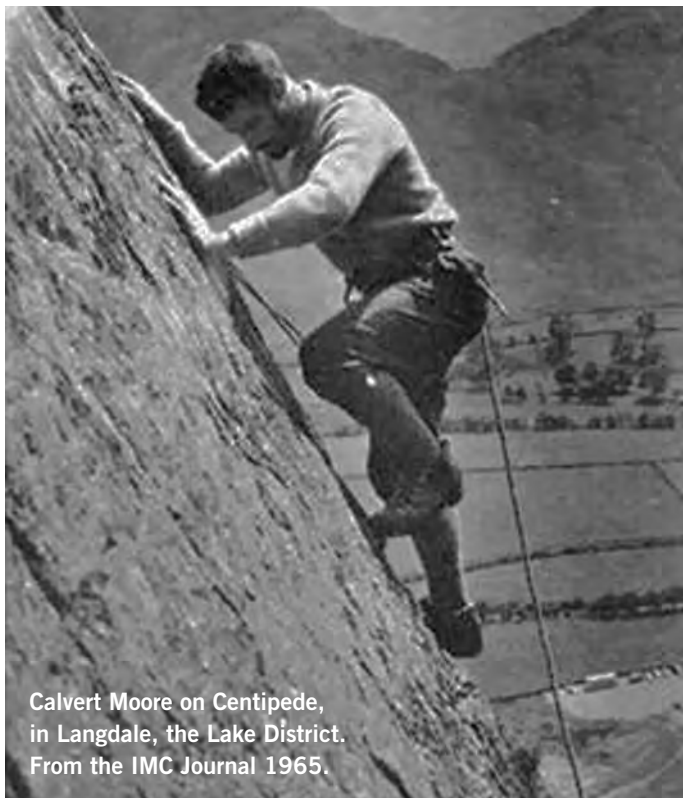
Calvin Torrains remembers:

I had met Calvert and the Foff lads on a number of occasions around the Mourne in the 1960s before we organised to go climbing together at Lower Cove one day. When we were standing at the back of Cove Cave, Calvert said "there ye go" with a slight grin (he was never one to hog the lead on a first ascent), and that was it. I tied the rope around my waist, kicked the mud off my walking boots and set off into the unknown for my first taste of new routing.

Calvert got a group of us hooked on searching out first ascents. It was the ethos of the club at the time and, given his great knowledge of the Mourne, there was plenty more for Sammy John Crymble, Willie Jenkins, Ricky Cowan and myself to have a go at.

Calvert was always a willing partner for a first-ascent outing and was in his element when standing at the top of some forgettable vegetated route, notebook and pencil in those massive hands, calculating the overall length: "Three metres of rope for the belay, two metres for tying on, by two makes ten..." and so on, until he had made 120 metres out of a 20-metre route and confused generations of climbers to come! It was a great loss to Irish climbing when Calvert emigrated to Canada.

► *We would like to extend our sympathies to Calvert's family and friends in Canada and in Belfast.*



Calvert Moore on Centipede, in Langdale, the Lake District. From the IMC Journal 1965.

DAVEY DICK

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A large, layered rock formation, likely a sea stack, dominates the background. A person in a yellow shirt and blue pants is climbing the rock face, secured by a rope. Another person in a red jacket and white helmet stands on the ground, managing the rope. The foreground is a dark, rocky beach. The sky is blue with some clouds. The text 'LIVE THE ADVENTURE...' is overlaid in the top left corner, with 'LIVE THE' in white and 'ADVENTURE...' in yellow. A green handprint graphic is also visible in the top left corner.

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