

Trekker

June 2019

Trekkers Mountainering Club Glenageary Co Dublin www.trekkers.ie

Edition 65



Blue Skies in Dingle

The Trekkers Converged on Dingle

The journey down was very pleasant. We arrived at the Dingle Skellig hotel on schedule, giving us enough time to hit the ground running. The local cultural, culinary and beverage culture was sampled, e.g. Harry Clarke windows in the Presentation convent chapel, Murphys ice cream down at the harbour and music and pints in O'Flahertys. And still only Monday!

Tuesday morning saw an early start for our trip to the Great Blasket Island. We had a super walk around the island. The scenery was breathtakingly beautiful. Neasa's brother, Lorcaín, accompanied us, imparting interesting facts and helping us to feel a bit less like tourists and more like locals! We finished with a cuppa back at the cafe in the village. The return boat trip was choppy, but exciting and dramatic. We felt we had earned our 3-course meal that evening.

Wednesday; We walked around Sleah Head; it is so beautiful. John Hegarty pointed out sites of archaeological significance, including several clocháin.

Inside

- 2 Chairs / Editors Notes
- 3 New Members
- 4 Dingle continued
- 6 Leading Walks
- 7 Remembering Micheál Cotter
- 8 Ethiopia
- 9 Memorial Service
- 10-12 Canary Island Capers
- 14-16 Walk Photos

Continued on page 4

Chairman Notes

I am delighted to welcome the following new members: Clóna de Bhaldrathe Marsh, Marie-Lou Hartford, Colm & Frieda Swords, Catherine Mulcahy, Catherine Almond, Jim Costello, Jim Ryan, Kevin & Ann Carroll, Angela Carrick and Tom Fitzgerald. There are currently 175 full and honorary members plus 3 associate members.

The past few months have been very active for your Committee. I have heard great reports about the four-day trip to the Dingle Peninsula under the direction of Malachy Hanley and John Hegarty and the one to Tinahely Co Wicklow led by Paddy McManus

Three one-day Walk Leadership Workshops have been arranged with expert tutor Charles O'Byrne at his base in Glenmalure– each accommodating six persons and all fully subscribed.

The Summer Party will take place in National Yacht Club on Saturday 27th July – with after-dinner entertainment! I look forward to seeing as many members as possible enjoy that evening.

I was pleased that Ryanair promptly refunded the air fares paid by 31 Trekkers in respect of travel Carcassone in September when it became clear that this French Trip could not proceed after the onset of Micheál's Cotter's illness.

I am delighted to confirm that Alan Kane has accepted the role of Secretary for the remainder of this membership year

Wishing everyone well for a Summer offering many enjoyable hikes in weather that is hopefully pleasant!

Myles Duffy

Editors Note

Welcome to the latest edition of the the Trekker with its mix of reports and articles from you the members.

The Trekkers have been very busy recently galavanting around the place both home and abroad, I hope you will enjoy reading about their adventures.

Encouraging new members to lead walks is the life blood the club. It can be daunting to do this for the first time. Alan Kane has shared his experiences with you in this issue. He mentioned using the Viewranger App which is a great asset in planning routes. ViewRanger runs very well on many smartphones and is a cost effective way to have a GPS . Aurimas Paršonis has produced two instructional viedos on how to use it, they are availbale on the webiste.

Many thanks to all of you who have contributed to this issue. The content for this magazine relies on your reports and photos so keep them coming. Let me know what you would like to hear about and I will listen out on walks for potential articles, at the risk that you might all start avoiding me!!

