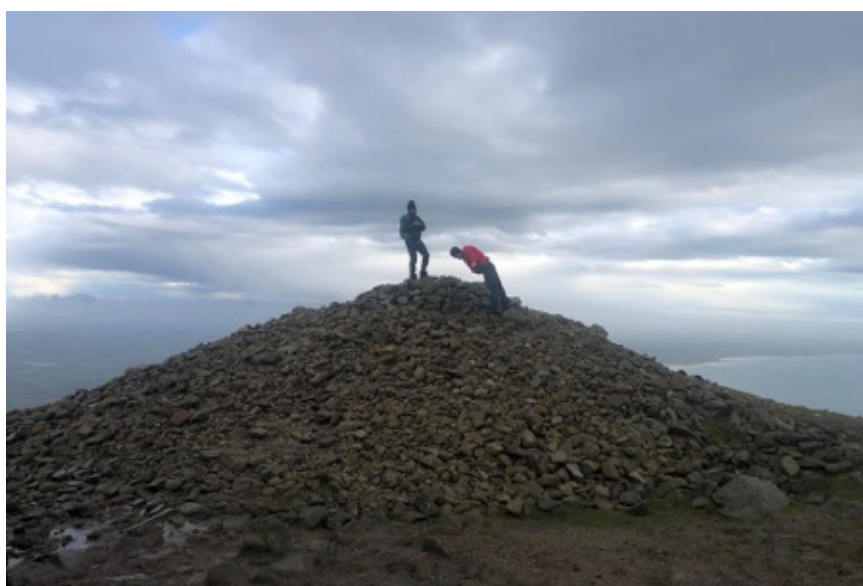




# The Trekker

Trekkers Mountaineering Club Glenageary Co Dublin [www.trekkers.ie](http://www.trekkers.ie)  
Edition 75 January 2023

## Magic of the Mournes



Mark Taylor with Silent Valley in the background, left. Right: Declan Coughlan tests whether the wind is stronger than gravity

**Alan Kane** on a wonderful A walk led by Aurimas Paršonis and Indre Lukošūtė

The November A walk gave us the opportunity to spend a day in the Mournes courtesy of Aurimas and Indre. The plan was to arrive

at the Bloody Bridge carpark for 08.45, which would be our starting point after we dropped a car to the finishing point in Newcastle, a couple of kilometres up the A2. This meant an early start from South Dublin, 06.30 leaving the house.

We started walking at 09.15, handrailing the Bloody

Bridge River with all its waterfalls and deep rockpools and came across a few hardy souls who felt it was a good idea to have an early morning swim in one of the rock pools ... none of us were tempted.

We continued our ascent until we reached the Mourne Wall  
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# Chair's notes

This is my first contribution to the Newsletter as Chair of the Trekkers' Committee. Since taking over from Fiona O'Sullivan at the AGM last October, I have been going through a steep learning curve from my fellow Committee members.

What I am learning confirms all the reasons why Neasa and myself wanted to join in 2017 – the combination of the physical and the social, the camaraderie among members and mutual support of each other.

It has also opened my eyes to the secret sauce that makes the operation of the club so smooth – the willingness of members to

design and lead interesting walks, and the enthusiasm and professionalism of those willing to serve on the Committee.

I would like to thank Fiona for overseeing a strong rise in interest to join the club, highlighting the importance of diversity, and delivering a very innovative and varied celebration of 40 years of club existence.

We are privileged to have such a rich and unspoilt hinterland of hills and mountains within easy reach of our capital city. In truth, the smallness of our island makes all areas accessible for special occasions.

As you know, the club

has been growing in numbers continuously and dramatically recently. You will have seen that there is concern to ensure that the quality of the experience remains high during growth. Reluctantly but I believe responsibly, a pause in admission of new members has been put in place for nine months to rebalance demand and quality. I am confident that solutions will be found to these issues.

Meanwhile, I hope to get out more myself on walks in the course of the year, and meet as many of you as possible on the hills and in the valleys so familiar and dear to all of us.

**John Hegarty**

## Editor's Notes

Welcome to the first Trekker Newsletter of 2023. It has a mix of stories, accounts of walks that include A walks, which are attracting more walkers than ever, along with one about a Social walkers getaway and a fascinating urban walk that started in Inchicore. Many of you may be interested in a feature on access to Ireland's hills in which Mountaineering Ireland's Access Officer dispels some notions walkers have about "rights of way". There are lots of good recommendations for books and shows and recipes in the final pages. Thanks as always to all the Newsletter's contributors and photographers. Information, articles, photos all welcome -- email to [franorourke@gmail.com](mailto:franorourke@gmail.com). **Frances O'Rourke**



### Caption

#### Competition

The competition is back: entries to [franorourke@gmail.com](mailto:franorourke@gmail.com). There's a prize for the winner

## Calling all members to Zoom EGM

A one-topic Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) will be held on Zoom on Thursday, March 23, to vote on a proposal to amend Trekkers' Constitution: this is to amend Clause 4.2 which requires a quorum of one-third of the membership to attend in order for a general meeting to proceed. Currently, one-third of our membership is 82 people. Please email Secretary Mary Cadogan at [mary@trekkers.ie](mailto:mary@trekkers.ie) to confirm your intention to attend. Details of the proposal will be emailed to the membership before the meeting.

## Trekker training courses offered

A **Map Reading & Navigation Beginners' Course** aimed at demystifying the topic will be held in February/March by Trekkers Training Officer Alan Kane with the assistance of five member/navigators from within the club. It is planned to accommodate up to 20 members on the course which will be run over two days. A notification with all the details will be sent out to the membership in the coming days. Meanwhile, 10 people are attending a **First Aid** course this week (the last week in January) and there will be 10 on the next course in February. More **leadership** courses are also being planned: keep an eye out for more information in emails and on the News section of the Trekkers' website. There's more Training & Education information on the website.



Left: Mourne Wall leading to Slieve Donard. Right: Happy Hikers on the Brandy Pad

## Seven and a half hours, 17km and a climb of 1,250m

### From page 1

and then handrailed the wall up to the summit of Slieve Donard, the highest mountain in Ulster at 853m.

The wind was blowing a real gale on the top of Donard, with winds gusting at 75km/hr. Declan couldn't resist the temptation to see if the wind was 'stronger than gravity'-- see photo.

We continued our way descending down from Donard into the col and up the other side to the top of Slieve Commedagh where our leaders had an ideal spot for lunch out of the wind.

Lunch over, Aurimas assured us that we only had two more summits to go before we started our descent; we fell in line and proceeded to Slieve Corragh and on to Slievenaglogh and then down to the Hare's Gap.

Climbing complete, Mary Lou produced the most wonderful home prepared Energy balls – wow, were they good. Bolstered by Mary Lou's treat we headed for a long final trek into Newcastle, passing alongside a very swollen Glen River.

A quick check of the stats showed that we had completed 17km, 1,250m of climb and it

had taken seven and a half hours to complete. To the credit of our leaders we finished in daylight and the head torches remained in the back packs.

We took ourselves into O'Hare's Lounge for some well-earned refreshments and watched the start of the Ireland V South Africa match in the Autumn International Series before setting out on the road back to Dublin.

A long day but really worth it. Thanks to Aurimas and Indre for a wonderful hike. We hope to get to the Mournes at least once a year going forward.

## Why you should read Trekkers' website

Trekkers growth in the past year has been dramatic --- it has roughly a third more members than it did 16 months ago, 251 compared to 191. A lot of those new members are now eligible to co-lead and lead walks, and may soon be getting a message from Walks Co-ordinator Nick O'Loughlin telling them that they have been selected to co-lead or lead a walk.

Don't panic! If you don't know what to do, first go to the Trekkers website, [trekkers.ie](http://trekkers.ie), log in (ask if you've forgotten the password) and look at Documents, on the right hand side of the website.

Clicking on that brings up a wide variety of documents, but the most useful for beginners are the Guideline/Policy Documents which have five that advise in detail just what to do.

They are: Information for New & Existing Members; What to do when selected to lead or co-lead a walk; Leading Club walks; Co-leading Club walks; Buses. Get the contact details for your leader

or co-leader (under Members on the website) and call them as soon as possible to arrange when to do a recce for the walk. And remember: while the club offers Leadership, Map Reading & Navigation and First Aid courses for members, attendance at any these courses -- whilst desirable -- is **not** required in order to lead or co-lead a walk. Ideally, choose a walk that you are interested in, know well or enjoy.

