



Cumann Siúlóirí
na hÉireann

The sixth decade of The Irish Ramblers Club 2014 to 2023

Edited by:
John Burke



**Mountain
Refuge**

Watercolour by
Colm Butler

Illustration of Life in The Ramblers
through a Compendium of
Abstracts, Photographs and Articles
from the 120 Editions of The Rambler
in our Sixth Decade - 2014 to 2023.

Members who served the Club on the Executive Committee, 2014 to 2023

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
President	Derek Tracy	David Vipond	David Vipond	Bob Nugent	Bob Nugent
Vice President	Sarah Doherty	Bob Nugent	Bob Nugent	Paul Caffrey	Paul Caffrey
Treasurer	Michael O'Neill	Michael O'Neill	Michael O'Neill	John Burke	John Burke
Secretary	Bríd O'Higgins	Bríd O'Higgins	Ann Egan	Ann Egan	Ann Egan
Editor	David Vipond	Liam Johnston	Liam Johnston	Liam Johnston	Colm Butler
Membership Sec	Eilís Kelly	Eilís Kelly	Eilís Kelly	Katherine Banks	Katherine Banks
New Members Sec	Martin O'Shea	Martin O'Shea	Martin O'Shea	Geraldine Cleary	Geraldine Cleary
Webmaster	William Murphy	Finola McDonald	Patrick Gray	Patrick Gray	Patrick Gray
Training Officer	Gráinne McLaughlin	Gráinne McLaughlin	Siobhán Purcell	Siobhán Purcell	Siobhán Purcell
Environmental Off	Seán O'Grady	Terry Leonard	Terry Leonard	Eileen Murphy	Eileen Murphy
Away Hikes/Car Sec	Joe Gilvarry	Pat Cummins	Pat Cummins	Pat Cummins	Pat Cummins
Social / Facebook		Angela Hickey	Angela Hickey	Terry Leonard	Mary Conlon
G5 Development			Fergus Roche	Fergus Roche	Anne Geoghegan
Committee Member	Patrick Pierce		John Burke		Declan Murphy
Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
President	Paul Caffrey	Paul Caffrey	Declan Murphy	Declan Murphy	Anne Morrissey
Vice President	Anne Geoghegan	Anne Geoghegan	Joe Byrne	Anne Morrissey	Helen Scully
Treasurer	John Burke	Suzanne Harnett	Suzanne Harnett	Suzanne Harnett	Bríd O'Higgins
Secretary	Declan Murphy	Declan Murphy	Helen Scully	Helen Scully	Susan Cuniffe
Editor	Colm Butler	Colm Butler	John Burke	John Burke	John Burke
Membership Sec	Katherine Banks	Margaret O'Sullivan	Margaret O'Sullivan	Margaret O'Sullivan	Michael Finn
New Members Sec	Geraldine Cleary	Clodagh Veale	Clodagh Veale	Clodagh Veale	Gillian Dennehy
Webmaster	Martin McCarthy	Martin McCarthy	Martin McCarthy	Neil Kenealy	Neil Kenealy
Training Officer	Joe Byrne	Joe Byrne	Paul Caffrey	Martin Dermody	Martin Dermody
Environmental Off	Eileen Murphy		Anne McEleney	Anne McEleney	Anne McEleney
Committee Member		John Burke	Brenda Reinhardt	Maria Lawlor	Elaine Dardis
Committee Member			Fran Wall	Michael Finn	Joanne Burke
Committee Member				Joanne Burke	Michael Doorly
Committee Member				Elaine Dardis	Deirdre Stuart (Brian Kennan-MI)



**Rambler
Feb 2014**

The beginning of an Odyssey. An Introductory hike for prospective new Ramblers - 17 Jan 2014 - accompanied by established Ramblers at the Spinc viewing platform.

The 2014 Executive Committee

Rambler
May 2014



Sarah Doherty
Vice-President



Derek Tracy
President



Bríd O'Higgins
Hon. Secretary



Michael O'Neill
Hon. Treasurer



David Vipond
Editor



Patrick Pierce
Assistant Vice-President



Éilís Kelly
Membership Secretary



Seán O'Grady
Environmental Officer



William Murphy
Webmaster



Joe Gilvarry
Weekend & Long Walks



Gráinne McLaughlin
Training Officer



Martin O'Shea
New Members' Secretary

Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler

Rambler
May 2014

Austria, July 2014 with Jim Forde

Rambler
Jan 2014

There are still a small number of places available on this trip.
We leave Dublin on 7th July 2014 and return on 17th July 2014.



Mary Rose
Murphy

Liam
Johnston

Dominic
Gallagher

Angela
Hickey

Derek
Tracy
President

Spreading their Wings
at Kilmainham Jail

Rambler
Jan 2014



19 Dec 2013

Martin
Hackett

Frank
Wilson

Kevin
O'Loughlin

Gráinne
McLaughlin

Michael
O'Neill

Seán
O'Grady

Mick
Whelan

Aidan
Punch

Gaye
O'Grady

Rambler
Jan 2014

G3+ Thur hikers with our new Treasurer, **Michael O'Neill**, leading his first hike. May there be many more of them!! Congratulations also to new leaders **Anthony Duggan, Sheila Moran** and **Damien Cassels**.

From the Grapevine:

Rambler
Apr 2014

Congratulations to new leaders,
Sean O'Grady, Pat Cummins and **Liam Johnston**.

Eva McLaughlin (daughter of Gráinne) is doing Trojan work for the club.

The amazing **Herbert Herzmann** began his 'Navigation Skills' program with 8 Ramblers.

Tree Council of Ireland: Rambler

Apr 2014

Many thanks to the Tree Council of Ireland ... for donating 500 saplings to our Remembrance Wood project. ...

Club Lug 21 Jun 2014 - all grades

... Grades 3 & 4 start Lug Walk 31 May and complete it in four weekly stages:

1. Seahan to Sally Gap 13k, 552m
 2. Sally Gap to Carrigshouk 11k, 588m
 3. Carrigshouk to Wicklow Gap 13k, 736m
 4. Wicklow Gap to Fentons 16k, 515m (via Table Track)
- 21k, 860m (via Lugnaquilla) ...

Rambler
Apr 2014

Eileen Turner, IRC Founder Member, died Mar 2014 - an appreciation by JM:

... the Club's unofficial matchmaker ... could spot a blossoming romance well before the couple themselves ... the only match she failed to predict ... that of herself and Brian ... with his soft Kerry accent, love of poetry and detailed knowledge of the hills was cracked about his Eileen ... They were the heart and soul of the Ramblers - he was the hiking heart and she was the social soul. ...

Rambler
May 2014

Christmas Away Night, Glenmalur

Thur G4's Dec 8.
Cost - €75pps which includes
dinner and B&B, singles €95.

Rambler
Sep 2014

Carol Doyle

May contain traces of nuts...

Let's get the facts out of the way first. The trip to Kerry to celebrate our half-century as a club was an outstanding success. The hotel was lovely, the food fine, the weather was kind and the organisers all did a fantastic job.

Ramblers climbed Carrauntoohill, toiled up Purple and Tomies, sauntered around Mangerton, proceeded apace up Mulliganatin. They skipped up and down The Gap of Dunloe, wandered along the Kerry Way and visited Muckross.

Much as you would expect so far, I hear you cry.

But things that caught my eye were somewhat less predictable. I name but a few:-

- Gerry Baxter, who is no stranger to the finest of outdoor clothes, sporting a cover for his Rucksack fashioned from a white fertilizer '10:10:20' bag.

- Mick Whelan eyeing up the stone shelter on the top of Carrauntoohill to see if his roofing business was interested in quoting to put a lid on it.

- Eadaoin O'Shea being crowned winner of the 'put your waterproof overtrousers on and off again in the shortest time' competition.

- A total of nine Rambler Presidents past and present in the same room. I struggle for a collective name. Does a 'Pride of Presidents' do them justice?

- The scrum when the doors opened on Buffet night reminiscent of a herd of Wildebeest crossing the Serengeti plains with a couple of lions in hot pursuit.

- A veritable smorgasbord of storytelling which ranged from Peter Buckley telling us the fairytale of Rinderella through Nollaig O'Ceallaigh playing all four characters in his Brendan Behan tribute, to John Shackleton offering us the story of the bucket of bricks.

- Three Rambler statisticians (Tim, Aidan and Michael) having breakfast together discussing their favourite TV program 'Wigs and Jigs' when by rights they should surely be discussing Relative standard deviations, Weighted averages, Bell curves and outliers.

- Me being barred from the Poetry Night for fear I would leap to my feet with an ill-chosen Limerick when all around were quoting Heaney. I thought it worthy of a Nobel Prize myself so I quote it here for your delectation:-

When The Ramblers to 50 had got,
Off to Kerry they went like a shot,
They hiked and they sang,
It went off with a bang,
Which is better than going to pot!

So thanks again to the organisers and to all who made it memorable for whatever reason. It was nutty certainly and good fun definitely.

Enid Hughes



Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

Walk the Wicklow Way in May

6 Days full walking, Tinahely to Marley Park c.100k
Coach to start and finish points.
Stay 5 nights in Glenmalur Lodge, Dinner B&B.
Sunday 18th May to Friday 23rd May.
Cost €400.00 per person sharing (based on 14-16 people).
Enquiries to: **John Shackleton**

**Rambler
Feb 2014**

Irish Classic Hike

I have completed the Derryclare (Glencoaghan) Horseshoe - my favourite Irish climb - in the Bens in Connemara at least once a year over the last twenty years. I hear some Ramblers might like to join me this year. I would like to hear from them. ...

**Rambler
May 2014**

Patrick Pierce

Congratulations to
Tom Milligan, Michael Neary and Niall & Tina Ennis
on completing the 51k Art O'Neill walk.

**Rambler
Feb 2014**

Irish Ramblers Club awarded by Mountain Views

Derek Tracy received an award on behalf of
the Irish Ramblers Club for

Outstanding Contribution to Hill Walking

at the Mountain Views Awards, 21 Feb 2014 to mark the Club's 50th Anniversary. ... the Club was an outstanding organiser of club-walking in the Dublin area, running up to 10 walks a week. **Simon Stewart**

**Rambler
Mar 2014**

The Rambler Art O'Neill Walk

Distance 53k (road 29k; forest trail 10k; tracks 5k; open mountain 9k)
Total ascent 1700m
Commencing at midnight, on Fri 25 April outside Dublin
Castle (entrance gate to the right of City Hall). **Tom Milligan**

**Rambler
Apr 2014**

Rambler Jun 2014



Heading to a May Full Moon Hike

Rambler Jul 2014



G3+ on Lug Stage 1



Ramblers at start of a single-stage Lug

**Rambler
Jul 2014**

The Remembrance Wood - an update

Many Ramblers helped in all sorts of ways with the initial planting and clearing. We succeeded in planting 1,200 saplings on our beautiful site on Derrybawn mountain. It was hard work because there is only a thin cover of soil on the rock of the mountain. This work started in April 2013, and resumed in December 2013 to conclude in April 2014.

Next, we had the invasion of the hares. We had erected a stout wire fence to protect against deer and goats, but not against smaller creatures, and to our dismay we found droppings and bitten saplings which told the sorry tale. Again, a small army of Ramblers assisted in attaching to the fence a finer mesh supplement about a metre up from ground level, and this seems to have been effective.

The Remembrance Wood committee, led by the redoubtable Mick Reidy, recently inspected the site, and the news is generally good. Our Rowan - Mountain Ash - has done really well, and there are several saplings which are at 2m height already - it would take an athletic hare to chew the top of these. Our Scots Pine had a slow start and seemed not to be thriving, but happily now look well established and growing well, albeit not very high just yet. The Birch saplings appear very strong. Our Oaks had a strong start, but at present seem affected by a fungal infection which has tentatively been identified as mildew. This is work-in-progress at present, and we are liaising with the nursery which supplied the saplings to understand and address this challenge.

If any Rambler reading this has any insight into this area, assistance will be very welcome.

The next stage in our mission is maintenance. Even along the side of Derrybawn Mountain, the laws of the jungle prevail, and our adversary now are the Ferns aka Bracken. They are making territorial advances over the areas planted with saplings, and we need to counter-attack, by trampling them back to allow light to our young trees. We are also seeking to establish a more defined central clearing area, with a bigger cairn.

Our summer forays were beset with insects, so we are planning a late September visit to progress this work without close insect attention. We hope to be joined by many Ramblers to continue our work on this wonderful site.

Michael O'Neill



**Rambler
Sep 2014**



The Horse in the Hole Hike

Rambler
Jan 2015

A Tale of Derring-Do from our fearless and heroic Grade 4s!

For some time, the club has been running "Clean-Up" hikes, but Sun 30 Nov 2014 may be our first animal rescue hike.

The Ambler hike had succeeded in restoring to its home a dog found on the hills. But the G4 hike was involved in a more ambitious rescue. Let us start at the beginning....

It was a beautiful sunny, crisp autumnal day, the company jovial and I was substituting for Fergus Roche. What could go wrong? Dame Djouce was ahead of us, teasing with her veils of wispy mist as we sallied forth. Descending into Mason's Glen, the craic was mighty. At the White Cottage, where we spied two horses ahead, we suspected nothing amiss. As they led us, in stately fashion, along a path through the heather, I could not understand such reputedly intelligent animals not breaking to either side, as sheep would have done. They led us to where a

third horse was trapped in a hole, with only its head and neck above ground.

Jim Forde declared that we could not leave the horse trapped, and not to frighten it. I stepped quietly over a gully in the heather, without my more usual brio, and started the scene in mid drama that I would title "The Lost Leader". I stepped, not onto the other side, but onto overhanging heather and, "Houdini-like", disappeared from the face of the earth and descended into its bowels. I had discovered The Great Powerscourt Peat Crevasse! When I had gathered myself together, I could poke my head over the edge of the crevasse. There we were, horse and hoarse (me from my whimpering!) to the amazement of the hike.

Jim and David Vipond, like a guerrilla dental team, quickly extracted me from the chasm like a recalcitrant molar. Turning our minds to the problem, I produced a light rope. Deftly fashioning a lariat, I twirled it over my head, Roy Rogers fashion, before the hike. They

were now huddled together for mutual security. A rumour was gaining ground that they were witnessing a candid camera type event connected with the Club's fiftieth anniversary.

David and Jim, showing their superior equine expertise, turned the horse's head and led it along the crevasse to where it was shallower, and the horse could exit. Giving a grateful whinny it joined its two friends and the three amigos headed in a stately fashion to more lush pastures. I, somewhat abashed, coiled my lasso and stowed it in my saddlebag, sorry rucksack.

As the setting sun was now painting with red the few clouds in the sky, we decided to skip second drum-up (with one dissenting vote). Fortified with boiled sweets, we happily wended our way into the setting sun. (Actually the sun was setting behind us but everything does not need to be perfect to make a perfect day).

Pádraig McGrane

Jun 2014. Photographic course by Michael Delahunty



Rambler
Sep 2014

Tom Moran in typical restful pose for the camera on the photographic course, Jun 2014



Rambler
Sep 2014



Working Team on establishment of Remembrance Wood, 2013 - 2014



234km Galway to Dublin Coast-to-Coast 2014
Alice Harding, Paula Darby, Clair Nason, Derek Tracy
Guest Keri Dapron, Dominic Gallagher and Ellis Kelly

Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

Come and help maintain our Remembrance Wood!

Our next Meitheal is on Wednesday 30th September to push ahead with maintenance of the site. Please support us by coming along.

**Rambler
Sep 2014**

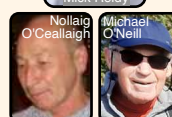
When? Wednesday 30 September 2014

Assembly - 9.30am Wicklow Heather, to do on-site maintenance from 10.00am to c 14.00pm

Required – willing to help tramp ferns and help progress the central clearing area; please bring a stick or pole, if you have them.

Contact-; Mick Reidy, Nollaig O'Ceallaigh or Michael O'Neill

Opposite see photograph of one of the saplings referred to by Michael in his article.



Remembrance Walk 2014

**Rambler
Sep 2014**

This is the fifteenth walk since I started it in 2000. The idea is to celebrate in a happy and cheerful way, our memories of the joy, company and friendship of our Rambler friends who have passed away. The success of this walk is borne out by the high numbers of Ramblers who have joined me on the previous walks and is proof that we have not forgotten our friends. ... Ron Baker

New Thursday Grade 2

... common knowledge that the Thur G3+ hike is more akin to a G2 hike than G3+. Often distance, ascent, and pace, have been above guidelines now that Thursday hike will be called Grade 2, to be moderated by John O'Connor. ...

**Rambler
Oct 2014**

Training Update

**Rambler
Oct 2014**

Gráinne McLaughlin, Training Officer, is busy winding up her training programme for the year. Her ongoing training plans include – GPS Training, First Aid, Hiking Skills. The last course for the year will take place on 29 and 30 Nov at Kippure Lodge, and a 'Tree' walk late this year or early next year by Jim Clarke ...

The Lug Walk 2015

**Rambler
Mar 2015**

The sub-committee, of Finola McDonald, Margaret O'Sullivan and Tom Milligan, is working on arrangements for this year's Lug Walk. They will need help with this major Rambler-hosted event. Walkers from all over the country will take part and Ramblers want to make this challenging walk safe and enjoyable for all. ...

Am I walking at the right grade for Me? Bob Nugent

Am I always out in front of my hike or at the back? Do I find hikes are too slow or too fast? Do I go home feeling I could have walked further/higher/faster? Or do I go home and barely have energy to collapse into a bath?

Perhaps I am walking at the wrong level for my fitness – have I thought of moving up or moving down a grade?

The benefits of such a move are obvious, not least to the other hikers on the grade! I would no longer be putting pressure on those who are not able to keep up with me nor would I hold back those who are faster than me.

From the point of view of safety on the

hills, which is always our first concern, tired hikers are more likely to get injured or detached from the main group especially in bad weather. People going too fast for a grade may cause others to push themselves to keep up and cause them stress. Alternatively if others have to wait around frequently for slower members in the group they can get cold. Both situations are a recipe for disaster and will cause general unease in the group.

Remember, our fellow hikers' well being should be taken into consideration as well as our own comfort.

If our level of fitness is not adequate for a particular grade, it is neither safe nor fair to impose

ourselves on a group of fellow Ramblers who have come out to hike at that grade. The reverse is also true.

Please remember on club hikes we are all part of a group and that we should choose our hike grade in accordance with our own capabilities. If you are in doubt about the speed, height and distance to be expected on a hike, check out the grades on our website.

Hiking should be a pleasure for everyone on the hike – please do your best to ensure that it is!

**Rambler
Mar 2015**

Car sharing and Ramblers

**Rambler
Mar 2015**

The executive committee has formed a group comprising Bob Nugent, Pat Cummins, Martin O'Shea and Michael O'Neill to look afresh at this area.

**Rambler
Apr 2015**



G1, G2 and G3+ Combined Hike 15 Mar 2015 led by Kevin O'Loughlin

Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

After AGM discussion, the EC will investigate the possibility of archiving the Club records. Jack Morrissey, who had argued for the importance of archiving our records at the AGM, has kindly offered to head up a sub-Committee of the EC for this purpose, consisting of Jack, Janice Gibbs and Mary Conlon. Bríd O'Higgins, the Club Secretary, will liaise between the sub-Committee and the EC. Jack has submitted the following article..... DV -- President

**Rambler
Apr 2015**

Archiving our Club's records

We are embarking on a project to archive the records of the Irish Ramblers Club. An initial meeting has been held, attended by Dr. Mary Clarke (Dublin City Archivist), Ellen Murphy (a member of Dr. Clarke's staff) with Janice Gibbs, Mary Conlon and Jack Morrissey from the Irish Ramblers Club. When the project is completed, our records will reside in Dublin City Library & Archive, and will be preserved and stored free of charge. Once our material has been fully catalogued, it will be made available to the public for consultation in the Dublin City Library and Archive Reading Room. In this manner our records will be accessible by our members past, present and future and by social historians and researchers. Arrangements will be made to add appropriate material to our archive on a yearly basis.

Our sub-committee consisting of Janice, Mary and Jack, would like to hear from Ramblers present and past who have material for our archive. Any items relating to the Irish Ramblers Club would be of interest to us including:-

- Minutes, annual reports, working papers/briefing documents (for example, of the various sub- Committees that have been set up over the years), brochures and other advertising/promotional material (e.g. posters, flyers),
- Papers of the key officers,
- Constitution, legal papers,
- Reports and major submissions
- Records relating to special events, social activities (e.g. tours, annual dinners) and major campaigns, as well as the day-to-day running of the club
- Financial records such as journals, balance sheets and annual financial statements, and any material relating to sponsorship, funding, etc.
- Photographs- especially of special events, and with individuals/events/dates identified as far as possible,
- Memorabilia such as membership cards, art works, tickets, certificates, souvenirs
- Oral history material (recordings, transcripts) and written accounts (e.g. diaries, articles, memoirs, notes on club history)
- Personal papers
- Sets of press-cuttings relating to the Club, and other public relations material
- Register of members
- Correspondence and files relating to club

If you are wondering if we would be interested in an item or not, err on the side of inclusivity and send it to us. If To make arrangements for collection of material please contact one of us:-

Janice Gibbs,

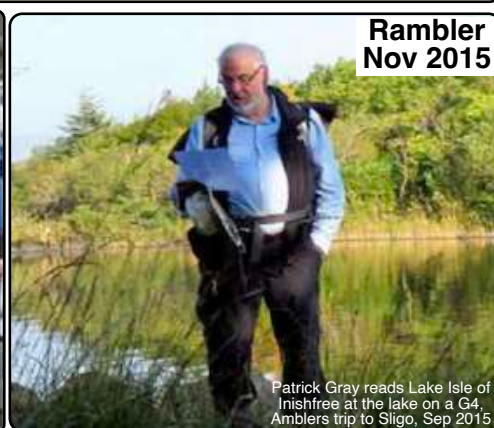
Mary Conlon,

Jack Morrissey

Jack Morrissey



**Rambler
Nov 2015**



**Rambler
Nov 2015**

October in Connemara

**Rambler
May 2015**

12 to 16 Oct 2015, staying at The INN to the West, 5 mins walk from the centre of Clifden, the Inn to the West, offers 30 large comfortable bedrooms, all en suite. The four stone-clad buildings are modelled on Dun Aengus on the Aran Islands. Walks will be arranged from Grade 4 to 3+. Other grades subject to demand and availability of leaders.

On one of the days there will be a free master class in Connemara Landscape Photography for a limited number of people. On a couple of evenings bridge will be organised

Membership

**Rambler
May 2015**

Eilis Kelly, reported that 602 full members and 19 Life Members had renewed.

Martin O'Shea, reported that 83 associates had renewed

Autumn Meet of MI

**Rambler
May 2015**

We have agreed to host the Autumn meet of MI in Glendalough in October to be organised by Terry Leonard Gráinne McLaughlin, Bob Nugent, David Vipond and Nollaig O'Ceallaigh.

The Lug Walk Saturday 20th June 2015

Rambler
Jun 2015

Thank you to all our volunteers. Let's hope we have a glorious day on the 20th!

Briefing Session Volunteers please attend our pre-walk briefing session on Thursday, 18th June 7:30 to 8:30 downstairs in Templeogue Tennis Club to collect your equipment and be briefed on your role.

Lug Walk Draw A draw will be held for all volunteers as a gesture of appreciation and in lieu of paying expenses. The draw will be held at the Club BBQ on 5th July.

Checkpoints

4:15 - 5:30	Ballinascorney Gap	Peter Caulwell
5.00 - 6.00	Start Seahan Forest	Jerry Mac Donough & Brendan Treacy
7.00 - 9.30	Car Park North of Sally Gap	Milo Kane & Anita Morris
7.00 - 9.30	Sally Gap Crossroads	Michael Cosgrave
9.30 - 12.30	Mullaghcleevaun	Eddie Culligan & Donal McLeela
10.00 - 12.30	Wicklow Gap	Carolyn & Eoghan Brangan
12.30 - 15.00	Wicklow Gap	Gráinne McLaughlin & Margaret McO
11.00 - 13.30	Lough Firrib	David Ensor & Seamus Sullivan
13.30 - 16.00	Lough Firrib	Pat Dignam & Barbara Condon
12.30 - 15.00	Table Track	Bob Nugent & Nollaig Ó'Ceallaigh
15.00 - 18.00	Table Track	Catherine & Kevin O'Loughlin
14.00 - 17.00	Lugnaquilla	Deirdre Morris & Enid Hughes
17.00 - 20.00	Lugnaquilla	Robert Garrett & Anne Morrissey
15.00 - 21.00	Seskin/Glen of Imaal	Jessica Lennon & Ron Baker

Lug Walk - from Jul 2015
Congratulations to Finola and her team (especially Tom Milligan and Margaret O'Sullivan) for the running of a very successful Lug Walk. 79 walkers completed the hike, and the event proceeded without any mishap.

Rollups

c. 6.00	Seahan Forest to Sally Gap	13km	550m ascent	Maurice Holly & Catherine Fenton
c. 9.30	Sally Gap to Wicklow Gap	18km	904m ascent	Doreen Lynch & Dorothy Byrne
c.15.00	Wicklow Gap to Glen of Imaal	21km	853m ascent	Paul Roche & John Burke

Transport

4.00 - 5.00	Luas Car Park Red Cow to Seahan start	Peter Buckley, Mary O'Brien, Gerry O'Dwyer, Turlough O'Molloy, Barbara Young, Jack Morrissey, Helen Rohan
13.00 - 15.00	Wicklow Gap to Blessington	Eileen O'Connor, Jim Forde, Ted Bowe
20.00 - 21.30	Fentons Glen of Imaal to Blessington/Red Cow	Seamus Smyth, Herbert Herzmann, Helen Donoghue, Ray Cummins (B), Seamus Moriarty, Larry Matthews

Wicklow Gap Refreshments

10.00 -12.30	Patricia Elliott & Carol Doyle
12.30 -14.30	Susan Brown & Angela Hickey

Organisers

Coordinator:	Finola McDonald
Checkpoints:	Tom Milligan
Transport:	Margaret O'Sullivan

Early Bird Special: A Great Experience

Rambler
Jun 2015

The Early Bird Summer Solstice Special will take place on 21 Jun 2015 on the Great Sugarloaf, Kilmacanogue.

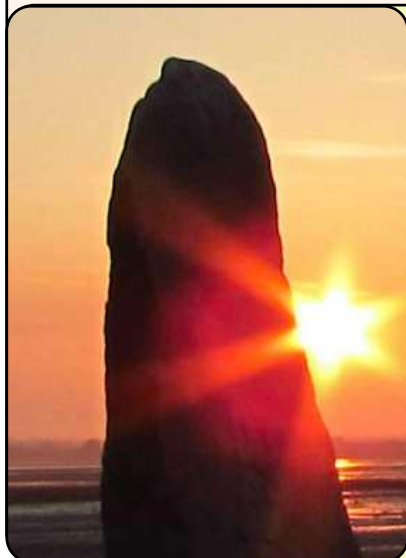
The Walk will start approximately 45 minutes before sunrise at c. 4am – (exact time to be verified beforehand).

The walks starts from O234 121 - the car park, 4km from Kilmacanogue, off the road to Roundwood.

Head torch essential

Great fun Guaranteed

Leader: Derek Tracy



Carlingford, Jan 2015



Tommy Taylor,
died July 2015



Dec 2015



Jack Morrissey
Rambler of the Year 2015
David Vipond, President



Seán Lowry
died Feb 2015



Milo Kane and
sapling at
Remembrance
Wood



Carmal Mollroy on
Belfast Mayoral
Chair, 2016

Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

Launch of the Ramblers Website, theramblers.ie, Rambler Aug 2015

The new Ramblers website is up and running. Thanks to the people who commented on the design. Thanks especially to Simon Stewart who provided many of the lovely photos as well as valuable expert advice.

All Ramblers with email addresses have been sent instructions on how to change password and complete membership registration for the new website. Have you completed your registration yet? Are you having trouble? Email info@theramblers.ie for help.

On the website you will find your latest Rambler bulletin, the current hikes list, car pooling where you can offer and get lifts to the hikes, leader's hike report form, coming events, news, etc. The website is easily updated and will have new items regularly.

We welcome your inputs to Ramblers News and Musings – send your articles and photos to info@theramblers.ie.

We welcome your comments on anything in connection with the Club - see Members Forum. The GPX library is being tested as is the Rambler bulletin archive and both will be available soon.

Finola McDonald, Webmaster and Website Project Manager

Fergus Roche Mindfulness on the Mountains - A Different Challenge

Rambler
Dec 2015



I have been walking with groups for the past 25 years and feel that our preoccupation with achievement, walking faster and further, and climbing higher, can sometimes block our engagement with nature. The goal always takes precedence over the process. More often than not, we rush towards our destination and afford ourselves little time to pause and take in the scenery en route. There are no programmed pauses, when for a moment or two, we desist from idle chatter, put our minds in neutral and use our senses to explore the wonders of natural world. Even though we have left our youth behind we are still caught up in the old mindset, aptly described by the poet (*italics added*);

When I was young, like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
of the deep rivers and the lonely streams,
wherever Nature led – *more like a man*

*flying from something that he dreads
than one that sought the thing he loved*

The big challenge is to integrate a relationship with Nature whilst maintaining our fitness at whatever level we walk. Is it possible to widen our field of awareness to take in both? The overpowering western ethos of tangible achievement – i.e. getting to the summit as quickly as possible leaves little time or space to align ourselves with the natural habitat.

When someone stops to see a flower, watch a bird swoop across the heather or take in a particular landscape, it is often seen as an interruption of the hike rather than a joyous encounter with Nature. The process of adopting a different mindset on hikes will require considerable effort and ingenuity. For many of us the biggest struggle will be to slow down, mentally and physically. We could start by including a few

pauses on our hikes, when we silently experience the beauty of the landscape. This may create a space, however short, to begin a new relationship with the mountains, one of friendship rather than conquest.

It's important to remember that this is 'added value' to what we do. We can still climb as high, walk as long but at the same time cultivate an awareness of what is around us.

For I have learned to look on Nature
Not as in the hour of *thoughtless youth*
But hearing oftentimes the still sad music of
humanity.

This quote and the previous one is from Tintern Abbey, by Wordsworth, which many of us learned at school. Read it again s-l-o-w-l-y and gasp in wonder at the beauty and miracle of Nature that unfolds all around us.

