



**Working for
and representing
hillwalkers
and climbers**

www.mountaineering.ie

ANNUAL REVIEW 2011

Mountaineering Ireland

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Mountaineering Ireland promotes the principles of Leave No Trace.



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“ MI’s gatherings and meets had a stronger focus on club development and support in 2011. This offering was reflected in increased attendance and good participation in workshops and discussions ”

MI ANNUAL REVIEW 2011

While Mountaineering Ireland’s membership continued to rise in 2011, efforts made during the year will see a significant growth during 2012 with new clubs in the process of joining and the return of the Irish Ramblers Club. This demonstrates the continued growth of our community and an effective MI serving all hillwalkers and climbers by being a strong voice on many issues including the threat of the sale of Coillte, the outputs of Comhairle na Tuaithe and providing benefits of real meaning to our membership, from the *Irish Mountain Log* to robust insurance policies. The *Irish Mountain Log* reached the milestone of issue 100 during 2011, which is a magnificent feat for the core group of volunteers that have supported its delivery over the last 25 years.

MI’s aims for 2011 were to:

- ▶ Represent the interests of walkers and climbers.
- ▶ Improve and secure access to the Irish hills and crags.
- ▶ Promote mountain training and safe practice.
- ▶ Encourage conservation and responsible use of the mountain environment.
- ▶ Support members, and especially young people, in skills development.
- ▶ Provide appropriate services and effective communications to members.

MI’s gatherings and meets had a stronger focus on club development

and support in 2011. This offering was reflected in increased attendance and good participation in workshops and discussions. This will be continued into the future delivering events that celebrate our upland environment, bring opportunities for learning and support a true hillwalking and climbing community.

During 2011 MI embarked on a review of its Events Policy. The process of engagement with members through many channels was rewarding with quality feedback and good attendance at club forums throughout Ireland. The new policy will be put before the membership at the 2012 AGM.

Mountain Meitheal’s inspiring commitment to our upland environment was recognised on the European stage in 2011 when it took second place in the European Ramblers Association’s ECO Awards. The effort of Mountain Meitheal is now stimulating the prospect of other Meitheals forming.

Again, it is the huge number of volunteers throughout our clubs that makes MI effective. I sincerely thank all the members for their commitment during 2011 and MI looks forward to supporting your activities, answering your questions and bringing new opportunities to our community.

Karl Boyle,
Chief Officer



Mountaineering Ireland gratefully acknowledges the funding it receives from The Irish Sports Council, Sport Northern Ireland and the Women in Sport programme.

CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS

A Year of Major Milestones – It has been a tremendous privilege to serve as Chairperson of Mountaineering Ireland (MI) during 2011 – the final calendar year of my tenure as chair. The Board is filled with a sense of deep pride reflecting on what has been achieved in 2011. It has been a year of continued growth, with the organisation now servicing the needs of almost 11,000 members and many more new clubs and members preparing to join in 2012.

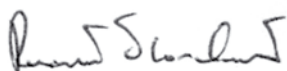
The general election in the Republic and the Northern Ireland Assembly elections provided a timely opportunity for MI to engage with all political parties regarding our key priorities as outlined in our Strategic Development Plan. In the Republic, our campaign focused on the retention of Coillte in state ownership. While this resulted in a Dáil statement that Coillte would not be sold this campaign goes on, as speculation continues that Coillte will be sold in some form. MI remains adamant that there is nothing more strategically important than access by future generations to outdoor recreation. Coillte's importance is not simply as a provider of recreational infrastructure or forest parks. What is considerably more important, from a hillwalking perspective, is the access that the Coillte estate provides onto the majority of Ireland's uplands.

The vast majority of MI members will be unaware of the world of competition climbing. Great progress has been made in 2011 by a growing number of young climbers from Cork to Belfast. Dominic Burns, a 14 year old from Belfast, is now ranked in the top 15 in the world in his category. This is something MI is immensely proud of. Our relationship with Scouting Ireland continues to grow and this, together with our Youth Participation, Training and Development Programmes, is preparing the ground for future generations of mountaineers.

Perhaps the highlight of 2011 was Issue 100 of the Irish Mountain Log. The edition, marking 25 years of publication, was a very significant milestone for both the magazine and MI. It was a remarkable achievement. The volunteer editorial team put in an incredible amount of effort and they deserve credit for providing us with what I believe is the premium national governing body magazine in Europe.

I also want to thank MI clubs for hosting the Spring and Autumn Gatherings in 2011. These wonderful events were brought about through the vibrancy and commitment of club members. I want to thank all who supported the provision of training and our Winter and Alpine meets. I want to pay special thanks to MI staff members, North and South, who continue to help you as a member get the most out of your membership. In addition, I wish to convey my deep appreciation to our funders, the Irish Sports Council and Sport Northern Ireland, who have continued to support us in these difficult economic times.

Finally, I want to remember all those members who passed away during 2011. Chief amongst our thoughts is Joss Lynam (1924 – 2011). Joss was a Giant of a Mountain Man in every respect. He was a great advocate for Ireland's uplands and his contribution to promoting the sport of mountaineering and developing rural recreation in Ireland continues to have a very positive impact throughout Ireland. Mountaineering Ireland is commemorating Joss through a number of projects, including, the Lynam Lecture and a Hillwalking Guidebook to Ireland's high mountains. May he rest in peace.