Please send copy and photos to me at maryllavellemurphy@gmail.com

Mary Murphy



| Education Link Name | Education Link URL |
|--|---|
| Viewranger Lesson 1, by Aurimas Paršonis - Introduction | https://drive.google.com/open?id=1sfh3688lbeA0mHEhK2M9L0eZbnTRVajU |
| Viewranger Lesson 2, by Aurimas Paršonis - How to Plan a Route | https://drive.google.com/open?id=1lK8l9F1eRGCor_xPeDDO_SWBzJ27nF4Y |

Viewranger is free to download.
For help on how to use it have a look at Aurimus's instructional videos on the website
homepage > education

Welcome our newest members



Clíona de Bhaldraithe Marsh



Catherine Mulcahy



Angela Carrick



Ann Carroll



Kevin Carroll



Colm Swords



Freda Swords



Jim Ryan



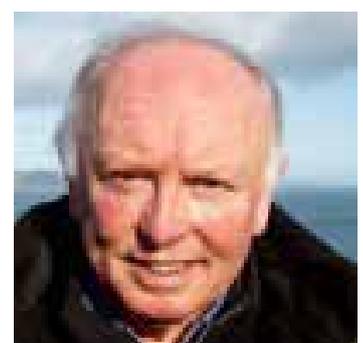
Catherine Almond



Marie-Lou Hartford



Tom Fitzgerald



Jim Costello



Dingle trip continued

We visited the OPW Blasket Interpretive Centre in Dún Chaoin where we delved into the story of the lives, traditions, language and culture of the people who lived in the Blasket village we had visited the previous day.

Once again, Lorcáin was on hand to welcome us and answer our questions. Some opted to linger in the Centre, while others did a second walk. For the movie-lovers among us, it was exciting to walk in the footsteps of Robert

Mitchum and Sarah Miles on beautiful, windswept cliffs ('Ryan's Daughter', 40+ years ago!).

Music fans were treated to top-notch traditional Irish music in John Bennys pub on Wednesday evening. The pub is owned by Neasa's brother. The music was provided by her sister, Éilís, and her band. Éilís sang beautifully.

Thursday We walked a 13k section of Cosán na Naomh.

Much of the path runs between ditches teeming with diverse nature. The views of Ceann Sibéal, the Three Sisters and Wine Strand were stunning. A highlight of the pilgrim path is Gallarus Oratory, an early Christian church, constructed from dry stone. Very impressive. From there we walked to an old church and graveyard. It was so interesting to wander quietly and peruse the headstones. It is a stunning burial ground.

As on the other evenings, we had a full 3-course meal. I suspect many of us gained more calories than we burned

over the few days.

Several trekkers adjourned to the lounge for a nightcap and a few songs.

Friday We left Dingle in glorious sunshine. The views from the bus on the journey to Tralee were super. The return journey went very smoothly.

The trip went like clockwork. It was thoroughly

The trip went like clockwork. It was thoroughly enjoyable, from start to finish





enjoyable, from start to finish. The hotel worked out really well; the staff were friendly and helpful. Buses were always punctual and drivers very pleasant. Most importantly, the trekkers' company was delightful!

Our thanks and appreciation to Malachy & Anne and to John & Neasa for making it all possible.

Fionnuala Martin

What the Donkey Saw ?

The caption competition is back

Any thoughts of what that donkey is thinking as he watches Trekkers traipsing around the Kerry hills ?

A free bus trip for the most entertaining offering !

Entries please to marylavellemurphy@gmail.com



Leading Walks

Leading Walks for the first time can be daunting. Alan Kane shares his experience

Q Had you any previous experience in leading walks?

A I also walk with another walking club - I led a walk with that club last summer, so leading the walk with Trekkers was my second time to lead

Q How did you go about choosing a route?

A I used the Trekkers website to find a suitable route, I was amazed how useful and user friendly the website is. Just go to the 'Walk Routes' page and here you find a full database of all previous walks. You can then search by location, by grade, by distance or by climb height. I found a walk that was last done in 2010.

Maps from www.eastwestmapping.ie are a great starting point. They have a range of maps that cover the Dublin mountains and Co Wicklow. They can also be purchased from book shops and outdoor stores or in digital versions, which are compatible with ViewRanger.

Q Tips for setting about it, did you use a GPS or APP to help?

A I have to say I like my gadgets. I have a Garmin 64s and I also use ViewRanger. I was able to download the track from the website on to my Garmin and then use it for the recce. The

Q How was the recce experience?