Fergus Roche



Rambler
Sep 2016

Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

Mountain Meitheal

Mountain Meitheal is a volunteer group who undertake projects to protect and conserve mountain and forest areas in Ireland. The organisation aims to counteract the pressures which are evident on our fragile landscape by building and maintaining trails which are sympathetic to the surrounding countryside and to promote sustainable recreation by encouraging personal

responsibility and awareness.

Those interested in joining Mountain Meitheal or renewing their membership should contact Cliona Ní Bhréartúin at cnibh@eircom.net. Non members please note that insurance is only valid for three work days after which it is necessary to become a member. Volunteers should come prepared for a day in the hills and be prepared for all weathers. For safety and comfort wear

appropriate footwear. A packed lunch is advisable including a hot drink. A change of clothes is recommended for the homeward journey. Bring gardening gloves if you have them otherwise they will be supplied. Mountain Meitheal will provide the tools. Why not bring a friend – new comers are always welcome.

**Rambler
Mar 2015**

For more information on Mountain Meitheal check out the web site www.pathsavers.org.

MOUNTAIN RESCUE EVENING

Come along to an evening of information and news on what Mountain Rescue are up to at the minute and learn when and how to call them for help – it pays to know, you may save a life or limb by taking the time to learn the simple steps to safety.

Wynn's Hotel, Abbey Street, Dublin 2
12 May 2015 19.00

**Rambler
Apr 2015**

National Trails:

If you have a smart phone and are interested in availing of almost 700 hiking routes / trails for free, a download app is available from irishtrails.ie.

It gives great detail on routes nationwide and is an excellent hiking accessory.

**Rambler
Apr 2015**

GPX Library now open!

In the Members Area of the website you will now find links to the GPX Library.

A few files have been uploaded to start with. In time we hope that many more will be added by members.

It's not necessary to have a GPS device to use the

library - you can see any of the hikes by clicking on the link and following instructions for first time users.

There are a number of guides which can be read onscreen or, usually better, printed out.

Patrick Gray

**Rambler
Aug 2015**



Tom Moran and friend, Lobawn, July 2015



John Shackleton and Jim Forde help gardai with enquiries - Donegal, Apr 2016



TIME? 5:30pm.

Meet fellow Ramblers for an evening of fun with Live music / Song / Dance / Food and Spot prizes!

Enjoy all this for only € 15.

Book with Angela Hickey before July 1st.

Cheques made payable to The Irish Ramblers Club to Angela at Merrick House Eaton Rd Terenure Dublin 6w.

Contact Angela at socialsecretary@theramblers.ie

Looking forward to a big turn out for this event - see you there.

!!!LOTS OF EXCELLENT SPOT PRIZES!!!

**Rambler
Jul 2015**

Amblers:

David Vipond reported on discussion with Fergus Roche, John Gaughan and Patrick Gray. Suggestions from Fergus, John and Patrick were:

- (1) the Amblers should be renamed as Grade 5, and
- (2) new members should be recruited for this G5 group directly, rather than at present where the members can only come by dropping down from the higher grades.

**Rambler
Feb 2016**

National Pilgrim Path Day takes place in Ireland each year on Holy Saturday, on which day there are organised walks on 10 pilgrim paths around the country. Most of these take a few hours and details can be found on www.pilgrimpath.ie

Last year Ramblers Kathleen Forde, Anne Geoghegan, assisted by Rambler Tom Moran, walked Tochar Phadraig and Kathleen's account of the trip is set out below.

**Rambler
Mar 2016**

Christmas Away Night, Glenmalure

Thur G4's are having a Christmas night on Dec 8th .

Cost - €75pps which includes dinner and B&B, singles €95.

Carol Doyle

**Rambler
Sep 2014**

HIKE START TIMES SURVEY

**Rambler
Mar 2016**

40% (243) responded - good, 60/40 to females.

G1 no result G2 10:00

G3+ 10:30 G4 10:30 Sun 11:00 Thu

Amblers 11:00

The Annual Archive:

**Rambler
May 2016**

When Jack Morrissey, with assistance of Janice Gibbs and Mary Conlon, took on the task of sorting out the club's archives, it was agreed that these archives would need to be updated on an annual basis. The EC decided to ask Jack for a listing of which documents would be required.

Car Pooling:

**Rambler
Feb 2016**

We discussed the need to step up the level of car pooling to hikes. It is not unusual to have about 15 cars being used for every 20 hikers. While it was understood that Ramblers have their reasons why it is difficult to car-pool, it was agreed that this level of car usage is unsustainable, and a campaign will begin to strive to increase the amount of sharing.

Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler - 2014 to 2023



24 Ramblers on Wicklow to Bray Walk
led by Derek Tracy, April 2016

Hike in Magillicuddy Reeks

**Rambler
Feb 2016**

Starting at Lisleibane, through Hags Glen, to Cnoc na Toinne (958m) via Zig Zags. Then the route follows 7 rocky peaks. End at Kate Kearney's Cottage.
Distance: 19km Ascent: 1280m Time: Up to 9 hours.
Sean O'Grady

Post Christmas Get Together

**Rambler
Oct 2016**

Jerry MacDonough 18 to 20 Jan 2017
Four Seasons Hotel Carlingford, Co. Louth.
€150 pps - 2 B&B's & 2 Dinners. €200 for singles
Hiking for all grades, subject to available leaders

Car Sharing by John Burke

**Rambler
Sep 2016**

It turns out our Wicklow Hills are not ours at all. There are lots of people using them – members of the public and other Walking Clubs.

The Ramblers are getting a bit of a reputation for bringing too many cars on their walks and hogging all the parking spaces wherever we start our walks. Members of the public do the same, but not much can be done about that. Other Walking Clubs, apparently, are much better at organising Car Sharing than we are.

As a club, we will, in future, strongly be pressing the need for car sharing by our members. We don't want to inhibit other people's enjoyment of "our hills".

And, besides, we don't want to do any damage to the environment of "our hills".

Do you know that a typical round trip of 100km from the centre of Dublin to Glendalough by twenty cars puts one third of a tonne of CO2 into the air. That's 4 to 6 times the weight of the driver sitting in the car on his own! The Lord Save Us.

How do we arrange Car Sharing?:

1. The Rambler Website – theramblers.ie. The steps to follow are set out in Martin O Shea's article.
2. Set up a WhatsApp Group with other members who live near you or

along your typical routes to hikes. The Thursday 3+ members use this and all lifts are quickly arranged on the Wednesday. And it's very sociable and friendly.

3. Just phone someone you think may be going on your hike and make an arrangement.

Let's make the Ramblers the byword for protection of "our hills" and fairness in sharing access to them for everyone else.

John Burke



Art O'Neill Plaque:

**Rambler
Oct 2016**

Tim McKenna and Michael Cosgrave ask for repairs to the plaque, put in place in 1992 by the IRC, under Derry O'Crowley, Peadar O'Riordain, Michael Cosgrave and Tim McKenna.

A Trip to Austria

**Rambler
Nov 2016**

25 Years will have gone by since Herbert Herzmann organised his first holiday for Ramblers and Wayfarers.

Join him on his 10th Hiking Holiday in Gesäuse National Park, Austria 28 Aug-8 Sep 2017

You will be overwhelmed by the stunning location of the hotel and the wonders of the Gesäuse!

ALL Grades (1 to 4) catered for.

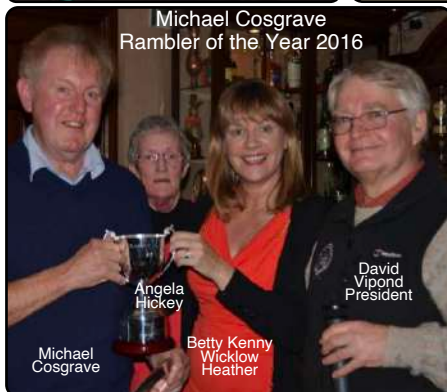
Estimated Cost:

€ 1200 includes flights, rental of cars, fuel and half board accommodation.

Please indicate if you are willing to be a driver and what grades you will be mostly walking! **Without enough drivers no holiday!**



Vincent Clarke
died Aug 2016



Michael Cosgrave
Rambler of the Year 2016

Angela Hickey

Betty Kenny
Wicklow Heather

David Vipond
President



Paul Caffrey

John Burke

Geraldine Cleary

Liam Johnston

Katherine Banks

Fergus Roche

Patrick Gray

Bob Nugent
President

Pat Cummins

Siobhán Purcell

Terry Leonard

New Executive Committee
2017

Also: Ann Egan
Eileen Murphy



Remembrance Wood
Work Party, Apr 2017

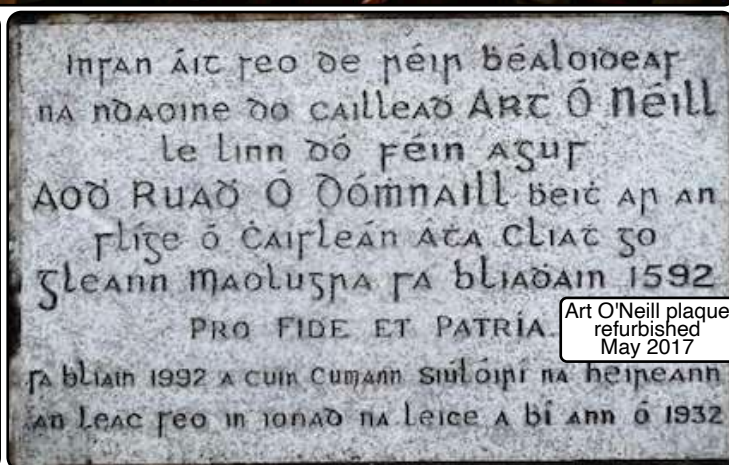
Milo Kane

Bob Nugent

Michael O'Neill

Geraldine Cleary

Dominic Gallagher



Art O'Neill plaque
refurbished
May 2017



Dolomites trip June 2017
led by Louis O'Donoghue



The Twelve Graves of Glenmalure Feb 2019

(Grid Ref: T 120 920) are marked by small wooden crosses. They are recorded in local folklore and documented in Carmel O' Toole's book "Glenmalure The Wild Heart of the Mountains". The Twelve Graves are situated near Little Braigue Mountain, on the right of the Military Road, as it descends from Laragh towards Drumgoff past the Shay Elliot Recreation Area.



The Twelve Graves

The crosses are made of teak and serve as a reminder of the history surrounding the Twelve Graves. There are two theories on the graves' origin. One is that a local priest and some worshipers were killed by Cromwell's army between 1649 and 1650. The Cromwellian army had moved through Leinster, from Drogheda, under General Ireton (a son-in-law of Oliver Cromwell). There were many raids and skirmishes fought throughout the mountains of Wicklow as the army travelled on to lay siege to Wexford.

A second theory of the origin of the Twelve Graves is that there was an attack on local people by Abraham Critchley's men (a landowner in Ballyboy) towards the end of the 1700s. Critchley's name is recorded on East-West maps at Critchley's Corner (T 096 936), south-west of Mullacor.

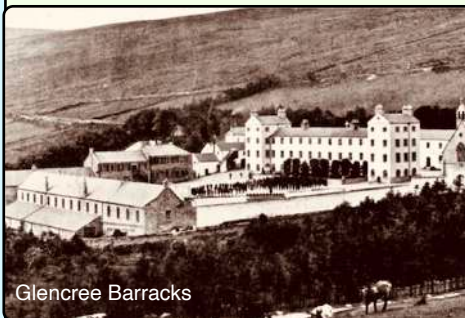
Others believe the grave-like mounds are simply an indication of cultivation on Little Braigue Mountain. No matter what their origin Coillte and local Glenmalure people continue to respect and protect the Twelve Graves area. Over time the crosses deteriorated but have been replaced by local Glenmalure people with the help of a hillwalking group called "The Roving Soles".

Military Road Jun 2019

Many of our Rambler hikes traverse or are adjacent to The Military Road, a North-South route across the Wicklow

Mountains. The route begins in Rathfarnham and finishes in Aughavannagh in South Wicklow. The road continues over the Featherbeds through the Sally Gap, passing near Glenmacnass Waterfall and the Shay Elliot memorial. It is about 58 kilometres in length.

Some of Ramblers' start points begin near the grounds of iconic buildings, which today have very different uses to those for which they were originally designed, e.g. Drumgoff (Glenmalure) Barracks - today occupied by the Irish Caravan and Camping Club - and Glencree Barracks, now the "Peace and Reconciliation Centre".



Glencree Barracks

The Military Road was constructed in the early 1800s after the 1798 Rebellion, to suppress Michael Dwyer and his followers who continued to attack government forces. There was also concern about a French invasion along the East coast of Ireland. Five military barracks were constructed along the Military Road at Glencree, Laragh, Drumgoff (Glenmalure), Glen of Imaal and Aughavannagh.

It was envisaged a military road from Dublin to Wicklow over the mountains would ensure troops could move quickly to where insurrection occurred.

Surveys were undertaken by Captain Taylor of the Royal Irish Engineers in 1800. Work began soon afterwards, with soldiers working in four teams, each of fifty soldiers and one officer. They lived in tents and houses (made from sods). The soldiers were paid a shilling a day, the officers five shillings and Captain Taylor fifteen shillings! The Military Road was completed in 1809 at a cost of £43,500, double what was budgeted. The upland of blanket bog was challenging, and harsh weather made work arduous.

It was decided to construct the five military barracks along the route as the threat of a French invasion became very real. They were to house up to

100 men except for Glen of Imaal Barracks which was to house 200. Private contractors built these barracks at a total cost of £27,000.

Michael Dwyer surrendered long before the road was completed and the threat of a French invasion receded after the death of Napoleon in 1815.

Today as we travel over this historic road to our hiking routes or when we walk on some parts of the Military Rd, we remember how the past continues to influence our meanderings through the Wicklow hills and mountains.

Gossan Stones Nov 2019

Ramblers hiking on Paddock Hill, just above Laragh, often pass two small standing stones. They are about a metre high and 1.7 metres apart. They are known as "Gossan Stones" (Grid Ref: T 145 988), possibly, a Hiberno-English slang word for "gossun" or young boys. Why were they placed in such a position in an area not known for pre-historic monuments?

The stones are aligned on a north-south axis. As you face east towards the Irish Sea over the valley of the Devil's Glen, a solar alignment is evident on a clear day at the time of the Equinox. As the sun rises during the Autumnal Equinox around the 23rd September, the stones act as a portal through which the sun shines. The equinox is midway between the winter and summer solstices. On the day of the equinox daytime and night time are approximately of equal duration.

Unfortunately, during the equinox this September, the cloudy weather was not conducive to seeing the sun rising and shining between the stones. However, we believe some Ramblers have experienced the equinox in all its glory on Paddock Hill, at dawn, a few years ago! Perhaps next year we may be lucky to see this extraordinary phenomenon.

Frances Leahy



The Gossan Stones



Austria is a great country for mountaineers of all kinds. There is excellent hiking, skiing, rock and ice climbing and whatever the heart desires. There are well organised mountaineering clubs such as the Österreichischer Alpenverein (ÖAV) the Österreichischer Touristenklub (ÖTK) and the Naturfreunde. These clubs put markers on hiking routes, construct Klettersteige (via ferratas), secure rock routes with bolts, build and run mountain huts and own indoor climbing walls. Their countless regional sections provide regular activities for hikers, climbers and skiers. If you join one of these big clubs, you can partake in any of the activities organised by any of their sections anywhere in the country. They also provide excellent insurance against accidents in the mountains. Yet although you have paid your annual subscription to the main club you will be asked to pay an additional fee for the leader of each event. This is called

Führungsbeitrag and amounts to about 3 Euro for an easy day's hike, 10 or 12 Euro for a via ferrata, and 70 Euro or more for an event covering several days.

The good thing about the Austrian clubs is that they organise very professional training and mountain skill courses and great trips to Austrian and foreign destinations under competent guidance. However, as far as the more ordinary regular activities are concerned they do not match what Irish clubs such as the Ramblers or Wayfarers offer their members. I explained to an Austrian friend what the members of the Irish Ramblers get for their very modest annual contribution: six hikes every Sunday, four hikes every Thursday, hikes on Saturdays, Wednesday evening hikes in the summer months, appointed leaders for all hikes, security service at remote car parks, weekends away, holidays abroad, a big variety of social activities and I furthermore

told her that the programme is planned well ahead, that each monthly bulletin lists all activities with amazing precision and that everything happens exactly as described in the bulletin and that all this has been going on for over 50 years! All the work, I finally informed her, is done by an elected committee which consists entirely of volunteers who receive no financial incentives such as the Führungsbeitrag!

When my friend looked at me in utter disbelief I decided to quell her doubts once and for all by sending her a copy of the Ramblers' bulletin for April 2017. She was flabbergasted and responded by email:

Das ist ja Wahnsinn, wie toll das Rambler Programm ist.

(That is absolutely amazing - how fantastic the Rambler's programme is). What better compliment could there be for our Irish hiking clubs?

Herbert Herzmann

Frances Leahy

Jun 2020

Jul 2020



Gougane Barra, Beara-Breifne Way

West Cork has been the focus of many Rambler holidays. We recall hiking in areas such as Hungry Hill, Gougane Barra, Sheep's Head, Barley Lake as well as exploring Bere Island.

Gougane Barra (the rock cleft of St. Finbarr) is a National Forest Park located in the Shehy Mountains. It has both low-level forest trails as well as high-level mountain circuits. The high level route begins near the lake close to the most unusual award-winning thatched ladies' and gents' facilities! Along the uphill zig-zag track there are spectacular views of the surrounding mountains, forests and lakes including Gougane Barra and St. Finbarr's island oratory. The hiking route continues over the mountains of Foilastookeen, Conigar and Bealick around the edge of the coom and descends again into Gougane Barra. This route brings us past a gully - "the savage cleft of Poll"- which was the scene of daring escape in 1921, in the War of Independence. Gnl Tom Barry, under cover of darkness, used local guides with ropes, to help him and his trapped troops descend from the south-west edge of

the coom down to the safety of Gougane Barra. This however, is not a route recommended for us Ramblers!

At Lough Fadda near Foilastookeen a signpost indicates the Beara-Breifne Way, which reminds us of the legendary march by the Gaelic chieftain Donal Ca O'Sullivan Beare and his supporters in 1602. Following the fall of Dunboy Castle, O'Sullivan Beare made an epic exodus from the Beara peninsula on New Year's Eve with his clan and 1,000 of his followers. The journey to Co. Leitrim took seventeen days and all but thirty-five people perished as a result of battles, exposure and hunger. O'Sullivan Beare fled to the safety of Spain. Today the Beara-Breifne Way is a long-distance trail following the route of this march from the Beara Peninsula to Breifne in Co. Leitrim.

Lough Ouler, Standing Stone

Ramblers en route to Tonelagee, Barnacullian or Mullaghcleevaun hike near a number of features in the landscape. One hiking route begins at the car park at Glenmacnass Waterfall

Grid Ref: O 114 030. Travelling upstream (approx 80m) the Glenmacnass river is easily forded at some natural stepping stones. Many guide books warn hikers how quickly the river can rise, following poor weather conditions. The track continues upwards alongside Lough Brook, a small tributary flowing from Lough Ouler.

Lough Ouler is an unusual heart-shape corrie lake nestling below Tonelagee (Backside to the Wind). It was formed by glaciation and is shaped like an amphitheatre with steep cliff-like walls on three sides. A narrow path along the northern shore of the Lough Ouler climbs up to the rim of the cliffs.

Further along the track between Stony Top (714m) and Tonegalee (817m) is a Standing Stone or cross pillar composed of mica schist. There is a cross carved on each side of the pillar. It is believed that this standing stone is an ancient boundary marker. From here, on a clear day there are spectacular views of the Barnacullian ridge, Mullaghcleevaun, Lough Nahanagan with Turlough Hill Reservoir and Lugnaquilla in the distance.

Frances Leahy

The 40th Anniversary of the Lug Walk Challenge, 2017

Thank you to all our volunteers. Let's hope we have a glorious day on the 24th!

Briefing Session Volunteers please attend our pre-walk briefing session on Tuesday, 20th June 7:30 to 8:30 downstairs in The Morgue, Templeogue village, to collect your equipment and be briefed on your role.

Lug Walk Draw A draw will be held for all volunteers as a gesture of appreciation and in lieu of paying expenses.

Checkpoints

4:15 - 6:00	Stone Cross Traffic	Declan Kehoe
5:00 - 6:00	Seahan Forest Entrance (Start)	Margaret O'Sullivan & Simon Stewart
7:00 - 9:30	Car Park North of Sally Gap	Carol Doyle & Jim Doyle
7:00 - 9:30	Sally Gap Crossroads	Pat Cummins
9:30 - 12:30	Mullaghcleevaun	Barbara Nolan and John Burke
10:00 - 12:30	Wicklow Gap	Carolin & Eoghan Brangan
12:30 - 15:00	Wicklow Gap	Máire Donovan & Patricia Murnane
11:00 - 13:30	Lough Firrib	Séamus Sullivan & Vera Lynch
13:30 - 16:00	Lough Firrib	Joe Gilvarry & Brian McCann
12:00 - 15:00	Table Track	Eilís Kelly & Grace Tolan
15:00 - 18:00	Table Track	Kevin O'Loughlin & Catherine O'Loughlin
14:00 - 17:00	Lugnaquilla	Brendan Treacy & Mick Whelan
17:00 - 20:00	Lugnaquilla	Brid O'Higgins & Jamie Keane
15:00 - 22:00	Seskin/Glen of Imaal	Jessica Lennon & Ron Baker

Rollups

c. 6:00	Seahan Forest to Sally Gap	13km	550m ascent	Greg Mooney & Eddie McGettigan
c. 9:30	Sally Gap to Wicklow Gap	18km	904m ascent	Dominic Gallagher & Thomas Donnelly
c.15:00	Wicklow Gap to Glen of Imaal	21km	853m ascent	Mel O'Hara & Michael Casey

Transport

4:00 - 5:00	Luas Car Park Red Cow to Seahan start	Mary O'Brien, Terry Leonard, Buses
13:00 - 15:00	Wicklow Gap to Red Cow carpark	Bus Available
20:00 - 21:30	Fentons Glen of Imaal to Red Cow c/p	Buses and Terry Leonard, Joe Gilvarry

Collecting hikers' change of clothes bags from the Red Cow carpark and from the start of the hike at Seahan to transport all down to Fenton's in the Glen of Imaal: John McLoughlin

Wicklow Gap Refreshments

10:00 - 12:30	Eileen Murphy & Eileen O'Connor
12:30 - 14:30	Susan Brown & Angela Hickey

Organisers

Coordinator:	Geraldine Cleary
Checkpoints:	Tom Milligan
Transport:	Terry Leonard
Emergency:	Una Quinlan

Training:

Terry Leonard will give two ViewRanger workshop sessions. One, on 4 Feb, is for beginners; the second, on 25 Feb, is intermediate level. Currently, there are 6-8 people on a waiting list ...

Rambler
Jan 2017



Ramblers on a trip to the Burren organised by Eileen Murphy from Rambler July 2017

Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler - 2014 to 2023



**Rambler
Feb 2017**

Members of the G3,4 and 5 at the Lead Mines Chimney
on the Combined walk on St Stephen's Day

Wednesday Evening Hikes, 2017

**Rambler
May 2017**

Hikes start at 19.00 unless otherwise stated. Offers to lead a hike welcome and if you have a Special Interest hike you would like to share, let me know.

Wed May 24.

Leader: Angela Hickey

Remembrance Wood

**Rambler
May 2017**

April outing went well. We maintained our Wood by clearing overgrowth, removing blown debris, and felling invading conifers. The saplings are thriving, with Mountain Ash in leaf, Scotch Pine doing well, and the oak and birch not yet in leaf but looking good. Next outing - Fri 19 May. Our main task is to trample ferns. Please join us if you can. Mick Reidy

AGM - Club Archives. The AGM concluded with a wonderful presentation by Jack Morrissey on the Club, he had given at the handover of the Club Archives, Many thanks to Jack.

**Rambler
Apr 2018**

Committee Notes - Car pooling. Car pooling continues to need our attention, car parks are overcrowded, please see if you can share, we will be seeking your support for some measures shortly. Please try to help.

40th Anniversary of Lug Walk, 24 June

**Rambler
May 2017**

Nearly everything is in place for hill-walkers from all over Ireland to come and enjoy our mountains from Tallaght to the Glen of Imaal, except the weather ! and we are putting out a huge plea for more volunteers. ...

MI Meeting:

**Rambler
May 2017**

A meeting took place with Mountaineering Ireland to discuss their draft document on the future of Ireland's uplands and mountains and ... details of the latest proposal from Co Council on the Hellfire/Massey Wood project. The meeting was attended by Helen Donoghue, Terry Leonard and Bob Nugent.

Mournes October Weekend

**Rambler
Aug 2017**

Mary Conlon and Jonas Brandt are organising a week-end in the Mournes, travelling to Kilmorey Arms Hotel in Newry and staying over-night Fri 27 & Sat 28 Oct. ...



On Magillicuddy Reeks, organised
and led by Seán O'Grady

**Rambler
Jun 2017**

Committee Notes Appointments to Mountaineering Ireland

Rambler Mar 2018

The EC congratulates Grainne McLaughlin and Helen O'Donoghue on their election to the Board of Mountaineering Ireland at the MI AGM on the 24th March. The Committee is keen to support them in their challenging roles and is confident that all Ramblers will support them.



First G5 lead by Bernie McGaheren
and Jean Hallahan, 9 Jul 2017

**Rambler
Sep 2017**

Committee Notes

**Rambler
Mar 2018**

Contact has continued with Mountaineering Ireland regarding our efforts to have MI establish a Hill Walking Committee. A motion has been drafted by the club for the MI AGM seeking the introduction of a hill walking committee.

Committee Notes

**Rambler
Jul 2018**

Mountaineering Ireland (MI) has established a Working Group to agree terms of reference for the Hill Walking Committee, as was agreed at their AGM last Spring. Declan Murphy has been accepted on to this working group, which is chaired by Grainne McLaughlin. It is hoped that its work will be completed by November.





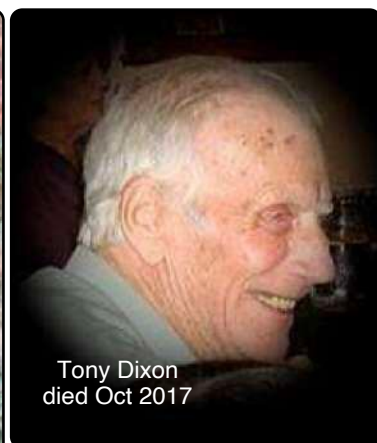
Lug Walk finishers
June 2017

Barbara
Taylor

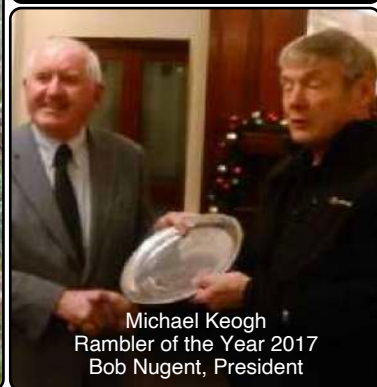
Niall
Rennick



Ron Baker plays, as every year,
at Remembrance Wood, 2017



Tony Dixon
died Oct 2017



Michael Keogh
Rambler of the Year 2017
Bob Nugent, President



Jack Morrissey presents Rambler
archives to Dublin City Library Nov
2017



Bob Nugent makes a Rambler donation to
Glen of Imaal Mountain Rescue
Apr 2018



Herbert Herzmann's 10th trip to the
Gesäuse National Park in Austria,
before Kaiserschnitt and
Hochkugel with 43 Ramblers in
2017



Betty O'Neill wins Gold for Ireland
and the Heather Fuller Award in
Floral Artistry in Toronto, Mar 2018



Jerry Mac Donough leads a trip to
Alcudia, Mallorca, May 2018





G8s on the second stage of the Club Lug Walk, Jul 2018



Serial Trip Organiser
Herbert Herzmann



Serial Trip Organisers
spotted together, Jul 2018



Fergus Roche
Rambler of the Year 2018
and Serial Trip Organiser



Sheila Powell and Anne Geoghegan
on Slieve Foye, Apr 2019



Michael Twomey
died Dec 2018



Mabel Corry
died Oct 2018



Spring Clean Day
Apr 2019

Hardy Annuals Charity Walk - 2019



Fergus Roche

This walk was on 26 Sep '19 when 120 Ramblers took part. We were honoured to have Micheál O'Muircheartaigh who took part in one of the walks and gave us a great send off with his unique blend of Béarla agus Irish. The object was to raise money for PAL Projects in South America. It was a very festive occasion and we were blessed with good weather. There were four different grade hikes, all starting from the Brockagh Centre in Glendalough who provided us with tea and coffee at the end.

In total €18,000 was raised for the Charity. I wish to thank the organising committee: Anne Geoghegan, Sheila Powell, Louis O'Donoghue, Jerry MacDonough, Tom Milligan, Dominic Gallagher, Kevin Roche and John Molloyhan.

We plan to repeat the event in 2024.

In 2008 Partnership America Latina (PAL) was set up by 12 Ramblers to fundraise for and support projects in South America for poor and disadvantaged people. Projects included Income Generation, Education and Care for the Disabled. The countries involved were Brazil, Argentina, Peru and Colombia. They worked in partnership with the Little Sisters of the Assumption who not only work with the people, but live among them. In 2014, 24 Ramblers visited two projects in Peru after raising €40,000 in their support.

Of course they also did tourist things - the trek to Machuu Pichuu, visited Colca Canyon, stayed in Cusco, gateway to Machu Pichuu and did a 12hrs bus trip across Alto Parana, 4,000m high, to Lake Titicaca on the Bolivian Border.

The 'Hardy Annuals'

Charity Challenge Walk for the Active Retired
Glendalough, Thursday 26 September 2019

All proceeds go to Partnership America Latina

CONTRIBUTION

€25

Friends, fun and fresh air!

Four options: 22km-ascent 1000m
20km-ascent 860m
15km-ascent 660m
10km-ascent 300m

To register, email: hardyannuals@gmail.com
Or telephone Fergus Roche 085-1402480

Visit www.palcharityprojects.ie for more details
Registered Charity CHY6304



Some of the 120 who took part

Royal Drumree

Seán Quinn 2014



I loved you well then, Drumree,
I love you still.