On the main menu of the website, you can double check if you've been asked to lead/co-lead on the Walks Programme link. The Walk Routes page contains information on walks completed over the last 25 years, this can be a great source of inspiration when planning future walks. There are many documents on the Trekkers website which members should look at at their leisure. Joe Murray (see profile page 10) is the webmaster who has devised this rich source of information for us – enjoy looking around it.

# Access for hillwalkers threatened

Careless parking, dogs and urbanites not understanding the rights of landowners are problems that have become more pronounced on Ireland's hills since Covid – and risk access to popular walking routes being restricted. And access in Ireland, north and south, is not guaranteed, because the law is mostly on the landowner's side. **Frances O'Rourke** and **Pat Macken** report.

Mountaineering Ireland (MI) campaigns to increase access to Ireland's hills, but bad behaviour and bad attitudes by some hillwalkers could make access worse, says MI Access officer Helen Lawless. Many hillwalkers assume the paths we regularly walk on are public land, that unfenced land is common land and that we have a right to be there.

This is simply wrong says Lawless: "In Irish law, it doesn't matter how long a route has been used, it doesn't make it a 'right of way' – it has to be dedicated by the landowner for public use." Landowners are "put out by attitudes of people who say 'it's a right of way,'" says Lawless.

Behaviour likely to annoy landowners includes careless parking, which has worsened since Covid: MI appeals to all walkers to take care not to block access for local residents, large farm vehicles or the emergency services, which may need them



Ballinacor: privately-owned estate open to hillwalkers but owners ask them to follow guidelines

24 hours a days, seven days a week. MI recommends asking permission if you need to park outside a house, farm or other premises.

It also asks walkers to respect farm animals and breeding wildlife by not taking dogs onto the hills. Generally dogs, even on a leash, are unwelcome on farmlands, including mountain lands, due to potential stress for farm animals even by their close presence. MI is considering giving tips to hillwalkers on what to say to dog walkers.

In the UK, a long history of campaigning for "the right to roam" and The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) gives some protection to hillwalkers – but this is not the case in Ireland. In Ireland, there are five different types of property (see [https://trekkers.ie/documents/253\\_Document.pdf](https://trekkers.ie/documents/253_Document.pdf) OR <https://trekkers.ie/membersonly/docdisplay.php?DOCID=253>): walkers only have open access to walk in Ireland's six national parks. Luckily for Trekkers, the Wicklow National Park covers most -- if not all -- of the Wicklow mountains and Coillte has many walkable forest tracks. But commonage

– open mountainside farmed by a number of landowners – is private property. There may be a history of "permissive access" for walkers, but it is not a legal right.

Hillwalkers in Northern Ireland (NI) are in a similar position to those in the south. The UK's CROW law does not cover Northern Ireland, and NI has very few public rights of way compared with England. There is access legislation in Northern Ireland, explains Lawless, but it was poorly drafted and has not been effective in expanding opportunities for hillwalking. As an all-island body, Mountaineering Ireland has been involved in efforts to introduce new legislation in Northern Ireland, a process stalled by the lack of a functioning assembly.

MI says it's better to ask, rather than to assume, if you are unsure of access to a walking route. "Checking if access is permitted on your intended route will generally get a positive response. It also helps to build trust with the host communities in the places where we walk and climb." If you don't know who owns the land, Helen suggests calling to a local farmhouse to inquire about access, checking

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# Fewer access issues on Ireland's east coast

## from page 4

with a local club or emailing her at [helen@mountaineering.ie](mailto:helen@mountaineering.ie). "From speaking with a farmer in the area you will get a good sense of who the landowners are, if there's someone else you should check with and whether or not there is any sensitivity regarding access for walking. The fact that you have enquired about access is usually appreciated."

In general, there are fewer issues on Ireland's east coast, where hillwalking is long established, than in the south and west (although it took nine months for a barrier on a section of the Roundwood Reservoir Upper Vartry Trail to be removed in October 2022: a complex

issue involving a paintball company and insurance cover had to be resolved). Trekkers are mostly aware that they need permission to walk at Luggala, Ballinacor or the Scotch Village (see panel). In the southwest, MI has been negotiating with landowners in Kerry to improve access at Macgillycuddy's Reeks. There are access issues at the Gap of Dunloe, Tomies Wood and the Black Valley: people organising walks with groups of over 10 people should register first on <https://macgillycuddyreekskerry.com/event>

An organisation called Keep Ireland Open (KIO) campaigns for access to Ireland's countryside

to be written into law and for walkers to have the right to access the countryside, believing that landowners have the law "completely and unfairly on their side". MI has the same aims as KIO but believes that negotiation with landowners is preferable to confrontation. "There are a relatively small number of places that walkers cannot go," says Lawless. That said, MI is "actively involved in efforts to improve and secure access for responsible hillwalkers in Ireland, north and south". And finally: if you come across any situation where you think access has changed, email [helen@mountaineering.ie](mailto:helen@mountaineering.ie)

## Private estates open -- but check out MI's advice

**LUGGALA:** the estate, which includes the mountains of Luggala/Fancy and Knocknacloghoge is open to responsible walkers who adhere to the estate's code of conduct (photo attached). However there are sometimes weekday closures due to activities at the estate; they have set up a Twitter account - @luggalaaccess -- where notice of any closures is posted. While there isn't need to get permission in advance, Mountaineering Ireland encourages groups to email [info@LUGGALA.com](mailto:info@LUGGALA.com) ahead of any activities that are planned for Luggala Estate as a courtesy. Luggala Estate 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!

**SCOTCH VILLAGE:** the Scotch village is the former settlement roughly southeast of Knocknacloghoge on the opposite side of the Cloghoge river (it's marked as Scotch Village on the EastWest map). Once you cross the stepping stones near the two storey-house at the northeast side Lough Dan you are on Ballinrush Estate, which is not open to the public. It is owned by a family trust. MI approached them a few years ago about agreeing an access route from the stepping stones up to the Coillte forestry on the hillside above (where walkers could connect with the forest tracks and the Wicklow Way). The trust has made it clear that it is privately-owned land and they do not want walkers there.

**BALLINACOR ESTATE:** like Luggala and Ballinrush, Ballinacor is a privately-owned estate. The owners are amenable to recreational access, keeping to the main paths along the ridgelines, on Fananierin and Croaghanmoira, see attached sign for guidelines. You will notice the sign does not show Ballinacor Mountain: one of the reasons is that the estate owns the land, but not the grazing there. MI Access officer Helen Lawless says "I don't think there's any difficulty with people going over and back between Croaghanmoira and Ballinacor, however they do not want walkers going into the valley between Ballinacor and Fananierin.



# Cleaning up in the uplands

## Catherine Almond on how Trekkers got involved in an environmental project -- and why more volunteers are needed

Something really unusual happened in March last year. Dara and I arrived early for a Trekkers walk!! So, we decided to go for a bit of a drive to fill in the time. We were in Glencullen and after a short while we came across a group of very busy people with litterpicking sticks and blue plastic bags working at the side of the road beside the Featherbeds. We stopped for a chat and found out all about the Pure Project.

PURE (Protecting Uplands and Rural Environments) was established in 2006 to combat illegal dumping/fly tipping in the Dublin/Wicklow uplands. The Pure Mile is an environmental, community, heritage initiative, established by the Pure Project.

The project encourages communities and groups living in rural areas to adopt a mile, or miles, of road, and keep this area litter/rubbish free, research information about their local wildflowers, plants, trees, animals, and the built, cultural, and social heritage. It also welcomes interested groups such as walkers and cyclists who use the uplands to join the project.

PURE is currently funded by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, and supported by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Wicklow Uplands Council, South

Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Coillte and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

The project has a very informative website and an active social media presence. Check it out for lots of lovely photos of Trekkers. <http://www.pureproject.ie/>

I mentioned our chance encounter with the litter pickers to the committee to ask if this was something Trekkers might be interested in becoming involved with. The committee was very encouraging so I contacted Ian Davis, the Operations Manager, who emailed me lots of information about how Trekkers



participation would be very welcome. I approached Geraldine Boland to assist with the logistics of Trekker involvement as, apart from being a committed Trekker, she is also an experienced organiser with the Monkstown Tidy District.

So with Geraldine's help we liaised with Ian Davis, emailed the Trekkers membership and gathered volunteers for Trekkers inaugural Pure Mile clean up.