A The recce experience was invaluable. It really is essential to do one, no amount of looking at a map will replace actually being on the ground. So many things can change from month to month on the routes and recent weather can be a major factor in choosing a route. It's a good idea to do the recce fairly near the date of the walk. On the first walk I led one of the coleaders showed me a great spot for lunch and an option to minimise the road walk. You really can gain from talking to other trekkers and sharing their experience of leading

walks.

I had heard about the Deserted Village off the Wicklow Way in Ballinacorney and was keen to see if I could include it in the walk, on the recce I found that the main route to the Deserted Village had been closed off. I needed to consult East West map and find another way of accessing it.

Q How did it work out on the day?

A We were very unfortunate with the weather, we got a very wet and windy day. As a result the walk proved to be a lot tougher than expected. Due to the inclement weather we decided to leave the Deserted Village for another day. All were glad to reach the Coachman's Inn in Roundwood for a pint or a coffee.

Q Would you do thing differently next time ?

A No, I don't feel I would.

Q How did you feel about the overall experience?

A I found it a very positive experience, it makes a big difference when you are leading.

Q Would you encourage other Trekkers to undertake leading walks

A I certainly would. I am attending one of the Walk Leadership Programmes, I look forward to learning how to deal with the different situations that can arise on the hills.

Don't worry you won't be thrown into the deep end straight away, you will be given the opportunity to colead first.



Remembering Micheál Cotter

(10 December 1949 – 20 April 2019)

Trekkers were reminded about the fragility of human mortality when Micheál was stricken suddenly with a serious illness at Lehaunstown in the course of the C Walk on 2nd February. But the wonderful tribute paid to her husband by Josephine before his Requiem Mass at SS Alphonus & Columba Church Ballybrack began portrayed a dynamic man of conviction with an abundantly generous and committed spirit; always up for a challenge; who has left a strong and durable legacy. Micheál's was a life well led.

Micheál and Josephine joined the Club after he retired in 2006 from a long career with AIB Bank and quickly became a quintessential Trekker. He held tenure on the Committee three times – from 2011 to 2013 as Publicity Officer; from 2013 to 2014 as Treasurer and he was elected Secretary in 2017. Aside from that input, he and Josephine arranged three very successful trekking trips to France and his planning for a fourth next September had been well advanced. His deep affection for the splendour of rural France began with family holidays in the vicinity of Cantobre in the Aveyron region, - an

area of outstanding beauty and he shared this passion with Trekkers.

Micheál put his heart and soul into everything that he set his mind to. He was brimming with ideas for many new initiatives and had the thoroughness and determination to see them implemented successfully – among them the Social Walks designed for Trekkers whose customary mobility has been impaired.

His presence, resourcefulness and camaraderie is missed greatly. Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to Josephine, his children Thomas, Michael and Néidín and the extended family.

Myles Duffy
Chairperson

Ethiopia

Trekkers Una Davis and Emer Spillane took to the hills in Ethiopia

Trekking the Wollo Highlands in Ethiopia at altitude 3,300 meters was an amazing experience. Thirteen of us brave souls (inc. Emer Spillane and I) flew direct from Dublin to Addis Ababa last Oct. We spent two days there visiting the tomb of Haile Salassie and viewing the skeleton of 3 million year old Lucy in the National Museum.

Then had a 10 hour bus ride across magnificent countryside through towns and villages to Bahir Dar. During our boat trip on Lake Tana, a real live hippo surfaced and eyed us and the boat menacingly! We visited ancient Coptic Church monasteries on some islands and went as far by boat to the source of the Blue Nile.

Next came the Trek, 6 days, 105 km across the remote highlands. We hiked for 7 hrs a day with local guides and had mules to carry our bags. There was no electricity, no running water and roads were just rocky dirt paths. The countryside is vast and beautiful and the views of the valley were especially breathtaking. The people manage to survive on so little, don't have words to describe it.

The most moving part of the trip was the welcome we got in two schools being helped hugely by Africa Direct. The classrooms had no windows and few desks. The children attend morning or afternoon classes and then work in the fields and mind the animals, and seem to spend much of their time shooing baboons away from the crops.