In boyhood's summer days,
saving hay, tending sheep,
Happy rambling up your steepy hills
all 'round,

Each green field we knew
by ancient name.

Those green fields we played
they are no more,

Now all barren forest floors,
where nothing grows,

Close growing conifers
crowd in on all sides.

It's time for me to go,
Oisín 'ndiadh na Fianna.



Micheál O'Muircheartaigh
sends Fergus on the way.

Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

Lug Walk Saturday 15th June 2019

Thanks to all our volunteers. Let's hope we have a glorious day on the 15 June!

Briefing Session: Volunteers please attend our pre-walk session on Wednesday, 12th June, 7:30pm to 8:30pm in The Morgue, Templeogue village (parking at the side and at the back) to collect your equipment and be briefed on your role.

Lug Walk Draw: A draw will be held (three vouchers) at the briefing session for all volunteers as a gesture of appreciation and in lieu of paying expenses.

Checkpoints

4:30 - 5:30	Stone Cross Traffic	Declan Kehoe
4:30 - 5:30	Start Seahan Forest	Brendan Treacy & Tina Ennis
7:00 - 9:30	Car Park North of Sally Gap	Carol & Jim Doyle
7:00 - 9:30	Sally Gap Crossroads	Fergus Roche & Joe Gilvarry
9:30 - 12:30	Mullaghcleevaun	Joe Byrne & Phil Byrne
10:00 - 12:30	Wicklow Gap	Carolin Brangan & Eoghan Brangan
12:30 - 15:00	Wicklow Gap	Máire Donovan & Patricia Murnane
11:00 - 13:30	Lough Firrib	Séamus Sullivan & Martin Hackett
13:30 - 16:00	Lough Firrib	Barbara Nolan & Joe Gilvarry
12:30 - 15:00	Table Track	Barbara Condon & Pat Dignam
15:00 - 18:00	Table Track	Bob Nugent & Eilís Kelly
13:30 - 16:00	Lugnaquilla	Pam Coleman & John Burke
16:30 - 20:00	Lugnaquilla	Michael Casey & Robert Garret
14:00 - 17:00	Seskin/Glen of Imaal	Britt O'Sullivan & Barbara Taylor
17:00 - 19:00	Seskin/Glen of Imaal	Ron Baker & Jessica Lennon
19:00 - 21:00	Seskin/Glen of Imaal	Kevin & Catherine O'Loughlin

Roll-Up Teams

Seahan Forest, 05:30 to Sally Gap	Paul Roche & Colm Carberry
Sally Gap, 09:30 to Wicklow Gap	Paul Roche & Peter O'Toole
Wicklow Gap, 15:00 to Glen of Imaal	Dominic Gallagher & Declan Murphy

Wicklow Gap ESB key collection 08:30 to 10:00: **Connie Ryan**. Key return 15:00 to 17:30 **Orna Flannery**

Drivers for roll-up teams: **Barbara Young, Gerry Maguire**.

Transport hikers' bags from Red Cow car park to Seahan to Glen of Imaal: **Dermot McMullen**

Transport

4:00 - 5:00 Luas Carpark Red Cow to Seahan start: **Brid O'Higgins, Connie Ryan & Buses**

13:00 - 15:00 Wicklow Gap to Red Cow carpark: **Bus available**

20:00 - 21:30 Fentons Glen of Imaal to Red Cow carpark: **Brid O'Higgins & Buses**

Wicklow Gap Catering

10:00 to 12:30 Patrick Cummins, Rita Cummins. 12:130 to 15:00, Kay Dolan and Anne Geoghegan

Emergency Stand-by Contact Number Person: Milo and Sheila Kane

Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

Rambler
Aug 2018



The Red Brigade - Ramblers enjoying some typical Irish June weather, in Bad Gastein, Austria

Tom Milligan - a member of An Oige, The Hillwalkers and The Ramblers - completed The Lug Walk a staggering 81 times. Organised by The Ramblers, the 53km route involves an ascent of 2,500m over 15 summits.

In 1999 Tom walked the route THREE times over 48 hours, in succession.

Rambler
May 2018



MI Hillwalking Committee
Gráinne McLaughlin abstract

Rambler
May 2019

... Along with two IRC Members on the Hillwalking Committee, we are so lucky to have Rambler Helen Donoghue, as a most efficient Chairperson of the Access and Conservation Sub-committee within MI.

So between both Committees you have three members of your club actively working on behalf of hillwalking. Ramblers have a lot of input into what is done on behalf of hikers and walkers.

Mountaineering Ireland Announce Hillwalking Development Officer

Rambler
Sep 2019

... That person is Ruth Whelan whom many of you will know from contact over the past years in various aspects of hiking. She is also Secretary of the Hillwalking Committee, so is very involved with all aspects of Hillwalking and Hiking ...

Rambler July 2018



Car Pool Day Patrick Cummins, from the Security Sub-Committee, says that reports from Hike Leaders for Sun 17 Jun '18 show there were 41 hikers out in 21 cars which, at 1.95 people per car, was better than normal.

Committee Notes Car Pooling We hope that our efforts to improve our car pooling statistics with the Car Pooling day, but we also want members to sign up with our what's app groups to reduce our car numbers, we all need to continue to work at it, remember it will save you money in addition to being better for the environment. Think of all the news and events you discuss while travelling to the hikes. Please discuss your travel plans during drum up and you may discover all kinds of possibilities for car sharing.

Committee Notes Rambler Oct 2018 Car Pooling

We need to keep working at it. Members should try to arrange to car pool, because two people in a car means one less car on the road. Perhaps at drum-up you might try to recruit a passenger or a driver and get them to sign up to a WhatsApp group.

INVITATION Wayfarers Walking Club
Celebrates 50 years in 2020

Rambler
Nov 2019

To mark their 50th, Wayfarers are organising an Art O'Neill Walk at midnight on Sat 11 Jan. They invite any members of the Irish Ramblers Club, fit enough to participate.

As it's 52km long with ascent of 1600m, advance training will be required - mere enthusiasm won't cut the mustard! However, training hikes will be provided by Tom Milligan.

A bus will be provided at the finish, at minimal cost, to transport everyone to dinner in Glendalough and afterwards back to public transport in Dublin. There is no entry fee but there will be a transport fee.

If interested, let Tom Milligan know

Rambler
Nov 2019



An informal **Viewranger** Workshop, to share experience on how to make the most of the programme, and to suggest solutions to problems being encountered by users, will be facilitated by Brian Carson and Terry Leonard on Saturday, 16 November, subject to numbers. The workshop is for those who are



Joe Byrne, Training Officer

already familiar with, and using, Viewranger.

If you're interested in being there, send an mail to Joe Byrne (jmbyrne54@gmail.com) to book your place (if you haven't already done so).

"The Hardy Soles"

Rambler
Jan 2020

Following an approach from a group of members professing to be "retired climbers", the Committee has approved monthly flat walks for those who no longer wish to climb yet want to continue to walk and socialise with fellow Ramblers. All of the walks will be

- held on the first Saturday of the month, - of 3 hours duration,
- of nil ascent (i.e. dead flat!)
- accessible by public transport.

The first walk will be on Saturday, 1 February. Details in the February Rambler and in the Hiking Calendar on the IRC website.

Margaret Rohan has kindly agreed to be co-ordinator for the group. The current Rules of the Club and guidelines for walking safely will, of course, apply.

Anne Geoghegan Vice President

Selected Poetic Ramblings

Rhyme and No Reason

Donal McMahon



"[Rhyme] my days out of their aimlessness" –
I'll try this now, as Yeats (I'm sure you
Know) did.

Someone there is, free spirit in the west,
Counsels the city-pent, "Get up and
Go, kid".

Staycation on the Wild Atlantic Way?
Alas, I can but dream, hearing him
So bid,

Or think of him who, exiled far from Rome,
Will grant me licence now to call him
Ovid.

"What's this?" I dream, feeling along the shelf.
"A travel book someone here long a-
go hid,

With, in between the leaves, a note – of pain
Or joy that day's spontaneous over-
flow* – slid?"

"Will no-one rid me of . . .?" a king once cried. Ah,
who will us now of this so-and-
so rid?

And then, the cover (is it?) of a box . . .
With faded letters on the . . . (Treasure
Trove?) lid.

Here end these lines as, soon, may all **this** too.
Rhyme, yes, but still no reason for **this** . . .
COVID!

**Wordsworth's definition of poetry: 'the
spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling'.*

Winter Woes

Ah, the scourge of Winter's wind,
freezing face and numb behind,
a painful sting in fingers and in toes,
but perhaps the greatest bind,
yes, the cut that's most unkind,
a raw and iridescent runny nose.

Do these thoughts run through your head
when your nose is ruby red
and, merrily, the mucus comes and goes:
of sunny Spain and deep blue Med,
a cosy bar, your comfy bed,
some place where trace of Winter never shows?

Well, I, when cold and snotty,
dream not of Lanzerote
or sunbaked rock on which, perchance, to pose,
but of a simple bothy,
by lonely Inverlochy,
a base for climbing magical Munroes.

In a hollow, 'neath a hill,
where frost lingers, white and still,
there slender birch and berried rowan grows
by a little rock-strewn rill,
leaping waters, swift and chill,
swollen by the burgeoning Winter snows.

Mottled rock, all grey and green,
sparkling bright with frosty sheen
and glint of red, when sunset warmly glows;
ice-bound burns that dully gleam;
deep, crisp snows; these are, I deem,
the antidotes for all our Winter woes.

Gerry Moss



Let me march, with measured stride,
where the ptarmigan abide,
where flies the raven, darkest king of crows,
where, on wing-span, five-foot wide,
soaring eagles wheel and glide,
pinions trimmed to capture thermal flows.

Give me gulleys, draped in white,
ice-choked chimneys, dark and tight,
the clammy kiss of sodden sweaty clothes,
corniced ridge, translucent light,
wind-swept summit; wondrous sight -
Scotland's hills, laid out in shimmering rows.

And these hills, in time, will tax
craft of crampon, rope and axe,
my hammer shatters ice with skilful blows
and, when soft the moon shall wax,
by its light you'll trace my tracks,
descending, as the day draws to a close.

So, shake out those sleeping-bags
check out those boots and cags,
for soon a journey North I may propose,
to that land of lochs and crags,
that haunt of hinds and stags,
of wily fox and wide-eyed, furtive does.

And if you hear it too, that drum,
yet you hesitate to come,
then harken to the words of one who knows.
Try this simple rule of thumb -
when the mountains call ... succumb -
don't even wait to wipe that runny nose!

Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

Coronavirus Covid-19

Rambler
Apr 2020

Due to the restrictions and protections imposed arising from the spread of the Covid-19 virus, the formal hiking programme for the Ramblers was suspended in mid-March. The situation is changing daily and will continue for some time to come.

While The April Hiking Programme is published here on page 7, it is not possible to say if restrictions will be lifted to enable the programme to proceed. Please check with the website for up to date information and stay safe.

The Spreading Our Wings outing to Visual in Carlow is in a similar position.

Louis O'Donoghue has advised that the trip to Crete scheduled for 29 April to 13 May '20 has been cancelled, while the proposed trip to the Dolomites from 19 to 29 June '20 is under review.



Covid-19 Interim Hikes

Rambler
Oct 2020

... Because of the latest Covid-19 restrictions, we have had to suspend the Club's hiking programme until further notice, as most of our members live in Dublin and almost all of our hikes are outside the county. We all hope the restrictions will be lifted during October and that then we will be able to resume the programme as planned. ...

Paul Caffrey, President

Covid-19

Rambler
Nov 2020

Because of the Level 5 restrictions in operation from midnight on 21 October 2020, whereby there is a limit of 5km on movement outside the home and a prohibition on meeting people from other households, there is no hike programme for November and the interim hiking facility has been suspended until further notice.

The Covid-19 page on the website will continue to give updates on Club policy and news related to the pandemic.

Paul Caffrey, President

Covid-19 President's Notes Abstract

Rambler
Jan 2021

... The week after the 2020 AGM - on Friday 13th March, believe it or not - we had the first of many Covid consultations and took the decision to suspend all hikes until the end of March. We secretly feared that we might have had to cancel April as well. We certainly didn't foresee the stop-start-stop-start pattern of hiking that would be the norm for the rest of the year. Or, that many members would be under virtual house arrest or confined to within a few kilometres of home for months at a time ...

Covid-19 Vice-President's Notes Abstract

Rambler
Jan 2021

... During all this time, uncertainty and fear, our wonderful coordinators have continued to pull together a hike programme each month in the hope that some day this will end and when it does we will be ready.

Social distancing, limited numbers, county limits and county lockdowns are all new variables that have to be dealt with. Thanks to you all for your patience, flexibility and speed in restarting the programme every time the Government announced a change in direction ...

Anne Geoghegan, Vice President

MI News on Access and Conservation

Rambler
Jan 2020

Abstract - Helen Donoghue

Good news from Luggala.



For many decades – by courtesy of the late Hon. Garech Browne – members of MI have enjoyed selected access to the mountains, cliffs and valley of the Luggala Estate, while at the same time respecting the work commitments of the Estate (filming, grazing etc), the privacy of the Estate's guests and tenants, their residences and the main lodge as well as their grounds. MI campaigned for the State to purchase the mountain lands of Luggala Estate as part of the Wicklow Mountains National Park.

As it turned out, the Estate has been sold in its entirety to a private buyer. The good news is that the new owner, Luca Padulli (Count Luca Rinaldo Contardo Padulli di Vighignolo) is maintaining previous arrangements on recreational access at Luggala. MI is in touch with Luggala Estate Ltd; a meeting is planned to discuss and agree proposed changes, if any, to the existing access conditions, for the continued enjoyment of this special landscape by MI members. ...

Government's Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business

Rambler
Jun 2020

What will be possible at each of the phases of the Roadmap?

Phase 1 (from 18th May): local walks by up to 4 people, within 5 km of their homes.

Phase 2 (from 8th June): small groups may walk within 20km of their homes.

Phase 3 (from 29th June): no change from Phase 2.

Phase 4 (from 20th July): no restriction on distance from home, but small groups.

Phase 5 (from 10th August): return to normal hiking possible, but with social distancing, so no car sharing.

It's obvious from the above that the Club will not be in a position to organise any hikes before July 20th, when the 20km travel restriction will, hopefully, be lifted.

MI News on Access and Conservation

Rambler Jan 2021

Abstract - Helen Donoghue

MI has been active on Access and Conservation in 2020. I continue to be involved as a member of the A&C Committee. My term as Committee Chair and MI Board Member came to an end in June. The new Chair and Board Member is David Pollard, a life-long hillwalker with a lot of relevant experience.

The Dept of Community & Rural Development has launched a review of Ireland's outdoor recreation strategy, one of the questions being about the support needed to keep the uplands open in a sustainable way for responsible hillwalking. ...

... The A&C committee has discussed this. We think support should be available, for practical necessities worked out at local level by cooperating local players (landowners, recreational interests, hiking clubs, local government etc). This could be a matter of car parking, access paths from roads to the open uplands, repairs to and preventive maintenance on highly used paths etc. ... A core point for us is that support must be linked to clear, firm commitments on access. ...

... MI is actively involved in the Helping the Hills initiative, facilitating the sharing of skills among those involved in high quality upland path construction and management. ...

Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler - 2014 to 2023



Covid-19

Rambler
May 2021

President's Notes Abstract

... In the last few weeks we have all been afforded the permission to go slightly further afield than our over walked and over familiar local parks. The committee is hopeful that we may be able to resume hikes soon. We await the restriction on groups meeting outdoors to be lifted ...

Covid-19

Rambler
Jun 2021

President's Notes Abstract

Are we finally at the end of this strange period in the history of our club? We have had our false starts and our disappointments before. Let's hope that at last we are going in the right direction (a common aspiration in the Ramblers!).

Covid-19

Rambler
Jan 2022

President's Notes Abstract

The pandemic years of 2020 and 2021 have merged in our consciousness and our sense of the passing of time has been changed. Indeed these past two years have altered all our lives. We are blessed the raison d'être of our club, our hiking, is allowed under regulations and has not been curtailed since June.

Covid-19

Rambler
Mar 2022

President's Notes Abstract

... At last we can look forward to a real, in person, non-virtual, non Zoom, AGM! We have been lucky with the timing of our AGMs in that the AGM in March 2020 was shortly before things closed down and this coming one on 1st March is soon after restrictions have been lifted. ...

Grade 2 Thursday Hike

Rambler
Jan 2022

Joe Byrne
Vice President



... In response to suggestions, the Committee has decided to launch Thursday Grade 2 hikes on a trial basis, to see if demand exists.

Progress on this is already made and a 'Thank You' is due to Brian Kennan, who has volunteered to act as the initial coordinator.

Brian will be in contact with members via the Grade 2 and Grade 3+ WhatsApp groups seeking leaders.



During the trial, hikes will start at the same time and place as the planned Grade 3+ hikes, and it is hoped that the first hike will take place on 27th January, with hikes every Thursday thereafter. ...

EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

Rambler
Feb 2022

Anne
McEleney



Birdwatch Ireland has an article about targets that have been set to extend legal protection to 30% of the EU's land and sea area.

The report found that carbon-rich landscapes such as peatlands, grassland and forests which are beneficial for biodiversity and the climate should be prioritised. This will require the cooperation of all users of land and water - farmers, businesses, foresters, fishers.

The plan is to end subsidies that harm nature and change policy to support wildlife friendly farming which is also necessary to help humanity survive.



Hardy Soles Graduate to Grade 6

Rambler
Feb 2022

Peter
Buckley



... The Committee has recently agreed to a proposal to change the name of the Hardy Soles to the Grade 6 and to change the frequency from once a month to every Saturday morning. This will be for a trial period of one year with Peter Buckley as coordinator. ...

MI Hillwalking Cmte Update - Abstract

Rambler
Jun 2022

Brian
Kennan



... MI established a Hillwalking Committee (HWC) just four years ago, in 2018, recognising that hillwalking is a separate sport from climbing, with its own distinct opportunities, needs and challenges. The Ramblers were instrumental in bringing this about as it was our member, Simon Stewart who put forward the motion that brought the committee into existence.

The new committee provides a voice for hillwalking within MI and influences the development of future work plans supporting hillwalking in all of Ireland.

This committee is up to 12 volunteers, currently 9, from different clubs. Gráinne McLaughlin is our Chairperson and Ruth Whelan, an MI employee is secretary (both Ramblers). I recently joined the Hillwalking Committee and attended my first meeting last week. ...

Summiteering - The Sperrins, Abstract

Rambler
Jun 2022

Margaret
O'Sullivan



... I recently completed the Highest 100 list of mountains in Ireland. This is the list on which the beautiful "Irish Peaks" book, by Mountaineering Ireland, is based. I then got a bit carried away and decided to try to complete the Vandeleur-Lynams (VLs) before my 75th birthday. The VLs are the list of 274 mountains in Ireland of at least 600m and prominence of at least 15m, seen in MountainViews.ie. ...

The Mountain Panthers

A new hiking group
organised by
Herbert Herzmann

Rambler
Aug 2022



Are you a grade 1, 2 or 3+ hiker who is getting on in life and finding it hard to keep up with the pace of your group?

The Mountain Panthers will look after the not so young members of our club who wish to continue hiking at higher grades but at a slower pace.

Everybody who feels they can do a G1, 2 or 3+ hike at a relaxed pace, is welcome to join. Herbert will lead the hikes at his famous alpine pace that is well tried on long, strenuous walks from hut to hut in the Austrian Alps. On these we usually climb between 800 and 1500m and cover 15-20 km every day for six or seven days. At the right pace this is no problem. ...

**Soil**Rambler
Mar 2019

The top 50cm to 150cm of the loose weathered material on the earth's surface is known as the regolith. When this is enriched with organic matter and becomes capable of supporting life, soil is formed. Good quality mineral soils usually consist of 50% pore space, 45% mineral matter and up to 5% organic matter.

If we value biodiversity, it is important to realise that one quarter of all species on planet earth live in the soil. More carbon is stored in soil than in the combination of all the plant biomass in the world and all the atmospheric carbon.

Grassland soils are usually rich in organic matter (and so in Carbon). In a sustainable system, fertile soils will support about 2 tonnes/hectare of living biomass grazing on the surface. But up to 100 tonnes of life is sustained below ground within the soil. Cultivation of these soils will deplete the organic content and release carbon to the atmosphere - an outcome that seems to have been forgotten in the current call to eliminate livestock farming.

Soils process waste, regulate the carbon cycle and recycle organic matter releasing nutrients for further growth. They provide habitat for macro and micro-organisms, plants and animals. Soils purify water and act as an enormous reservoir buffering us against the impacts of drought and flooding.

Pore network in soils is immensely complicated but crucially important. Individual soil particles are aggregated together to form macropores which, depending on size, fill with air or water. When this network of pores is destroyed the soil becomes vulnerable to erosion, waterlogging and compaction.

The shear strength of the soil is related to moisture content and so, of course, maximum damage is done when travelling over wet soil. This is where we enter the picture.

We can destroy soil cover very quickly. Natural processes can take up to 500 years to make 2cm of soil to repair the damage we have done.

Tread carefully. *Eileen Murphy*

Rambler
Mar 2020**Sitka Spruce** *Picea sitchensis*

The plant everybody thinks they must hate.

Sitka spruce is a native of the coastal region of North America stretching from Alaska all the way down to Southern California. Few could resist the beauty of a single specimen tree. It will reach a height of up to 54m in Ireland (Irish champion in Caledon Estate, Co Tyrone) and pretty spectacular specimens can also be found in Co. Wicklow at Powerscourt and Shelton Abbey. These trees were probably early introductions. The Scottish plant hunter, David Douglas in 1831, introduced the first trees. Around the same time Douglas Fir, Giant and Coastal Redwoods and many others led to a fashion for assembling collections of these exotic conifers into landscape features that became known in the big estates of Europe as "American Gardens"

At the start of the twentieth century, forest cover in Ireland amounted to only 1% of total land use. It was then, and remains one of the lowest forest areas in Europe. The new nation builders sought to establish publicly owned forestry. Sitka is ideally suited to wet soils, mild winters and cool summers. Given its range in America, the original foresters chose stock that balanced a long growing season with frost tolerance and so most of the Irish forest stock has its provenance from Queen Charlotte Island in British Columbia. Sitka will grow on soil that has very little potential for growing other trees. It offered a potential for income generation on very marginal land. It will mature in about 35 years and generate timber growth worth about €1000 per hectare per year compared with the likes of oak which will not reach maturity within the lifetime of the person who plants it. It is not surprising that we reached a situation where 52% of the Irish Forest Estate is Sitka Spruce. Our forests now occupy ¾ million hectares, 11% of total land area producing 11.4 million cubic metres of logs per year. Bear in mind, these forests have removed 3.8 million tonnes of Carbon Dioxide equivalents per year from 2007 to 2016. Broadleaf trees grow more slowly and this means that they have the potential to remove carbon from the atmosphere at a rate at best one third to one half the rate that the

Sitka will do the job. Carbon sequestration has become the compelling argument in favour of Sitka Spruce.

A major Bioforest Research Project was undertaken to try to gather an evidence base for future management of forests. Sitka Spruce and Ash were compared. They found that Sitka forests supported more bryophyte diversity than Ash. Total plant species richness showed no significant difference between Ash and Sitka when variation due to structural stage was removed. Diversity of spiders was slightly higher in Sitka than Ash, hoverfly diversity was the same and the influence of species of tree on bird assemblages appeared to be negligible. When improved or semi improved grassland was planted with Sitka the effect on biodiversity was neutral or positive. However planting on peat and the drainage work involved prior to planting has negative effects on biodiversity and carbon capture. For that reason planting on peat is no longer recommended. When the canopy closes over completely with Sitka there is a significant deterioration in biodiversity. Improved management could mitigate these bad outcomes. The Sitka forest would be visually more pleasing if planting blocks were smaller and open areas and glades were incorporated and biodiversity improved.

Sitka timber is not very highly valued in Ireland but in America it is particularly prized for making musical instruments. The students of Loreto Balbriggan were winners in the Young Scientists this year with their study of the antibacterial properties of Sitka sap. Sitka foraging is very important in modern Scandinavian cookery. Spruce is a popular flavour for beer. To make spruce butter, pick young pale green growth tips now. Blend 75 grams in liquidiser, gradually add 250 grams softened butter until you get a pale green mix. Remove coarse fibres and freeze until you use.

Any non car-sharing ramblers be particularly thankful to the despised Sitka Spruce, it is most important in saving us from even more severe penalties for carbon emissions

Eileen Murphy

Eyes and Ears for the Environment

Rambler
Sep 2019



While many of us would wish to make a contribution towards improving the quality of the environment and biodiversity, sometimes it can be a bit dispiriting to listen to all the negativity regarding the imminent arrival of environmental meltdown. Maybe as walkers we can do something.

We can report incidents of antisocial or destructive activity. Fires cause the most devastating impacts on mountain habitats. If you can report fires or off road vehicle activity to the authorities on time, something can be done. Keep a record in your phone of contact for Duty Park Ranger 087 9803899 and report any incidents to them by voice. Do not text message as they will not receive that communication. As an alternative during working hours, the Wicklow Mountain National Park Office at 0404 45425 can be contacted.

The Pure Project will act if illegal dumping or littering is reported to them at 1850 365 121. The Glenmalur comm-

unity have successfully worked to improve their area and have contact numbers for reports of harmful activity - 087 4109259 or 087 9234764. We have participated in clean up days and maybe we might extend that ethos so every day is a clean up day. If practical, remove litter any day we hike.

The promotion of biodiversity might seem a vague aspiration that we are powerless to influence, but like all worthwhile activity, interventions to promote biodiversity must be evidence based. We can make a significant contribution here. The National Biodiversity Centre has an app, downloadable to all smart phones. It is very easy to use and if we record our sightings of plants, animals, birds or insects we are helping to build up a database which is the only rational basis on which policy can proceed. Currently they are looking for information on sightings of hares. Earlier this year, they were collecting information on a suite of

Spring flowering plants. Some of the Ramblers contributed to this survey. Frog spawn and frog sightings are sought every year. All of us have the skills needed to participate in this work. While it is quite mundane, this "Citizen Science" activity is invaluable.

Some of our rarest native plants, relicts of pre-glacial times, are found only in our highest mountain tops. Who better to keep an eye on them than mountain walkers? Once you become interested in this, other options will present. The Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland, BSBI organise a New Year Flowering Plant Hunt. Ramblers sent in a report in 2017. These phenological records build up evidence on climate change.

If none of this interests you, there are still two important messages that you must not ignore: -

1. Car Pool whenever possible, and
2. Avoid erosion of hillsides by walking on the boardwalk or on hard, already worn tracks.

Eileen Murphy

Adam Grennan

Selected Writing

Rambler
Sep 2021



Maumtrasna and its tragic injustice

Irish Peaks, Mountaineering Ireland's excellent publication, records Maumtrasna as a 'sprawling plateau, adorned with steep sided corries and shapely spurs... a mountain landscape that merits exploration'. On Tuesday, 3 August, I decided to see for myself. I wasn't disappointed.

The walk begins at a high point overlooking Lough Mask, named as Knockaunabausty (Cnocán na bPáistí - The Little Hill of the Children) in Mountain Views, and follows a well-defined path to Lough Nadirkmore. On a fine day, such as it was, I paused for a moment to consider how lucky I was to have this beautiful spot to myself, before setting off on a steep ascent to a col below Buckaun.

I headed west along the narrow ridge, which soon opened up to reveal the



Myles Joyce

wide expansive plateau. The ground is a little broken but navigation is easy. Three cairns mark the route to the broken Trig point at 673m. Oddly,

this is not the highest point. 681m is 1km to the south west and, for me and other pedantic folk, you'll find 682m about 400m further west.

Before heading down the long south eastern ridge to the finish point, I stayed a while to take in the wild, beautiful surroundings.

There, I also remembered a tragic event that took place in 1882, almost 140 years ago, in the townland of Maumtrasna, when five members of a single family were brutally murdered.

It was tragic for all manner of reasons, not least because of how families and people well known to each other split, some becoming accusers and others accused. And not only because this tiny poverty-stricken area became the focus of the western world's media, as it was then, and the subject of a truly astonishing miscarriage of justice that foreshadowed others in more in modern times.

No, the reason it was truly tragic was because, we can now say with absolute certainty, that one of the three people hanged, Myles Joyce, was entirely innocent of the crime.

As I descended the ridge to Skeltia, above the townland, I thought about the injustice of it all and recalled the



words written by Jarlath Waldron in his book **Maamtrasna – The Murders and the Mystery**, the definitive work on the subject:

On the scaffold, his arms were pinioned, his legs strapped – he could no longer fight. The only weapon of defence left to him was his voice.

As long as breath was left in his body, he used it with every fibre of his being – to tell the world it was wrong. He was about to meet his God. Him he did not fear. His shouted prayer was for his wife and his children.

"Go bhfóire Dia ar mo bhean agus mo chúigear clainne." – May God help my wife and my five children.

From the quicklime grave near Galway Cathedral his cry echoes still.

Adam Grennan



The Footnotes
Dec 2019



Deirdre Collier
Paul Gorecki
Michael Cosgrave
Susan Murphy



Anne Geoghegan receives
the President's Award for
Outstanding Contribution
to the Club, May 2021



G4s on the first hike of
the Covid era, July 2020,
Leader Patrick Gray



Joe Byrne
Enda Naughton
Brid O'Higgins
Michael Neary
Robert Garrett
Niall Ennis
Tina Ennis
A rare view of G1s on their first
hike of the Covid era, Aug 2020,
Leader Brian Casey



Mary Conlon
Triona McCarthy
Joan Stuart
Gaye O'Grady
Michael O'Neill
G3+ Leenane trip
Sep 2020



A Walk on the Tame Side

Rambler
May 2020

If you ever think of doing the Wainwright Coast to Coast Walk in England, you may like to know it's 336,160 steps from the Irish Sea to the North Sea. I clicked them off on my worry beads. And there's a lot to worry about in the deceptively peaceful English country.

You know how the English love their dogs. Every English man, woman and child has two dogs. They're all treated with tender, loving care. If you have any trouble with them, TLC is your only man. So, when two Doberpersons (the English are very politically correct) come howling and slaving out of a driveway in your direction, remember the old TLC approach. You've got to wait not only until you can see the reds of their mad eyes but the great dollops of anticipatory saliva dripping from the sides of their gaping maws. Then pick your moment carefully, and ram your walking poles down their throats. That is guaranteed to send them howling back to Mum for some throat lozenges and an extra bowl of Pedigree Chum.