Ian Davis suggested that the area around Piperstown Road, Upper Cunard Road and the Lemass Memorial is one of the litter hotspots in Glencullen. We took his advice and arranged two cleanup days in that area with the Trekker volunteers.

Geraldine led the first one on 29 May, and the second day

out was on 14 June. All necessary equipment was provided by Pure Mile; gloves, Hi-Viz jackets, plastic bags and litter pickers. We allocated areas to groups of volunteers, collected plenty of litter including some interesting items! (a handbag was found and taken to the gardai.) Both days were not only successful in respect of the litter collected but also very much enjoyed by those taking part. An Autumn cleanup was arranged in September, also a great success.

I would like to thank Geraldine and the 33 volunteers who did such sterling work during 2022. In October a few of the Trekker volunteers attended the Pure Mile Gala evening at Brooklodge Hotel in Wicklow where we were presented with certificates and a cheque for €250 in recognition of our endeavours. The Gala evening is an annual event and in a beautiful area of Wicklow so we are thinking maybe we can incorporate a Trekkers outing to coincide with it in 2023.

We hope to make the Trekkers involvement with Pure Mile a regular event, hopefully in Spring and Autumn of each year and to that end we have arranged a Spring clean-up on Sunday 5 March and a midweek date in the week beginning 17 April, and an Autumn date on Sunday 3 September and a midweek date in September. We are also planning how best to use our award - tree planting, donation to Mountain Rescue, all ideas welcome.

We will of course be looking for volunteers, the more the merrier, and emails and news will be sent nearer the time. If anyone has any questions please contact me – [catherine.almond@hotmail.com](mailto:catherine.almond@hotmail.com)

# Hiding out in Ireland's lake district

Six Trekkers walked and cycled on an autumn break in lovely Leitrim. **Richelle Crowley** reports

In Autumn 2022, six adventurous trekkers -- Kaye Moir, Patricia Duffy, Mary O'Loughlin, Catherine Walsh, Hildi Cahill and Richelle Crowley-- headed to Ireland's Lake District, Co Leitrim (Leitrim derived from the Irish Liath Druim meaning 'greyridge'). Two hours later we were having a relaxed lunch at the Leitrim Inn and hadn't far to go to check into our digs, Drumhierny Woodland Estate, a few yards down the road.

We approached through a long drive fringed by stunning trees. The resort is set in a 100-acre wood (shades of AA Milne, Winnie the Pooh, Tigger). There are 16 lodges each of which sleeps six, and a state-of-the-art entry system to each lodge

which involves downloading an App onto your mobile phone. Our lodges were most impressive, A-framed newly built wooden cabins designed on sleek and simple lines. The interiors were light-filled, spacious and airy. The kitchen was well-equipped and invited self catering. The furniture and fittings were wooden



From left: Kaye, Mary, Hildi, Catherine and Patricia in Drumhierny Woodland Hideaway. Below right: Patricia and Richelle get ready to cycle the Shannon Blueway; bottom left, lodges in the woodland

and rustic with comfortable couches. Even the wardrobes were constructed from wooden branches, so there was a wonderful aromatic scent of fresh wood wafting around!

Having settled in, some of us headed back to the village bike shop to check out bikes we had pre-booked for the next day and to discuss routes with Seamus the owner.

A preliminary recce around the estate was very enticing. There was the wellness centre, with its open-air seaweed baths and thermal spas surrounded by the forest. The Woodpecker café

with its rustic wooden tables and benches looked most inviting but we wrenched ourselves away to get ready to go out to dinner at the highly recommended Beirnes of Battlebridge, an award-winning pub/restaurant. It's a very traditional

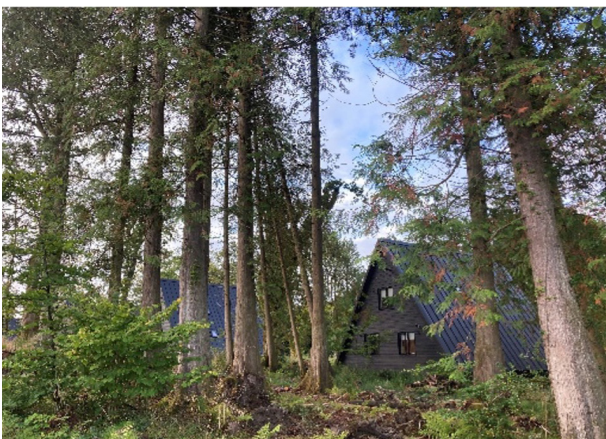
establishment set right on the road with a half-door entrance, flagstone floor and trestle tables. The staff were friendly, looked after us very well and the food was really delicious and reasonably priced.

**Day 2:** The cyclists collected their bikes and arranged to meet the walkers at the Shed in Drumshanbo for a late lunch. Cycling along the blueway was like gliding through a Dutch landscape painting with broad immense skies above, cruise boats purring along the waterway and the verdant countryside

fading away into the distance.

We met some joggers and a few cyclists, swans and birds but it was peaceful and quiet. Balm for the soul!

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## Exploring Leitrim by foot, bicycle and car

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Before long we were on Acres Lake Boardwalk, Ireland's first floating boardwalk and initially Ireland's longest boardwalk and had reached Drumshanbo (ridge of the old cow!) The 600m boardwalk, in the picturesque village of Drumshanbo, is the start of a 6.5km linear walking and cycling trail along the Shannon Blueway from Acres Lake to Battlebridge Lock, near Leitrim Village. Drumshanbo is located on two lakes, Acres and Lough Allen, with Iron Mountain (Sliabh Iarann) as a backdrop.

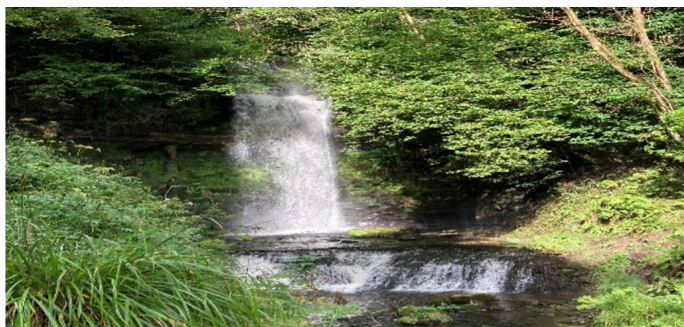
Tired and famished, we headed straight for the restaurant in the Shed Distillery for lunch. We were pleasantly surprised by the welcome, décor and ambience here. The cafe was colourful, bright, inviting – and busy. But it didn't matter -- you could order just soup or a full lunch, no problem. As you can guess, we all made a really leisurely return to our log cabins that afternoon!!

That evening we headed a few metres down the road to Leitrim Village for a pleasant meal in The Barge Steakhouse, where the main course was just €13.50).

Next day, in the motoring part of our odyssey, we headed to Lough Gill. Here, scenery on the coastal drive around Lough Gill is beautiful --but when the car rounds a corner and suddenly the spectacular fairytale turreted Parke's Castle hoves into view it's beyond stunning!

Here we had a superb guided tour conducted by a pleasant and enthusiastic OPW Guide. As he led us through the castle we learnt about the restoration process (training young apprentices, utilizing native materials like oak), the hazards of thatched roofs, ancient customs like the use of a steam cave and more recently the uncovering of the foundations of an ancient Tower House.

This Tower House was the seat of Brian O'Rourke, an unfortunate Gaelic lord executed at Tyburn in London in 1591 for harbouring Spaniards



**Parke's Castle, Lough Gill, top; Glencar Waterfall, below**

from the Armada. Next we motored on to Dromahair (the ridge of two devils and I'm not explaining it!!.) a most attractive town laid out by the landlord to resemble a town in Sussex. WB Yeats was friendly with the parish priest here, Fr Gilligan, "who was weary night and day".

We had a pleasant lunch here, then motored on to Glencar Waterfall, located on the border of Counties Leitrim & Sligo and a source of inspiration to Yeats. The waterfall was in full spate so we felt that we had truly "come away to the waters and the wild". Photos and videos can't do it justice! Another pleasant evening followed in The Barge in Leitrim Village, followed by tea and refreshments back at our lodges. Next day we had to drag ourselves away from our woodland idyll and return to Dublin. Most of us drive through Leitrim rapidly on our way to elsewhere but we're missing out, as the countryside there is so unspoilt, undeveloped, low key and yet so beautiful. "What is this life if full of care we have no time to stand and stare" (as a poet once wrote). And no, we didn't see Tigger and Co in the 100-acre wood but Patricia did spot a red squirrel!