We stayed in tukals along the way and local women cooked for us around bonfires at night. We had some fun around those fires entertaining ourselves with chats, jokes, songs ... and beer!



Memorial Service 2019

New members might like to know the background to the Annual Commemoration of deceased Trekkers

Trekkers Mountaineering Club was started in 1982 by Shaun Trant and other fathers of sons who were members Sandycove Sea Scouts.

The decision to erect a permanent memorial to deceased Trekkers was taken in 2009 following the death, in the course of the intervening years, of Joe English, Jack Langan, Charlie Ryan, Eric Lindstrom and Ciaran Trant.

The Club is indebted to the Dowling family of Glenmalure Lodge who kindly permitted our Memorial to be sited on their property. The first commemoration at this Memorial took place on 18th July 2009 and each year thereafter.

Myles Duffy

Colette Dorgan with Myles Duffy laying the wreath in Glenmalure to commemorate 15 deceased Trekkers, including her own husband Michael who died in 2000



Two nights were spent in Lilabela, a small pilgrimage town with 12th century churches hewn from solid rock.

The trip is run by Africa Direct (africadirect@gmail.com), a small voluntary organization who fund and supervise vital projects.

I'm left with a lasting memory of the resilience and elegance of the people in the face of such poverty and I'd recommend the trip to any hardy folk who'd like to view life from a very different angle. (Warning : it will prick your conscience)

From my point of view, the only downside was that my friend Mary Murphy missed the trip of a lifetime!

Una Davis

Canary Island Capers

Trekkers seeking winter sun took off to the Canary Islands

Tenerife

Fourteen hardy trekkers assembled at Dublin Airport and journeyed to Tenerife for a week's walking trip (more of a 'limping' trip given the number of injuries being carried by at least half of the group). We shared four holiday villas and our leader, Martin, lived in another villa, all in the same development in Golf del Sur. We were picked up at the airport about 7 pm and shortly afterwards we were all enjoying our first drink in Martins's front garden. This pre-dinner drink(s!) continued every evening much to the enjoyment of all. Every 5 minutes or so the 'chat' was briefly interrupted by another planeload of holidaymakers arriving and passing almost within touching distance above us; gave us time to drink between the 'chat'. After the first day's walk we were brought 'food' shopping for our breakfasts and packed lunches; you should have seen some of the stuff that was bought; carrots!! We were brought to very nice restaurants every evening with good food and even better wine.



Our first walk 27th Feb brought us to Chinyero where we completed a walk of almost 10k and a climb of 300 mtrs. This was our introduction to the black lava fields and dusty tracks with magnificent views all around especially of Mount Teide. It was warm but we had the benefit of some shade for much of the way.

On day 2 we went to the area of Sumara where we walked 8.5k and 400 mtrs climb in similar terrain to previous day.

Day 3 saw most travelling to volcanic Mount Teide; the two oldies, Terry and Joe took the day off, afraid of an eruption! The rest took the cable car from 2400 mtrs to 3500 mtrs. The fit and the brave numbering six took the steep steps up another 200mtrs to the top reaching 3715 mtrs! The other six walked to viewing areas, etc. at the 3500 mtr level. Most felt the lack of oxygen and had to rest frequently. All agreed it was a wonderful experience and well worth the effort.



Day 4 was a semi-rest day. Half went shopping with Martin to a Decathlon sports outlet; remainder went to a seaside town called El Medane and were joined later by the shoppers, some sporting their purchases. There were windsurfers, kitesurfers, dingies, etc in vast numbers moving in all directions and it looked chaotic.

Joe, Paddy & Terry travelled there by hired car, parked it carefully, noted carefully the location and spent at least 45 mins looking for it afterwards !!!



Day 5 brought us up the east coast to Guimar port and an area call Malpais (badlands) de Guimar with a volcanic hill and several lava flows which are quite recent, less than 10,000 years. It's a wonderful area for a walk and is frequented by many of the locals. The circuit is about 7k with a climb of 200 mtrs. All enjoyed a little drink afterwards in the very lively town seafront.