Ruairí Ó Conchúir
Chairperson



“ Chief amongst our thoughts is Joss Lynam (1924 – 2011). Joss was a Giant of a Mountain Man in every respect. May he rest in peace ”



ACCESS AND CONSERVATION

MI's work on access and conservation is focused on two core objectives:

To secure continued access to mountain areas and crags.

To promote the conservation and responsible use of the mountain environment.

During 2011 many MI members contributed to our work towards these objectives, through roles on MI, club and other committees, and through personal action to protect access and the mountain environment. This collective effort is vital if MI is to deliver on its objectives.

The access and conservation efforts of MI volunteers are supported by MI staff, including a full-time Hillwalking, Access & Conservation Officer, Helen Lawless.

SECURING ACCESS

MI'S AIM

As the national representative body for hillwalkers and climbers, MI's policy is that we are seeking reasonable access for responsible users. Our aim is to have open, unrestricted access on foot to unenclosed hills, mountains and coastal areas throughout Ireland. Where there isn't direct access to these areas from the public road, access should be achieved via routes leading from the public roads and car parks, through or around the enclosed fields out onto the open hillside. Mountaineering Ireland pursues its access aim, primarily through involvement in Comhairle na Tuaithe (the Countryside Council) and the Countryside Access & Activities Network (CAAN) in NI, and through building relationships with other upland stakeholders.

COMHAIRLE NA TUAITHE

Following the change of government, the Rural Recreation Section (RRS) which supports Comhairle na Tuaithe, transferred to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, as a result, Comhairle met just twice in 2011, with both

meetings taking place in the final quarter. MI maintained contact with the RRS and contributed to the agreement of a programme of 10 priority actions for 2012.

MOUNTAIN ACCESS SCHEME

The Mountain Access Scheme currently being piloted by Comhairle na Tuaithe, on Carrauntoohil and at Binn Shléibhe (Mount Gable) near Clonbur, has the potential to provide a framework for the management of access. Agreement in principle has been reached on a State indemnity scheme for private landowners in Mountain Access Areas. MI has urged Comhairle na Tuaithe to formalise the Mountain Access Scheme and extend the pilot to at least six other areas in 2012 so that the viability of the scheme is fully tested.

ACCESS & LIABILITY INFORMATION

MI drafted a public information leaflet on the subject of access and occupiers liability to deal with the main questions and misunderstandings that arise for both landowners and recreational users in the Republic of Ireland. This leaflet should be published by Comhairle na Tuaithe in the first half of 2012.

NORTHERN IRELAND

MI has continued to work through CAAN and Sport NI to improve the access situation in Northern Ireland. MI contributed to Sport NI's research on access and occupiers liability, which is informing the preparation of a 10-year Action Plan for the further development of Outdoor Recreation in Northern Ireland.

MI joined with other organisations in seeking to have the coastal path from Ballycastle to Fair Head taken in charge as a public right of way, a campaign which was successful.

ACCESS ISSUES

MI dealt with a number of access issues across the country during the summer of 2011, typically working through local members and with other agencies to resolve matters. One thread that ran through more than half of the recent access problems was a failure to communicate well with landowners. An important lesson from this experience is that it takes a lot more time and energy to resolve issues than to prevent them in the first place.

We urge MI members to contact us for advice and support on access issues, plus this flow of information ensures that MI's work at national

level to secure access is based on a comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of the situation on the ground.

PROMOTING CONSERVATION

MI'S AIM

MI's work on conservation focuses on protecting the quality and character of the mountain and coastal environment. In addition to a number of policy submissions, MI's activities in 2011 included:

MOUNTAIN ENVIRONMENT LEAFLET

To help improve environmental awareness amongst hillwalkers, MI worked with the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) and other partners to prepare a leaflet on Wicklow's Mountain Environment. A draft was circulated at MI events in 2011 and the final version will be published in 2012.

UPLAND PATH EROSION

In March 2011, based partly on feedback from members, MI produced a position paper about path erosion on Carrauntoohil, which recommended

that an up-to-date opinion be sought on how to deal with the erosion of the Devil's Ladder. Elfyn Jones, the BMC's Access & Conservation Officer for Wales who has experience of upland path management, made a brief study visit to Carrauntoohil and his recommendations were presented to MI members in the south west in November 2011. With the backing of local clubs, repair of the Ladder will be discussed with the landowners on Carrauntoohil early in 2012.

In meeting with members across the country, it was clear that upland path erosion is a concern in many areas. An important principle in considering this, is that path repair or construction in the uplands should only be carried out for the purpose of erosion management to protect the environment, and not from the perspective of making it easier to walk in the mountains. The quality of work carried out and materials used are vital. Rough machined tracks across hillsides show the negative impact that inappropriate work can have on upland landscapes.

Members also made MI aware of the development of marked walking routes in some upland areas. The introduction of marker posts and trail furniture into an otherwise natural environment reduces the sense of wildness in upland areas and gives walkers a false sense of security. MI supports the long-standing National Trails Office (NTO) policy to avoid marked routes above 300m for safety and environmental reasons and made a strong submission seeking retention of this policy in the NTO's new trail planning guidelines.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE ACTIVITY

Despite a lull in the early part of 2011 (perhaps due to publicity and new regulations in 2010) MI received a number of reports of off-road vehicle activity in upland areas in the latter part of 2011. MI members are urged to photograph damaged areas and send details of date and location to NPWS/NIEA and to the MI office.





PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE USE

Responsible enjoyment of the hills and countryside is an important value within MI and our sport and runs throughout much of our work.