## Trekkers on tour: away trips taking place in 2023

Four Away Trips – two abroad and two in Ireland – are being organised in 2023. A weekend trip for B and B- walkers to the Comeragh Mountains will be held at the end of June. A weekend trip for B walkers in the Cooley Mountains will be held at the end of August.

Meanwhile a 10-day trip to Croatia catering for B and C walkers will take place in May. A week-

long trip in the Western Pyrenees for strong B and A walkers will take place in the first week in September. Away trips are popular and places on all these walks have already been filled. Trips organised through the club need to be approved first by the Committee. For more information on organising away trips, look under Documents, then General Documents in the Trekker website.



# Return of the Christmas party



Above left: Fionnuala Martin, left, Mary Murphy and Mary Cadogan; above right, Barbara and Michael Lane, Ita Lawton and Noreen O'Brien

Trekkers were able to celebrate Christmas in their usual style at our first Christmas party since 2019. There was a strong post-Covid turnout at Killiney Golf Club, in spite of wild weather on the night, and Trekkers old and new danced the night away to entertainment provided, as always, by Carmel. Three walk leaders – Myles Duffy, Paddy MacManus and Aine Allen – were presented with a bottle of wine for leading the most number of walks from October 2021 to October 2022. Many thanks to the trio on the party organising committee – Dympna Thunder, Mary Murphy and Fionnuala Martin -- for all their hard work, which made it a most successful night. To see more of Michael Brady's pictures from the night, copy and paste this link into your browser: [https://share.icloud.com/photos/0f9uGr8F6XnNOi-WrHQ\\_MdvFQ](https://share.icloud.com/photos/0f9uGr8F6XnNOi-WrHQ_MdvFQ) (just click on download, no need to have an icloud account)



Clockwise from top left: Aine Allen, and Carmel Gillen; Nick O'Loughlin; Dympna Thunder; Alan Kane, John Hegarty and Jim Ryan; Dara Robinson and Catherine Almond; Una Davis and Betty Fitzgerald



# Why Trekkers' IT guy likes a challenge

## Joe Murray, the man behind Trekkers' website, on a lifetime of walking -- and a life working with computers

One of the first things Joe Murray had to learn when he joined Trekkers was not to race up the hills. He first started walking in his last year in college, joining UCD's Mountaineering Club around 1965 and "I've kept it up all my life, until I got a bad back a few years ago".

He married in 1970 but still walked with a group of six, seven, eight pals once a week or a fortnight, usually on Sundays. "We'd meet in the car park of the Glenview Hotel and decide where to go, we'd no plans. We'd stretch over a mountain, never kept together."

He joined Trekkers nearly 20 years ago after two of the pals—Tom Gillen and George Barry – had joined. "On my first Trekker walk I was way out in front -- a finger was wagged at me. But I was used to going as fast as I could, we'd kind of a race to get to the top of a mountain first."

His experience of walking mirrors that of many longstanding Trekkers: he joined in 2004 and did A and B walks up to 2012, then B and C walks up to 2020. His pal Tom Gillen, 92, still walks on the flat and "was a great walker, he went up Lug on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. I'm 78 now, and there's no way I could get up Lug".

A back operation nine years ago slowed Joe down and during Covid "I got lazy, didn't take enough exercise. I'm undisciplined about doing physical



Trekkers' web guru Joe Murray

training every day – but I do miss walking". (In fact, he undersells himself – Joe has gone out on a fair few Social walks in the past few months.)

Mentally, he's as active as ever: Joe is Trekkers' webmaster, the man who designed and maintains the Trekker website, along with several more for other voluntary groups, like University of the Third Age (U3A). It means keeping up to date with computer developments "but it's enjoyable. It's been like that since 1968. Every year or two, you have to learn new skills to keep on top of things in the computer business".

Joe has been part of Ireland's computer revolution nearly since the beginning. After studying electrical engineering in UCD, graduating with an MA in 1968, he joined IBM and worked there for 27 years until branching out on his own as a consultant.

At IBM, he'd go out to their customers, the IT guy, helping with technical knowledge.

"Often we were just two pages ahead in the manual." The most exciting development, he feels, "was the invention of the personal computer -- "the IBM PC was invented in 1982".

He found walking a great de-stresser – "there was quite a lot of stress in the computer industry". Joe married his late wife, Sinead, in 1970: she was a great walker "on the flat. I tried to bring her up Lug, but it wasn't a success". She had to leave her job in the civil service in 1972

(the year before the marriage bar was lifted) and eventually worked full time in the home raising their five children. Sinead died fairly suddenly in 2010, aged 65, after becoming ill on holiday in Italy. "It was a shock."

He credits Sinead with his branching out into doing voluntary work using his computer skills. He did some work for a friend and asked her what he should charge him. "She had a great sense of justice and said 'charge him nothing, he's a friend'. I'd never have thought of that. Now I do half-a-dozen websites voluntarily for different groups and feel terrific about it, it's part of giving back something."

He started working on the Trekker website in 2009. A former Trekker, Carol Behan, "had put together a small website; she left and I volunteered to do it". He writes all the lines of code for it and spent a lot of time

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## 'Websites get stale unless there's a constant change of data'

### from page 10

with Trekker Owen McKeown working on what information to put onto the site. They devised the "Walk routes" feature, for example, which gives details about every walk done every week – a description of the walk plus how long, how high, with names of people who went on that walk.

"It's useful for leaders trying to think of a walk to do – you can search for the name of a particular place, or of a particular leader "and that's exactly what

we did that for". He also spent a lot of time devising a method by which members could send a message to many or all Trekkers at once (more complex, of course, than it might look). More recently, along with Mark Taylor, Joe worked on adapting the website to comply with statutory GDPR rules and with Alan Kane to present training materials on the website. "The thing about websites is that they get stale if no one uses them and unless there's a constant change of data."

Recently, some members have wondered if there could be a simpler method for members to sign up for walks than our present system, which involves six walk leaders a week each sending three emails to the membership. "It's something that might have to be done," thinks Joe although again, it's complex."

Why does Joe go on working on the website after all these years? "The benefit for me is that it's a challenge, like doing the crossword."

**Frances O'Rourke**

## First in-person AGM in three years

The first in-person AGM in three years took place on October 22, 2022 in the National Yacht Club Dun Laoghaire. Despite our fears that we might not have a quorum, 92 members attended.

Several decisions had to be voted on: 100 per cent of the attendees voted in favour of changing the Constitution to include the role of Membership Officer as a full member of the committee with voting rights and elected by the membership.

There was also 100 per cent support for the motion to seek an exception to Clause 5.12 of the Constitution which states "no member can serve as an officer of the Club for a term longer than three years". This was to allow Alan Kane, Training Officer, who was elected in 2022, to remain in that role for a maximum of two further years.

Candidates for positions on the Committee were unopposed and declared elected. Chair Fiona O'Sullivan stood down after her three-year term and John Hegarty became the new Chair. Walks Co-ordinator Anne

Hayes also stood down and Nick O'Loughlin took up the post. Mary Cadogan remains as Secretary, Mark Taylor as Treasurer, Alan Kane as Training Officer and Frances O'Rourke as Publicity Officer. Áine Allen was confirmed in the new role of Membership Officer.

Outgoing chairperson Fiona O'Sullivan welcomed the three new Committee members, John Hegarty, Nicholas O Loughlin and Áine Allen and acknowledged Alan Kane remaining in the Training Officer Role.

She also expressed her thanks to two former Committee members who stepped down during her time as Chair: Patrick MacManus, former Treasurer and Dymrna Thunder, former Walks Coordinator.

Fiona also thanked the Committee for their support during the last year and everyone for their attendance at the AGM. She made special mention of a number of people who have helped out in many different ways during her tenure: Joe Murray, who works tirelessly to keep

Trekkers' website and systems current; Paul O' Kane for the wonderful photo archive he has created for the club, his input into the 2022 calendar and the photo slideshow at the AGM; and Monty Tinsley for his help and guidance in the last three years since her appointment as Chairperson.

Under Any Other Business, Vincent Cahill raised the matter of the high numbers required to form a quorum for the AGM and the Committee have undertaken to review the current requirement and come back to the membership.

Myles Duffy proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairperson and the Committee for their work during the last year and for managing all the complexities that arose.