On day 6 we had a lovely walk of 7.5k and 450mtr climb, in the Chimiche – Las Vegas area. In contrast to the previous walks it was green with trees shrubs and flowers.

On the last day Martin brought those willing and able on a brisk 8k coastal walk from Palma Mar to Las Galletas. After this we left for the airport at 5.00 pm and all arrived home safely.

Many thanks to Mary Murray for organising this very successful trip and also to Jim Bourke for taking on the driving of the second people carrier on all the trips and of course to Ciaran for his navigational assistance to Jim. Our hosts Martin and his wife Toni looked after us really, really well. Our thanks also to two friends of Martin & Toni, another Martin & Jane, who came on some of the walks.

Terry O'Brien



Walking the Valleys of La Gomera



As I stepped off the bus before our very first walk on the island of La Gomera, my body gave a slight shiver. This was chiefly due to the low temperature, but a sense of uneasiness may also have played its part. After all, our journey to the starting point had meant negotiating countless zig-zags through a ravine-scored landscape, and now that we had finally alighted we were surrounded by menacing pinnacles of naked rock, while ominous clouds crowded the sky overhead.

The first hundred yards or so of our walk could plainly be seen before us: a steep, narrow, gravelly path that descended a series of steps into a plunging valley before swerving out of view and venturing onwards into the unknown. But as we resolved to follow this snaking path and as we picked our way down into lower country, the temperature seemed to rise and the threat of the clouds subsided – so that whatever uneasiness might have weighed upon our hearts quickly subsided along with it.

Our ever-cheerful guide Giovanni also helped to lift the mood, and within a short period of time we fell into a nice rhythm and it soon appeared that our holiday had begun in earnest.

The island of La Gomera is an almost perfect circle and perhaps its most prominent geographical features are the deep, sheer-edged valleys that radiate out from its centre. *Flat* is certainly not an adjective that applies to the terrain here. In order to travel anywhere on the island therefore it is necessary to take on wildly circuitous routes and for this reason alone it is easy to forget that the island is only twenty-two kilometres across.

The sea is never far away, and if one is facing in the right direction it is possible to make out Mount Teide

on neighbouring Tenerife, rising formidably above the horizon. Much of the walking undertaken by our group of eight involved clambering in and out of these valleys, or, as was more usually the case, making our way patiently along them as they penetrated through the rocky country. At times,



the sound of our voices was given an eerie, echoing quality – almost as if the voices themselves were unable to escape the close confines of the deep ravines in which they found themselves.

Of course, another feature of La Gomera which sets it apart from any walking that I had done before is the vegetation: sun-faded green cacti, squat palm-trees, and euphorbia – a plant with which we were to become very familiar. Giovanni was able to tell us how to distinguish the different varieties of these plants by pointing out to

Christmas Party



us the ever-so-subtle differences between them. And, what is more, these beautiful and unusual plants were not just a feast for the eyes, for every so often Giovanni would climb monkey-like up into a nearby tree and bring us back fruits and nuts to sample: almonds, and the sweetest of figs.

All of these elements make La Gomera a paradise for walking, and while there is often a sense when walking there that one is treading upon paths that no-one has ever trod on before, the paths are carefully and lovingly maintained. In addition to this, walkers are treated to a variety of settings, and throughout our five walks we encountered lush forest, barren expanses of broken rock, areas of widely scattered trees, and views of sea-cliffs and foaming waves.

And the one final thing La Gomera has to offer is its position off the coast of Africa, so that even in early March the weather seems to be that of June or July. Indeed, perhaps that's La Gomera's greatest appeal: being there gives one a special preview of the summer months to come.

Dermot Murray

The Trekker June 2019





Recent Walks



C Walk 25 November



WW 5 December



C Walk 23 February



WW 16 May



WW 16 May



WW 16 May





WW / Howth



B Walk 1 December



B Walk 19 January



C Walk 13 April



Social Walk to the Devils Glen



WW 16 May