REVIEW OF EVENTS POLICY

In response to a growth in events such as walking festivals, adventure races, club challenges and fundraising hikes, MI reviewed its policy on organised events in Ireland's mountain areas during 2011. After a call for submissions in the spring, a draft policy was published and a series of regional consultations took place during October and November. A new policy incorporating guidelines for event organisers and participants will be put to MI's AGM in March 2012 for approval.

DOGS ON THE HILLS

Early in 2011, the problem of dogs worrying sheep came to a head in the Cooley Mountains. MI facilitated a meeting between hillfarmers, representatives from clubs that walk in the Cooleys and mountain-bikers, after which a statement was published in the local media. This issue also arose in other upland areas and in spring 2011 MI issued a public appeal to avoid taking dogs on the open hillside, other than with the landowner's permission to do so.

LEAVE NO TRACE

MI continued to support the Leave No Trace programme, with a financial contribution and by including the Leave No Trace message in MI

publications and events. Vincent McAlinden represents MI on the Board of Leave No Trace Ireland and also Chairs the Leave No Trace Education Advisory Group. During 2011 MI co-ordinated a project to develop Leave No Trace resources for primary schools. The resources are available on www.leavenotracesschools.org.

MOUNTAIN TRAINING SCHEMES

Arising from recent revisions to the Mountain Skills syllabus, a session on Access and Conservation was included in all BOS provider workshops during the year as well as the Club Training Officers' workshop in November 2011.

CLUB ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICERS

MI encourages all its affiliated clubs to appoint a Club Environmental Officer (CEO) to help raise environmental awareness within the club and provide a point of contact for MI. The number of clubs with CEOs increased from 50 to 85 in 2011. A total of 40 people attended three regional training workshops for CEOs, with input from environmental experts, Rural Recreation Officers, NPWS and Mountain Meitheal. It is MI's hope that the CEO network will build to become a strong grouping of MI members working to protect the upland environment.

SUBMISSIONS

In accordance with its objectives and policies, Mountaineering Ireland made the following submissions during 2011:

- ▶ Wicklow County Council – responses to consultation on Tourism and Land-use Plan for Laragh/ Glendalough, Co. Wicklow – (Feb 2011 and Aug 2011).
- ▶ Coillte – response to draft Strategic Plans for Coillte’s thirteen districts (April 2011).
- ▶ Louth County Council – response to planning application for Rockmarshall windfarm, Cooley Mountains (June 2011).
- ▶ Forest Service (NI) – response to draft bye-laws (June 2011).
- ▶ Forest Service (ROI) – response to draft guidelines for prescribed burning (August 2011).
- ▶ Department of Environment (NI) – response to consultation on enabling legislation for national parks in Northern Ireland (October 2011).
- ▶ Department of Arts, Heritage & Gaeltacht – response to issues paper on National Landscape Strategy (November 2011).

These submissions can be downloaded from the Access and Conservation section of www.mountaineering.ie.

REPRESENTATION ON OTHER ORGANISATIONS

MI’s work towards its access and conservation objectives is supported by voluntary representatives on a number of other organisations. Brief feedback from some of these is provided below:

COILLTE SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL PANEL

Pat Dignam, MI’s representative on Coillte’s Social & Environmental panel for the Eastern District reports that the group met twice during 2011, with the spring meeting focusing on the draft District Strategic Plan and the autumn meeting being a field trip to see a repaired bridge and trail construction work on the Wicklow Way. Coillte’s current capacity to provide or repair recreation infrastructure is being

affected by lack of funding. Late in 2011, Sinead Gaughan was appointed as MI’s representative on Coillte’s Social & Environmental panel for the Connemara/Mayo district.

IRISH UPLANDS FORUM (IUF)

MI is represented on the Irish Uplands Forum by Peter Norton and Ruairi O Conchúir. Following on the publication of IUF’s ‘Challenges, Changes and Opportunities in the Irish Uplands’ report in 2010, contact has been maintained with the three study areas, Sligo/Leitrim, Connemara and the Comeraghs. IUF has also been working closely with the Wicklow Uplands Council to develop an EU LIFE application for a project based on best practice management of upland vegetation so as to benefit biodiversity and farming.

DUBLIN MOUNTAINS INITIATIVE (DMI)

The DMI continues to participate in the Dublin Mountain Partnership, with Coillte and the local authorities. Recreational developments through 2011 included the ‘Plod’ half marathon held in July and the opening of a dedicated mountain bike trail at Ticknock. Unfortunately the Dublin Mountaineer bus service became a casualty of economic hard times. The Dublin Mountains Way is now in its second year and walking traffic continues to increase. DMI participated in consultations with community groups held during 2011. It is hoped these will result in further improvements to the route. Milo Kane represents MI on the DMI.

WICKLOW UPLANDS COUNCIL (WUC)

Feedback from Pearse Connolly indicates that 2011 was a year of change within WUC, with the retirement of Colin Murphy and the return of Cara Doyle, in the role of Co-ordinator. Despite budgetary challenges, a new strategic plan was adopted, and good progress was made with Wicklow County Council on winter weather emergency plans. WUC continues to contribute to the

PURE project to tackle litter and illegal dumping the Wicklow/Dublin uplands. In conjunction with IUF, a committee was formed to develop an application for an EU LIFE project based on the sustainable management of upland vegetation.