A slideshow of pictures of Trekker outings, created by Paul O'Kane, was a highlight of the night and enjoyed by all for the happy memories captured of wonderful walks. The meeting then closed and adjourned for the customary post-AGM drinks in the bar of the National.

# Record breaking A walk

An October A walk attracted 19 Trekkers -- a record number -- to hike to the summit of Kippure. **Padraig O Fathaigh** reports

Nobody among the group who assembled at the DART station on October 1<sup>st</sup> could remember a previous A walk with 19 participants.

We had been set a challenge by Mark and Declan – 21 kilometres, 850 metres of climb and an air temperature in keeping with a late autumn day. Nonetheless, spirits were high with the merry band which included nine of the group who had returned from the Picos Hut-to-Hut trek in September.

Given the size of the group, Mark was faced with and met a logistical challenge akin to moving a battalion to assemble us all at the cottage below Eagle's Crag. Mark's son in law assisted by dropping the car drivers who had earlier met at Johnny Fox's, while the bus disgorged its 16 passengers in sight of our first climb.

After an initial briefing from our leaders, we set off through the heather to the foot of Eagle's Crag. When we arrived and looked up I thought to myself, "that's a bit of a climb". Apparently others had thought the same except that I had "thought it out loud".

Declan offered assurances by way of ropes not being required, unlike Northern Spain, and so we all galloped up enthusiastically and reached the site of our water break.



Hiking over open ground to the summit of Kippure above

Suitably refreshed after our break, we trekked across the open countryside to the summit of Kippure. This provided an opportunity for some to practice following a compass bearing.

Though the going was tough across the boggy ground, we were rewarded with some spectacular views. As we reached the summit of Kippure near the radio mast, we had some misty rain, thus reducing visibility. There

**'Mark and Declan allowed two lunch breaks'**

was little point in hanging about on the summit so we headed down the far side where we took shelter and enjoyed our banana break.

The sun came out as we descended towards the Featherbeds, once again providing the best scenic views imaginable. When we reached the approach road from the Featherbeds, we turned and walked along the

county line before reaching our lunch stop at Old Boley's forest.

During lunch break, Mark carried out a survey of the fare being consumed and declared Alan the winner. Several others claiming "home-made", status were disqualified because they were unable to tell us whose home Avonmore and Lidl soups are made in.

A further navigation exercise was undertaken as we headed for Glendoo summit before we took to a newly discovered forest trail as we headed for Tibbradden, where we took a second lunch stop. Note to all who are considering an A hike, you get two lunch breaks. Yahoo!

As we reached Fairy Castle in weather much different to our morning start, it occurred to some that we were within hailing distance of the finish line and more importantly, Johnny Fox's imbibing emporium.

Settled comfortably in the late afternoon sunshine outside that establishment, we reflected on what a great hike we had enjoyed indicative of the work put in on the recces by Mark and Declan.

What a great indication of a vibrant club that a challenging A walk can draw 19 participants in late autumn, with the air ringing with laughter throughout.

# The Route of my Roots

**Pat Nolan** revisited childhood haunts on a walk starting in Inchicore

**Starting point:** Goldenbridge Luas stop (Red Line)

**End point:** Museum of Modern Art, convenient for Heuston Luas and buses.

**Length:** About 9.5 km. Rialto a natural stopping point for lunch/coffee.

## Me and the Christian Brothers

I was born and raised in Drimnagh which had a large Catholic boys' school. My mother was unimpressed: it only had lay male teachers, too easily distracted by mammon. What was required was the full-on dedication of a teaching religious order.

So I was sent across the canal to Christian Brothers' schools: St. Michael's Primary School in Keogh Square, Inchicore, and later on to James's St. Secondary School. Keogh Square, converted from Richmond Barracks post-independence, was then the worst slum in Ireland – a place for the terminally skint and desperate.<sup>1</sup>

James's St. School was right beside the commerce and smells of the City Basin. I'm grateful to the Christian Brothers. They taught me grammar and the value of a public sector pension. And Latin for Benediction and Matriculation.

## A Palimpsest Walk

So, when invited to propose a Trekkers' walk, I hit on a revisit to these childhood haunts 50 years on. It's a palimpsest walk: imprinting the new on the traces of the old. And I was mightily impressed with what I saw: gentrification, prosperity, clean air, fresh cultural vibrancy, coffee shops galore, sushi! in Inchicore!, off-road walks on towpaths and linear parks. And the Luas.

**What's gone:** abject poverty, teaching orders, the notorious Goldenbridge Industrial School<sup>2</sup>, A whole branch of the Grand Canal from Suir Bridge to the City Basin, now Luas-ified.

## And what's still there:

- St Michael's Church, formerly the Richmond Barracks Garrison Chapel, graced with Harry Clarke windows.
- The surviving buildings from Richmond Barracks, now part of a handsome community resource, Dún Richmond, combining old and new.
- The Oblate Church<sup>3</sup>, an elegant church with beautiful stone- and marble-work<sup>4</sup>.
- In the grounds of the Oblate church: a life size facsimile in concrete of the Lourdes Grotto, site of the 1858 apparitions. Local hearsay has it that for many years an IRA armoury was concealed under the Grotto (Inchicore, not Lourdes!)
- Goldenbridge cemetery – the earliest Père Lachaise type garden cemetery in Ireland (1829). The big innovation: burial of people from different creeds on same site.
- Canal towpath from Blackhorse Bridge to Rialto Bridge. Remains of art deco Rialto Cinema. Vestigial traces of Back of the Pipes, Dublin's early watercourses.
- The Maryland estate (1932), where all roads are named after appellations of the Blessed Virgin: Ave Maria Rd., Morningstar Rd., Lourdes Rd., etc.
- The City Basin<sup>6</sup> (filled in), now locale for 3 massive high-rise apartment blocks still in building phase.
- The evocatively named Cromwell's Quarters, née Murdering Lane<sup>7</sup>.

The walk ends with visit to MOMA grounds to see Bully's Acre, the oldest graveyard in Ireland.

1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZEKsUqDurK8>

2 See <http://childabusecommission.ie/>

3 The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, a Catholic order of priests who came to Ireland in 1856, The Oblate Church is on Tyrconnel Rd., Inchicore

4 The altar and altar rail are carved by James Pearse, father of Patrick.

5 [https://dbpedia.org/page/The\\_Back\\_of\\_the\\_Pipes,\\_Dublin](https://dbpedia.org/page/The_Back_of_the_Pipes,_Dublin)

6 <https://arranghenderson.com/2015/12/08/dublins-old-city-basin-3-historic-hospitals/>

7 <http://mossreid.blogspot.com/2016/04/cromwells-quarters-murdering-lane-or-39.html>

## Southside connection to walk in Inchicore

An interesting feature of Trekker urban walks is the connection between landmarks en route and our own locality as one of the first Wednesday Walks of 2023, led by Ann Carroll and Pat Nolan, from Goldenbridge via Richmond Barracks, the Grand Canal, The Coombe and Grand Canal Harbour showed. (See page 13).

The drive to create Kilmainham Township in 1868 was sparked by protests arising from the huge volume of untreated sewage discharged into an exposed public environment in Inchicore from Richmond Barracks and its population of 76 officers, 1,600 non-commissioned personnel and a 100-bed hospital:

it caused public uproar. Apart from the enormous railway maintenance establishment in Inchicore on 76 acres, the businesses in the vicinity used water power made available by a millrace at Islandbridge. Three businessmen pushed for the creation of Kilmainham Township: they were David McBirney (1806-1882) who lived and died at Barnhill, Dalkey; Francis Moore Scott, Island Bridge Woollen Mills, who lived on Brighton Vale, Monkstown and Rockfort Terrace, Dalkey and Samuel Shelly, general manager Manders Flour Mill, Island Bridge.

David McBirney established the McBirney & Co

Ltd department store on Aston Quay in 1845 which endured until 1984, over a century after his death. McBirney also provided the seed capital in 1857 to establish Belleek Pottery.

The Dublin Townships lost their independence in 1900 on foot of a Royal Commission Report prepared in 1878 by the Exham Commission: it was chaired by William A Exham QC (1821-1881) who lived from 1865 in the chateau-style residence with extravagant stone-capped gables and conical tower, called Court-na-Farraige, on Station Road, Killiney. This later became the Court Hotel.