Then there are the bulls. A few days in Pamplona is recommended preparation for the Coast to Coast Walk. You'll all know about the fantastic system of footpaths, bridleways, and rights of way all over England. You may not know that it is quite legal for a farmer to have a bull in a field through which your right of way meanders.

When you see him pawing the ground and roaring for the approval of his cow

harem, start "sprinting" for the nearest stile. When you feel his hot breath on your neck, tack and weave like a snipe rising from wet rushes. Never mind the steps on the stile. Just dive over, like Superman with a rucksack and gaiters. After all, is it not better to land with your face in fresh cowshit than to have a bull's horn half way up your arse on the second step of a stile?

I met a gentle Japanese man who was doing the walk sedately. He told me that he had been chased by a herd of bulls and was "velly frightened". I reckon it was just a herd of Friesian cows who were curious to view the exotic stranger up close. I guess he didn't know an udder from the 'odder' thing.

Then there are the English people. They are nice people. However, someone famous said that in the conviviality stakes, the English are about two whiskies behind the Irish. As a whiskey drinker, I'd say four. In other words, it's hard to get them to talk bullshit until two in the morning in a pub.

I learned a trick. You've got to confront them with a question. They are polite people, so they'll answer. A good opening gambit I used once was: "Didn't I see you on TV breaking up the seats in Lansdowne Road the night the English soccer hooligans forced the Ireland/England match to be abandoned?" Mary wondered why I arrived home with two black eyes.

But, what about the walk itself? Well, it's fine as far as Richmond, a pleasant town in Yorkshire. However, when you start out on the 22-mile section from

Richmond to Ingleby Cross, you should steal a car about a mile outside Richmond, drive like hell to Ingleby Cross, torch the car and give yourself up to the police. I assure you it's less boring to spend a few days in jail than to walk through the corn fields of the Vale of York for eight hours. It got so bad that I passed the time by identifying the diseases on the wheat and barley crops. I'm quite sure that the majority of Ramblers will be riveted to know that Rhynchosporium is rampant on the English wheat crop this year. Septoria and Fusarium are serious, while rust and black smut are about average for the time of year.

Even Wainwright admits that this section is boring. But he enthuses wildly (or did, he's now dead) about a walk along a section of abandoned railway in the Yorkshire Moors. "You can even get up to 5mph along this section", he gushed. "You can easily imagine the trains, and hear the hiss of the steam. Why, you can even imagine that you are a train yourself." Yeah? I reckon he died of hyper imaginative syndrome. It's boring and flat and you want to get away to the nearest hill.

All this is complete fiction, of course. I love the English people, their dogs and bulls, and their wheat and barley, and also the Japanese. Even Wainwright's walk is like the curate's egg, an Eamon Dunphy kind of walk.

But, if you really want to know what it's like, you'll have to buy me a whiskey in the pub after the next hike.

Nearly Put to the Sword

Rambler
Nov 2020

The Rambler archive is a wonderful store of information to have available at the click of a mouse. Great credit is due to the people who assembled it and made it so accessible. Recently, I was reading something about the film Excalibur, much of which was made in Wicklow in 1980/81.

It rang a bell about a little incident that happened on a Rambler hike almost 40 years ago. I checked back on the archive and, sure enough, I found it was on Sunday Feb 8, 1981. The hike was led by John More O'Farrell, an older brother of Richard, who was well known in the Ramblers in later years.

This was a Grade B hike of 11 miles

and 973 metres ascent from Oldbridge taking in Scarr, Brown Mountain, Knocknaclohogue and Fancy before we went down the Luggala valley towards Lough Dan and crossed the stepping stones at Ballinrush.

John said that he knew a handy way back to Oldbridge through woodland at Lake Park. It was private land, of course, but he thought that if we nipped through it quickly and quietly no one would notice. Obviously, he wasn't up to date with the filming diary of John Boorman, who was way behind schedule with Excalibur and wasn't going to waste a late Sunday afternoon in an effort to catch up.

So, the knights were seated around a fire in a clearing in the woods with lights set up and camera in place to

record a scene when the Ramblers blundered in and added a little something which wasn't in the plan. But not for long. We got the message fairly fast that we weren't exactly welcome and were encouraged to get lost as quickly as possible. Which we were very glad to do before Excalibur was unearthed to behead us!

This was one of the first films of Helen Mirren (didn't notice her on the day), Liam Neeson, and Gabriel Byrne (didn't spot them either!). Mannix Flynn, now a member of Dublin City Council, was also in Excalibur.

It was a grand way to finish a hike and brightened up a February Sunday.

Brian Gilsenan

Meet the people who work for us all in The Ramblers

Rambler
May 2021

The Hike Coordinators

Robert Garrett
G1 Sunday



Niall Rennick
G2 Sunday



Sheila Moran
G3+ Sunday



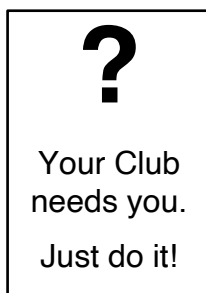
Rose Leonard
G3 Sunday



Sheila Powell
G4 Sunday



Vacancy
G5 Sunday



Michael Cosgrave
G3 Saturday



Margaret Rohan
Hardy Soles



Martin Hackett
G3+ Thursday



Peter Caulwell
G3 Thursday



Deirdre Stuart
G4 Thursday



Angela Dunleavy
G5 Thursday

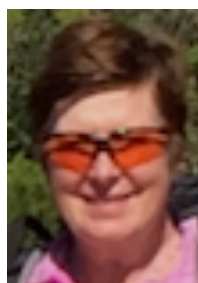


The Car Security Subgroup

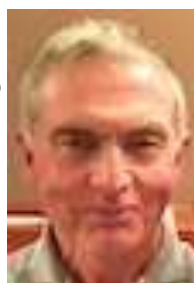
Carolin Brangan



Rita Cummins



Kevin O'Loughlin



Pat Cummins



Catherine O'Loughlin



Michael Keogh
who recently
retired as
Chairman of the
Subgroup after
many years'
service, replaced
by Carolin

Selected Poetic Ramblings

Hill Fever Peadar O'Riordan

When winter days are over
And dawns the sun of May,
I love to take a rucksack
And westwards make my way.

To leave behind the city,
The hustle and the work,
To smell again the heather
On Maamtrasna and Maamturk.

To see again each furze clad hill,
To hear the honey bee,
To breathe the clear and salty air
On Croagh Patrick and Mweelrea.

To hear again Atlantic waves,
Walk in the woods so green,
And hear the cuckoo calling,
O'er Bengower, Benbán, Benbreen.

Then turn my face to Kerry
From care and sorrow free
To stroll where Massatiompan
Slopes down to the sea.

Or climb to Brandon's lofty peak
And watch the young lambs play;
Or walk among the bluebells
On the shores of Brandon Bay.

To wander down a Sligo lane
Where hawthorn blossoms bloom
Or stand again upon that hill,
Where Maeve lies in her tomb.

Or stroll along the riverbank
Amongst the violets and primrose
And watch the evening sun go down
As the day draws to a close.

To roam the hills of Donegal
With wild deer and woodcock,
And hear the sweet song of the lark
High up o'er Altan Lough.

But oh, that God would grant me
When sweet May dawns again,
To rest awhile on Errigal
Or in the Poisoned Glen.



Rambler
Mar 2021

West Cork Hill Walk Maria Murphy

Rambler
Dec 2021

Long incline causing lungs to heave,
But always enough breath for laughter,
Teasing glimpse of sea through trees,
Nudging wonder into wakeful anticipation.

Aches ease as muscles warm,
Palm against rough branch,
Clang of farm gate on right-of-way,
Slippery roots, while going higher and higher.

Summit reached, wonder now wide awake,
Emotion overwhelms,
Filling my eyes with sudden tears,
Blinked away quickly before being seen.

The expanse of beauty is a gift,
Exquisite in the moment,
But not capturable - a voice suggests.
Maybe that's why it hurts as well as enthralls.

My guide, generously sharing his world,
Moves in to give some insight,
Then away for quiet space,
Like the gentle ebb and flow of the tide.

I breathe in
Blue sea, windy hilltop,
Everything that fills this moment,
And in the now, I am complete.



Donal McMahon The Uphill Struggle of Life

"Say not the struggle nought availeth."
These words alone can steel the will,
When legs grow weak and courage faileth
And, gasping, I climb up the hill.

Help! Out of sight has gone the leader.
I've lost the path, gone all astray!
Fear not, you don't need him or need her.
Recite "Say not . . .", you'll find the way.

Where are the hopes, the prospects cheerful,
The optimism of the start?
Think not these things gloomy and fearful.
With High Victorian you won't lose heart.

[See here](#)

Remember how the sun climbs slowly,
The tide comes in slow inch by inch.
Now get yourself together wholly
And make this long hard climb . . . a cinch!

Some people think there's nothing finer
Than everyday plain plodding prose.
"The tough get goin'" – that one-liner
Just has it all, so they suppose

But has it got what's in this poem,
Stiff upper lip and sterner stuff?
"Say not the struggle . . .", c'mon, let's show 'em,
Good ol' Mister Arthur Hugh Clough!

I'm plunging through the knee-high heather
And all I have seems not enough.
But all hills climb and all storms weather
I will, thanks to Arthur Hugh Clough!



Lament for Ukraine

Rambler
Apr 2022

I cannot hear the bombs fall, I can't see the people dying,
But I can close my eyes and hear the children crying.
What greed drives a nation to such an awful deed,
To blow a town to pieces, to see the people bleed?
Don't they have any pity, do they not feel the pain?
Think of all the horrors past; why do it all again?
Eighty years have vanished since last the world was torn;
Of killing tyrants, we were free and better thinkers born.
But no, it's happened all again, will not the killing cease?
It seems, if man exists, there never will be peace.

Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

MEET & GREET

Rambler Oct 2022

An old friends' get together

Agnes Leonard



... So if you wish to meet up once a month - please come along to Herbert Park, Ballsbridge on the first Tuesday of the month, at 11am, for a stroll, a chat or coffee at the Herbert Park Cafe, (beside the tennis courts), or at any other cafes nearby. ...

Mountain Meitheal

Rambler Nov 2022

Brian Kennan



Now that Covid is somewhat in the rear-view mirror, Mountain Meitheal is welcoming volunteers for their programs of work. They do some invaluable work, as you know, restoring trails to usable condition, managing environmental impact of trails, benefitting hillwalkers and also keeping landowners happy, thus facilitating continued access.

To make contact send an email to: MountainMeithealDublinWicklow@gmail.com



Trail Blazers Inaugural Hike

Rambler Dec 2022

Elaine Dardis



Our first Younger Member hike took place on 8 Nov 2022, guided by Declan Murphy, from Kilgobbin Lane to Fairycastle and back via the Dublin Way.

We were joined by ten other Ramblers, mostly long time members, which was great to see. Even for some of them it was a new experience. Several had never been on a night hike.

It was a beautiful, clear night. Guided by the full moon we made our way, taking in the views over Dublin city and coastline; taking in the sights and sounds of the mountains and surrounding landscapes; and the city twinkling below us.

It was a lovely way to spend an evening. Sure, what else would you be doing on an Autumn night!

It was a magical experience for everyone, enjoyed by all.

The Lugnaquilla Challenge Walk, Sat 17 June 2023

Every two years the Irish Ramblers Club hosts this major challenge walk open to experienced hill walkers from all over the country.

The sub-committee of Tina Ennis, Niall Ennis and Geraldine Cleary are now looking for Rambler **volunteers to help out** on the day.

To assist please contact lugchallenge2023@gmail.com

Car Sharing Performance

Rambler May 2023

... Our car-sharing performance has improved by 11% in 2023, to date, compared to the whole of 2022. At 1.9 passengers per car, on average, we are almost at our interim target of 2.0.

So let's keep trying to adjust our habits to keep improving. It takes effort. But the reward is a meaningful contribution to saving the world as we know it and avoid disaster for our grandchildren.

Actually, if we can get car occupancy up to 4 per car, we will have as good a carbon footprint as having a 30 seater bus with 24 people on board. ...

Mulranny Holiday for G5/6

Rambler May 2023

Peter Buckley



... Numbers are limited so book early by sending an email with your mobile phone number to me and I will provide details of how to pay the €100 booking deposit by credit card or debit card.

Daily hikes on the Greenway and in the Mulranny area are planned with the option of using public transport. ...

Committee Notes

Rambler Nov 2022

Four donations of €500 have been made to:

- Dublin/Wicklow Mountain Rescue - most used area
- Glen of Imaal Mountain Rescue - next most used
- Donegal Mountain Rescue - used for Away Hikes
- Mountain Meitheal Ireland - beneficial path works

Re-introducing Buses on Hikes

Rambler Jan 2023



As the newly appointed Bus Coordinator I am very interested to hear your views on bus usage

Joanne Burke

- : bus from city centre to start of hike and back : use of public buses to hikes
- : reducing carbon footprint
- : reducing need for Car minding
- : linear walks for a change
- : new start points as not limited to car parks
- : cost of buses - are you prepared to pay and what's your limit. Don't forget that fuel and car wear and tear cost you a lot already. ...

National Spring Clean

Rambler Apr 2023

Helen Scully



... Its objectives are, to:

- Encourage clean-ups throughout the month of April
- Galvanise the practices of recycling and re-use where possible
- Increase the number of events and participants

The Irish Ramblers Club has registered for the 2023 National Spring Clean. An Taisce has provided:

- high vis vests;
- rubbish bags for recyclable and general waste and
- a small quantity of heavy-duty safety gloves. ...



Free Hike Leading Training

Rambler May 2023



The following notice was sent to me from MI. I have applied for some spaces on courses on behalf of The Ramblers. Dates for courses will be announced later.

I look forward to a good level of interest and commitment to Hike Leadership Training from members, both experienced and completely inexperienced. Hike Leadership, done safely, is an essential skill for as many members as possible within the club. All of us should be able for it and only exceptional circumstances would allow that a person might not be up to it. The vast majority of us are. You just need the training to give you the confidence.

Martin Dermody Training Officer

Rambler Jul 2023

Anne Morrissey



Irish Ramblers Club

1964 – 2024

Celebrating our 60th Anniversary in 2024

Send your ideas for the Celebration

Willing Members Needed to Organise the Events



The World Kept Turning

Rambler
May 2020

It was the best of times. It was the worst of times.

Man had split the atom, dropped the atomic bomb, walked on the Moon, found cures to most diseases and the technological revolution had transformed our business methods and personal communication. Granted this transformation had not impacted on the world in any equal measure, but western man did feel rather pleased with himself. Globalisation had made us one big, fairly happy family.

It was the best of times.

Then word came of an unknown virus taking hold in China. The government had everything under control - but they didn't really. As the statistics started coming out, this new disease, the Corona Virus, steadily and menacingly made its way to Italy, then Spain and then France via travellers availing of cheap and environmentally damaging air travel. So our island status did not save us and on Feb 29 a teenage boy returning from Italy became the first victim in Ireland.

It was the worst of times.

But the world kept turning and the flowers bloomed.

We didn't even have a government but the elected TDs pulled together in this emergency and eventually locked us down in our own homes. An emergency seems to bring out the best in people. Non-working medical workers volunteered their services - up

to 60,000 of them. Irish doctors came home from abroad to help. My residents association organised a leaflet drop to all 238 houses telling vulnerable residents how they could avail of necessary help. Churches closed but religious ceremonies took to the internet. County Councils set up central help hubs, where people could look for assistance. KBC bank partnered with ALONE to reach out to older people in need.

And the sun rose and set each day.

There are always those who will not obey. They gathered in the pubs in Temple Bar and had virus parties, they congregated in public parks, they spat at Gardai and health workers in hospitals. All in brazen defiance of crucial social distancing. Some even succeeded in reaching their holiday homes all over the country.

And the moon waxed and waned.

Being forced to stay home helped us to re-set our priorities. We don't need to be hectic and busy all the time. We have books to read, music to listen to, friends to converse with by phone. Maybe more of us will realise our addiction to consumer spending the way we took for granted the idea of cheap and boundless air travel without considering the huge damage flying was doing to the environment. Maybe, like Icarus, we will realise we have flown too far, too often.

And the tides ebbed and flowed.

The news told of the daily increase in infections and deaths. Normal funerals could not take place and bereaved

families were robbed of the power to gather and hold each other in grief. For others, home became the most dangerous of places with an increase in domestic violence.

And the trees burst into leaf.

With so much unaccustomed time at our disposal, we have come to realise how fragile our world is, how one tiny virus can have such a catastrophic effect on the rest of the planet. Our ancestors knew how we live in each other's shadow: Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine. This can also be seen in the traditional custom of the Meitheal, neighbours coming together to complete a task. Air pollution in Chinese cities has nearly disappeared as their big factories have ceased to operate. Many people have learned they can work from home. Imagine the improvement in city traffic and air quality if this practice continued in future.

And the birds kept singing.

"Must Christ be crucified in every generation because men lack imagination?" (G.K.Chesterton) And imagination seems to be what we lacked when it took an airborne danger to bring home to us the fact that we all breathe the same air. The reality of human interdependence has finally hit us by the staggering speed with which the virus has spread. It has been said that the one thing man learns from history is that man never learns from history. Let's hope that this GUBU pandemic has scared us enough to remember how fragile Mother Earth is and to treat her accordingly.

And the world keeps turning.

Textile Therapy

Rambler
Mar 2021

Two men looked out thru prison bars
One saw mud and the other saw stars.

On a physical level, we do have plenty mud around the place and especially on our walks. And at times these days, we probably feel stuck in the mud. But there are still stars in the sky though it takes an effort to see them. It took me a while to realise that I could do something productive with my time, instead of constantly complaining.

As members of the Patchwork Society we had been asked to make fidget quilts for people with dementia in nursing homes. I learned that such people tend to do a lot of fidgeting on

anything within reach. So a fidget quilt provides them with such items. It consists of a square meter of fabric done in whatever decorative pattern of choice. Then it is backed with either towelling or fleece to keep it from slipping off the lap. Both pieces are then quilted together. Then here is where the fun starts.

I am a magpie when it comes to collecting odd items (for recycling) that I am convinced will be of use at some future time. That time had arrived. What a joy it was to root through this collection of zippers, buttons, jewellery, rollers / curlers, ribbon, tape, key chains, large paper clips, Velcro, pompoms, empty spools of thread and attach a selection

of them to the quilt. While I have never seen the people in question when they fidget, it was a joy to think that my effort would bear some fruit.

My sewing room has become more of a mess than ever, but it is a productive mess. Unendurable as this lockdown once was (and still is to some extent), at least I found a method of doing something productive for a group of elderly people.

Regarding the fidget quilts, I am reminded of the mantra of Frankie Byrne the agony aunt on the radio. "It may not be your problem today, but it could be tomorrow."

Kathleen Forde



Glencullen, WW, Lough Bray and Prince William's Seat - 36km

I started early in the morning as I had planned a big day ahead of me.

It was a freezing morning. I parked my car at Glencullen, Boranaraltry Bridge. I could feel the cold morning breeze



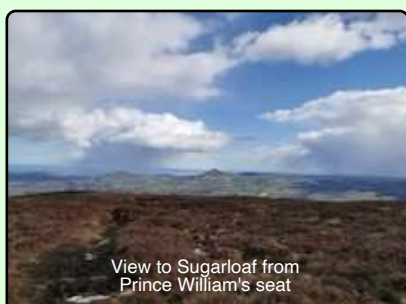
View from Glencullen, 8am

blowing on my face. The morning fog still floated on the grass, new-born lambs surrounded their mothers, and hailstones still lay in a corner out of the morning light. Not far away, I could see Three Rock's Fairy Castle under the beautiful morning sky, mysterious and peaceful.

I walked alone in the direction of Crone Forest Road. I was surprised to see new shoots had quietly grown on the pine trees. The whole forest had a different layer of green, under the gentle morning sunlight, like a layer of gauze shining with gold. I walked a fairytale, narrow road; both sides full of yellow gorse flowers.

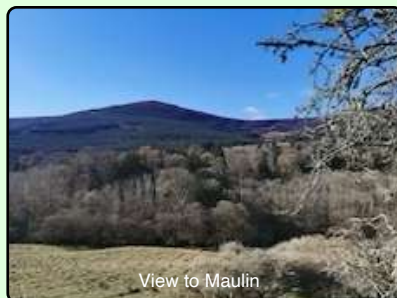
When the morning breeze blew, the air smelled like sweet honey, recalling the warm memory of when I was a child, as I followed my cousins to pick fresh flowers in the early morning, sucking the flower heads, delicious and sweet. I stopped then and selected several of the gorse buds; very tasty.

I had hoped to watch the sunrise over Sugarloaf, but forgot it was summer-time already. I was too late, and was a little bit disappointed. However, as the sun rose high, the light passed through the treetops, illuminating a small piece of grass in the forest. The dew on the trees was like crystal-clear pearls that, irradiated by the sun, evaporated immediately.



View to Sugarloaf from Prince William's seat

By 10am, at the viewpoint of Crone Wood Ride Rock, where there are stunning views over the Powerscourt Waterfall and Great Sugarloaf, I took my first tea break admiring the beautiful Wicklow countryside. I wanted to sit there till sunset and bask in the sun the day long. After my tea, I headed to Maulin and Tonduff from the south.

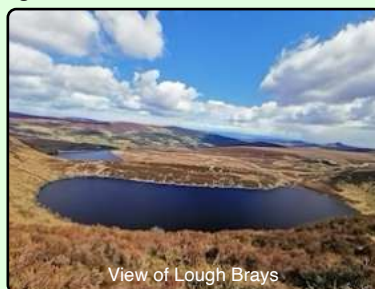


View to Maulin

Unfortunately, I got lost again. That was not my first time lost on Tonduff south hill, and it seems that I am never able to find the track in that place, even under a clear sky. I used the Kippure high transmitter as my direction and scared a group of deer who should have been leisurely. Much later, I saw cars pass by the Military Road. I was relieved and felt safe.

I enjoyed the peaceful wilderness of Sally Gap. I checked the road was empty, and walked in the middle for a whole minute, feeling like a naughty kid. After the bird information board, I turned to Lough Bray. I was looking for the most beautiful angle of Lough Bray to have my second cup of tea and a sandwich.

After the lunch break, I slowly approached the highest cliff, a spectacular bird's eye view of both loughs and east Wicklow.



View of Lough Brays

My girls call them Guinness Pint lake and Half Moon lake.

I strolled on the edge of the cliff.

My mother used say;
"Walk without looking at the scene.
Look at the scene without walking."

It was a lucky day for me. Few clouds floated in the blue sky; only warm sunshine. Staying quiet, I thought I heard the wind blowing on the lake. But maybe it was my imagination.

I arrived at Glencree Forest around 3pm. The next hour was the highlight of my day. I took my third small break at Mass Rock when an unexpected



Mass Rock

snowfall drifted westward with the spring breeze and the sky split in two - half with the sun and blue sky over a green carpet of mountains, and half with dreamy snow.

I have never seen such a miraculous landscape, a thousand miles of endless sky and a thousand miles in misty clouds.

I closed my eyes, recalling, as a child, in hot summer, when the wind blew the clouds and the sun hid in the clouds, making shadows on the ground. My little brother and I used chase the shadow to avoid the sun.

Cold and warm, Ireland and China.
This is a most beautiful May day.

After Prince William's seat, I ran the whole way down to Boranaraltry Bridge just before 5 pm. I felt happy, grateful, and free like a bird.



Boranaraltry Lane

It took me nine and a half hours to complete 36km.

Eventually, after Covid 19, I look forward to joining my hiking group again.

Ping Liu



G3+ on Moanbane, July 2021



Michael Twomey (d)

From the archives, G1 hikers, 2002

Tommy Taylor (d)

Michael Kaliszer

John O'Connor (father of S & J)

Anne Morrissey

Noel Kerley (d)



Susan Cullen

Catherine Jennings

Teresa O'Flynn

G5, Susan and Catherine first lead at Varry, 7 Oct 2021



Maurice Flanagan died Oct 2020



Patrick Gray Rambler of the Year 2021 Declan Murphy, President



Louis O'Donoghue

Anthony Duggan serenades the G's

Sep 2021



Peadar O'Riordan died Jan 2021



G5 Nov 2021

Donie Harmon

Michelle Demomby

Ron Ellis

Brenda Butler

Phyllis Ellis



Oct 2021

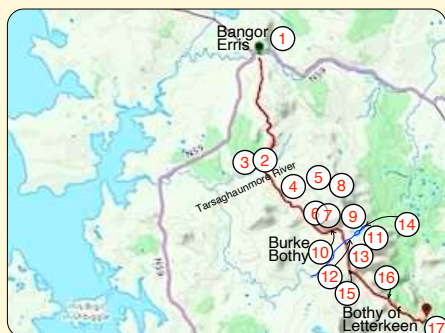
Brian Rooney

Mairéad Esmonde

Dominic Gallagher

The Bangor Trail Rambler Aug 2021

The Wild Neiphin Ballycroy National Park in Mayo is one of Ireland's last great isolated areas - 15,000 hectares of Atlantic blanket bog and mountainous terrain, a vast uninhabited, unspoiled wilderness. The Bangor Trail runs for 25 km through this wilderness from Bangor Erris to the Brogan Carroll Bothy at ① Letterkeen Forest, 13km north of Newport. The Trail follows a mostly discernible path along the mountain sides, high enough to avoid the worst peat bogs but low enough to



avoid steep climbs. It dates back at least to the 16th century, or further. It has attracted travellers over the centuries. Indeed, Dr Richard Pococke in 1752 referred to the route having been used by locals for centuries past.

Fellow Rambler, Aidan Punch and I, together with our friend Donal Murtagh, took on this challenge in June. On the advice of our host John Chambers, of Brannens of Newport Guesthouse, we did it from north to south for the best views. John Chambers himself is an avid hillwalker with the Neiphin Beggars and gave us good advice and tips.

We were advised to expect the going to be either wet or wetter! In truth we got both. The trail is seldom dry. Mostly it's a stream rather than a path. That's the wet part! In the wetter parts the trail becomes a swamp to be negotiated with care. At Tawnyannruddia⑥ the trail disappears altogether. But, in the sunny conditions we enjoyed, it could be seen half a km away climbing the spur at Tawnanashiffin.⑦ In less good visibility it would call for accurate navigation to find it again. This is probably the most remote part of the wilderness and is definitely not the place to get lost.

Selected Writing

The first river crossing comes about two and a half hours into the walk. A new suspension bridge② makes the crossing of the Tharsaghaunmore River easy and safe. The ruin nearby of a herdsman's house③ is currently being renovated, presumably to convert it to a bothy. I'm sure it has often provided welcome shelter to walkers battered by the weather, but on this beautiful June day we chose to sit by the riverside to have our lunch.

After crossing the river, the trail follows a ravine along the Gleann River④. To the east from here is a mountain called Marafar⑤, from the Irish Marbhacht - dead beat exhaustion! But it's too soon for that. Still a long way to go!

On the slopes of Tawnanashiffin⑦ is the midway point. Standing on the spur of this mountain offers great views back to the faraway hills near Bangor①, now on the horizon, where we had started our walk. As we congratulated ourselves on having walked so far in four and a half hours, it suddenly dawned on us we still had the same distance ahead. The views here are stunning in all directions with the huge bulk of Sliabh Carr (721m)⑧ and a range of mountains stretching out to the Atlantic and Sliabh Mór on Achill Island to the west. Corrsliabh (544m)⑨ is generally regarded as the most remote mountain in Ireland, with a challenging walk of about three hours just to reach it.

The trail winds its way around Tomashiffin, and we soon came upon the Burke Bothy⑩ - no more than the ruins of an old house, with a ramshackle galvanized shelter built within its walls. Here Neiphin Beg⑪ with its saddle over to Corrsliabh⑨ dominates the skyline. From Burke Bothy to Scardaun Falls⑫ and for another kilometre afterwards, the trail is completely unusable, unless you're wearing wellies. John Burke's wisdom was mentioned several times at this point! The Scardaun River⑬ is a dramatic series of waterfalls, with the water from Scardaun Lake,⑭ 120m above, tumbling down with great force. This crossing is quite dangerous and requires careful

Brendan
Ward



Aidan
Punch

Donal
Murtagh



planning. One slip could lead to a serious accident, in a place with no phone cover.

Crossing from the barony of Erris into the barony of Burrishoole, at Maumaratha⑮, we came upon the Lough Avoher shelter⑮, on the edge of Letterkeen Forest. The sight of the forest was a welcome one as we knew the end of our walk was in this forest. We also knew from our maps, however, that there was still the best part of two hours walking left and we should try to control our impatience for the end of the trail. Tiredness was now setting in, best displayed by our negotiation of the last stream. The trail ended abruptly at the fast flowing stream. We carefully sought the safest crossing. After some debate Donal looked up and asked "Why don't we use that footbridge over there"!⑯ Maybe it was tiredness, but we hadn't spotted the footbridge only 20 metres away!

At 7:10pm, eight hours and fifty-five minutes after starting the walk, we finally arrived at the Brogan Carroll Bothy⑰, maybe with a little marbhacht, but happy to have completed the challenge.

Brendan Ward

Aidan Punch

Donal Murtagh



Brendan
Ward

Aidan
Punch



Editor's News: I had a call on 2 July from our Angela to tell me she had injured her foot and was in the Mater hospital for an operation.

As a result, planning for a programme of Spreading Our Wings has not advanced.

Angela assures me she will be back in business in due course and will let us know what she has in store for us.

In the meantime, we wish her a speedy recovery and look forward to her renewed organisational skills.

Now, as it happens, before her accident, Angela had sent me the following piece about her beginnings with The Ramblers and her first hike lead:

In July 1988, I did my first hike with the Club and was "caught by the bug" of Hillwalking. I got my four hikes completed in good time despite the fact that I was working every second weekend. Keen to join my friend Susan Browne (who had encouraged me to join the IRC) on the Burren Walk weekend in August that year I applied to be included on the list and got the good news. I had a place. Susan had given me a birthday gift of a Silva Compass which we needed for the trip. Little did I know where this was going to lead (pardon the pun) in time to come!