WICKLOW MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK (WMNP) COUNCIL

Wicklow Mountains National Park, like all public bodies, has been hit by severe cuts in its funding. Some activities have been curtailed due to loss of staff and capital funding; this includes the national park council which only met informally on one occasion in 2011. However a formal meeting was held in January 2012 at which there was good discussion. The issue of uncontrolled dogs on the hills was raised by representatives from the farming community. Currently dogs are allowed in the national park, but a ban may have to be considered as uncontrolled dogs cause problems for ground nesting birds as well as farm animals.





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YOUTH

MI has continued to be focused on making an impact on youth participation, not simply through membership but by developing leadership skills within our clubs and equally in other youth focused organisations. MI's Youth Officer, Paul Swail, coordinated a wide programme during 2011, including Aspirant Mountaineers Workshops, a host of adventure trips for young people and a number of school-based initiatives as well as ongoing coordination of climbing classes, which continue to increase in participation.

ASPIRANT MOUNTAINEERS

The Aspirant Mountaineers Workshops, held in the Mourne and Wicklow mountains, aimed to bring young leaders from our University Clubs together to develop their Mountain Skills and improve their leadership skills. Participants in these workshops were provided the opportunity to follow on to continue their development in a winter mountaineering workshop in Scotland. Developing leadership in third level colleges will be a key component of the youth programme in coming years.

YOUTH ALPINE INITIATIVE

MI provided a Youth Alpine opportunity as part of the 2011 Alpine Meet. Following selection and pre-Alpine training with MI's Youth and Training Officers, Robbie Fenlon delivered a programme of training in the skills of Alpinism.

SCOUTING IRELAND

In 2010 Alan Tees described the relationship with Scouting Ireland as the “most important development in MI”. The ongoing success of this relationship was recognised during the Scouting Ireland Hillwalking Conference and at a number of leadership workshops held during 2011.

Scouts throughout Ireland now are progressing through a 9 stage hillwalking skills programme, which allows Scouts after stage 7 to go forward for Mountain Skills Assessment. MI will conduct a Train the Trainers workshop with Scouting Ireland leaders in 2012.

MI is in the processing of mapping a similar pathway both for leaders and participants with the Irish Girl Guides. This programme is expected to be fully developed and hillwalking skills being delivered during the course of 2012.



GIRLS OUTSIDE KERRY

Mountaineering Ireland's Girls Outside Kerry project continued until May 2011. The project was successful in attracting more than 200 girls to hillwalking and rock climbing. Participants developed new skills, promoted leadership and all were encouraged to become involved in local clubs and continue their participation for life. The project was supported by local Kerry clubs and the Kerry Recreation and Sports Partnership.





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PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT

Angela Carlin moved on from MI during 2011 to establish Ireland's first Climbing Centre, Gravity Climbing in Inchicore, Dublin. Angela's commitment to both Talent and Youth Development was exceptional and all associated with MI wish her the very best in her new venture. Following on from this, MI appointed Neal McQuaid as Talent Development Officer. As well as being a trained teacher, Neal brings with him a depth of personal climbing and training experience.

COACHING DEVELOPMENT

Without continued development of opportunities for people to experience climbing, the development of performance climbing would not have any candidates. Clubs across Ireland continued to develop, with support from MI, and improve their support structures for participants with opportunities to experience all disciplines of climbing, and also supporting continued improvements in coaching for novice climbers. MI is a partner in the development and delivery of Coaching Awards and this will be a priority for MI in 2012.

FUNDAMENTALS

2011 saw the continued rollout of 'Fundamentals' across Ireland, a programme which raises coaches' awareness of agility, balance, coordination and of the body's centre of gravity; important themes underpinning climbing movement. More than 30 coaches attended 'Fundamentals I' and the first of the 'Fundamentals II' workshops was also delivered. This was complemented with a focused Coaching Workshop delivered by Ian Dunne.

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

YOUTH CLIMBING SERIES

The Youth Climbing Series continued to expand throughout 2011 with an ever-increasing number of participants across the island of Ireland. One of the rounds, Tollymore, was the second largest of its kind across Ireland and the UK during 2011. The four qualifying events took place at UCD (Dublin), Mardyke (Cork), Hot

Rock (Tollymore) and Gortatole OEC (Fermanagh). The All-Ireland finals took place in Belfast, and from this 13 climbers went on to represent MI at the Great Britain and Irish finals in Coventry.