**Myles Duffy**

## Welcome to new members



Dorothy Behan



Fran Behan



Leonard Abrahamson



Valerie Charlton



Philip Mangan



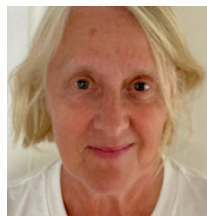
Fiona Kelly



Niall Holohan



Rory Hensey



Barbara Cumming



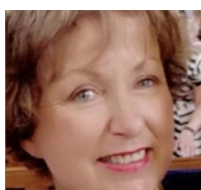
Anne O'Dea



Caroline O'Nolan



Moire Hanley



Bernadette McCann



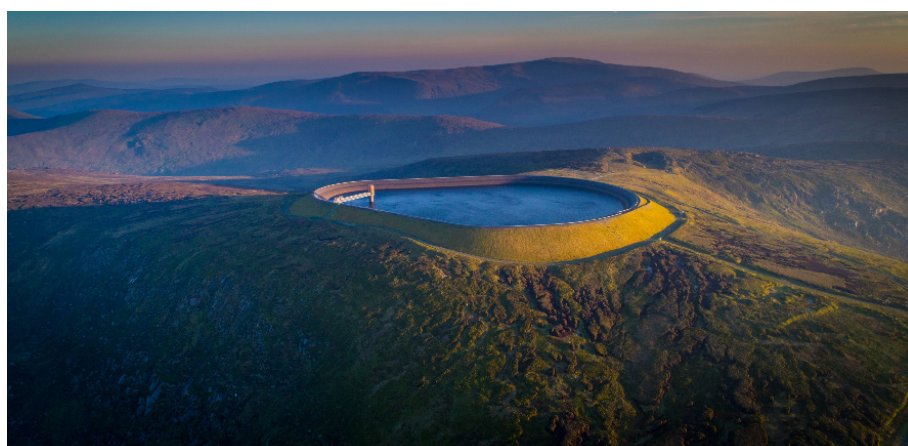
Miriam Dollard O'Leary



**Clara Bridge, March 2022: a guest walk for younger walkers last year**

# The power of Turlough Hill

Remarkable  
and at times  
very beautiful:  
**Dermot Murray**  
on a landmark  
viewed on many  
Trekker hikes



Turlough Hill is Ireland's only pumped water power station

For anyone familiar with walking in the Glendalough area, Turlough Hill is a stalwart presence: its flattened summit and intake tower make it unmistakable, and all too often it seems to reveal itself suddenly through the mist, doing so from a myriad of different possible viewpoints.

For walkers, Turlough Hill can also be immensely useful, for once it has been singled out by anyone looking on, it makes the task of identifying surrounding peaks just that bit more achievable.

But the site is also remarkable in that it remains Ireland's only Pumped Storage Power Station, brought into operation in 1974.

My own first experience with Turlough Hill goes back to my days in the scouts, when I remember being given a tour of the innermost part of the facility – and, in particular, to a carved-out chamber known rather aptly as **the Cavern** – and here we were allowed to view the technology on show, including the enormous turbines that to this day generate electricity as water passes from the upper reservoir, and then through the heart of the mountain to the mighty (and naturally occurring) Lough Nahanagan, 286 metres lower down.

Curiously (and perhaps even paradoxically – or so it

might seem) Turlough Hill differs from other power stations in that it is not a primary source of power, but is in fact a net user of electricity, as the water that has passed through the turbines is pumped – in vast quantities – to the upper reservoir once again.

The apparent paradox is resolved when a key feature of electricity is pointed out: that

'The sky was the colour of iron . . . the sun struck the water so that it gleamed like a sheet of purest silver . . . all who were out that day had something special to remember

is, it cannot be stored, at least not in large amounts, and so the water is only permitted to flow through the turbines at times of peak demand when it is needed most, thus fulfilling its usefulness and proving to be an important

addition to the electrical power system as a whole.

Furthermore, Turlough Hill is the fastest starting electricity-generating plant on the system, and can go from standstill to full generation in a mere 70 seconds – by contrast, stations that use other kinds of fuel, such as gas, can take up to 12 hours.

The hill, of course, can be incorporated into many walks: to the east, beyond a maze of peat-hags, lies Camaderry; to the south, the walker will be taken into deer country and down to the Glenealo river, which ultimately snakes its way into Glendalough; to the north-east, the walker may join the St Kevin's Way; while to the north, menacing Tonelagee looms above the Wicklow Gap, inviting walkers to take on its gale-governed slopes.

And while we may not always think of Turlough Hill as a feast for the eyes, I do recall standing on the summit of Tonelagee on a recent walk – the solitary spot where the upper reservoir can be seen clearly – and on a day when there was a mantle of snow on the ground and the sky was the colour of iron, when the sun struck the water so that it gleamed like a  
**Continued on page 16**

# Functions 'without a feather of smut or smoke'

## From page 15

sheet of purest silver, to give all who were out that day something special to remember.

But then the dimensions of the site, as may be gleaned from a number of short films that are available online, are unquestionably impressive: an estimated 1,000,000 tons of peat was removed to get at the

bedrock, while a further 300,000 tons of granite had to be shifted to create the access tunnels. 40 acres of asphalt were used to seal the reservoir, which holds, when full, 2.3 million cubic metres of water.

Yet, despite its scale, the whole facility blends in admirably with the surrounding heathland, so that it functions "without a

feather of smut or smoke" – to borrow the concluding words of narrator Eamonn Andrews in one particular film.

The films are certainly worth a look – although the content can be a touch technical at times – and are available at [esbarchives.ie](http://esbarchives.ie).

## Caught on camera



Clockwise from top left: C walk December 14; Aine Allen in Glendalough, January 18; Ann Matthews on the Avonmore Way, October; in Kilcoole, November; collecting apples on the roadside near Downs Hill, November; at the Brennanstown dolmen off Lehaunstown Road, October





# Trekking 45km in wilds of Mayo

From the archive:  
**Monty Tinsley** on a hike through the wild and desolate Nephin Mountains



Trail once used by cattle raiders leads through the Nephin Mountains from Bangor Erris to Newport, on the shores of Clew Bay

During the 1980s, the monthly Trekkers' walks were nearly always of an A standard and frequently lasting 5 hours, like many of the A walks today.

They used to take place only from September to June, concluding with a weekend away on the western seaboard.

In June 1989, Shaun Trant led his band of seven seasoned Trekkers to Co Mayo where he was born in 1931. They spent the Friday night in a hostel in Westport before climbing Mweelrea (814m) on a sunny Saturday. They had a swim at Silver Strand and then drove to Newport for the second night.

On 17<sup>th</sup> June they got a bus to Bangor Erris to start the walk back to Newport. This was the Sunday challenge organised by the Nephin Beg Mountaineering Club.

The trail is 28 miles (45km) long and weaves its way through the Nephin Mountains to Newport on the shores of Clew Bay. They had check points all along the route to provide aid, assistance and certification for all participants.

Legend has it that the trail had been used by cattle raiders that rustled cattle to the richer pastures of South Mayo, and it could well be true. This is wild,

desolate countryside with very rough and broken terrain and few homesteads.

So, the seven warriors – (Shaun Trant, Jack Langan, Paddy O'Duffy, Charlie Ryan, John Furey, Gerry Keane and George Barry) along with an army of foot soldiers were waved off with due ceremony.

The day itself was extremely sunny and this caused some to become more dehydrated

**Was this the longest trek undertaken by a group of Trekkers?**

than others. Whereas the weather always plays a part in most walks, the temperature and terrain made this expedition extremely demanding. A more adequate supply of water would have relieved some of the problems. Two difficult river crossings added to the challenge.

After 18 miles (30K),

at Srahmore, the main part of the walk ended and Paddy and Charlie decided to drop out and were ferried back to Newport.

The eldest Trekker – Jack Langan -- was asked if he wished to continue the extra 10 miles to which he made his famous reply "I will or I will die in the attempt". He meant it. This was no place for the fainthearted.

Eventually, all arrived in Newport and at a reception in the Town Hall they were presented with certificates to prove they had past the endurance test.

Sleep came easy for everyone that night and with no Trekker walk until September, the summer months allowed all wounds to heal and only good memories to remain.

Apart from the 33-mile Lug Walk undertaken by six intrepid Trekkers in June 1984, traversing 19 summits, I wonder was this the longest trek undertaken by a group of Trekkers?