We picked up Peadar O'Riordain in town and set off for Ballyvaughan - a long enjoyable trip. Susan and I did the shorter route on the Saturday and enjoyed every step of the way - even using our new compass to help us along the stoney paths.

A few months later browsing the November Rambler, "Beginners Training Course" caught my eye and as it was my weekend off I decided this is just the thing for me to do. I enlisted for the course on Saturday 19th - 20th November.

On the morning I set off with great enthusiasm to learn all about the map and compass not knowing what I had let myself in for. I met up with Des Doyle (our instructor) who introduced me to the group. All four were Grade 1 and 2 walkers. God, was I in fright? Nothing for it but to struggle on - though my boots made less contact with the ground than my new red gaiters which were now black. I did a little better on the Sunday, again a wet and miserable day with lots of rain. When we came to a river crossing I took fright. Peadar came to my rescue and helped me across. This was in the Kippure area.

What did I learn from my experience? Well, I can now take a compass bearing and read a map as laid out in the Hiking Programme and it makes the hikes more interesting. However, I felt I would need a lot more experience before I would attempt to lead a Hike. But I didn't count on what was to follow a few months later. Pat Dignam, VP, cajoled me into leading a G4 in February 1989. I agreed to do so and with the help of Elsie McCarthy and Mary Higgins we did a few reccies, happy that I had everything in hand to show off my new skills. I should state the hike route:

Crone CP - WW - Ride Rk - Maulin - 1944 - Ravens Gl - WW - CP 7 miles 1,600 ft. Leader Angela Holohan (as I was then)

However, on the day, I woke up to a snow covered Dublin and without my two guides (both had said they would not be free on the day). I had never walked on the hills in snow. I met my group on the Quays and, turned away two walkers who didn't have walking boots with them. I knew a few of my group and guessed I could ask for help if needed. So we set off.

Thankfully all went well. I signed some cards for Probationary Members, two of whom were Swiss from the Swiss Embassy. That led to another story and a fab holiday in Switzerland in 1990 - more anon.

I came home tired and happy after my hike. To my surprise and delight I was awarded Best New Leader for that year.

That birthday gift of a Silva Compass led to many enjoyable hikes and meeting new and lasting friends. I became more involved in the Club and have enjoyed all of my adventures.

Angela Hickey

Where on earth are we?

Rambler Aug 2021

So you're out on the hills. As a good Rambler, you have map and compass with you.

Without warning a heavy mist descends. You know the narrow track you are on will lead you to a wide main path to bring you back to your car.



So you press on confidently until the track runs out and then spend several fruitless minutes trying to find it again. No luck.

If you know where you are you whip out your map and read the bearing you should continue on. This must be reasonably accurate. The margin for error is slim - the sheer drop on one side of your route and the quicksand nature of the bog on the other make this imperative.

But there's no need to panic! Before setting off you had charged your phone and earlier you had installed a very useful little app - Irish Grid Ref Compass, available for iPhone and Android.



You open the app and read the Irish Grid reference.

Now use your map, which of course hasn't got the lost track on it, to find the bearing you must walk and set off.

From time to time you check your position, adjusting as needed.

Eventually, after a gruelling walk through waist-high heather, you reach the path leading back to the cars.

Unknown to you the narrow track was never more than a few metres away at any point but you don't care too much.

You're happy to be safe at last.

Patrick Gray

Selected Poetic Ramblings

Where are they now? Donal McMahon

Dear Reader, pause in silence here awhile,
Recalling days that now we'll see no more,
When life was lived in good old-fashioned style
And The Rambler quite a different aspect bore.



Where are they now, all those distinctive signs
Of editors from Ray back to Sean Fox,
The unjustified free-ranging rows of lines,
The crooked text, the awkward hand-drawn box?

And what about the tools of their lost trade,
Pen, ruler, Tippex, Letraset, typewriter?
Shall we not sigh, not hear a last post played
For these servants of many a poor old blighter?

No, here receive from me a fond farewell,
Though it be typed out on Apple Mac,
Though no typewriter ring for you its bell,
Lamenting days . . . What, Reader? --- "And don't come back!"

Poor Old Blighter

June 2002

A Whimsey Michael Cosgrave

When God gave me a head
I thought he said bed
So I asked for a big one

When God gave me a nose
I thought he said rose
So I asked for a red one

When God gave me an eye
I thought he said sky
So I asked for a blue one

When God gave me a chin
I thought he said gin
So I asked for a double

When God gave me a leg
I thought he said peg
So I asked for a wood one

When God gave me a brain
I thought he said rain
So I said "Oh, no, thank you"

Nov 2021



Remembrance Tree

Ron Baker 2014

Beneath the slopes of Derrybawn at noon on an Autumn day
A small oak tree was planted there, in a private wood to say
Thank you to so many friends whom time did steal away
Thank you for the memories that linger, come what may.



Perhaps, if you could pass this way, and rest for just a while,
Let your mind go travelling back and thinking bring a smile
When you remember all the folk who with you often strolled
All the conversations the jokes you shared, sometimes bold.

Remember all the sunny days, but let us not forget the rain.
We'd not appreciate the good times if we never felt the pain.
When winter's snowy mantle draped the mountain yet to try
With pale mystic sunlight beckoning, you'd conquer do or die.

The flowers of the springtime they are blooming once again.
They gain their strength from what the past had put in train.
Some people that we've loved, their time to leave has come.
Let's celebrate their gift to us and take their memory home.

Remembrance Wood

Near Derrybawn there is a wood
With sunshine dappled 'neath the leaves
And the breeze whisp'ring in the pines...
There I am, there remember me.

In the cool of an afternoon
As you make your way to higher ground
Stop a while and listen...
There I am, there remember me.

On these hallowed slopes
Where conspiring ravens soar
And watchful deer are cautious...
There I am, there remember me.

Or in the hearts of friends
In a silent prayer
Or a private tear...
There I am, there remember me

Brendan Ward



"WE WALKED THE CAMINO EACH DAY"

Seán Quinn

recalling perhaps the best trip ever, organized by Fergus and Maura Roche.

We answered the Roche invitation,
to walk the Camino each day,
We booked with great expectation,
and flew to Bilbao in May.

We walked on those days so hot,
Santiago Cathedral - we prayed quite a lot,
some "fours" passed the "threes",
because Fergus said "Walk as you please".

Shells we wore on our sombreros,
with walking poles and water to drink,
We felt like real peregrinos,
about life on the hikes, we did think.

In the Picos, high mountains we climbed,
covered in snow in the sun,
In Bilbao we Guggenheimed,
in Santander, more celebrations and fun.



There once was a man
from Clondalkin

Who joined a club
for hillwalkin'.

Some people would say
Us he's goin' to delay.

Get walkin', stop talkin'
and gawkin'.

Ron Baker 2024





Paul Wills
died July 2022



Hugh McNally
died Jan 2022

Simon Stewart completes the list
of 405 Arderins - Irish mountains
of over 500m, Jan 2022



Irene
(nee Moran)
O'Farrelly
died Feb 2022



G5s, Jan 2022
Photo: Helen Scully



Patrick Pierce
died Mar 2022



Gráinne McLaughlin
Chair of MI Hillwalking
Committee 2018-2022

Nov
2021



Trial of Thursday G2s,
Jan 2022
Photo: John Burke





Doolough Valley lies in the south west corner of Co Mayo. It is a hauntingly beautiful place with its inky dark lake, Doo Lough, reflecting the surrounding mountains, Sheffrey Hills to the east, Ben Gorm to the south and majestic Mweelrea to the west. It's a narrow valley, no more than a kilometre at its widest point, with the R335 from Louisburgh to Leenane squeezed between the lake and the base of the Sheffreys.

This beautiful place however holds a dark story of one of the most terrible episodes of the Great Famine which came to be known as the Doolough Tragedy. It happened 173 years ago this month (March). Perhaps the best source on it, just eleven days after the event, is a letter to the editor of The Mayo Constitution newspaper. The letter, signed "A Ratepayer", told of the discovery of five bodies on the roadside, halfway between Delphi Lodge in Doolough Valley and Louisburgh on Sunday, 1st April. The bodies were of a woman named Dalton and her two children, a son and daughter, and two men. The men's bodies were found about a mile from the family group.

The five, the letter writer explained, were among a number of destitute poor who left Delphi Lodge the previous day to return to their homes near Louisburgh, a distance of eleven miles. The reason the people were at Delphi Lodge was clarified in this and subsequent letters, published in the same newspaper over the following weeks. The people, all recipients of outdoor relief, were told by Westport Union officials to present themselves for inspection at Louisburgh on Friday, 30th March 1849 to decide if they were entitled to remain on the relief list. It was a check on the books for abuse of the relief system. In effect an audit!

The people gathered at Louisburgh on the appointed day and two officials arrived, Colonel Francis Hogreve, a vice-guardian of the Westport Union, and Captain J. M. Primrose, the poor law inspector. For reasons, never well explained, the inspection did not go

ahead. The two men left Louisburgh for the comfort of Delphi Lodge. With no thought for the wretched state of the people, they ordered them to proceed to Delphi Lodge where they would be inspected early next morning.

The starving people who had gathered that day had only one hope of survival - to remain on the relief list. Without food rations, they faced certain death from starvation. So, in freezing cold, poorly clad and probably barefooted, "hundreds of those unfortunate living skeletons, men, women, and children, were forced on the 11 mile journey on foot by road and mountain passes to Delphi Lodge" [The Mayo Constitution].

The inspection took place the following morning, Saturday 31st March, but not before the people had to wait on the lawns of Delphi Lodge while the officials ate a hearty breakfast. After inspection, the people were left to make their own way home without water or food. The shocking discovery of five bodies the next morning showed the effect so gruelling a journey had on people already in advanced starvation.

Sadly, the number of casualties did not end there. Later, two more bodies were found on one of the mountain passes. Ten others never returned home and what became of them is unclear. More deaths occurred soon afterwards among those who had made it back.

The Mayo Constitution editor, struggling to control his anger when commenting on the events, laid the blame firmly with the two officials, who did not take the time to inspect the people at Louisburgh, but caused them to make the unnecessary 22 mile round journey to Delphi Lodge to be inspected at their convenience. "Can this be true?" he asked "Is it to be tolerated that men largely paid for dispensing relief to the starving peasantry, shall be guilty of such barbarity as this? The blood of these people calls loudly to heaven against those who sent them unprepared before their God by the most melancholy of deaths - death by hunger."

A post mortem was carried out some days later. The coroner, assisted by the workhouse doctor, examined the bodies that had been buried in a bog hole close to where they fell. It was common for bodies to be quickly buried in this way to prevent them being eaten by dogs and scavenging animals. Later

an inquest jury returned a verdict of death from starvation and cold for all of the victims. The editor was incensed at how the inquest was conducted (only two of the five bodies inspected) and called for a public inquiry. There is no evidence a public inquiry took place. The Westport Union as so many at the time, was by then struggling to cope with an ever increasing deaths from starvation and disease among the poor. The local Catholic curate, Rev. Thomas O'Dowd, provided coffins and made sure that the bodies of those poor souls were given a proper burial.

The names of a further six who died on the journey back from Delphi Lodge were published in the press on 17 April 1849 - Catherine Dillon, her children, Pat and Honor, Catherine Grady, Mary McHale and James Flynn.

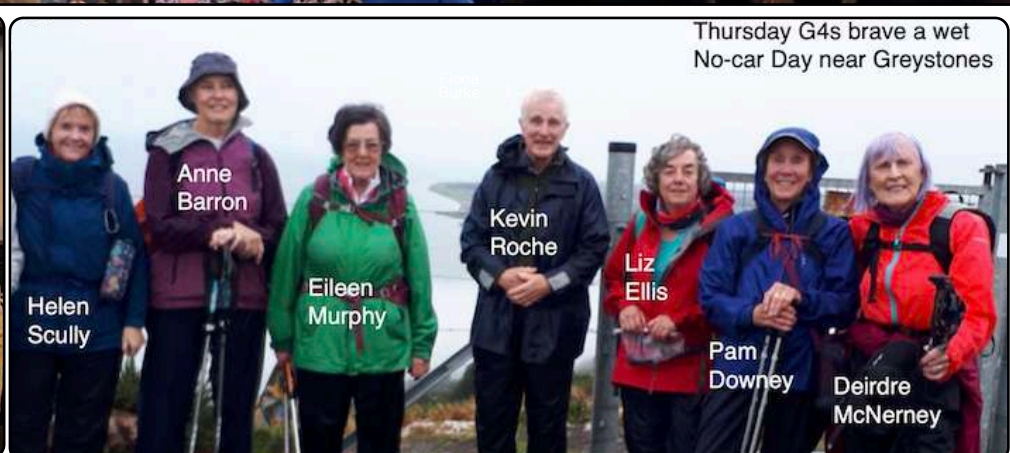
Today two memorials in the valley mark the tragedy. One is a plain stone cross engraved with the words "Doolough Tragedy 1849". The second bears the inscription "To commemorate the hungry poor who walked here in 1849 and who walk the Third World today".

Each year since 1988, other than 2020 and 2021 due to Covid, AFRI (Action From Ireland) has organised a walk on the 11 mile route from Louisburgh to Delphi Lodge in memory of those who died, and of all victims of starvation in the world today. Over the years it has been attended by many notable people including the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Kim Phuc - she was the little girl in the iconic photo running naked and burned by napalm in Vietnam, Vedran Smailovic, the cellist of Sarajevo, and members of the Choctaw Native American Nation who sent \$170 (about \$5,000 in today's value) in 1849 to assist the victims of the Irish famine.

One hundred seventy three years later, there are still people, forced by famine and persecution, to walk the desperate walk as they make the long trek to EU frontiers in the hope of salvation.

Perhaps this is something for us, for whom walking is a pastime, to reflect on now and then. For these people walking is not a pastime but a frantic bid for survival. Not all who ramble are lost, but millions are!

Brendan Ward





A Following of Art Christopher Clayton, Rambler

Mid-winter night

At a black-barred Castle gate
We gather and commemorate
Young Art, Énri and Aodh who fled,
By Edward Eustace led,
Four hundred years ago.

We start to follow on the days' divide
With pace unstretched, uneven stride.
We do not scurry, go by the wall,
Or wade through any moat.

From the Northerne ditch go west, then
south
By Patrick, New, Clanbrassil streets.
On the left is fifty-two ----
Our steps line up with Leo Bloom's.
Houses dark, most asleep.

By lands enclosed and hedged, some
common,
Suburban rings and Ice-age Dodder,
Our padded feet on hills determined
Pass Austin Clarke's, it's one o' seven.

Two miles on is Dearga's Brú,
Too many came one night A.D.
They left its name alone,
A blood-red name.

We leave its road, past Gleann na Smól,
The end of Ossian's Tír na n-Óg,
Untouchable, the poor mouths said.
It's black --- bar a síbín's carefree light.

Leave the lowlands by the Scorney Gap
Up round the weathering Bánóg rocks,
Grinding, drifting north, four hundred million
years.
Take a minute sos at their Stone Cross.

Fuaim na n-os from Suí Chon's slope,
Shrill, unchanged and wolf-outlasting.
On past Suí Finn, and hurry up,
Don't fall behind, a torch impatient hounds.

Down Scurlock's ancient path we cut
To Smuttan's bridge and Liffey side.
A break in cloud gives lunar light and
A simple shower gives a moonbow bright.

Shocked horses burst from Sorrel's gloom,
Their bulk and black and hooves our fright.
Were there no horses then for Art?
Does a trudging ghost ask why?

At Nultagh's crest we leave the road
To a huddling change in chilling squally
sleet.

We have harder boots for softer ground,
How nice to have a change.

Cleevaun's cone looms snowy grey
Smooth and stumble-free, not like this
track.

It's long enough, this winter night,
Maybe too short for some in flight.

A pink-red dawn lights Billy Byrne's
A gap with sun-stained snow
Reminding us of a croppy's blood
And how -- Don't think --
Two centuries ago.

Calmer down in broad Glenbride. It's blest
With blackthorn, fields, a house, a gate and
a cat
Surefooted, warm and permanent.
But robins feast at our breakfast.

By the river of Kings and the Pilgrim's Way
It's easy now in Cushkilay, a place to rest .
Just a few hours now from Gleann Maoiliúir
You jump the river, gain height, move right,
east south-east.

We don't, we drift
Left at the Easbán's sparkling fork,
Look east, observe an aonarán and more,
While up ahead in Glenreemore a raven
wheels.
There's falling ground, unyielding frozen
earth.

The mountain air is crisp pale-blue, it hardly
moves,
Not full with snow,
Not blanket snow, not bog-hole deep,
Not wet all through, not torn shoes,
Not shrinking wind.

*My God, that wind is yours.
Lema sabachthani ?*

Ní féidir.

At the valley head
There's a weathered plaque on a tilted
flagstone rock.
The letters say
...ins an áit seo ...
...do cailleadh Art Ó Néill ...
... Pro Fide et Patria...
In Anno Domini one five nine two.

Birth and place no-one can choose,
And after that what's left?

All his hostage steps were moved
By Tudor edge and Gaelic fret.
And Norman blood --
How did the Bagenals take the news?
Perhaps with human careless words?
Perhaps a common prayer?

All our worlds move on.

Scramble up through a gully in the rocks of
Nye
To tumbling ground at a plateau edge
where stands

Inspiring
High above
Metres high
A cross of wood A witness A bare
brown cross
Ulster faced
Defiant
Modest
Proud
Alone
Winter-galed Rope-lashed
An Óige-tended

Composed after the
Art O'Neill Walk in
mid 1980s



Another rest, another move, it's noon
(True solar time, not Greenwich).
Wend south round peat-hags to the perfect
flat

Of a Three Lake dazzling white
With tested layered ice.
Those strata never die,
Not here, not anywhere.

Aim now at Lug for Table Track,
Then down the green and footsafe edge
Of a frozen Abhann Beag.
Its ice is born again,
Matures with every drop
And a river courses Gleann Maoiliúir.

At its longest reach in fading light
We feel we're home.
We're dry in the brú of Baravore
On land made proud by Fiach Mac Hugh.
We talk of ease and thirty miles or so.
It was a goodish walk, no more.

Some spare a thought for a harder year,
And a hostile Pale --- where might we be?
Our peers were everywhere,
In every house and hut.

Five miles due east, a cairn has stretched
To a fallen spread of funeral stones, a
clochrán,
Sprawling lives, misleading words maybe,
and thoughts to come.

Art's Clorawn. Fading Pleiades.

Christopher A Clayton





An unlikely but remarkable story

Nobody would guess the unlikely origin of contour lines and the curious story behind them.

You'll probably imagine contour lines were invented by map makers to illustrate topography. Not so. Their origin dates back nearly 300 years to a time when scientists were trying to prove Isaac Newton's theory of gravity.

When Newton presented his revolutionary theory of gravity to the world in 1687, it explained how planets orbit the sun, and moons orbit the planets. But until this new theory could be scientifically proven, it would remain merely a hypothesis. At the time, the mass of the earth was unknown and seemingly unmeasurable, so the theory couldn't be definitively proven.

It wasn't until 1772, 45 years after his death, that an experiment was proposed not only to validate Newton's law of gravity but also provide a good estimate for the weight of the earth. The experiment was proposed by the British Astronomer Royal, Nevil Maskelyne, whose job as director at the Royal Observatory Greenwich was equivalent to a modern day astrophysicist.

Newton's law of gravity stated that the more mass an object has, the stronger its gravitational pull. Maskelyne's idea was to hold a plumb line beside a large mountain and measure by how much it was deflected. The deflection would be measured by astronomical observations of about 70 stars.

The major elements of the experiment were - to select a suitable mountain, figure out the mass of the mountain, measure the deflection of the plumb line, and finally do the calculations to weigh the earth. To execute and oversee the experiment the Royal Society established the Committee of Attractions. There were many scientific notables on this committee including Benjamin Franklin.



Schiehallion mountain (1,083m), in the very centre of Scotland, was selected because it was physically isolated from any nearby mountains that would interfere with measurements. It was also quite conical in shape and so it should be possible to measure its mass relatively accurately, and it was steep, which meant that the measurements could be made closer to the mountain's centre of gravity.



In order to get his sensitive equipment to **Schiehallion**, Maskelyne sailed from London to Perth and then travelled 65km across country. A team of locals was recruited to build two observatories so measurements could be made on both the North and South of the mountain. First they focussed on their astronomical observations in order to establish their reference points. Then they measured the plumb line against those reference stars on each side of the mountain and found the deflection caused by the mountain's gravity. Maskelyne's team spent four months on the mountain in harsh conditions, at the end of which, they had a hearty celebration where a large quantity of local Scotch was consumed. The celebration got a bit out of hand and their lodgings burned to the ground.

To find the weight of the mountain, the experimenters first needed to know its precise shape. The surveyor Reuben Burrow was tasked with completing a detailed survey. Burrow battled the unpredictable weather of the Scottish Highlands, where mist, rain and heavy winds often hampered his progress.

Burrow hauled his scientific equipment up the mountain, often far from any track, to record the elevation at every point on the mountain. The task took him nearly three years.

The mathematician Charles Hutton was tasked with finding the weight and gravitational effect of the mountain. Using the survey data collected by Burrow, Hutton subdivided the mountain into a stack of lateral imaginary slices, so that the mass and gravitational pull of each slice could be calculated. This process of conceptually slicing the mountain was the first use of contour lines and was very successful for the purpose. Hutton's contour lines were later adopted by European mapmakers in the 19th century to depict elevation, supporting the development of railroads, mining and other infrastructure.



The **Schiehallion** experiment was very successful and yielded several results. It validated Newton's gravitational law, and gave us the weight of the earth to within 20% of today's estimates. The experiment also gave us a weight for the other planets, moons and the sun, as those weights were known only in proportion to the earth. It also demonstrated that the density of the earth is nearly twice that of the mountain, from which it was correctly deduced that the earth has a metal core.

Today, **Schiehallion** is a popular hiking spot and its trails are well maintained by the John Muir trust. It is considered to be one of the easiest **Munros** to climb, although it is very steep and rocky in places. The remains of the two observatories can still be found.

Brian Kennan



A Remarkable Encounter

Rambler
Aug 2022

The story of the plane crash on the upper slopes of [Djouce](#) is well known to Ramblers but got a new twist this year for Maureen and me. While dining in a restaurant in Brittany, we fell into conversation with a French couple at the next table. In answering the routine question of where we were from, the lady excitedly told us that her mother-in-law had survived a plane crash in Ireland as a young girl.

She was with a party of French Girl Guides in 1946, Mme Lacoïn told us. We were stunned to learn that we were hearing an almost personal account of the aeroplane crash on the upper slopes of [Djouce](#).

Chantal Lacoïn, or Chantal de Vitry D'Avaucourt as she was, was 21 and leading a group of Guides from all parts of France for an overseas Jamboree after the trauma of 6 years of war.

The French Airforce provided a plane, free of charge to transport the party to Ireland. The Ju52 was designed for 16 passengers, but all 21 Guides squeezed aboard, some sitting on the floor. There were also five crew. The plane was bound for Collinstown (Dublin Airport) in foul weather.

Nearing Dublin, the pilot had to cope with dense mist and strong gusting wind. Trying to find their position he descended to fly under the cloud to spot any landmarks. Suddenly, still in dense mist, he saw in front a darker shape and realised that they were on a collision course for a mountain.

They were lucky to crash onto the flattest slope of [Djouce](#). If the plane had been a few metres higher, it would have avoided the crash; but a few metres lower would have been fatal for all. As it was, while some suffered fractures, others escaped injury.

Despite the driving rain, wind and dense mist, it was decided that three would go north, by compass, in the supposed direction of Dublin. These were the Pilot and two Guides, one of whom was Chantal de Vitry.

They followed the Dargle downstream until they reached Powerscourt Waterfall.



Powerscourt Waterfall where they slid down in darkness and rain.

Below, they could see signs of habitation, but under the cliff. Scrambling and sliding down alongside the waterfall, they reached the safety of a house.

However the nearest telephone was a further mile away. Chantal and the

householder went from Deepark to Mount Maulin Hotel where she was able to raise the alarm. It had taken her five hours.

Meanwhile, the navigator and wireless operator had descended in the opposite, southerly direction mainly along Pipers Brook to reach Luggala Lodge some two hours after Chantal had raised the alarm. The engineer who had accompanied them got separated and wandered the mountain all night.

Oonagh Guinness set up a refuge and first aid station in Sheepbank Cottage, identified by a huge bonfire on the road outside.

Rescuers carried the less injured Guides "piggy-back" down the mountain and later with stretchers for the more seriously injured. The girls had been waiting, injured, twelve hours for help to arrive.

Despite their injuries, all twenty five returned to France. One of the last girls to return, still in plaster after many operations for multiple fractures on her legs, remarked that she spent three months in Ireland without putting her foot on the ground.

And what of Chantal, who first raised the alarm? Mme Lacoïn told us she was now 97 ("a year older than the Queen of England!") and still enjoying her daily game of Scrabble.

Pádraig McGrane



Curious locals check out the crashed plane

Car Security Diary: Annalecka on a beautiful Sunday, 21 Aug 2022 - Breda Roseingrave and Liu Ping

Rambler
Nov 2022



Liu Ping

Oh no, Grades 4 and 5 are already hiking as I arrive. Very silly. I enjoyed my drive and the view from Wild Sally Gap under the blue sky, the vast empty plain stretching beyond the horizon, no hills, trees, or cities beyond this point, only tall blades of grass rippling like waves in the morning winds. But now, I couldn't help but feel guilty. Breda had arrived on time. I will always check the schedule in future - a very important lesson for Ping. I introduce myself, receiving a wonderful warm welcome, and I apologise for thinking the trek only started at 11 o'clock.

We needed to keep the day interesting to avoid time passing too slowly. Stand and chat in the car park? Of course, not! The last time I did car security (Dec 2021) with my friend Mike, he walked me around the carpark. We did 18km that day. So Breda and I began to walk to the woodland behind us.

As we did, I noticed how wonderfully the breeze smelled, like ... sunshine, of wild grass, pinecones and rain. It was a lovely day. I even needed sunscreen for myself. Sensibly, Breda used a hat.

I told Breda my father-in-law, in his 80s - still a part-time farmer, would bring his collie to the hills three times a day to check on his sheep. He shared with me memories from the past; how his parents would ride in the carriage once a week to go grocery shopping; how, on Sunday mornings, his mother got the kids ready and out for Mass and how a young man once helped them out in the harvest season in exchange for a place to stay and a pack of cigarettes each week. Something like the 1910 Irish film - The Lad from Old Ireland.

Breda measures the distance with her memories, which is lovely and nice. She flashes back to when she was a child and remembers how a bike trader

would be on the street, much to the excitement of the kids. Children would bring glass jars to trade for his sweets. She remembers how peaceful Sunday streets were with no one working; how the ancient sweet pea flower in the front garden filled your lungs with the sweetest scent. Our twin shadows dance on the rippling grass as we did the U-turn to the car park. We still needed to keep an eye on the cars as we had promised.

We crossed the road and walked into a wonderland. Surprised, we find St Kevin's Way is there, marked by a great little yellow monk. I've never done the route. It might be good to try it sometime, but you'd need two cars I noted. I imagined my friend Kun would be a great companion as she has a car.

As my girls would say, I spied with my little eye, trying to find wild mushrooms in the wood. I told Breda, I had taken a mushroom foraging course as well as several other land and sea based foraging courses. It's remarkable how many plants, berries, mushrooms and shellfish we can gather in nature.

I discovered Breda speaks French beautifully. I can only admire her. She went back to college after retirement to finish her degree and study art. I hope, Breda, your holidays in France remain as treasured as your childhood memories.

We talked of historic Irish mansions like Castletown House, Derrynane House, Ardgillan Castle, Killruddery House and other charming locations I've been to but can't recall the names of. (The truth is I can't pronounce the names.) I told her I brought my girls to the National Gallery to see George Barret's Powerscourt Waterfall artwork. A week later I took them to Crone Woods to see the actual waterfall to inspire them

to appreciate the outdoors as much as possible. They enjoyed seeing it, but they disliked the distance on the way back, which they judged to be long.

Noontime, the air was sweet and gentle. The sky stretched high; an intense blue. The sun poured like warm liquid on my head and shoulders. From Annalecka Bridge carpark, I can view the hills rolling up and down, carved into fields and lined with ridges of hedging and trees. Time flies by so quickly.

We saw several hikers returning. Not long after, the G4s arrived back safely; then the Grade 5. Their spirits were high and they appeared to have enjoyed their walk in such a beautiful setting. Or this may have been due to the day's gentle sun, which shone so brightly that even the dust in the air seemed to make people smile. This was the first time I had met these different grades of Ramblers.

A wonderful day doing car security with Breda.

Liu Ping



Annalecka



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Snippets from Past Issues of The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

The [Lugnaquilla](#) Challenge Walk, 17 June 2023

**Rambler
Jul 2023**

A big thank you to everyone who helped to make this another memorable Lug Challenge.

The conditions were difficult with heavy rain showers, mist and almost zero visibility at times, none of which seemed to dampen

anyone's spirits.

It was great to be a part of our club's traditional hosting of the toughest challenge in the hiking calendar.

For the competitors, I know each and every one of them were

delighted to receive their certificate and commemorative Lug Challenge buff which were hard earned, well deserved and may be worn with pride.