IRISH BOULDERING & LEAD CHAMPIONSHIPS

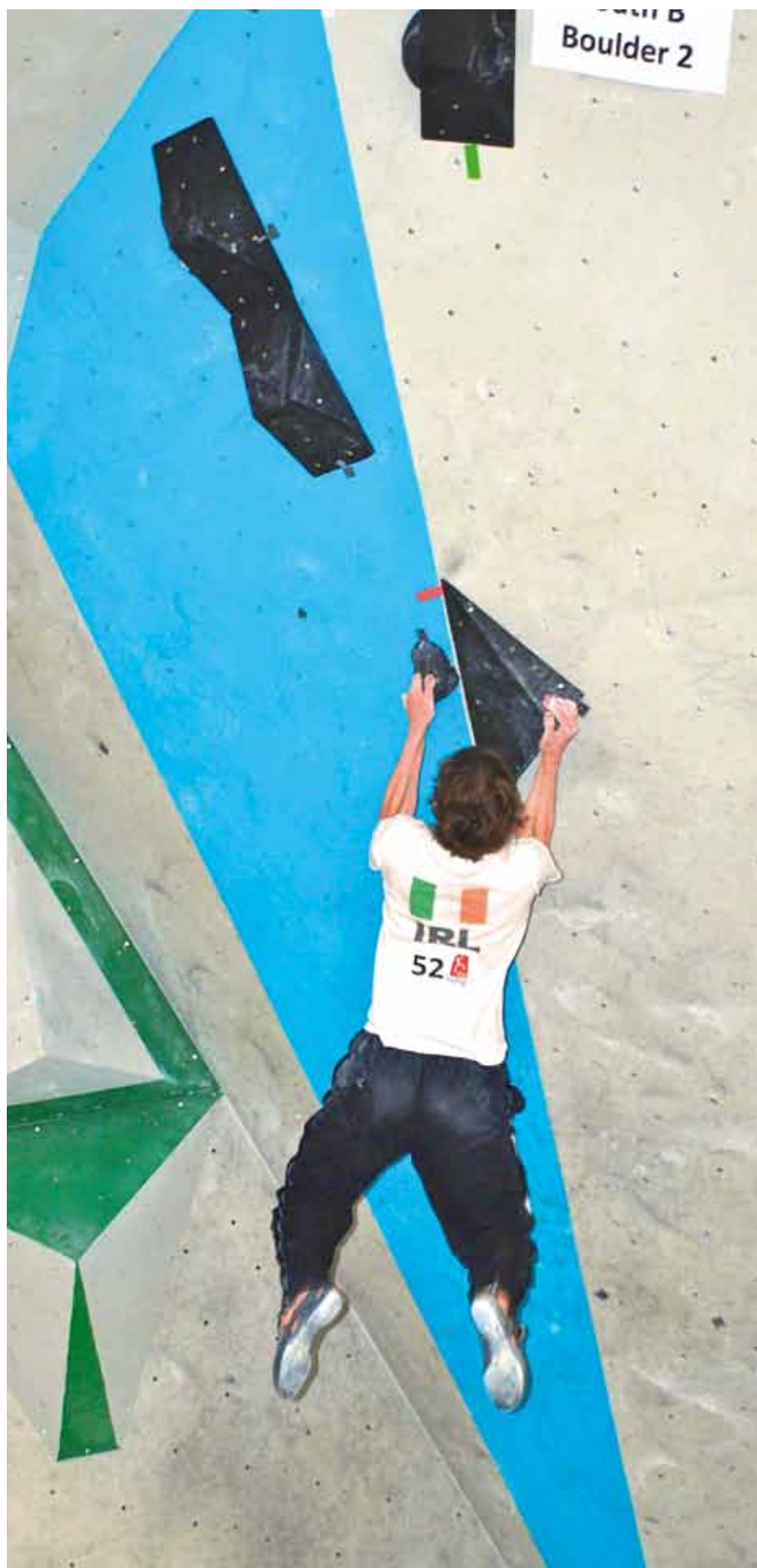
The Irish Bouldering Championships took place for the second year running in Belfast. As in the previous year, there was a very high standard of competition. Jonny Argue and Katie Maxwell took 1st place in the senior finals, with Dominic Burns and Vanessa Woods becoming the 2011 junior champions. For the third year, the Irish Lead Climbing Championships took place in Play At Height, Dingle where Dominic Burns proved his standing winning both the senior and junior event, with Maggie Chojan and Niamh Hebblewaithe winning the senior and junior categories respectively.

IRISH BOULDERING LEAGUE

As ever the IBL continues to play a hugely important role in the climbing community, all of which is organised by a voluntary committee. Over 200 competitors took part in competitions at four rounds across the country. IBL participants and volunteers wish to express their gratitude to Nicole Mullen, who stepped down following this year's league. Nicole has been the key driver of the IBL for a number of years. New volunteers are now required to continue the IBL's success.

INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS

2011 was another phenomenal year for international competitors. Climbers from Ireland participated in a number of competitions across Europe, both at youth and senior level. The best result yet, a 6th, at European Youth level by Dominic Burns shows the continued dedication and quality of our competitors. 2011 saw five junior level and one senior competitor at international competitions.





TRAINING AND SAFE PRACTICE

WALK SAFELY

MI and partners published a new *Walk Safely* leaflet in 2012. It is a resource for those who are new to walking in the Irish hills and countryside, be they tourists or friends, family and colleagues who want to get outdoors and benefit from the beauty of Ireland's countryside. *Walk Safely* highlights some tips which will give you confidence and make your experience more enjoyable. It also promotes responsible enjoyment of the Irish countryside.

CLUB TRAINING OFFICERS (CTO) WORKSHOPS

CTO workshops are designed to help designated CTOs develop skills and give greater confidence within their clubs. The CTO workshop in November 2011 was attended by seven club officers.

TRAINING GRANTS

During 2011 training grants were awarded to clubs to assist with their training for MS, CTO and ML. MI encourages all clubs to consider applying for Training Grants to encourage and support members to progress their skills and develop new leaders within their clubs.

BOS AWARD SCHEMES

The continuing success of the Mountain Skills (MS) scheme is reflected by the increasing numbers that take part in MS training, the integration of it into the Scouting Ireland hillwalking programme and FETAC. Following a visit by Mountain Leader Training (MLT) a similar scheme is also being piloted in the UK.

The new provider agreement was finalised towards the end of 2011, simplifying the information and the process to becoming a provider and maintaining it. BOS is keen to ensure that providership for the MS scheme is equally available to club members and commercial providers.