**The above information has been extracted from Trekker founder Shaun Trant's records.**

# Feelgood beetroot & feta soup

**Breda O'Hara** on a sweet, salty and nourishing dish

For anyone who likes beetroot, this is a real nourishing, feel-good soup. The tomatoes add a touch of sweetness (I don't separate the skin and pips as it all gets blended anyway) and the feta a contrasting saltiness. Yum!

## Ingredients

- 3-4 medium (apple-sized) [beetroot](#) (about 500-600g/1lb 2oz-1lb 5oz, grated coarsely, or chopped into small dice
- 500g/1lb 2oz ripe [tomatoes](#), halved
- 1 clove [garlic](#), chopped roughly
- 1 medium [onion](#), peeled and finely chopped
- 2 tbsp olive or [sunflower oil](#)
- 500ml/16½ fl oz good strong stock (beef is best, but chicken or vegetable will do)
- salt and freshly ground [black pepper](#)
- 125g/4oz real (i.e. Greek not Danish) [feta](#) cheese



## Method

1. Place the halved tomatoes in an ovenproof dish. Throw over the garlic and drizzle over half the olive oil.
2. Roast for 25-30 minutes in a fairly hot oven (190C/375F/Gas 5) until soft and pulpy. Rub through a sieve to



- remove the skin and pips.
3. Heat the remaining oil in a pan and sweat the onion for a few minutes until soft. Add the beetroot and the stock and bring to the boil. Season lightly with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Simmer gently for 7-10 minutes until the beetroot is tender.
4. Stir in the pureed tomato, transfer the soup to a blender and process until completely smooth. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary
5. To serve cold, chill the soup in the fridge, then divide between six bowls. Using your fingers, crumble a little feta into each bowl. A sprinkling of grated raw beetroot makes a good garnish for the cold version
6. To serve hot, reheat the soup until thoroughly hot but not boiling. Divide between warm bowls and crumble over a little feta into each bowl. Serve with crusty bread.

# Mary Murphy's fool proof shortbread

## INGREDIENTS

50g butter at room temperature  
125g caster sugar  
250g plain flour  
125g semolina or cornflour

## METHOD

Preheat oven to 150C  
Butter 22cm square tin  
Cream butter and sugar until pale, light, and fluffy.  
Add flour and semolina or cornflour



Mix lightly  
Transfer dough to tin and press out, poking it into the corners  
Prick all over  
Pop into preheated oven for 50 mins until lightly golden

**Note: what I often do is pop the whole lot in a Food Processor and whiz it, real shortcut and seems to come out just as well.**

**Agatha Christie: An Elusive Woman by Lucy Worsley**

At the heart of this biography is the novelist's 11-day disappearance in 1926.

**Boldly Go by William Shatner**

Star Trek's William Shatner's book of essays reflect on the interconnectivity of all things, our fragile bond with nature, and the joy that comes from exploration

**Vincent Heagney**

**Age Proof: The New Science of Living a Longer and Healthier Life by Professor Rose Ann Kenny**

Book on ageing featuring findings from TCD Professor Rose Anne Kenny's extensive career in the field of ageing reveals why and how some people live longer, fitter, healthier and happier lives than others. Very relevant to our age group.

**In Praise of Walking: The New Science of how we walk and why it's good for us by Shane O'Mara**

In this hymn to walking, neuroscientist Shane O'Mara – like Rose Ann Kenny, a TCD professor -- invites us to marvel at the benefits walking confers on our bodies and brains, and to appreciate the advantages of this uniquely human skill.

**Kaye Moir**

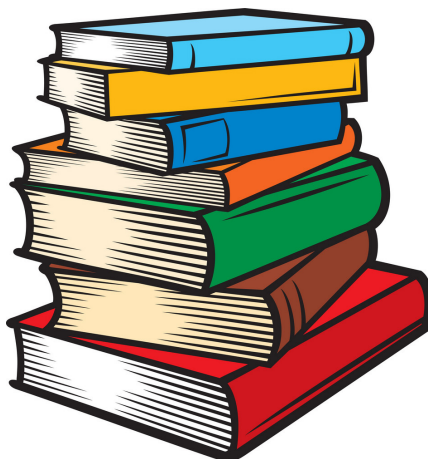
**The Island of Sea Women by Lisa See**

A historical multigenerational novel set in Korea under Japanese rule. Telling the story of the haenyeo divers on Jeju island and the dramatic history that shaped their lives. A very moving novel.

**The Book of Goose by Yiyun Li**

A remarkable exploration of the friendship of two young girls in post war France. Beautifully written.

**Judy Humphreys**



**BOOK  
BEAT  
What  
Trekkers  
are  
reading**

**Next Year in Havana by Chanel Cleeton**

**Our Man in Havana by Graham Greene**

I was in Cuba recently and read a couple of good novels to set the scene! In **Next year in Havana**, a Cuban-American woman travels to Havana, where she discovers the roots of her identity—and unearths a family secret. **Our Man in Havana**, set in Cuba in the 1950s, is a black comedy in which a vacuum cleaner salesman is recruited by MI6. Both are wonderful reads, very different books but equally enjoyable.

**Anne Dunne**

**Tidelands and Dark Tides by Philippa Gregory**

Gregory continues her advance

into historical fiction and has reached the mid-17th century with her novels. *Tidelands* and its sequel *Dark Tides*. *Tidelands* is set in a seventeenth-century England caught in the maelstrom of civil war and obsessed with the prevalence of witches. The sequel, *Dark Tides*, moves to the contested frontier of early America, and to the golden streets of Venice. The more things change the more they remain the same!

**Turn a Blind Eye and Next in Line by Jeffrey Archer**

Love him or loathe him Jeffrey Archer writes a good thriller: these are two in his latest series on the adventures of policeman William Warwick.

**Jim Costello**

**All the Broken Places by John Boyne**

This is a sequel to *The Boy in Striped Pyjamas*. It's 1946, three years after a cataclysmic event tore their lives apart, a mother and daughter flee to Paris, shame and fear at their heels, not knowing how hard it is to flee from your past. Powerful, moving and thought provoking.

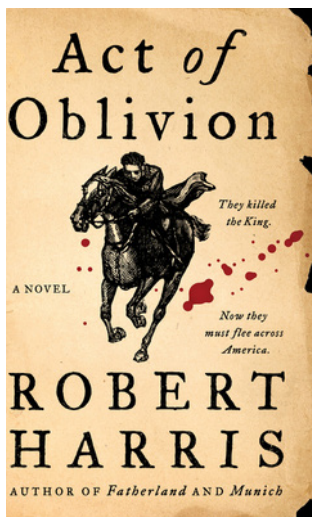
**Demon Copperhead by Barbara Kingsolver**

This is a modern retelling of *David Copperfield*. Set in the Appalachians, the same set of horrifying tragedies still exist. It provides a scathing look at a forgotten population, told by a perceptive red-haired kid who has more than his share of poverty, starvation, crummy foster homes and losses. He is a hero worth rooting for. A must read.

**Ordinary Grace by William Kent Krueger**

The summer of 1961 should have been another ordinary summer for 13 year old Frank, but it was a summer of tragedy, **Continued on page 20**

from page 19  
grief, adult  
problems and  
questions of  
faith. A poignant  
coming-of-  
age story with  
elements of  
mystery and  
suspense,  
**Una Davis**



**The Prince of  
the Skies by  
Antonio Iturbe**

This book is  
based on the true story of Antoine  
De Saint Exupery who wrote *The  
Little Prince*. His passions were  
for flying and beautiful women  
and in the early 20th century he  
achieved his ambitions as a pilot,  
which lead to the development  
of air mail services worldwide.  
However in his personal life, fame  
and fortune were short lived.

**Lessons in Chemistry by  
Bonnie Garmus**

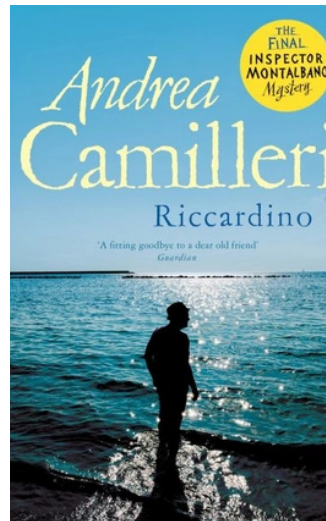
Set in 1960s California, this  
dryly witty novel is the story of  
Elizabeth Zott, the book's heroine,  
who sets out to achieve full  
equality with men in sports and  
in chemistry. There are many  
changes in her life along the way  
as she wants to change the status  
quo for 1960s women.