**Tina Ennis, Niall Ennis,
Geraldine Cleary**

Lug Walk Saturday 17th June 2023

Volunteers

4:30 - 5:30	Start Seahan Forest	Brendan Treacy,	Tina Ennis
7:00 - 9:30	Sally Gap Crossroads	Aine Gaughan,	Sheila Moran
9:30 - 12:30	Mullaghcleevaun	Declan Murphy,	Peter Caulwell
10:00 - 12:30	Wicklow Gap Check Pt	Bob Nugent,	Gillian Dennehy
12:30 - 15:00	Wicklow Gap Check Pt	Margaret O'Sullivan,	Barbara Young, Carla O'Shaughnessy
12:00 - 15:00	Table Track Check Pt	Yvonne Cotter	Mairéad Esmonde
15:00 - 18:00	Table Track Check Pt	Kevin O'Loughlin	Catherine O'Loughlin
13:30 - 16:00	Lugnaquilla Check Pt	Máire Hurley	Marian Keogh
16:30 - 20:00	Lugnaquilla Check Pt	Simon Stewart	John Burke
14:00 - 17:00	Fenton's, Glen of Imaal CPt	Dominic Gallagher	Doreen Lynch
17:00 - 19:00	Fenton's, Glen of Imaal CPt	Anne Morrissey	Geraldine Cleary
19:00 - 21:00	Fenton's, Glen of Imaal CPt	Tina Ennis	Niall Ennis
05:30	Seahan Forest to Sally Gap Roll up	Mark Connolly	Ruth Murphy
09:30	Sally Gap to Wicklow Gap Roll up	Dorothy Byrne	Eilish Doody
15:00	Wicklow Gap to Glen of Imaal Roll up	Brian King	Laura O'Neill
	Luggage Drivers	Ger Barron	Enda Naughton
	Roll-Up Drivers	Dermot Magee	John Moroney
	Emergency Phone Contact	Bernadette McCarthy	



Tina Ennis



Niall Ennis

The Results of All the Effort

70 signed up, registered and ready to take on the challenge

21 cancelled before start for reasons including torrential rain at 03:00

1,000,000 million midges form a greeting party at Seahan

48 step across the start line at 05:00

First arrival at Sally Gap at a phenomenal time of 07:02

1 drop-out at a very wet, misty Sally Gap after a difficult [Kippure](#) crossing

47 came through Sally Gap and [Mullaghcleevaun](#) checkpoints

First arrival at Wicklow Gap at 10:06. (Checkpoint only just set up on schedule at 10:00.)

8 drop outs at Wicklow Gap

39 through to Table Track. First arrivals at 12:05. Scheduled checkpoint set up at 12:00.

39 reached [Lugnaquilla](#), - the first two before the scheduled 13:30 checkpoint was even set up.

First two arrivals at the finish point at Fentons at 13:56 (impressive sub 9 hour time)

All 39 finished by 21.45.



Geraldine Cleary



With my eightieth birthday coming up this year my sons asked what I would like to do to mark it. There was really only one thing; some years ago we had travelled to North Wales to climb the famous Crib Goch Ridge of Snowdonia and, while we did it, the weather was atrocious and visibility was nil.

So we set about planning another ascent. Finding a weekend we were all free and a clear weather window, we settled on the June bank holiday. Both my sons are experienced hikers so I left the planning to them. My eldest Luke does not get out too often these days with three kids and Philip is a member of the Wayfarers and Na Sléibhte Hillwalking Clubs.

June 4 - we got the early Dublin to Holyhead ferry and headed straight to Llanberis by 1pm; the only hitch was getting out of the ferry terminal in Holyhead; the joys of Brexit.

Over dinner we discussed plans and, as Monday had the better forecast, we decided to tackle Tryfan on Sunday and leave Crib Goch and Snowdon for Monday.

June 5 - Up first thing Sunday and straight out. We passed Pen y Pass youth hostel (start point for Snowdon) at 6:30am. It was already busy. On to Idwal Cottage, parked up, a quick breakfast and on the road at 7.00am.

It drizzled all day until the very last descent down the Devil's Kitchen, with limited visibility and near white-out on top. Luke led with map and compass, and Philip backed him up on GPS and phone. We walked a kilometre before we left the road and started climbing.

A friend had lent me a route printed in the eighties which described taking a sharp right at a distinctive tree before you start up the Milestone Buttress. It was maybe a bit foolish to look for the same tree 40 years later, so at a certain point

we just committed and started to scramble up Milestone Buttress.

As we learned later you never take the same route up Tryfan. We took our time and found a good route up, only having to backtrack once or twice. It really is a Grade-1 scramble. At times you just had to commit to the scramble to move forward. It was a good tough climb the whole way to the summit; very hard in parts. We kept an eye out for the famous Canon Stone but with the visibility as it was, we must have just passed it in the mist.

At last we reached the summit with the two large monoliths of Adam and Eve marking the top. While one nameless person was tempted to take the Leap of Faith from one to the other in order to gain the Freedom of Tryfan, as they were both covered in green moss it was decided it was not a good idea.

Devil's Kitchen gully
from Glyder Fawr



Adam and Eve
monoliths on Tryfan

We lunched on the col below Clydier Fach and had a good long break, meeting a few people for the first time that day.

We headed to Far South Peak and on down to Bwlch Tryfan. Bristly Ridge loomed before us. We wondered the day before if it was the best idea to try another Grade 1 scramble up Bristly Ridge but, as it turned out, Luke led the way and we were committed before it was even mentioned. It was slow going but we did it. Apparently there are several gullies up Bristly Ridge but, with the visibility as it was, we only saw the one in front of us.

At least the scrambling was behind us. We made good time on to Glyder Fach and Glyder Fawr and on up through a boulder-filled route to Glyder Fawr and down the Devil's Kitchen, a very steep gully descent on large rock steps which did nothing for my tired knees. Finally back to Ogwen cottage - wrecked.

It wasn't the longest day in distance but certainly one of the hardest I've done.

June 6 - we headed to Pen y Pass; quick breakfast at the car and started at 7:20. Slow going all day but got it done. It was a reasonably warm day, with only one or two showers but no visibility. Philip took the lead and started up the Pyg track to Crib Goch. At a certain point you cross the last stile with the ominous warning, 'Caution. Route to Crib Goch' and then the marker stone for Crib Goch.

At times we lost Philip in the mist but as Luke said, "when we couldn't see him we always knew the route ahead as, with his chest infection, we could hear him coughing through the mist."

Another tough scramble up before reaching the eastern summit of Crib Goch. A quick breather



Luke, Eamon and Philip

before attempting the knife edge ridge in front of us.

At least with visibility the way it was we couldn't see how far the valley floor was below us!

Up Llwybr Bwlch y Moch and up Crib Goch, on to Garnedd Ugain and on to Snowdon. We met four people on Crib Goch but the summit of Snowdon was packed. We took a good long lunch to recuperate. Again a choice was to be made here about which descent we would take. But very little was said, as the full Snowdon horseshoe was taken as the preferred route. We descended a bit and found the marker for the Watkin Path, a long arduous scree slope but with a reasonable track.

Again very few on this track, passing only one or two. We were very careful to find the turn off the Watkin Path and up to Y Lliwedd but thankfully by the time we descended that far the view opened up and we could see it clearly before us. On Y Lliwedd we even got a little view of the spectacular Crib Goch ridge across the valley. The final track down was a nice easy track at least. A long day but we did it!

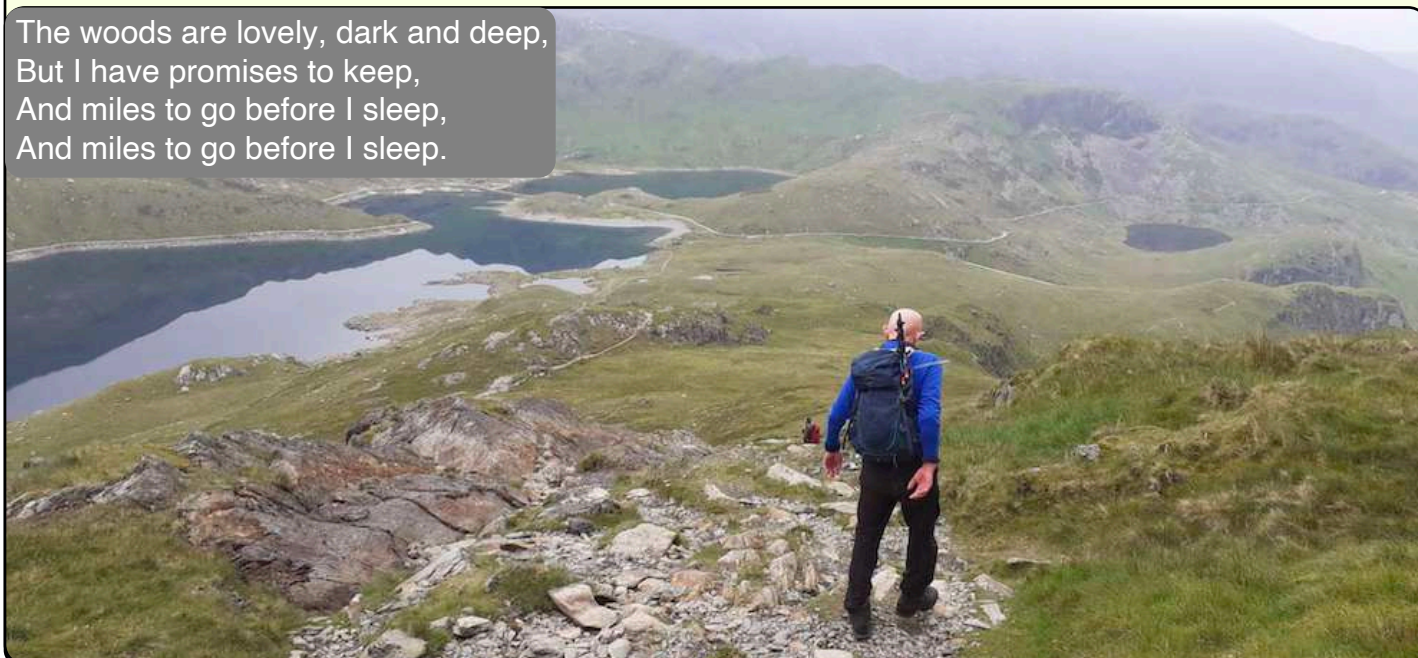
As we did this a few months before my actual birthday in the hope of getting a good day, who knows, if there's good weather in October, maybe we'll try again!

Eamon Walsh



On the Crib Goch Ridge

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.



Inaugural Hike of Younger Members Section

Elaine Dardis



Rambler
Dec 2022



Elaine Dardis

Our first Younger Member hike took place on 8th November, guided by Declan Murphy, from Kilgobbin Lane to Fairycastle and back via the Dublin Way.

We were joined by ten other Ramblers, mostly long time members, which was great to see. Even for some of them it was a new experience. Several had never been on a night hike.

It was a beautiful, clear night. Guided by the full moon we made our way, taking in the views over Dublin city and

coastline; taking in the sights and sounds of the mountains and surrounding landscapes; and the city twinkling below us.

It was a lovely way to spend an evening. Sure, what else would you be doing on an Autumn night!

It was a magical experience for everyone, enjoyed by all.

I'm now looking forward to the next one.

Restoring Luggala Estate

Rambler
Dec 2022

Brian Kennan



Michael Keegan and Alan Lauder taking questions

Conservation Cmte. Also there were Helen Lawless, Access and Conservation Officer for MI and about ten others from several hill-walking clubs.

I had heard many opinions on conservation in general and on our blanket bogs, but now I was with the experts and it was a great opportunity to get the facts ... and it was quite the education.

walkers from other clubs around the country. We were further treated to a talk from the creators of the Irish Peaks book, which has been updated and refreshed and will be released in mid-November for the Christmas market. The tale of late changes around [Mullaghanish](#) was truly extraordinary.

Rambler Simon Stewart spoke about how summiteering is aided by the two Mountain Views lists embodied in the book.

So what did I learn? Well, too much for a short article, but here's the top few items:

This October, Simon Stewart and I joined a fascinating tour of [Luggala Estate](#), hosted by Farm Manager Michael Keegan, who shared his insights and plans for Luggala.

We were joined by ecologist Alan Lauder, who is advising [Luggala's](#) new owner on environmental management and on a very ambitious and costly multi-year plan to improve habitats across the estate. Alan is chair of Mountaineering Ireland's Access &

A week or so later, some fellow-Ramblers told me they would have loved to have joined that tour and wished they'd known about it. It turns out that this tour was just one of the many walks and events open to attendees at MI's Autumn Gathering which took place over the weekend of Oct 7th.

New surface-protecting growth on Barnacullian, following restoration work by MI, Ramblers and others - all bare outside the fence.



View of Lough Tay and Pier Gates from Fancy Mountain

The gathering, my first, was hosted by Wayfarers hiking club as part of their 50th anniversary celebrations. All members of MI were invited to join the schedule of talks, workshops, choice of hikes, climbing lessons, and finally for dinner in the Glenview Hotel, all for a reasonable fee. It was an action-packed weekend and a great opportunity to learn and to meet fellow

1. Invasive Plants and Animals: As beautiful as [Luggala](#) is, the environmentalists would see it as being in very poor condition compared to how it should be. Invasive plants (rhododendron and bracken) and animal species (sika deer) have displaced native Irish biodiversity and the blanket bog is in serious decline. It will take decades of careful effort and significant investment by its new owner to restore the natural environment and biodiversity.

2. Poor Blanket Bog Condition:

Wicklow's blanket bogs need a lot of repair. Ireland holds 8% of the world's blanket bog, however much is in very poor condition. A healthy blanket bog is very wet with an abundance of sphagnum moss, acting as a carbon capture mechanism. **Luggala**'s blanket bog is too dry. It has been artificially drained, and is releasing its carbon into the air through oxidation and to rivers through drainage run-off, significantly reducing water quality and biodiversity.

3. Deer Overpopulation:

The Sika deer, a non-native invasive species, is overpopulating the estate by more than a factor of ten over what is sustainable. Deer have a very detrimental effect on the landscape by their grazing style, damaging the bog and selectively damaging young plants and therefore the biodiversity of native plants and animals.

Strimmed heather areas on Knocknacloghoge



4. Belted Galloway Cattle:

As a countermeasure, the very distinctive belted Galloway cattle are being used to crush the dense bracken and heather areas to let more light in so that other things can grow there and restore some

biodiversity. Their grazing area is controlled without any wire fences using only GPS pendants around their necks that emit a noise deterrent as they near the virtual fence. It's a more natural way to restrict the spread of bracken without wire fencing or chemicals and to restore a more diverse habitat over time.

5. Heather Strimming & Grouse:

Also, those strimmed patches of heather you've likely seen on the side of **Knocknacloghoge** and elsewhere are intended to support the return of grouse and other native wild birds and plants. The impact on biodiversity of these shorter areas of heather is already noticeable. In time, other areas of heather on this hillside will be cut back in similar interleaved patterns so that over the decades biodiversity on these hills will improve gradually.

6. Sitka Spruce to Irish Oak:

While there is some native oak on the estate, the non-native Sitka Spruce covers significant areas, again displacing native species of plants and animals. To address this, the acorns from the native Irish oak will be used to repopulate forest areas within the estate

and beyond. These areas will need to be fenced for upwards of 10 years in order to protect them from the deer. Once they are well established, the fencing will be removed.

7. Impact of Hill Walkers:

As walkers, our impact on the bog becomes significant over time, damaging vegetation, leaving the peat soil vulnerable to washing away in heavy rain. These paths then become routes for water run-off, washing away more peat and creating erosion channels as at the Lough Brays and some tracks to **Djouce**. To minimise our impact, we should keep within existing pathlines where possible, even if wet and mucky, and avoid widening paths through the bog.

Access to **Luggala**:

The estate is open to walkers who adhere to **Luggala**'s code of conduct.



However, there are sometimes weekday closures due to activities at the estate. The team at **Luggala** has set up a Twitter account where notice of any closures is posted - **@luggalaaccess**.

While there isn't a need to get permission in advance, it's best to email **info@luggala.com** ahead of any hikes as a courtesy. **Luggala** has been employing Engagement Rangers who are stationed inside the Pier Gates at weekends, to provide advice and to encourage responsible enjoyment of the estate. Some people have assumed this was a security presence, whereas in fact they're there to welcome you!

Overall it was an excellent weekend of activities, well organised and hosted by M.I. and the Wayfarers. I'll be watching the Mountain Log for news of the next gathering, which will likely be held in the Spring.

Brian Kennan



Alan Lauder measures peat depth while Dawson Stelfox and Helen Lawless ask questions



Corriebracks showing impact of walkers on bog exposure.

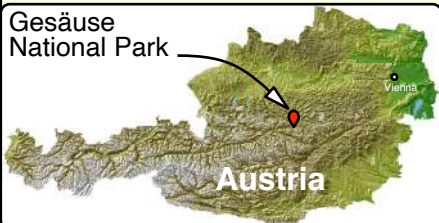
A Dramatic Hut to Hut Trip in Austria

Rambler
Dec 2022

Tricia
Boyle



Mon, 1st August: I flew to Vienna with a fellow Rambler and joined Herbert and friends in time for dinner at the Hansy restaurant. We were all fired up for a week's hiking hut to hut in the Gesäuse National Park where



the rugged peaks rise gloriously to the skies. The name Gesäuse refers to the sound of the rushing, gushing water flowing from the mountains, filling rivers and streams.

2 Aug: We met Herbert early at the station to travel to Admont, where



we'd begin our trek. The journey should have been easy but track maintenance delayed us for three hours. I heard no complaints as we were looked after by our leader and had the enviable courtesy of the information offices in Austria dealing with transport and route planning.

3 Aug: We had visited this picturesque town with its famous library and monastery in 2017. This year we stayed in a very comfortable little hotel, Hotel Die Traube, with good food. Unfortunately everyone was kept awake during the night by the regular tolling of monastery bells. It was time to head for the hills and the quiet of the peaks. So we set off for our first hut just after 8am.

Our ascent to the Admonter Hütte took four and a half hours; very pleasant except for the heat.

Oh boy! This is different I thought to myself! More later!

I found a bench in the shade at the back of the hut while the others got rooms and picked their beds. I chatted up a few hikers, sitting at the

only table in the shade, who were about to leave, having set out at five or six that morning.

We enjoyed a very good lunch with three types of soup causing great amusement to some of our group. Having recovered from the heat and the hunger we took a short hike to the Admonter Warte. After dinner that evening a great game of Scrabble was enjoyed by all.

4 Aug: We set off shortly after 8am and began our descent through a wonderful meadow before winding our way down a steep and shaded wooded area reaching a forest trail after two and a half hours. We found fountains in the mountains to refill our water supplies. After a short break to replenish tummies, three of our group took a shorter route down towards St Gallen. The remaining hikers moved up slowly to ascend the Grosses Maierleck (1764m).

We made it despite the burning heat and enjoyed a panoramic view from the top before our descent to Gasthof Hensle in St Gallen. Both descents that day were very steep, demanding close attention. Our final stage brought us through a beautiful canyon before reaching the village.



Our day had extended from seven hours to almost ten but who can move with agility in this heat!!

Wonderful food was served that evening on the outdoor terrace and conversation was good as always. Off to bed - no scrabble that night .

Disaster Strikes

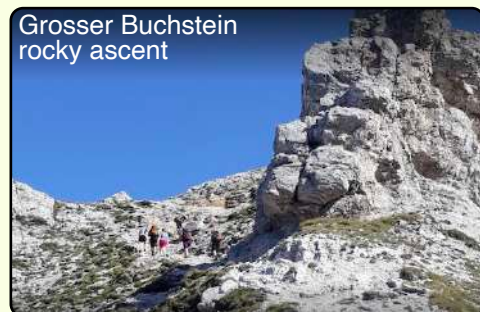
5 Aug: Austrians start early but we mortals needed breakfast and packed lunch. So our thoughtful leader arranged a mini-bus to the start, avoiding a road walk.

Herbert issued instructions that we

pace ourselves, stop often for water and not photos. We were heading for our next hut, the Buchsteinhaus.



We strolled in the forest with easy chatter before beginning the ascent to Grosser Buchstein (2224m). The way was steep and hot. Nearing the summit, we struggled on a stoney track with no shade whatsoever.

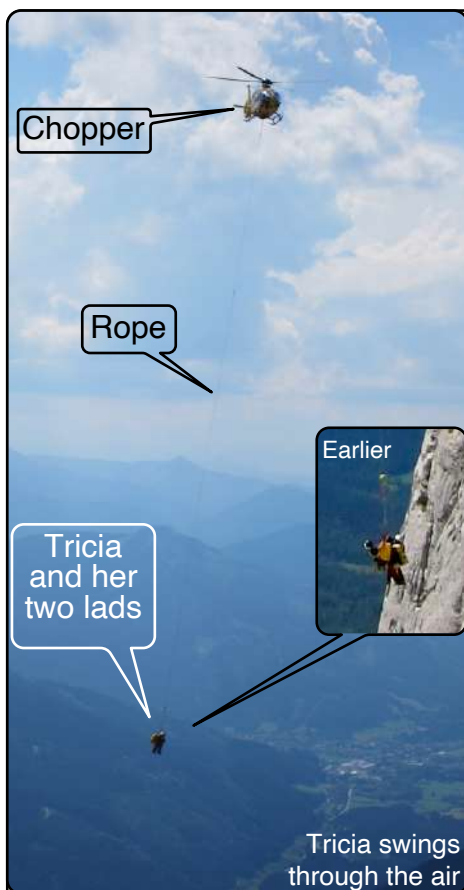


I say 'we' but in truth I was finding this uncomfortably tiring. I realised I was walking stooped. Then, I simply collapsed and know no more until I came to sometime later, to the relief of my fellow hikers and found myself lying on rock, burning in the hot sun.

My friends gave me water, told me I had been unconscious and rescue services were called. I lay there protected from sun by my group and two handsome Dutch lads whom I didn't get to see at all.

I heard the throb of a helicopter but to my grief it passed by. I urged the main group to continue as they were in the sun and still had a distance to go. Shortly after, the helicopter returned and dropped two paramedics. I got immediate attention and a line was inserted for hydration.

Soon after, dangling from a long rope, a large carabiner holding me on a stretcher, a paramedic each side of me, I enjoyed my last views of the rocky peaks, the tops of the trees; then just blue sky until I was gently lowered on to a meadow.



Tricia swings through the air

My immediate observation was the number of uniformed rescuers awaiting my arrival. I was quickly whisked onto another stretcher and up and away again to a local hospital. I had asked that they drop me at the Buchstein hut but wisdom prevailed.

One night in hospital, receiving lots of check-ups and hydration and excellent care. I was discharged the following day around midday.

I received texts from my group and Herbert who were concerned for me. I was concerned they should reach their hut safely after I caused them such a delay. I heard later of a very special hut and good food.

6 Aug: I went to Johnsbach and got accommodation and excellent food in the lovely Kölbwirt guesthouse overlooking forest and meadow and right beside a track to the Hessshütte. Temperature dropped a lot when the group descended from Buchsteinhaus, enjoying a picnic area and fountain en route. They had a 100m descent which they had ascended the previous day and then a 1,000m ascent to the Ennstaler hut on another long day. The Ennstaler hut disappointed with poor facilities, when the standard is normally so good and after a long hike.

7 Aug: After breakfast, still feeling weak, I set off and slowly weaved my way again up through shady trees and meadows and then tracks up and up, 946m to the Hessshütte. My only challenge this time was a herd of alpine cows and calves who pursued me for a time.

Meanwhile my friends were having fun 'on their best day so far' ... my synopsis! They began with a 1,000m descent pausing for food and water at Gstatterboden - a flat meadow-like area. They walked by the Enns river to the Kummer bridge leading to the waterfall track.

This was an arduous 1,000m climb. They were challenged not only with rain but a steep and slippery climb using wet steel ladders and ropes, leaving all miserable and tired.

It was then I found them. I decided

wining and dining and reliving all the adventures and fun of the week.

8 Aug; Monday brought more rain and we waited until afternoon before venturing out for a short hike to take in the surrounding peaks and enjoy the last vistas of the wonderful Gesäuse region before descending on Tuesday **9 Aug** to our guesthouse in Johnsbach. Once again we enjoyed excellent comfort and culinary fare. Some of us had hiked here in 2017 on our first visit to Gesäuse National Park. Right beside our guesthouse, 'Gasthof zum Donner' was a little church and cemetery dedicated to mountain climbers.

We strolled through the cemetery trying to locate the tombstone of Herbert's great uncle. Wednesday morning **10 Aug** we travelled back to Vienna by train. We had one more



earlier to go down the valley from the Hess hut to surprise them and anxious to rejoin the party. I had positioned myself behind a tree, wondering should I venture further down when I heard the clickety clack of hiking sticks. I looked down and saw Herbert leading a wet slow-moving group of Celts ascending towards me. What joy! I arrived at just the right moment to surprise them. If they were glad to see me on my feet again, I was delighted to rejoin them and accompany them to the hut after an arduous 20km hike in not the most pleasant conditions.

We enjoyed two nights in the wonderful Hess hut with the most considerate host Poldi and excellent food and accommodation. The evening was spent with refreshed walkers

evening before the group broke up with various departure times.

It is three months since our return but the memories of great Austrian peaks and verdant valleys, the good company and fun of my fourth trip to this hiking wonderland, will remain in my heart forever. I am grateful for the companionship and support of my fellow hikers and also to Herbert, a mighty organiser and leader.

Tricia Boyle



An Interim Report on the Mountain Panthers

Rambler
May 2023

Herbert
Herzmann



The Mountain Panthers' first hike took place on 6 Sep 2022 in atrocious conditions making drowned rats of the Panthers. We were six who finished a shortened hike; one wisely turning back before rain became torrential.



Mountain Panthers inaugural hike, Sep 2022, before the deluge Photo: Harry Gibbons

Since then we have had a good many hikes, some in super conditions. The numbers of participants have mostly been in the middle to sometimes high single figures.

There is now a hard core of eight Ramblers including myself. Two live near Harold's Cross, three in the country and three on the North Side. As the Northsiders find it very difficult to comply with the early start at 9am on weekdays (the M50 mostly grinding to a halt from 8 to 9am), most of our hikes took place on Saturdays. As the three Northsiders are the most loyal Panthers I will keep the hikes on Saturdays in the future.



I would like the number of our followers to increase. We have had a few appearances from Ramblers who normally hike at G3 and G2 levels and I hope to see them again in the future.

There are many who say that they will come out with the Mountain Panthers as it appears to be such a good idea to start early and do G3+ and G2 hikes at a slower pace, but in spite of all their declared intentions they have not appeared. There is still time to join us!

The next hikes are scheduled for 29 April, 13 May, 3 June and 15 July. After that the Panthers' leader will be in the Dolomites, in the Austrian Alps and in his native city Vienna until the end of September. In October 2023 the Panthers hope to prowl the hills again, maybe in increased numbers.

A final reminder of the 3 principles on which Mountain Panthers was formed:

- (1) early start,
- (2) slower pace (an easy G3),
- (3) finding and trying routes that are not often walked.

So, if you like the idea of longer and interesting routes at a relaxed pace:

Do not be shy - Be brave and try

Herbert Herzmann

Seán Quinn

Selected Writing

Seán
Quinn



Memories of Mountains

Joyful are the feet of Ramblers, as we explore, enjoy and help to protect our beautiful countryside, our uplands and lowlands. We commune with nature, face to face. In body and soul, we benefit greatly as we enjoy our wonderful recreational activity.

Rambler
Feb 2023

Ramblers have wonderful memories of mountains they have climbed. These are a few of mine:

Enjoying the summit of LUG, with my dad, when I was a young boy ...

On BRANDON PEAK, when "wearing its cap" of white clouds, and I was standing above the white clouds, as if in paradise ...

CROAGH PATRICK, on garland Sunday, the wonderful traditional Irish event ...

Rights of Way

Rambler
Nov 2021

Since earliest times, Rights of Way have been controversial and challenging. Internationally, they may lead to border problems and hostilities. Berlin Wall and Hadrian's Wall come to mind.

Within national territories, countries decide rights of way issues by legislation or by their courts.

In rural areas, traditional tracks and trails for walkers may exist, e.g., St. Kevin's Way. Where such traditions have ended, the tracks become blocked or taken over by adjacent land owners. Walkers should use and enjoy such tracks, as often as possible, with clubs adopting local priceless trails.

Ramblers need rights of way to pursue their recreational activity. We succeeded in securing several rights of way, but our main success was the introduction of greenways in many areas. Most developed countries allow reasonable and responsible access to the countryside. Ireland is an exception, although our Supreme Court has advised that such access for walkers would not infringe land owners' rights. At least, there is a new and welcome recognition now of the value of countryside greenways, e.g., the availing of disused railway lines by local communities.

In urban areas, a right of way, in a particular place, may be of immense value. Some years ago, I met an Irish developer when attending a conference in London. He had bought a site, which when built on, would block a most convenient way to the sea and

local amenities. At my request, he generously agreed to provide a right of way, which is now used daily by many, many people, who, unaware of what happened, just take this wonderful amenity for granted.

National Parks

Rambler
Sep 2022

National Parks are popular because of their beautiful scenery - mountains, lakes and valleys. There is much more to explore and enjoy, as I discovered visiting the English Lake District. Wordsworth's "golden daffodils... fluttering and dancing in the breeze", may be seen and enjoyed.

Visiting the homes where famous people lived, like Wordsworth's Dove Cottage and Beatrix Potter's Hill Top, is most interesting. That most famous children's author, Beatrix loved open spaces and helped to secure access to the country side for the benefit and enjoyment of all. She bought up lots of land and gave it to the National Trust. She is credited with preserving much of the land that now constitutes the Lake District National Park.

Seán Quinn



Mountaineering Ireland has joined with Wicklow Mountains National Park and their conservation programme to help restore natural vegetation and prevent further loss of peat to the fragile eco-systems between Stoney Top and Barnacullian in the Wicklow Mountains. This is the first large-scale project of its type to be trialled in Ireland.

As a member of MI, I heard about the project and volunteered to help on a recent Thursday in April. Our leader for the day was Conservation Ranger Hugh McLindon who has responsibility for this land area.

Other volunteers and I met at Turlough Hill car park. After a brief introduction we headed down the western side of the Wicklow Gap, to enter the forest road network west of Tonelagee. The forest road is drivable with a car and there is parking in the forest, to which we carpooled. After a hike of 40mins over rough terrain we reached the top.

already see the advantage of the water level that was comfortable and safe. The workday was from 10am at Turlough Hill carpark to 3pm finish at Barnacullian. The work was managed by affable Hugh who was attentive and wanted everyone to work at a pace to suit themselves. Lunch was enjoyed together with lots of swapping of hiking adventures from home and abroad. We are a big 'tribe', us hillwalkers, from all walks of life.



One of the 15 wooden dams made on site

The other teams spent the day spreading harvested heather cuttings, 'brash' as it's called, with a pitchfork. The brash was gathered from Paddock Hill.



Spreading brash with a pitchfork

This brash acts as a seed source and its rough cuttings offer protection to growing plants. Spreading will continue until all the 'builders bags' have been emptied. This must be completed in time to spread a nursery crop of specially formulated grasses along with fertiliser, which will help soil stability and germination of heather seed. Our teams spread 14 bags, as we developed a method of spreading to suit the strength of individuals.

It was an enjoyable day despite working on rough and boggy ground. It was important to take it easy and work at a

The work continues on Thursdays into the summer until complete. There may be other dates in May and June.