Registrations for Training	
Mountain Skills	602
Mountain Leader	122
Walking Group Leader	39
Single Pitch Award	141
Multi Pitch Award	13

BOS TRAINING PROVIDERS

BOS approves individuals to provide the various BOS training schemes. They may be based in a club environment or work in a variety of locations, from Outdoor Education Centres to privately owned businesses. At the end of 2011, 63 BOS providers had been approved to run a variety of BOS awards:

The provision of general mountaineering safety advice and the training of hillwalkers and climbers are central to the aims of MI and its training sub-committee, Bord Oiliúint Sléibhe (BOS), the Irish Mountain Training Board.

The range of advice and training provided is broad and covers all summer and winter mountaineering topics in Ireland and abroad, including safety and the training of instructors and leaders. The efforts of many volunteers both on BOS and those unnamed individuals who help behind the scenes in clubs and within the course provider community is greatly appreciated.

The stalwart efforts of MI volunteers are supported by Nicole Mullen, Training Administrator and Alun Richardson, Training Officer.

Approved Number of BOS Providers	
Mountain Skills	63
Mountain Skills Assessment	20
Single Pitch Award	11
Multi Pitch Award	6
Mountain Leader Training	13
Walking Group Leader Training	5

MODERATION AND AUDITING

Auditing occurs during routine checks of the paperwork received from providers, phone calls and feedback from students. Advice and help is provided via the Irish Mountain Log, newsletters, CPD and moderations. During 2011 the Training Office focused on moderating assessments. A visit by John Cousins of MLTUK confirmed that the schemes administered by BOS are of a very high standard. This is due in no small part to the professionalism of the mountain training providers in Ireland and the work behind the scenes in the Training Office.

CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) WORKSHOP

All providers are required to attend a minimum of one full CPD workshop during the three-year approval period.

During 2011, five CPD workshops were run for MS training and assessment, WGL, ML and SPA providers. MI has also simplified the process of fulfilling this requirement by enabling groups of providers to design their own CPD, the first of these was organised by a group of Kerry-based providers.

MOUNTAIN LEADER TRAINING (MLT)

During 2011 BOS made a step closer to becoming a full voting member of MLT. The awards administered in Ireland were accepted by all the Home Nation Boards as being equivalent to the awards run in the UK. It is hoped that during 2012 the constitutional issues will be resolved and BOS will be accepted as a full voting member of MLT UK and Republic of Ireland.

TRAINING FOR FUTURE PROVIDERS

Providers are fundamental to the success of MI's aim to support skills development for hillwalkers, mountaineers and climbers in Ireland. The 'Train the Trainers' course is central to the process of becoming a provider. It is open to anyone holding the ML award and is designed to train and provide guidance to award holders instructing others.

Eight students attended the course at the end of January 2011. The course

was attended by Jon Garside of the BMC who praised the scheme highly and has since seen a similar workshop piloted in the UK.

SUPPORT FOR MIA TRAINEES

Mountaineering Instructors (MIA and MIC) are an important link in the training and assessment of instructors and leaders. To assist potential candidates, and those progressing through the MIA scheme, Dave Gaughran assisted by Orla Prendergast, Clive Roberts, Sinead Pollock and Alun Richardson ran a series of workshops for prospective MIA candidates culminating in training in North Wales. Congratulations to a number of these candidates who have gone on to successfully complete their MIA.

COACHING IRELAND (CI) AND THE 'ADVENTURE FRAMEWORK'

MI has continued to progress the Adventure Framework with work ongoing on the alignment of both the ML and SPA to the framework.

During 2011 eleven BOS providers of SPA, WGL and ML attended a Tutor Trainer assimilation run by CI. This was a first step towards their Tutor Trainership, which will be awarded following successful field assessment.





“ The Women With Altitude movement is aimed at facilitating women hillwalkers and climbers to share ideas, learn new skills, enjoy themselves and benefit from mutual support. This will be an ongoing focus as part of MI’s Women in Sport initiative ”



COMMUNICATIONS AND SERVICES

IRISH MOUNTAIN LOG

The Irish Mountain Log reached a the milestone of issue 100, signifying 25 years of excellence in the reporting of our members’ activities and news from around the world of hillwalking, climbing and mountaineering. The passing of Joss Lynam, who was the Log’s editor up to issue 50 and the literary editor until his death, was felt profoundly by all those involved in the Log. Issue 97 commemorated Joss’ passing and was a celebration of his commitment to our sport.

Under the editorship of Patrick O’ Sullivan, the Log continues to ensure a balance within its content. The Irish Mountain Log editorial team encourages staff and volunteers alike to contribute to the quarterly journal and the editor wishes to congratulate all those who had articles published during the course of 2011. The Irish Mountain Log’s distribution through newsagents in Ireland has continued with stores in Northern Ireland now stocking it.



MEMBERS GATHERINGS AND MEETS

MI’s spring, autumn, winter and summer gatherings and meets are an important opportunity for our community to gather together and share experiences, knowledge and, most importantly, their passion for the hills. Personal skills development is an integral part of the winter and summer meets particularly, offering a chance for individuals to progress the range of their personal mountaineering experience and competencies.





SPRING AND AUTUMN GATHERINGS

In March, the Spring Gathering brought many new and old clubs together in the Glen of Aherlow. The hosts, Galtee Walking Club, Peaks Mountaineering Club and Ballyhoura Bears were instrumental in it being such a positive event. A variety of activities and club development workshops were offered amongst a host of information sessions also.

The Maumturks Walking Club hosted a really lively Autumn Gathering in October. They fostered a real sense of camaraderie in Leenane and the weekend was blessed with some amazing weather and remarkable light on the mountains.