**Act of Oblivion by Robert  
Harris**

Based on a true story to find the  
killers of Charles the First, this  
17<sup>th</sup>-century novel begins with  
those hunting them arriving in  
Massachusetts. There is a large  
dramatis personae on both sides  
of the Atlantic. Harris's style bring  
you along very easily along on  
this great adventure.

**Riccardino by Andrea  
Camilleri**

And for a little bit of fun, the very  
last Montalbano mystery set in  
Sicily. The author plays a role in  
this one, which adds to the fun.



**Putin's People by Catherine  
Belton**

A good background history helps  
our understanding of what Putin  
has been doing to promote his  
ideals in relation to Crimea,  
Ukraine etc. It's obvious 'The  
West' has been asleep for many  
years.

**To My Daughter in France  
by Barbara and Stephanie  
Keating**

Sweeping historical drama that  
moves between occupied Paris,  
the coast of Connemara and  
the vineyards of the Languedoc  
region of southern France in the  
1970s is difficult to stop reading  
once you make a start.

**Gerry Fogarty**

**Mary Lou McDonald – A  
Republican Riddle by Shane  
Ross**

I'm reading Shane Ross's  
biography of Sinn Fein leader  
Mary Lou McDonald, seen  
by some as a possible future  
Taoiseach. Ross is well-qualified  
to write the story of the enigmatic  
Mary Lou.

A former government  
Minister familiar with the  
corridors of power, he is also  
an accomplished newspaper  
columnist. As a writer, he  
knows how to grab the reader's  
attention, and is no stranger to  
the well-turned phrase. I'm  
about halfway through the ebook

**Marie Comiskey**



version of  
'Mary Lou  
McDonald  
– A  
Republican  
Riddle' and I  
find it well-  
written and  
extremely  
well-  
researched.

**Special Forces Brothers in  
Arms by Patric McGonigal**

I'm interested in military history  
and a fellow Trekker told me  
about another book which I  
have also begun to read. In this  
fascinating book the author tells  
the story of two Irish Catholic  
brothers, Eoin and Ambrose  
McGonigal, and their role in the  
UK's special forces during the  
Second World War.

Eoin was a founding  
member of the SAS, along with  
his friend Blair 'Paddy' Mayne,  
from Newtownards, Co Down.  
Much to Mayne's distress, Eoin  
died on a parachute drop into  
Libya. His remains were never  
recovered.

Ambrose McGonigal  
(grandfather of author Patric)  
served with the Special Boat  
Service on coastal raids into  
Yugoslavia. He became a High  
Court judge and a Lord Justice  
of Appeal in Northern Ireland –  
dangerous posts to occupy during  
the Troubles.

According to his grandson  
Patric, he was known as 'The  
Black Prince' and was under  
constant protection, carrying a  
gun under his robes. (According  
to another source, he carried  
TWO guns under his robes.) He  
avoided the assassin's bullet and  
died peacefully in 1979.

**Sean Boyne**



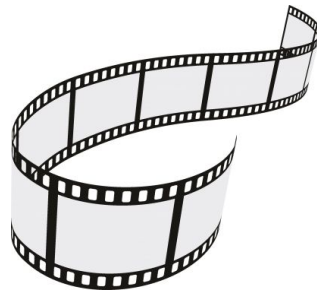
**The Swimmers**  
 Directed by Sally El Hosaini, released in 2022, this film is based on a true story about two sisters from Syria, aged 17 and 20, (played by two sisters) who leave their home in Damascus in 2015 in hopes of getting to Germany. They are both elite swimmers with aspirations to qualify for the Olympics. Their journey is portrayed realistically and, though harrowing, is also uplifting and full of heroism and humanity. On Netflix.

**Slow Horses**  
 This spy thriller series, based on a series of novels by Mick Herron, features MI5 rejects who in one way or another have messed up: relocated to Slough House, they are assigned boring jobs in the hope that they will resign through frustration or humiliation. They are known as 'slow horses', a pun/wordplay on Slough House.

Super production, terrific characters, great actors, especially Gary Oldman who plays Jackson Lamb, the head of Slough House, unkempt, uncouth and abusive, but with a razor-sharp intellect. On Apple+.

**Fionnuala Martin**

**The Bear**  
 An award winning chef takes on a debt ridden



TV, Movies  
 What  
 Trekkers  
 are  
 watching

diner in Chicago. Eight short episodes and a season two in the making. Comedy/drama. Excellent. On Disney +  
**Midnight Diner: Tokyo stories**  
 An anthology of human relationship stories connected through the midnight diner the characters frequent. Very empathetic Japanese Netflix series.

**Judy Humphreys**

**The Wonder**  
 Netflix movie is an adaptation of Emma O'Donoghue's book of the same name, atmospheric and haunting says Judy Humphreys.  
 Geraldine Boland says:  
 This period drama set in rural



Florence Pugh in The Wonder

Ireland in 1862 was shot in 2021 and features some locations familiar to Trekkers near Sally Gap. Also included are scenes on the Moat (bog) Road (below Kippure) in the Featherbeds (near Lemass Memorial and off the Military Road). This is a location for Trekker Pure Mile clean ups. Paced slowly, this unusual story follows an English nurse invited to observe a young girl who is said to be surviving without food. I loved the performances in this movie, in particular Florence Pugh and Tom Burke. I was delighted to recognise our familiar Wicklow mountain landscapes as the mystery unfolded. For further reviews and a trailer see: [https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/the\\_wonder\\_2022](https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/the_wonder_2022)

**Judy Humphreys  
 Geraldine Boland**

**Wild Cat**  
 Documentary set in the Peruvian Amazon jungle about a young British veteran dealing with PTSD. Loved it and brought back memories of a trip there many years ago. Saw it in IFI, it's now available on Amazon Prime.

**Madoff**  
 Very good four-part series about Bernie Madoff and his Ponzi schemes. On Netflix.

**Anne Dunne**

# Photo finish



Above: on Tibbradden, November. Top right: Powerscourt, October; below that, in Richmond Barracks on January WW (see story page 13)



Above: Feargal's first time on Maulin; below, outside Bono's gate on a WW



Above, A walk, Jan 7th; bottom right, Trekkers in the Wicklow Times (see story p6)



WW in Ballinastoe, Dec 14, left. Above: Lauren and Jack from Colorado, right, meet Trekkers on Howth in January

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## Tin Pure Mile Gala Evening

After a two-year absence, the Pure Mile Evening Awards will return for 2022 to The Brookledge Hotel in Macreddin, Aughrim, on Thursday 27th October.

The Pure Mile is an environmental, community, heritage initiative established by the Pure Project which encourages communities and groups living in rural areas to adopt a mile, or miles, of road, and keep this area litter-free, research information about their local wildflowers, plants, trees, animals, and the built, cultural, and social heritage of an area.

On the Gala Evening each group will receive a Pure Mile Certificate of Participation, a selection of native Irish trees, and all will be included in the popular Pure Mile Calendar which will be launched in December this year. Certificates of Recognition will also be presented on the night with over €6,000 of prize money being handed out to the winning Pure Mile Groups and their volunteers.

The Pure Mile is the perfect opportunity for communities and groups who want to make a positive contribution to their locality and environment, and assist people in improving and enhancing the place they live in or recreate in.

Special interest groups such as, walking groups, cycling groups, running groups, and organisations, adopt a mile, or miles, of road, in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands and help Pure to 'Clean Up The Wicklow/Dublin Uplands'. Pure provides all groups with Pure Mile signage, Pure Mile high-vis vests, Pure Mile bags, gloves, and litter pickers, and Pure also removes all of the rubbish collected by the groups.

If any groups, communities, individuals, schools, walking groups, cycling groups, scouts, businesses, ANYONE, want to get involved in next year's Pure Mile, they can contact Pure at info@pureproject.ie or download an application form from [www.pureproject.ie/what-we-do/the-pure-mile/](http://www.pureproject.ie/what-we-do/the-pure-mile/). You can also write to: Pure Project, Unit 6 B, Riverside Business Centre, Tinahilly, Co Wicklow, Y18 R9T8, and they will post out all the information, or request an application form and information pack by phoning Pure on 042 26662.

Further information on Pure can be found on [www.pureproject.ie](http://www.pureproject.ie)

TO REPORT ON NEWS AND HAPPENINGS IN THE WICKLOW/DUBLIN UPLANDS CALL 042 26662

1800 905 123

Pure Mile Trekkers Walking Group