Please contact Mountaineering Ireland on caoilainn@mountaineering.ie if interested. Please mention the club and my name so we can show we as members of the Irish Ramblers Club, are supportive of the peatland conservation project.

Note: Old gear is recommended, as you will get dirty on the bog!

Louise Nolan Grade 3+

(**Duncan Stewart of Ecoeye states a living bog can sequester 35 times as much CO2 as a living forest of trees can for a given area. - Editor)



Hiking to work at Barnacullian

Hugh McLindon is passionate about the restoration of peatland and the sequestering of carbon. The restored bog will store more carbon than trees into the future**. He explained the need to regenerate vegetation, made up mostly of heather, and to restore the blanket bog's water retention capacity by damming gullies. This reduces water runoff that washes peat away and ensures the water table is restored to its natural level. This re-wetting of the habitat allows mosses - particularly sphagnum species - to recolonise which in turn reinvigorates the carbon sequestration process and ensures overall soil stability. Lesson over!

As we neared the area Hugh spoke of the day's work schedule. There were two teams: one team worked moving untreated timber to build wooden dams into naturally formed gullies. Hugh had mapped out the gullies and one could



Water held back in just a few hours



An array of water holding dams to reduce water and peat loss



Preparation (the interesting part)

People have often asked me "How do you lead a hike"? I tell them.

- Get your name in The Rambler.
- Turn up on the hike morning.
- Tell the assembled hikers your name and that you are their leader today.
- Say "Follow me" and then turn and walk away.

Everybody will follow you, like the Pied Piper! As long as you return them to their cars, after 4 or 5 hours, they'll be very happy!

Yes! I'm joking.

But, that's more or less what happens every hike day.

The majority of walkers don't know, or want to know, about all the preparation that the leader must make for a hike to be successful!

But, they do understand there is a lot of preparation done for them to have a safe day on the hills.

So! What is this preparation?

1 Get your name in The Rambler

Go to one of the hike co-ordinators and volunteer to lead a hike. You can offer to lead a hike in your favourite area if you wish.

If you think you need lots of time to prepare, you can ask for that time. The co-ordinator will be delighted to accommodate you.

You might also get a friend to help. That way, the work load is halved.

I recommend that, to begin, you lead a hike at a grade lower than that at which you normally walk. The hike will then be shorter and easier for you and you will be the fittest person in the group. This can be a help, if you have to go back to check on someone.

2 Get a Mentor

Don't try to re-invent the wheel! There are many people in the club, who will be delighted to help you. We even have MENTORS, who have volunteered to take you out on the hills for the recce and show you everything you need to know.

3. The Route

There are dozens of routes in Wicklow. Pick the easiest one! If the hike coordinator wants you to do a route, which you think is too difficult, you can say "No! I don't think I have enough experience", and suggest another one!

You could also ask a MENTOR for advice. The MENTOR may be able to give you a variation, which will be easier to do.

[Editor: Or use mountainviews.ie]

4 Navigation Ah! The "N" word.

If you already know how to navigate, you are excused from reading the rest of this section. If you don't, then your biggest concern is:

GETTING LOST!

According to the Oxford English Dictionary the word "lost" means: "unable to find one's way; not knowing one's whereabouts"

This is something that very rarely happens and, having done a recce, will not happen to you! You may find yourself **misplaced**! This usually happens, when enjoying yourself and you've not been paying attention.

Anytime this happens to me, I just tell the group that I've missed the turn and I then backtrack to find it.

Ramblers are understanding, and don't expect leaders to be perfect always.

Finding your way on the hills is similar to finding your way around the area in which you live. Oh! I can hear people chuckling. But, think about it.

If you need to go to a part of Dublin, with which you are not familiar, you will consult a map. It's the same on the hills, which is why every walker should know how to use a map and compass.

When you leave your home to go to the local shops you do it without even thinking about it. You don't bring a map and compass. You go out the gate turn right and shortly you arrive at the shop.

You didn't always have this knowledge! There was a time when you either had to find your way (recce), or you asked someone for directions (mentor).

On the street a mentor would have said, "Take the next left and the second right"

In Crone car park a mentor would say:

"Go through the gate at the top of the car park, follow the Wicklow Way posts until the point where you go through a wall and the waymark points downhill. At this point you turn right for Maulin".

Yes! It takes a bit longer, but the technique is the same. Most of the time on the hills you don't need to check a map because, after 2 or 3 recces, you know the way. It's just like going to the shop.

To assist in remembering the route, it is essential to have a route card.

5 The Route Card (see Page 8)

The route card allows you to make a note of anything you think will let you complete the hike safely.

- Distance/Time between Waypoints
(where you change direction).

You leave the car park, knowing that in 20 minutes at Waypoint 1, you must turn right to another track. If, after 20 minutes you haven't reached the track, there are two things to consider:

- you may have walked past it, or - the group may be slow.

- Drum-up location

Pick somewhere to stop for drum-up around lunchtime. It does not have to be precisely at 1pm!

- Places and things of interest.

Not necessary but, if there is anything you know about it will be appreciated.

The route card is personal. You are the one making it. So, you can note every twist, turn and bush on the route, if you think you need to!

If you think that, two weeks after the recce, you may have difficulty recognising a particular Waypoint, you can take 2 or 3 photos with your phone, as a reminder!

You can also print and put them into your route card.

Remember, it doesn't matter what you put in your route card, as long as you can understand it!

Hike Day (the terrifying part)

The day arrives! You're nervous! Of course you are. There would be something wrong with you if you were not. Even after leading dozens of hikes, I still feel a bit nervous.

But, remember what I said at the very beginning, the group just wants to have a walk. They cannot do this without a leader (you).

They all appreciate the fact, that you have given your time and energy, to lead them. Quite a few of the group may be familiar with the route, having walked it before. These people, can be a useful source of information.

You will usually have your mentor to assist you, but if you don't, you could quietly ask one of the group, who knows the route, to assist you.

So! You better get the hike moving!

- Have a look around. If there are a few people still putting on their boots, you might as well wait.

- Check and make sure everyone is properly equipped.

- Gather the group around you. You have to give **The Talk!** A whistle is useful to get their attention.

- If you find this part difficult, rehearse it at home in front of a mirror! Practice makes perfect.

What will you say?

(A) My name is....., I am your LEADER today.

(B) The hike is as it appears in the Rambler!

(C) Can I have a volunteer for Rear Leader. (This applies even if you have a co-leader. If you are sharing the job, there is no point having one of you at the back).

(D) Introduce the rear leader by name, so all know who it is.

(E) Tell them nobody should leave the hike without informing either you or the rear leader.

(F) The rule is nobody goes in front of the LEADER. This allows the leader to control the pace!

I always relax this rule. I tell them they can go in front of me but, if they do, they must keep an eye on me, not me on them!

(G) The weather for today is

(H) We will all now go through the left (or right) side of this gate and the rear leader will count you.

You then set off at a pace which is a little bit slower than normal for the grade. This allows you to collect your thoughts and gives muscles a chance to warm up.

If the start is very exposed, hikers may need an immediate comfort stop. If several want to stop, it's better to walk on a bit before stopping. This will keep the group together and lets them know that YOU are LEADER and YOU will decide what happens on YOUR hike.

When the group reassembles, walk on at the usual pace for the grade.

How do I know the usual pace for the group, as some hikers will be stronger than others?

Look back and observe the group.

(A) If they are still together as a group, pace is probably ok.

(B) If they seem on top of each other, pace is probably too slow.

(C) If they're strung out, so the rear leader is up to 100 metres behind you, then the pace is too fast for the hikers at the back.

Base your pace on the hikers at the back. If the pace suits them, the hike will stay together for the whole day. If too fast, the hike will stop continuously to wait for those at the back.

Using the Route Card

Your route card has information on:

Waypoints: Location, Distance and Time between them.

Make a note of how they look. It only has to make sense to you. Use photos, kept in sequence on phone or print and put them in your route card.

Streams: Notes on where to cross.

Height Gained: Estimate from a map.

Drum-Up should always be beside a stream, with a beautiful vista and plenty of sunshine, of course! The reality is often very different!

You choose the site for drum-up when you are doing your recce.

Pick a place where people can sit

down and, if possible, after initial climbing has been done.

Time it between 1:00 pm and 1:30 pm. People will be hungry, having had breakfast at 9:00 am or earlier.

After Drum-up When you want drum-up to finish, SHOUT "5 minutes".

If necessary, this is a good time to change rear leader.

After drum-up, organise a split.

A MALE leader should take the men forward & wait for the women to catch up, before moving off.

A FEMALE leader should tell the men to go forward and wait.

When the group reassembles, pause for a minute, to allow people to sort themselves out (e.g. putting on / taking off jackets).

When starting after drum-up, consider slowing the pace, to let people warm up. Do a head count.

The second half of the hike, should be handled the same as the first, watching the pace, checking-off waypoints on your route card, etc.

Towards the end of the day, people are getting tired so, if crossing rough ground, the pace should be slower.

Shortly before finishing the hike, do a head count.

And then, you're at the cars!

The day is over sooner than you thought. Take any plaudits you get! You've earned them.

When can I do this again please?

Martin Dermody



Martin Dermody
Rambler
Training Officer



We are many classes of walker, we Ramblers, from strollers who take our time, look for butterflies and flowers, frogs and fungi, to fading but still serious hillwalkers who make an effort and recall old achievements, to surging masters of the hills who stride out in heroic determination. There is yet one more class of walker - those known, oddly, as 'Compleaters' (*sic*).

Compleaters are a disciplined lot. They follow a list of a category of mountain, generally counted in the hundreds and tick them off as *Completed* to the bitter end.

This requires organisation and planning to make the many required journeys in an optimum pattern so as to *bag*, if possible, several on the one trip rather than an inefficient one per trip.

Recently I was invited by one of our assiduous *Compleaters*, Margaret O'Sullivan to join her assault on the Faha Ridge of the Dingle Peninsula. She was seeking to *bag* two peaks of the list of Vandeleur-Lynams, Irish peaks over 600m, of 15m prominence.

Such prominence may seem trivial, but they are over 600m high, often starting from near enough sea level. Many are in remote and rugged areas. They are not at all trivial. In total, they are 275, an enormous number if you think of the effort to *bag* them all.

So, on 3 July, we headed to Dingle for the fine summer weather, to enable the feat and admire the spectacular views. That proved a forlorn hope and the best view of the three days was on the way to Dingle that evening when a wonderful sunset was seen.



Photo: John Burke

Sunset across
Tralee Bay

The day of the hike barely dawned on a dark, dreich day of low cloud, wind and rain. We drove to the Faha Grotto above Cloghane and ruminated while we searched the skyline where the Faha Ridge ought to be, as the rain flittered and splattered and gusty-slapped against the car.

Wise counsel about the dangers of

such a ridge on slippery wet rocks prevailed. We retreated and spent the day in gentle strolling around Clogher Head and Cé Dhún Chaoin.

We passed the evening in one of the many restaurants to be found in the tacky, tacky, paddy whackery of Dingle (not Daingean Uí Chúais, nor even An Daingean. Mustn't upset the tourists!)

Weather prospects looked better for the morning when we'd tackle the Ridge again. Back we went to Cloghane, four stalwart souls - Margaret, Simon Stewart, Vera Kelly and myself.

Cloud still clung to the Ridge but the way up was clear. We traversed the gentle and grassy slope to the heights.

I went ahead, eager to see what could be so big a deal. The grassy slope led to a top that seemed to be an end. Where was the Ridge, I mused?

Then, I nearly died!

At the end of the grass was a Peruvian scene of steep, rocky mayhem, down to a narrow track between precipitous drops, up through impassable, rocky overhangs to a fearsome craggy lump, barely discernable, looming in cloud.

Surely we're not?

The others arrived. I waited to hear it was worse than expected and we'd go home.

Then, Margaret intoned:

" Oh, isn't that wonderful ! "

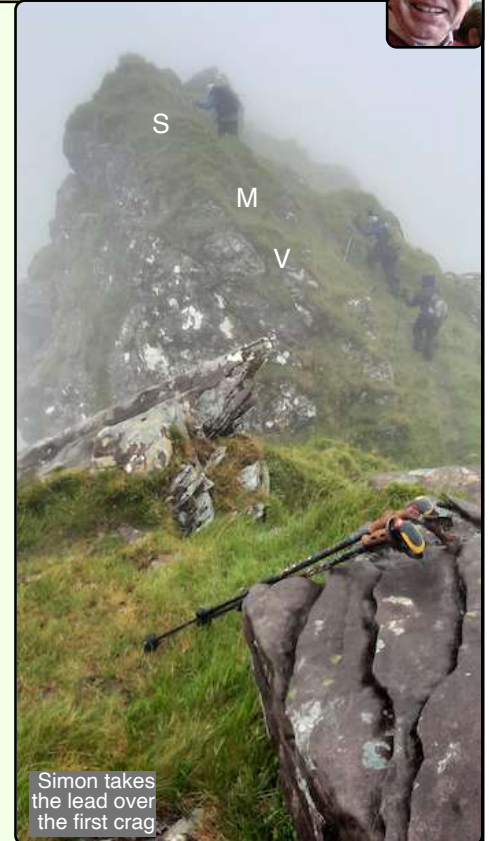
They forged on, leaving me in their wake. I clambered down, crushing rock with the force of my grip. Making the top ahead I saw a repeat down and up again to another



The Ridge looms into
view through the cloud



Once more unto the
breach, dear friends,
once more ...



Simon takes
the lead over
the first crag

crag, and another, each more desperate than the last.

Then we were there - Beann Fhaiche Peak of the Grassy Place (Benagh).

But it was only the first of the two VLs. Yet farther we went into the murky gloom as the wind rose and rain fell.

Briefly the cloud thinned revealing the full gravity of our position.

At last, after a death-defying traverse of the entire demonic locus, we reached our final goal, Na Point.

Margaret stood on the top, the light of achievement and delight shining in her face; two more bagged. Time to relish the victory and not think of the eight more yet to do. Now, 267 are done.

But our travails were not yet over.

We now had to repeat the route in reverse. Seeing it from a new perspective and in further clearing skies, the dangers we faced were even more stark.

The wind seemed to take umbrage at our audacity in crossing its lofty realm yet again. It rose even more as it sought to swat us from its domain.

But, with dogged perseverance and bolstered by our success, we held our feet and, at last, gained the placid

The Twilight Zone - A Tale of the Unexpected

Rambler
Nov 2021

John
Burke

The day dawned dismal, dull and damp as we set out on reccie. Yet a good forecast and a traffic free Sunday drive to Knickeen, augured success.

We set out for Sugarloaf on familiar forest roads - hardly worth a reccie. After 18 minutes "Keep Out" and "Firing in Progress" signs stopped us at a closed gate.

A rifle barked, sharp and scary. Rooks cawed hoarsely from treetops, watching, expectant.

A map check revealed a Plan B, an unknown forest ride to Logar, bypassing Sugarloaf. Well, that's what a reccie is for. The ride was rough and steep but do-able.

At a rock my boot bumped a hefty dark cylinder, half buried. The Imaal Range was close by. Could it be a live shell?

A mental image of explosion lent speed to our legs. We noted the grid reference to report.

Two frights ! Omens?

Grey cloud, heavy and low, enveloped the hillside. The valley filled with the bellowing roars and screeching chirps, the agony and the ecstasy of rutting stags and rutted does, like the spirits of the air, the Banshee, the Púca, the jealousy of Fionn, the scream of Gráinne at the death of Diarmuid.

We trembled in the mythic scene but forged ahead.

Logar-Lobawn-Cavanagh's Gap were uneventful. The traverse to Table was wretched. Brian plunged to his waist in a boghole. He sucked his way out.

Another omen?

We located the Air Crash site; a poignant remnant of tragedy.

We sat, reflective, for drum-up.

Stony Road took us to Oiltiagh Bridge where my water bottle fell from inside the zipped up rucksack. Odd! How?

Forest dryads? Evil nymphs?

Uneasy, I retrieved the bottle.

Back at the car, Brian, tongue thick with thirst, couldn't find his water bottle. "Damn. Must have fallen out in the boghole!"

Two more omens?

Home safely, I called the Army and reported the object.

Bomb Disposal scrambled with haste. I waited for news, pleased we may have averted a tragedy in Imaal.

The report from Bomb Disposal came quickly. Our directions were good. An armoured half-track ATV brought them rapidly to the forest ride. Even the ATV balked at that. On foot, fitness and youth took the squad and heavy gear quickly up the difficult, steep terrain.

The Army messaged a photo.



Army: "Is this what you found, John?"

John: "That's it!"

Army: "All safe and sound, so. Thanks for the info, John. We appreciate calls like this."



A second photo is sent by the Army.

J: "Uh, ooh. Is that a plastic bottle?"

J: "Hold on. My reccie partner lost his bottle. He was ahead of me."

A: "Well if that's his bottle, it will be in the Range Information Centre [near Fenton's] for him to collect."

J: "I've sent him the photo and asked if it's his bottle."

A: "Good. At least if it's his, some good has come of it."

J: "He says it's his alright. A strange way to find your lost bottle - get the Army to fetch it. Thanks a million."

A: "No problem at all, John. Gave us a nice walk to warm us up. Have a good hike."

John Burke

A Vandeleur-Lynam Quest (Cont.)

surroundings of the gentle grassy approach slope and shortly passed the Grotto to the car. The Compleater had another two in the bag, safely under her belt.

My terror is, by now, largely forgotten and only great memories and sense of excitement remain.

John Burke



No sign of Simon on the crag before Na Poirt.



The traverse to a large crag blocking access to Na Poirt



Two more in the bag



Sheila Powell

Joe O'Flaherty

Rose Leonard

Liam Johnston

Margaret O'Connor

Rose Walsh

Brendan Burke

Tom Milligan

Harry Gibbons

Mountain Panthers
Jan 2023
Photo: Herbert Herzmann



Bernie O'Callaghan

Colm Carberry

Car Security Fun
Wicklow Gap Jan 23



Ping Liu

Michael Neary

Tim Mc Kenra

Robert Garrett

Brian Casey

Kun Chen Donagh

The stately G1s
Feb 2023



Simon Stewart

Declan Murphy President

Simon Stewart, founder of Mountain Views receives the President's Award for his outstanding contribution to hillwalking, AGM 2023



Irene Connolly died accidentally Oct 2022



John Gaughan died Feb 2023



Jessica Lennon died Feb 2023



Eileen O'Connor (Doyle) died Apr 2023



Hazel Doyle died Sep 2023



Michael O'Neill died Sep 2023



Paddy Kavanagh died Oct 2023



Ann Harvey died Oct 2023

A Tribute to Michael O'Neill - died 30 Sep '23

Adam
Grennan



**Rambler
Nov 2023**

'Wait now, what's that forest doing over there?', I said.



'What bearing do you have?', asked Michael.

Examining the map, we found that, incredibly, both of us were 180° out. To paraphrase Oscar Wilde, 'to lose one walker, Mr. Worthing, may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness.'

Years later I overheard

Michael, while extolling the benefits of a map and compass over an App, claiming that the only time he ever went astray was on a bright sunny Sunday morning when he had lots to chat about. There's no doubt but Michael was indeed a great conversationalist. He also had a razor-sharp mind, quick wit and eclectic interests. Those chats of ours oscillated back and forth across many subjects. History was his all-time favourite and, as a mutual friend commented recently, 'his opinion was always worth listening to'.

Michael graduated from UCD in 1975. He spent most of his career as a senior partner in PwC until retiring in 2012.

After retirement, in his own generous way, he quietly joined several not-for-profits, charities and community-based organisations – including 3 years as *Ramblers Treasurer*. Many benefited from the financial expertise and acumen he brought to bear.

His love of hill walking stretched out over many decades and mountain tops. I was privileged to walk with him over much of that time. When our children were very young, the two of us would often be found traipsing through the ferns on the Wicklow hills early on a Sunday morning. At 8 am, the car would be tucked in on some side road, our boots laced up and we'd be off. Ever the family man, Michael would always insist on being back home by lunchtime to spend time with Joan, his two daughters and son.

Michael introduced me to many novel routes, always encouraging me to explore different paths. And, when I retired four years ago, it was he who encouraged me to join the Ramblers as he had done some years earlier.



Michael O'Neill leads the G3+ on Moanbane on 15 Jul 2021
Photo: John Burke

When lockdown came and the hills were outside our limit, it was Michael who said our streets and parks would be our walking world.

Michael was a natural leader in all things and became one of the most prolific leaders of hikes in the Club, not only in Wicklow but also on frequent trips to the Mournes and the West of Ireland.



Michael O'Neill leads the G3+ past Binnion tors on 20 Jan 2022
Photo: Brian Kennan

As noted, for Michael and me, walking and talking were inseparable. A topic we often returned to was sailing. While he loved walking, he would never, ever, miss an opportunity to sail. In the 70s we both learned to sail with Glenans, a French/Irish sail training organisation. When he bought his first boat, it marked a deepening of a mutual passion for the sea. I was lucky to race with Michael for many years around the cans in Dublin Bay and later, cruise to Scotland, Iceland and Norway.

I will always remember Michael, the family man, the consummate professional, the guy whose opinion I valued most, and a treasured friend with a twinkle in his eye to the last.

Motor Neurone Disease is a dreadful struggle for anyone unfortunate enough to suffer from it. The ordinary things, the things we all take for granted, become a relentless trial. And yet, while Michael's body faltered, his spirit never did. Just a

few days before he died, Simon Stewart, Brian Kennan, Michael Guilfoyle, John Burke and I, enjoyed, what turned out to be, a last stroll with Michael around Carysfort Park where, despite having lost the power of speech, we could see that he was still smiling, still enjoying the craic, still sharing his light with us all.



Michael's last walk with us, 26 Sep '23

Michael passed away peacefully at home on Saturday, 30th September with his wife Joan and his three children, Anna, Sarah and Eoin, by his side.

To quote from *Benedictus: A Book of Blessings*, by John O'Donoghue:

May there be a beautiful welcome for you
In the home you are going to.
You are not going somewhere strange,
Merely back to the home you never left.
And may your soul smile
In the embrace of your Anam Cara.

Rest in peace Michael. Thank you for all you did for us and all you meant to us.

Adam Grennan





Can I Tell You a Story

In 1958 I had my first continental holiday. As a CIE clerical officer I had free travel concessions on boat and train throughout Europe. I visited Paris, Lourdes, San Sebastian and ended up at the World Cycling Championships in Rheims. I had cycle raced for a number of years.

I decided to do the same in 1958 with the Championships due to take place adjacent to Amsterdam. I would first holiday in Germany. At that time war recovering Germany was inexpensive to visit and had a great network of excellent youth hostels.

To prepare for this holiday I thought it would be a good idea to try to learn German. So with my brother Paddy and pal Brendan deHora we enrolled for language classes at the Irish German Society (IGS) in St. Killian's German School in Leeson Park.

We discovered there was a very active hiking group attached to the IGS, with hikes every Sunday, hostelling week-

ends from time to time and a lovely social scene. I even ended up doing German Folk dancing in Lederhosen and learning German walking songs. I made some great lifelong friends and even met my future wife there.

I walked with Die Wandergruppe for a number of years and led walks and weekends, even a trip to climb Snowden and weekends in the Lake District. Happy days.

But then the German Government decided to open the Goethe Institute in Dublin, which would offer German language classes, promote German culture, etc. Funding was withdrawn from the IGS, which promptly folded. It was rumoured Germany was not too happy a lot of the older supporters of the Society had been Nazi sympathisers, no longer in favour in the new Germany.

And the walking group? We just kept walking and did so for about two years.

The group actually grew in strength as friends and colleagues got interested. We continued to meet every Sunday

morning outside the Irish Press office on Burgh Quay. We were the club with no name.

We often ended a Sunday hike with tea in Mrs. Butler's Tearooms in the Scalp, a favorite tea stop for clubs. We often had a slide show after tea or even a dance before getting our bus back to the city centre. Nobody had cars then.

Anyway, after one such walk as we sat around a lovely fire after tea, the subject of where we wanted to go as a walking group of friends, came up. After a chat I believe I suggested we formally set up a proper club, with officers, policy and a Constitution. I had the experience of setting up a cycling club and affiliating to a national body.

Agreement was unanimous and we very pretentiously named it The Irish Ramblers Club.

So you see - there is an unbroken lineage for the Irish Ramblers Club which goes back at least 80 years.

Seán Fox

A Foggy Day in Dublin Town

Rambler Apr 2023

I'm sure older folk will remember the putrid obnoxious very unhealthy smog suffered from time to time by Dubliners and caused by the burning of coal in thousands of homes. It was not nice.

In my Leaving Cert year at St Vincents CBS in Glasnevin I was, even then, a keen hill walker. So one Sunday morning I met up with a group of pals, from NC Rd/Cabra and Santry/Whitehall areas, in the city centre to take the 44 bus from Hawkins Street to Enniskerry.

From Enniskerry we set out along the road into Glencree Valley. We ascended Maulin.

We walked across onto the Tonduffs. Then to the Military Road and, by Lough Bray, up to the Mast on Kippure. From Kippure we picked

up one of the turf cutters' gravel roads and descended to the Featherbed. We headed for Rockbrook to take a bus back to the city centre. Throughout the day the weather had been excellent, with sunshine and blue skies.

Descending the Featherbed road you reach a point on an early winter evening where you should see the lights of the city. But where were they? We could not see them. We crossed from Kilakee towards Pine Forest, to Rockbrook. But there was no bus waiting.

Nothing for it but to continue to Yellow House, Rathfarnham to pick up the 16 bus. This would have been good for the Santry/Whitehall lads. We learned the problem was a peasouper smog enveloping the city, which had brought all traffic to a standstill. Buses had stopped running as had taxis and all other traffic. You literally could hardly see in front of your outstretched hands.

Already pretty knackered we just had to continue walking, through Terenure and Harolds Cross, by Christ Church and to O'Connell Street. We were living in hope the smog might dissipate and bus services would recommence. Our hopes were in vain. Nothing for it but to continue walking homewards.

The original Dublin tram tracks were being removed at that time. They were

stacked along North Frederick Street. I vividly remember almost pulling myself up the hill using the tram rails.

And I still had to make my way through Phibsboro to my home. I have never been so wrecked in my life.

There is a kind of funny ending to this story. During my time in St. Vincents I resolutely refused to participate in hurling or Gaelic football at the school. I have literally never played on a team in any code throughout my life. On the Thursday prior to our "epic" walk I was stopped in my tracks by Bro. Farrell, the sports master for the School. "Fox" he said "you're a tall lad with long legs and you look fit. I need a lad like you to represent the school in the Long Jump at the Leinster Colleges Championships in Croke Parks. See me after classes on Monday for a tryout"

On Monday morning I had monumental blisters on both my feet so that I could hardly walk. Every muscle pained. But because of the imminent Leaving Cert. exams I felt I needed to drag myself into school on my bike. Of course a trial for the long jump was out of the question. Up to the time I finished at St. Vincents I was convinced Bro. Farrell thought I had deliberately wrecked myself to avoid the trials.

Seán Fox



Seán Fox
age 17,
c. 1953



How long does it take before a member decides to lead a hike? From the club statistics it appears that a majority of members do not make that decision and I often wonder why.

I know when I joined the club, I was always in awe of the hike leader. They sounded very knowledgeable, seemed to know exactly where they were going and were able to have a good bit of banter thrown in for good measure. In essence they exuded all the competencies needed for leading a hill walk, the importance of preparation, communication and adaptability.

Each leader I have met has their own unique style for the pre walk briefing: from *"What kind of eejits would come out on a day like today."*

to *"Come over here now, have you got your maps and if not WHY NOT."* or *"Let's all look at the planned route in detail."*

They know the importance of preparation - having thoroughly researched the route. They have a knack of assessing the physical abilities of participants. *"Where do you think you're going in that outfit and without your water?"*

Sure can't we all do that? We only become full members after completing a recognised mountain skills course. So of course we are all familiar with terminology such as: compass bearing, compass housing, magnetic north and bezel. If by any chance these are now a distant memory, the Club has a national treasure in our Training Officer Martin Dermody who regularly brings together those interested in knowing what is involved in leading a hike. He covers all the basics and more :

Planning the hike: How to plan and what to consider.

Managing the group: Tell them what they can and cannot do.

Navigation: The easy bit! Martin says it is like going to the local shops!

Since joining the club in 2015, I spent many happy hours following Hike Leaders and marvelling at their skills, content to follow and definitely not daring to lead. That changed when the wonderful Mary Conlon took over the Coordination of the Saturday Grade 3 Group early in 2022. On her first walk as Coordinator she said "Marie, I must put you in to lead a walk. Will you let me know what date you will do?"

So, there it was; my challenge, and something I never thought I would have the knowledge, skills or competence to take on. So I had a choice. Would I say YES - or chicken out? Readers, I was secretly thrilled to be asked! In all honesty it is unlikely that I would ever have put my hand up had I not been challenged. Was I nervous? - definitely. However, I learned that the Club is teeming with members who are only too willing to help and support. Having disclosed my limited hiking prowess to anyone who would listen I was inundated with route suggestions and offers to do reccies and I said "Yes, thank you" to all offers. I led a hike for the first time in 2022 and thoroughly enjoyed both the help and support I received and the experience itself.

So a few thoughts and tips from my vast inexperience to date:

- Don't wait to be asked - it might not happen although I think the club should ask every member directly if

they would lead a walk!!

- Put the information we all gained on the mountain skills into use as often as possible. Read the map before the walk and after. It gets easier!

- If you put your hand up to lead, start gently. Try a

safe and well known route unless you are already a mountain skills whiz. Do a reccie twice if you need to before the big day. It will increase your confidence!

- Ask another Rambler to be there with you for that first time. Believe me, there are so many who have your back in this club

- Enjoy the experience and then do it again and again and again.

What I do know is the Club would definitely benefit from having more members to volunteer and lead hikes. I know it is not something everyone would be comfortable doing but I am convinced there are many new and even more long-standing members who could take up the challenge:

So: **Would you dare to lead?**

You will find, as I did, that the offers to support a new leader will come pouring in or just make contact with our fantastic Training Officer.

On another note, I was injured recently and unable to do the reccie for a planned hike. My dear husband was volunteered (by me) at the last moment and ended up inadvertently leading his first Rambler hike - again with the help of many. We were just 30 mins in when he realized he had left his phone with the route on it in the car. Leaving us to retrace his steps, he told us to keep going and he would catch us at a later way point!! He later pointed out that such flexibility is an important skill as a leader, and that navigating challenges safely and the ability to think on one's feet are hallmarks of effective leadership on the trail.