WOMEN WITH ALTITUDE

The very first *Women With Altitude* event was held in the Mourne Mountains in April 2011. The weekend was hosted by MI in association with Gartan Outdoor Education Centre. It was a weekend long celebration of women in the mountains. There was an irrepressible energy and enthusiasm which gave rise to an extremely enjoyable weekend, and plans for further events. *The Women With Altitude* movement is aimed at facilitating women hillwalkers and climbers to share ideas, learn new skills, enjoy themselves and benefit from mutual support. This will be an ongoing focus as part of MI's Women in Sport initiative.



SUMMER ALPINE MEET

The Summer Alpine Meet was held in Argentière, in the head of the Chamonix Valley, France. More than 75 participants enjoyed a range of workshops, courses, individual challenges and a range of walks and ascents. The five-day Alpine courses offered participants a chance for adventure at altitude. Due to poor weather, unfortunately only one person reached the summit of Mont Blanc. The vast majority of the feedback from the meets was overwhelmingly positive, however, some comments were made about the cost of travel to the meets. For 2012, it has been decided that the Alpine Meet will take place in Val Masino, Italy.

SCOTTISH WINTER & SKI MEETS

Onich, Scotland was the location for MI's Winter Meet. The purpose was to provide an opportunity for walkers and climbers to learn a wide range of winter skills including avalanche awareness, winter navigation, and climbing skills. Thanks to Clive Roberts who directed the programme.

MI's 'Ski Mountaineering and Snowshoe' meet took place in Chamonix, France. The meet was aimed at skiers who wanted to improve their ski mountaineering skills, learn avalanche recognition and avalanche search techniques and do some ski touring. The weather was good, the snow was adequate but the fun had was immense.

LIBRARY

MI has a growing collection of mountaineering and walking books and guides. There are also many papers and reports covering access and conservation issues, safety issues and other general information relating to Ireland. To search the online library database go to the MI website.

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

MI's membership discount scheme continued to grow in 2011 and there is an ever increasing number of retailers, accommodation and transport providers amongst others who offer discounts on the presentation of a valid MI membership card.

MEDIA ACTIVITY

During 2011 MI cultivated relationships with key media outlets and journalists. The outcome of this is regular features and news items in *Walking World Ireland*, *Irish Times Go* section, TG4, Raidió na Gaeltachta, RTE Radio and TV News and others at regional level.





RESOURCE UTILISATION

“ MI is sincerely grateful to all the volunteers who make such a rich contribution to this organisation, our sport and the protection of the resource base we utilise ”

As highlighted at the 2011 Annual General Meeting MI is planning to develop a Mountain Centre at Tibbradden in the Dublin Mountains. In late 2011 MI advertised a tender process for the development of a feasibility study. This centre will have a focus on training, education and information.

Careful financial management is a critical factor and MI aims to continue to embed a sustainable financial culture within the organisation. MI's finances at the end of 2011 show a surplus despite ongoing funding reductions from the Irish Sports Council. This is being achieved through growing our membership, identifying new revenue streams and delivering services efficiently.

THANK YOU

Mountaineering Ireland is a success primarily because of the active involvement of members volunteering for a wide range of posts, both within clubs and as representatives in various external organisations and internal committees. MI is sincerely grateful to all the volunteers who make such a rich contribution to this organisation, our sport and the protection of the resource base we utilise. To all club walk leaders, club officers, those who have submitted articles, reviews and photographs for the IML, and those who have represented and supported MI on various fora and events – *Thank you.*



EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION

Mountaineering Ireland is represented on the following organisations:

Coillte Social and Environmental Panels (Eastern District and Connemara-Mayo District)
Comhairle Na Tuaithe
Cork Walking Cycling Network
County Cork Local Sports Partnership
Dublin Mountains Initiative
Irish Adventure Sports Training Trust
Irish Uplands Forum
Leave No Trace Ireland
Mountain Rescue Ireland
Mountaineering Coordination Group (UK and Ireland)
Mountain Heritage Trust
Mountain Leader Training NI
Mountain Leader Training UK
National Coordinating Committee for Cave & Mountain Rescue
National Committee for Commemorative Plaques in Science and Technology
National Trails Advisory Committee
Wicklow Mountains National Park Council
Wicklow Uplands Council

AFFILIATIONS

Mountaineering Ireland is affiliated to the following organisations:

European Ramblers Association
Federation of Irish Sports
International Federation of Sports Climbing
Leave No Trace Ireland
Northern Ireland Environmental Link
Northern Ireland Sports Forum
Union Internationale des Associations d'Alpinisme (UIAA)
Wicklow Uplands Council

WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

In addition to the above we also work closely with the following organisations:

Access and Conservation Trust (ACT)
Birdwatch Ireland (BWI)
British Mountaineering Council (BMC)
Catholic Guides of Ireland (CGI)
Coaching Ireland (CI)
Coillte
Countryside Access and Activities Network for Northern Ireland (CAAN)
Dublin Mountains Partnership (DMP)
Fáilte Ireland
Ganaway Activity Centre
Gartan OEC
Gortatole OEC
Irish Girl Guides (IGG)
Irish Sports Council (ISC)
Irish Wildlife Trust (IWT)
Kerry Recreation and Sports Partnership
Mardyke Arena, Cork
Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS)
Mountain Leader Training Northern Ireland (MLTNI)
Mountain Leader Training United Kingdom (MLTUK)
Mourne Heritage Trust (MHT)
National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS)
National Trails Office (NTO)
Ozone Complex, Belfast
Rural Recreation Section, Department of Environment, Community & Local Government (RRS)
Scouting Ireland (SI)
Sport Northern Ireland (SNI)
The Heritage Council
Tollymore Outdoor Centre
Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs (UFRC)

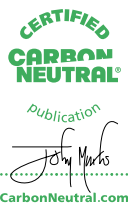
LIST OF MI AFFILIATED CLUBS

(As of December 2011)

4A's Walking Club
Acara
An Óige Hillwalkers Club
Aonach ar Siúl
Arklow and Wicklow Hillwalking Club
Athlone Walking Club
Ballyduff Walking Club
Ballyhoura Bears Mountaineering Club
Ballyvaughan Fanore Walking Club
Bandon Walking Club
Bank of Ireland Hill Walking Club
Beanna Beola Hillwalking Club
Belfast Association of Rockclimbers and Fellrunners
Belturbet Walks & Heritage Group
Bishopstown Orienteering and Hillwalking Club
Blackrock Hillwalking Club
Blackstairs Ramblers
Blarney Walking Group
Blayney Ramblers
Bogtrotters Hill Walking Club
Bootleggers
Boyle Curlew Hillwalking Club
Burren Walking Club
Cahiriveen Outdoor Club
Carran Walking Club
CIÉ Hillwalkers
CIT Mountaineering Club
Clare Outdoor Club
Clonakilty Walking Club
Clondalkin Hillwalking Club
Clooney Quin Hillwalking Club
Club Cualann
Club Siúilóide Chonamara Theas
Cobh Hillwalking Club
Coconuts
Colmcille Climbers
Comeragh Mountaineering Club
Co-op Climbing Club
Cork Backpackers Club
Cork Mountaineering Club
Crannagh Ramblers
Croom Abu
Crows Hillwalkers
Cumann Siúl Cois Coiribe
Cumann Sléibhteoireachta - Annascaul Walkers
Cumann Sléibhteoireachta Chorca Dhuibhne - Dingle Hillwalking Club
Dal Riada Climbing Club
DCU Rockclimbing Club
Defence Forces Association of Mountaineers
DIT Mountaineering Club
Dublin Phoenix Nordic Walking Club
Dublin University Climbing Club
Dublin Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team
Dungarvan Walking Club
Dunmanway Walking Club
Dunsany Walking Club
Enniscrone Walking Club
ESB Hillwalking Club
Evolution Climbing Club
Ferrard Ramblers Club
Fineos Hillwalking Club
Fitzamblers
Foyle Hillwalking and Rambling Club
Foxford Ramblers
Galtee Walking Club
Galway Walking Club
Garda Mountaineering & Canoeing Club
Glanbia Hillwalking Club
Glenwalk
GMIT Mountaineering Club
Grey Lake Ramblers
GWATS Walking Club
Hanging Rockers
Imaal Walkers
Irish Mountaineering Club
Irish Ramblers Club
Institution Mountaineering Club
Irish Christian Hillwalking Club
Irish Geological Association

Irish Quaternary Association IQUA
Kenmare Walking Club
Killarney Mountaineering Club
Kilmacthomas Walkers
Kinsale College Mountaineering Club
Knockadosan Hillwalking Club
Laune Mountaineering Club
Lee Hillwalking & Mountaineering Club
Letterkenny IT Hillwalking Society
Limerick Climbing Club
Lung Gumpas
Mallow Walking Club
Marley Hillwalkers
Maumturks Walking Club
Maynooth Hillwalking Club
Mid Tipp Mountaineering Club
Midleton Hillwalking Club
Midleton Climbing Club
Mountain Meitheal
Muintir Na Sléibhte
Na Cnocadóirí
Na Coisithe
Navan Trekkers
Nire Valley Bogtrotters
North West Mayo Hillwalkers
Northern Ireland Youth Climbing Team
NUI Galway Mountaineering Club
North West Mountaineering Club
Out & About
Out & About NI
Over the Edge Hillwalking Club
Ox Mountain Ramblers
Oyster Walking Club
Peaks Mountaineering Club
Poolbeg Ramblers
Queens University Mountaineering Club
Rainbow Hill Walking Club
Rathgormack Climbing Club
Rathgormack Ramblers
Roscrea Ramblers
Rosway Walkers
Savage Craic Climbing Club
Shanganagh Ramblers
Shelmalier Walking Club
Siúl Walking Club
Skibbereen Walking Group
Sliabh Bán Ramblers
Sliabh Luachra Hillwalking Club
Sieve Aughty Walking Club
Sligo Mountaineering Club
Sligo Walking Club
Spartan Red Sox Walking Club
Sperrins Hillwalking Club
St. Kevin's College, Dublin
Strabane Hillwalking & Rambling Club
The Arch Co-op
The Bushcraft Club
The Coolaney Walkers Club
The Goya Gang
The Team Project
The Wayfarers
Tinahely Walking Club
Tralee Mountaineering Club
Tredagh Trekkers
Trekkers Mountaineering Club
Trinity College Hiking Club
Tullow Mountaineering Club
Tyndall Mountaineering Club
UCC Mountaineering Club
UCD Mountaineering Club
University of Ulster Jordanstown Mountaineering Club
Waterford IT Mountaineering Club
West Clare Walking Club
Westport Hillwalking and Mountaineering Club
West Wicklow Walkers
Wexford Hillwalking Club
Winders Climbing Club
Woolgreen Walking Club

E&OE



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