So can I suggest that whether you are relatively new or here a long time, do think about the support you would need to lead a hike and then say YES!! You can be empowered to lead on the hills and help create more leaders. Or can you encourage someone you walk with to take up the mantle?

Just remember the excellent advice printed in every Rambler and especially the part that says "At all times, stay within visual contact of the leader".

Marie Faughey



Bernard and Marie Faughey



Jessica Lennon

Jessica Lennon, who died in February of this year, joined the Ramblers in 1988.

Originally from San Antonio in Texas, she came to live in Ireland with her husband. She was a committed walker and enjoyed meeting fellow Ramblers on the various hikes. She was employed by Minch Norton, Athy and was in charge of their lab there. She has one daughter, Megan and two grand daughters who all live in Monaghan.

For the past 20 years Ron Baker and Jessica were very happily married (as can be seen from the poem he wrote to her). Not a cross word was ever spoken.

They shared their love of music; Jessica playing the flute and recorder and Ron playing several instruments. Lively sessions frequently took place in their home with musicians improvising and participating in enjoyable perform-

ances. Jessica and Ron also played many times at Rambler events in the Wicklow Heather.

For many years it was their custom to lead the Whiskey Hike in Glendalough. At lunch time Ron provided the whiskey and Jessica produced her delicious home made Christmas cake. She was also noted for her lemon cake and pumpkin pie.

The couple had a holiday home in Spain where in later years they spent half the year benefitting from the warmer climate and getting to know many other residents. In Spain they belonged to an English folk club where they played the music for their Morris dancers.

Illness came to Jessica in 2018 and limited her to walks in the parks. She died peacefully in the loving care of her family on 2 February. As can be seen from all the Ramblers who attended her funeral, Jessica is greatly missed by all her Rambler friends.

Kathleen Forde

Kathleen Forde



Rambler
Apr 2023



As I listen to the bird song
on this bright summer's morn
I think about the time gone by;
oh, how the years have flown.
I remember well the time we met
upon a Wicklow Hill,
And it is with gladness in my heart
I see you still.
With joy we hiked the pathways
amidst the tall fir trees.
Along the shore of the upper lake,
felt the cooling breeze.
But that was in the summertime,
a long, long time ago.
Autumn season came, the leaves
they changed from green
to many shades of brown and gold;
a lovely varied sheen.
Life, unlike the seasons, for most
takes many, many years.
Some are filled with laughter;
some with bitter tears.
Cherish all the good times,
allow the bad to fade away.
Look out for the sunrise
on a bright new summer's day.

Ron Baker

The following is a list of Ramblers who died during the sixth decade as maintained by Ron Baker. It may not be complete but it's what's known about. If new information is available, please let Ron know.

Oct 2013 - Sep 2014

Eileen Turner

Oct 2014 - Sep 2015

Eithne Carr
Ed Johnston
Adolf Knopfell
Betty de Hora
Kitty Murphy
Dolores Fetherstone
Pauline Morris
Tommy Taylor

Oct 2015 - Sep 2016

Michael Quinn
Geraldine Fitzpatrick
Kevin Touhy
Sean Lowry
Vincent Clarke
Dolores McGilligan

Oct 2016 - Sep 2017

Vincent McLoughlin
Joe Kelly
Liz Diskin
Mary O'Neill
Helen Delahunty
Peggy Quinn
Terry Deegan
Roseanna Glynn
Damien Rochford

Oct 2017 - Sep 2018

Tony Dixon
Frances Donoghue
Christy Stenson
Frank Hamill
Mabel Corry
Joe Parker

Oct 2018 - Sep 2019

Michael Twomey
Joe Cahill
Pat Carthy
Brian Canton
Marie McEwan
Maire Pearson
Martin Moore

Oct 2019 - Sep 2020

Paddy Whelan
Una Ryan
Helena Burling

Oct 2020 - Sep 2021

Maurice Flanagan
Deirdre Moran
Peadar O'Riordan
Aideen McGlynn
Max O'Neill
Betty Kelleher

Oct 2021 - Sep 2022

Angela Murphy
Irene O'Farrelly
Patrick Pierce
Paula O'Regan
Hugh McNally
Paul Wills

Oct 2022 - Sep 2023

Irene Connolly
John Gaughan
Jessica Lennon
Eileen O'Connor
Sheila Birkett
Eddie Pender
Hazel Doyle
Michael O'Neill

Oct 2023 -

Eileen Houlihan
Paddy Kavanagh
Ann Harvey
Pauline Murray
Ciaran Diskin

Publications in The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

2014

Jan	Anonymous	The Remembrance Wood - an Update
Feb	Seán O'Grady	Irish Ramblers Club Conservation Policy
Mar	Anonymous Geraldine Cleary Seán O'Grady Anonymous	Irish Ramblers Club wins MountainsViews.ie Award On New Year Glen of Aherlow trip Environmental Good Practice Guide for Walkers Guidelines for Passive Car Security Volunteers
Apr	Kevin O'Loughlin	Car Security Incidents at Trooperstown
May	Jack Morrissey Various Enid Hughes	Obituary of Eileen Turner Feedback on 50th Celebratory Trip to Killarney May Contain Traces of Nuts
Jun	Tom Milligan	Ramblers Art O'Neill Walk
Jul	Nollaig O'Ceallaigh	Club Lug Challenge June 2014
Aug	William Murphy	E-mail Viruses
Sep	Michael O'Neill Derek Tracy Vincent Murphy	The Remembrance Wood - an Update Irish Ramblers Club Data Protection Policy On Tyrol trip, with Jim Forde
Oct	Seán O'Grady	On First Flora Field Day
Nov	Kathleen Forde David Vipond Ron Baker	On Austria trip, with John Shackleton Changing the Club Constitution Remembrance Sunday 2014
Dec	Brid O'Higgins Tom Milligan	On 51st AGM of Irish Ramblers Club A (Typical???) day in the Life of Tom Milligan



Sean Quinn
Founder President
of The Ramblers

2015

Jan	Anonymous Niall Ennis Pádraig McGrane	On Whiskey Hike Dinner 2014 New Training Programme The Horse in the Hole Hike
Feb	Sheena Duffy	On New Year trip in Yeats Country, with Catherine O'Loughlin
Mar	Bob Nugent Anonymous	Am I Walking in the Right Grade for Me Mountain Meitheal
Apr	Terry Leonard Vincent O'Hagan Anonymous David Vipond	An Taisce National Spring Clean Access to the Countryside, Rights of Way and the Common Good The Remembrance Wood - an Update Archiving our Club Records
Sep	Gerry Brady, Tommy Ellis Finola McDonald	Obituary of Tommy Taylor Ramblers New Website
Oct	Gerry Maguire	On Glover Challenge Walk
Nov	Anonymous Terry Leonard	On Sligo trip, with Fergus Roche Mountaineering Ireland Autumn Gathering hosted by IRC
Dec	Fergus Roche Anonymous Gráinne McLaughlin	Mindfulness on the Mountains On Clifden trip, with Michael Delahunty Relocation Strategies



Ping Liu at
work on
Remembrance
Wood

2016

Jan	Anne Geoghegan	On Whiskey Hike Dinner 2015
Mar	Terry Leonard Vincent O'Hagan Kathleen Forde	Hike Start Times Survey Results Obituary to Seán Lowry Tochar Phádraig 2015
Apr	Anonymous	The Remembrance Wood - an Update
Jul	Bob Nugent	Car Pooling
Aug	Martin O'Shea Joe O'Flaherty	Sharing Dars on Club Hikes On Austria trip, with Herbert Herzmann
Sep	John Burke	Car Sharing
Oct	Jack Morrissey Terry Leonard Colm Butler Pam Forde	Obituary of Vincent Clarke On Glencoaghan Horseshoe trip, with Patrick Pierce On Ruhpolding, Bavaria trip, with John Shackleton Shetland Islands Wildlife
Nov	Terry Leonard	MI Regional Consultation Meetings
Dec	Anonymous	Footnotes 50th Anniversary



Peter Buckley
G6 Coordinator
and Serial Trip
Organiser

2017

Jan	Patrick Gray Michael Cosgrave	Using the Ramblers Website4 The Late Late Speech
Feb	Eileen Murphy	All you ever wanted to know about Phenology
Mar	Liam O'Brien Pat McGorrian, Fergus Roche	Bull Island and St Anne's Park; the story so far Walking is the Simplest of Exercises and perhaps the Healthiest
Apr	Derek Tracy Kathleen Forde	Wicklow to Bray - a 6-hour Camino-like hike Visit to Freemason's Hall
May	Herbert Herzmann	An Austrian Compliment to Irish Hiking Clubs
Jun	Eileen Murphy	On Butterflies
Jul	Anonymous Eileen Murphy	On Refurbishment of Art O'Neill Plaque, May 2017 Car Pooling and serious congestion in Tibradden

Publications in The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

2017

Aug	Kathleen Forde	Car Pooling for the Environment
Sep	Geraldine Cleary	On Lug Challenge, Jun 2017
Oct	Kathleen Forde	On Dolomites trip, with John Shackleton
Nov	Anne Dwan Siobhán Purcell	On Dingle trip, with Deirdre Stuart On Austria trip, with Herbert Herzmann
Dec	John Sweetman Seamus Moriarty	Obituary of Tony Dixon On Mournes trip, with Mary Conlon

2018

Jan	Bob Nugent Eileen Murphy Anonymous	On Whiskey Hike Dinner Plant Hunt Invitation Transfer of Club Archive to Dublin City Library
May	Frances Leahy John Burke Tom Milligan	Bullaun Stones Car Pooling WhatsApp groups Triple Lug Walk 1999
Jun	Eileen Murphy	Meadowsweet
Jul	Eileen Murphy Helen Donoghue Colm Butler Vincent Trainer (Mourne Ramblers)	Bog Asphodel What's happening in MI these days On Mallorca trip with Jerry MacDonough and Eadaoin O'Shea On Mournes trip
Aug	Aidan O'Connell Kathleen Forde Eileen Murphy	On Dolomites trip with Louis O'Donoghue On Badhofgastein, Austria trip with Jim Forde Devil's Bit Scabious
Sep	Eileen Murphy	Spindle Bush
Oct	T.C. Eadaoin O'Shea Frances Leahy Eileen Murphy	Obituary of Christy Stenson On Campitella di Fassa trip with John Shackleton Knicken Ogham Stone Autumn gorse Irish furze
Nov	Siobhán Purcell Frances Leahy Eileen Murphy	On Austria trip, with Herbert Herzmann What does WD on Maps mean? Irish oak
Dec	Bob Nugent Colm Butler Eileen Murphy	On MI Autumn Gathering On G3 Curragh trip with Bob Nugent Mistletoe



Dan Lynch Co-convenor of Meet and Greet with Agnes Leonard

2019

Jan	Colm Butler Seamus Moriarty Vincent O'Hagan Eileen Murphy	On Whiskey Hike Dinner On Mournes trip, with Mary Conlon Mining in Glendalough - a timeline from WMNP Moss
Feb	Patrick Gray Eileen Murphy Bob Nugent Frances Leahy Gerry Brady, Eamon Power	How to make online ETF payments to The Ramblers Lesser Celendine A Trip to the Gobbins The Twelve Graves of Glenmalure Obituary to Michael Twomey
Mar	Eileen Murphy	Soil
Apr	Eileen Murphy Frances Leahy	Wild Garlic Baravore New Crusher Building Glenmalure
May	Eileen Murphy Gráinne McLaughlin	Rhododendrons Hillwalking Committee, MI
Jun	Eileen Murphy Anonymous Colm Butler Frances Leahy Tom Milligan	Elder Ticks Glenbarrow, Sliabh Blooms, day trip The Military Road (Page here) The Hart Walk
Jul	Eileen Murphy Cath. O'Loughlin Bernie Stanley Gráinne McLaughlin	Bilberry On Mallorca trip with Jerry MacDonough and Eadaoin O'Shea On 1969 Rhineland trip with Jim Forde New Waymarked Trail - Glendasan to Glenmalure Valleys
Aug	Eileen Murphy	Blackberry, Bramble, Briar
Sep	Frances Leahy Eileen Murphy Gráinne McLaughlin	Glenmalure Youth Hostel Eyes and Ears for the Environment Hillwalking Development Officer, MI
Oct	Eileen Murphy	Hazel
Nov	Eileen Murphy Frances Leahy Tom Milligan	Blackthorn, Sloe Gossan Stones Wayfarers 50th Anniversary Art O'Neill Challenge
Dec	Eileen Murphy Frances Leahy	Deck the Halls The Cooley Mountains



President Anne Morrissey conquers Beinn Narnain a Munro of Scotland



Simon Stewart Rambler, founder and leader of Mountain Views (mountainviews.ie)

Publications in The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

2020

Jan	Eileen Murphy Frances Leahy David O'Connor Mtn Hackett, Siobhán Purcell Helen Donoghue	Heather On Nerja trip with John & Helen Shackleton On Enniscrone, Co Sligo trip On Austria trip, with Herbert Herzmann MI Access & Conservation - good new from Luggala
Feb	Eileen Murphy Anonymous Seán Fox	Rush Footnotes - Past and Present Obituary of Brendan deHóra
Mar	Eileen Murphy Frances Leahy Patrick Gray	Sitka Spruce - that everyone thinks they must hate Seefin and Seefingan OKMap - a User Issue
Apr	Paul Caffrey Eileen Murphy	Covid 19 - Hiking Cancellation Scots Pine
May	Eileen Murphy Kathleen Forde Frances Leahy Brian Gilsenan Colm Butler	Herbs for Health And the World Kept Turning Bread and Butter Stone A Walk on the Tame Side C-19
Jun	Eileen Murphy MountainViews, Tom Condon Frances Leahy Colm Butler	Rose Sharpen Skills for return to the Hills Gougane Barra and Beara-Breifni Way C-19
Jul	Paul Caffrey Eileen Murphy Frances Leahy Colm Butler	Covid 19 - Hiking Resumption Ragwort Lough Ouler and Standing Stone C-19
Aug	Eileen Murphy	Grasslands
Sep	Eileen Murphy Frances Leahy	Autumn Foraging Turlough Hill Power Station
Oct	Paul Caffrey Eileen Murphy	Covid 19 - Interim Hikes Whitethorn, Maybush, Quickthorn, Bread and Cheese
Nov	Paul Caffrey Eileen Murphy Brian Gilsenan Frances Leahy Anne Geoghegan Colm Harrington	Covid 19 - Hiking Cancellation Halloween - Witches, Plants for Good and Evil Nearly Put to the Sword Fitzwilliam's Seat and Prince William's Seat - Confusion? Dublin Mountains Way Obituary of Maurice Flanagan
Dec	Eileen Murphy Patrick Gray Frances Leahy Jill Suttie	Ivy Bridge Solver in Chrome Hellfire Club Five Ways Hiking is Good for You



Brian Kennan,
Rambler and Chair
of Hillwalking
Committee of
Mountaineering
Ireland



Gillian Dennehy
New Members
Secretary

2021

Jan	Paul Caffrey Anne Geoghegan Eileen Murphy Helen Donoghue	Covid 19 - "2020 Vision" A Year Like no Other Yew MI Access and Conservation
Feb	Eileen Murphy Frances Leahy Seán Quinn Donal McMahon	Strawberry Tree Bohernabreena Reservoir and Glensmole Valley We All Benefit from Beauty, Royal Drumree The Uphill Struggle of Life, Rhyme and No Reason
Mar	Michael Cosgrave Eileen Murphy Frances Leahy Dan Lynch Kathleen Forde Peadar O'Riordan	Obituary of Peadar O'Riordan Clover Achill: Slievemore and the Deserted Village Obituary of Deirdre Moran Textile Therapy Hill Fever
Apr	Terry Leonard MtnViews, Chr Schaffalitsky Michael Cosgrave	ViewRanger takeover by Outdooractive Walking During Lockdown Archives - St Patrick's Weekend in Donegal
May	Teresa Redmond Tom Milligan Seán Quinn Committee	A Memorable Hike - Carrauntoohill Recording a Route for MountainViews National Walking Trails - the Beginning Protocol for IRC Holidays 2021
Jun	Declan Murphy Kathleen Forde Robert Garrett Ping Liu Declan Murphy	Covid 19 - Hiking Resumption A Memorable Hike - Tochar Phádraig A Terrible Story of Kilmashoge A Beautiful May Day Corrane / Cnoc an Chorráin, Achill
Jul	Frances Leahy Anne McEleney	Kippure Mountain and Mast Climate Change and the Peat Bogs
Aug	Anne McEleney Brendan Ward, Aidan Punch Anne Geoghegan	Rewetting Bog at Liffey Head The Bangor Trail Admiral William Brown, Foxford, Co. Mayo
Sep	Betty White, Sheila Powell Frances Leahy Patrick Gray	What did you do last Sunday? Glencullen, Daniel O'Connell, Fraughan Sunday Where on Earth are we?



Elaine Dardis,
organiser of
Ramblers Youth
group, the
Below 5-Os

Publications in The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

2021

Sep	Adam Grennan Kay O'Neill Kathleen Forde John Burke	Maumtrasna and its Tragic Injustice Beneath the Lakes of Blessington The Snows of Kilimanjaro A Curiosity for Solving by Clever Ramblers
Oct	Declan Murphy Anne McEleney Tom Milligan Milo Kane Patrick Gray John Burke	Replacement for Gráinne McLaughlin on Board of MI The All-Ireland Pollination Plan, 2021 - 2025 An Eclectic Correspondence When the Yanks Came Rambling GPX Library Update A Curiosity for Solving by Clever Ramblers - Solution
Nov	Anne McEleney Seán Quinn The Irish Times Dan Lynch Patrick Gray Kathleen Forde John Burke Brian Kennan Muhammad Ali	Ballycrov Visitor Centre and Claggan Mountain Trail Rights of Way Platform and Shoes (with Louis and Maryrose) The Footnotes - Then and Now Notes on Outdooractive, Tracks and Routes and Irfanview Nephin Beg Wilderness The Twilight Zone - A Warning on Hiking at Glen of Imaal The Ballad of Knickeen A Stream of Consciousness
Dec	Kevin O'Loughlin Seán Quinn Patrick Gray Adam Grennan	Walking with Herbert and Ursula in the Vienna Woods Terrific Trips GPS/GPX Notes A Bit of a Ramble



Paul Caffrey
former
President of
The Ramblers

2022

Jan	Patrick Gray Brian Kennan Frances Leahy Anne McEleney Sheena Duffy Tom Milligan Various John Burke	GPS/GPX Notes G2 Thursday Hikes Mourne Wall, Silent Valley Reservoir and Smugglers Trees and the Wild Garden Review of Travel Adventures 1950 - 2018 by Herbert Herzmann Diary Correspondence on Access to Luggala - the Effect of Courtesy A Strange Phenomenon - the Brocken Spectre
Feb	Simon Stewart Declan Murphy Patrick Gray Martin Dermody Anne McEleney Ruth Murphy Robert Garrett Peter Buckley	Completion of the Arderins - the Background President's Notes - on Completion of the Arderins GPS/GPX Notes I'm Furious About the New OSI Sheet 56 EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 A Note on Foraging - Sloe Gin The Ascent of Lugnaquilla by the Apterix - Episode 1/4 Hardy Soles Graduate to Grade 6
Mar	John Burke Brian McArdle OSI Christopher Clayton Anne McEleney Patrick Gray Brendan Ward Robert Garrett	A Note on MountainViews.ie Clarification of Martin Dermody Piece in Feb Rambler A Following of Art Dublin Mountains Makeover and other Environmental News GPS/GPX Notes The Doolough Tragedy The Ascent of Lugnaquilla by the Apterix - Episode 2/4
Apr	Ron Baker Vincent O'Hagan Gerry Moss Tom Milligan Robert Garrett Seán Quinn John Sweetman	Lament for Ukraine Greenways - Conditions of Use Winter Woes Diary The Ascent of Lugnaquilla by the Apterix - Episode 3/4 Obituary of Angela Murphy - First Vice President of The Ramblers Obituary of Irene (nee Moran) O'Farrelly
May	Declan Murphy Robert Garrett John Burke Patrick Pierce Conor Pierce Brian King Brian Kennan Brian Gilsenan	Car Sharing and the Environment The Ascent of Lugnaquilla by the Apterix - Episode 4/4 A Celebration of Patrick Pierce Mountain Memories Obituary of Patrick Pierce - the Mountains are Calling An 85 year old Walker on Lugnaquilla An Unlikely but Remarkable Story - The Story of Contours Obituary of Mick Harkin
Jun	Simon Stewart Ruth Murphy Brian Kennan Anne McEleney Margaret O'Sullivan Declan Murphy Various Tom Barragry	MountainViews.ie Gathering 2022 Solo Trip to Scotland Hillwalking Committee, MI, an Update Little Egret, Peatland Restoration, Marie Whelan's Bird Camera Summiteering Trips - Episode 1/2 - The Sperrins Younger Members Section Letters from Ramblers Corrie Lakes - Where Do They Come From?
Jul	Seán Quinn Declan Murphy Margaret O'Sullivan Elaine Dardis Martin Dermody Various Helen Lawless (MI)	Pilgrim Paths Developing Use of Buses Summiteering Trips - Episode 2/2 - Comeraghs and Galtys On Tri-peaks Challenge in Aid of Special Olympics How to Lead a Hike Letters from Ramblers Bog Restoration in the Wicklow Mountains
Aug	Herbert Herzmann Pádraig McGrane Seán Fox Frances Leahy Martin Dermody	Proposal of the Mountain Panthers A Remarkable Encounter - Plane Crash on Djouce, 1946 Early Use of Buses by The Ramblers Hungry Hill, a Spanish Princess and Daphne du Maurier Emergency and Safety Advice for Irish Ramblers



Brid O'Higgins
Multiple times
Committee Member
and G1 hiker



Milo Kane,
former President
and great leader

Publications in The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

2022

Aug (cont.)	Cath. O'Loughlin Anne McEleney Teresa Redmond John Burke	On Slovenia trip, with Jerry MacDonough Coillte Forests, Talks on Irish Uplands On Dolomites trip, with Louis O'Donoghue and Maryrose Murphy Schiehallion Cone Solution
Sep	Seán Quinn Herbert Herzmann Elaine Dardis, Brendan Glynn Simon Stewart Marco Delaurenti Seán Fox Seán Fox John Burke	National Parks Launch of the Mountain Panthers A Day Trip to Cape Clear and Fastnet Lighthouse Dramatic Discovery in Irish Cartography made by Rambler Boffin Why you Should Use a Watch to Plan and Track your Route Evening Herald report on Irish Ramblers Club, 1965 Enniskerry Walkers Sued by Landowner Supermoon, August 2022
Oct	Agnes Leonard Frances Leahy Various Brian Kennan Seán Fox Herbert Herzmann	Proposal of Meet and Greet On Madonna di Campiglio trip, with Jerry Mac Donough and Eadaoin O'Shea Letters from Ramblers The Confusing Car Parks of Djouce Wood Hob Nail Boots Inaugural Hike of the Mountain Panthers
Nov	Kathleen Forde Mary Conlon Dan Lynch Eamon Walsh Ping Liu Brian Kennan Seán Hegarty Anne McEleney Michael Doorly	Remembrance Hike, 2022 On a trip to Sligo (aka Mayo) Inaugural Meet and Greet An Eightieth Celebration on Crib Goch and Tryfan Car Security Diary - Annaleeka on a Beautiful Sunday Mountain Meitheal Footnotes - the Ramblers Choir Bog Cotton, Wicklow Mountains Path Condition Survey Megalithic Minds
Dec	Mary O'Keeffe Elaine Dardis Brian Kennan Tricia Boyle Anne McEleney John Burke Alice Cronin, John Burke Various	Obituary of Irene Connolly - a Tragic, Accidental Death Inaugural Hike of the Younger Members Section Restoring Luggala Estate A Dramatic Hut-to-Hut Trip in Austria Sustainable Living in Co Tipperary Car Emissions and Bog Restoration - a Comparison Why is my Waterproof Jacket not Waterproof Extracts from Mountain Log



Tim Kinsella in charge of Remembrance Wood refurbishment



Multiple EC Member Margaret O'Sullivan seeks Vandaleur-Lynams

2023

Jan	John Burke Tom Milligan Joanne Burke John Burke Seán Fox Herbert Herzmann Seán Quinn	On Whiskey Hike Dinner 2022 - first after Covid The Leonids Meteor Shower Proposal for Use of Buses Car-Sharing League Table of Performance A Bit of Rambler History - na Coisithe Thoughts of an Aging Rambler - How the Mountain Panthers were Born Ramblers and Urban Areas
Feb	Anne McEleney Donal McMahon Brendan Ward Seán Quinn Adam Grennan John Burke	MI Guide to Walking with Wildlife in the Comeraghs Of Mice and Mountains How I got into Hillwalking Memories of Mountains Climbed HAFE - The Irish Connection O'Raitfeiri Poem and Contemporary Reports of a Tragedy at Anach Cuain
Mar	Fergus Roche John Burke Patrick Gray Patrick Gray	Obituary of John Gaughan On a trip to the Comeraghs, with Jerry MacDonough GPS/GPX Notes Tutorial on Custom and Other Maps
Apr	Simon Stewart Helen Scully Gráinne McLaughlin Kathleen Forde Anne McEleney Fiona Burke Seán Fox Brendan Ward Joe Byrne	President's Award, 2023 and Thanks An Taisce Spring Clean, 2023 Charlie Bird Hand of Friendship Walk Obituary of Jessica Lennon On 'Regenesis' - George Monbiot, Wicklow Mountains Fire The Enjoyment of Volunteering A Foggy Day in Dublin Town Remembrance Wood Reflections Table of Wind Speeds and their Corresponding Effects
May	John Burke Louise Nolan Seán Quinn Herbert Herzmann John Burke Brian Kennan	Ballyroon Mountain to Punta Quinseina di Santa Elisabetta Peatland Restoration Project Greenways Ireland Interim Report on the Mountain Panthers Abuse of a Friend to Hillwalking in Glenmalure Car-Sharing League Table of Performance
Jun	Michael Guilfoyle Tom Milligan Fergus Roche Joanne Burke Philip Bromwell, RTE	Seefingan Tumulus Vandalism Seefin and Seefingan Tattoo or not Tattoo - that is the Question Bus Hire Update Call for Bus Access to Dublin Mountains



Pat Dunne who was the subject of a serious incident with a hiker in Glenmalure, 19 Mar '23

Publications in The Rambler - 2014 to 2023

2023

Jul	Geraldine Cleary Simonius the Lanky Francis Cotter	Report on Lug Challenge Walk Lore of the Lug - Quest for Fenton's Peppery Soup Our Cretan Exploration
Aug	Helen Scully Eileen Murphy John Burke Seán & Gaye O'Grady Anne Ryan Anne Delaney John Patton	60th Celebrations Sub-committee On Environmental trip to CloghJordan, with Anne McEleney A Vandeleur-Lynam Quest Walking the Camino del Norte, 550 km On Slovenia trip, with Jerry MacDonough Barrow Way - Leighlinbridge to Carlow Town The Alternative Dublin Mountains Way
Sep	Helen Scully Eileen Murphy Martin Dermody, Kathleen Forde Kathleen Forde James Joyce Fergus Roche Seán Quinn Brian Kennan Martin Dermody	Remembrance Wood Refurbishment Commemoration of Paula O'Regan Hike Leadership Soliloquy on trip to Dolomites, with Louis O'Donoghue Soliloquy of Molly Bloom How I Became a Sucker What's in a Name? The Ogham Stone of Knickeen Is it Good to Walk with Walking Poles?
Oct	Anne Morrissey Joe O'Flaherty Anne Morrissey	Organising a Holiday with Click and Go On Austria trip, with Herbert Herzmann Report on Survey of Ramblers
Nov	John Burke Michael Guilfoyle Liam Johnston Anne Morrissey Dan Lynch Adam Grennan Ron Baker Herbert Herzmann Donal McMahon	Remembrance Sunday, 2023 Margaret O'Sullivan's Completion on Corragh On Leenane trip, with Anne Ryan and Fergus Roche Austrian Alpine Club Insurance Meet and Greet - One Year On Obituary of Michael O'Neill A Verse for Hazel Doyle Obituary of Paddy Kavanagh The Ascent of Mount Ventoux
Dec	Anonymous Brendan Ward John Burke Margaret O'Sullivan Anonymous Seán Fox	Attack on Pat Dunne - Greystones Guide Diabetic Emergency and Hill-walking Earth We Walk and Enjoy - Atmosphere, Snowball Earth Successful Completion of a Personal Challenge - 275 VLs MI Autumn Gathering in Sneem Obituary of Pauline Murray

Bench dedicated to
Peadar O'Riordan
in Marley Park



Rambler of the Year, 2023
Louis O'Donoghue

Force	Description	Speed	Effects on You	Effects on Surroundings	Effect on a lake surface	Effect on fresh snow
0	Calm	<2 kph	None	Smoke rises straight up	Like a mirror	None
1	Light	2-5 kph	None	Smoke drifts	Ripples	None
2	Light	6-11 kph	Felt on face	Grass and bracken quiver	Wavelets, none breaking	None
3	Light	11-20 kph	Hair ruffled, loose clothing flaps	Heather and small twigs move	Some wavelets breaking	A little drift near surface
4	Moderate	20-29 kph	Hair disarranged	Small branches move, loose dry grass picked up	Some white horses	Drifting up to a metre or so
5	Fresh	30-39 kph	Walking inconvenienced	Small trees sway	Some spray	Widespread drifting
6	Strong	40-50 kph	Steady walking difficult	Large branches move	Much spray	Some blowing above head height
7	Strong	51-62 kph	Walk with great difficulty	Whole trees move	Foam in streaks along wind	Blowing in clouds above heads
8	Gale	63-74 kph	Walking dangerous	Twigs break from trees		Dense blowing clouds
9	Gale	75-87 kph	Blown over, crawling difficult	Branches break from trees		
10	Storm	88-102 kph	Progress impossible	Some trees uprooted		
11	Storm	103-116 kph		Many trees uprooted		
12	Hurricane	>116 kph		Great damage		

Submitted by
Joe Byrne
Apr '23

