



# The Trekker

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

Edition 66 November 2019

## Donegal Delights



The Trekkers walking trip to Donegal, organised by Myles Duffy and Kevin Carroll, kicked off with the group of 40 brave souls making their way to the Central Hotel in Donegal Town.

I travelled by bus from Bus Aras, very reasonably priced and plenty of buses each day. There were a few of us travelling together, others took earlier buses or drove.

Arrival at the Central Hotel was very straightforward, the hotel located very conveniently at the bus stop on "the Diamond" in the centre of town. An efficient reception saw us in our rooms swiftly and after acclimatising we met up in Chapman's Restaurant in the hotel for dinner.

The room was buzzing with chat when I arrived at 7, everyone delighted to be there and anticipating the next few days. There was much discussion of the weather prospects!

[continued on page 6](#)

### In this Issue

Chairspersons Report	2
New Members	3
Hon Life Memberships	4
Tinalhilly	5
Donegal Trip	6
AGM Report	10
Looking After the Knees	12
Walks Photos	14

# Chairpersons Notes

Hello Everyone,

It is wonderful to see so many people out walking regularly on all our walks despite the damp weather we have had over the last couple of months.

As so often said, the ethos of the Trekkers is what makes it so special, the way we receive new members reflects that, so in particular I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members and wish you all many years of walking, new friendships and of course interesting conversation.

While only briefly on the committee I am struck by the hard work and commitment of its members to ensure that we continue to have a strong and vibrant club. I would like to thank them on your behalf for all their efforts.

*Fiona O'Sullivan*

# Editors Notes

Welcome to issue 66 of the Trekker.

Trekkers have been very busy since the last issue. There have been trips around the country, lots of walks and social events. I hope you enjoy reading about some of them.

There are a bumper volume of photos of recent walks in this issue. I have been on the receiving end of lots of fab photos, thank you all very much for taking the time to send them to me. I think we all love reminiscing over walks, so keep them coming.

At the AGM Karen from the Maple Clinic in Booterstown give a very informative talk about looking after our knees. The notes from the article are also on the web site under "documents" should you like to print them off

I am always interested in the exploits of Trekkers so please let me know of anything of interest to your fellow Trekkers. Send copy and photos to me at [marylavellemurphy@gmail.com](mailto:marylavellemurphy@gmail.com)

*Mary Murphy*

## Your new Committee



Fiona O'Sullivan  
Chairperson



Alan Kane  
Secretary



Dympna Thunder  
Walks Coordinator



Paddy McManus  
Treasurer



Mary Murphy  
Publicity Officer

# Welcome our newest members



Mary Cadogan



Anne Coffey



Conal Harvey



Isle McD



Joan Kennedy



Louise Woodhouse



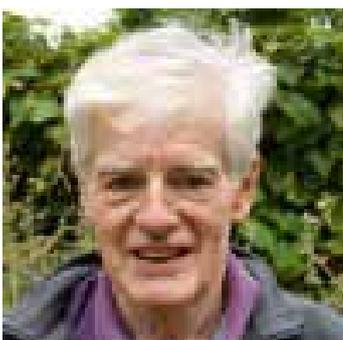
Lee Devlin



Mark Leslie



Mary Dolan



Paddy Smith



Patrick Howlan

## We also welcome

Brendan Hannon  
Corinne Giacometti  
Carmel Gillen  
Frazer Meredith  
Roy Devine  
Grainne Carty  
Tina Glynn  
Sorry guys you haven't been caught on camera yet !!!

# Honorary Life Membership



Myles with Monty, Dick and Evelyn



Brendan

At the Summer Party in the National Yacht Club in July the Club was delighted to confer honorary membership on Monty & Evelyn Tinsley, Dick Ryan and Brendan Bracken in recognition of the exceptional service each of them rendered to the Club over many years.

A great evening was had by all and members danced the night away to entertainment provided by Carmel Dickenson.

# Tinahely Trekking

## Ballycumber and Mangans Loops

### How to describe the experience?

**T**reasure, a gem

**I**t's intimate, embracing beauty

**N**atures abundance of flowers, light and scudding cloud

**A**n almighty heaven

**H**ail the peace, the silent air

**E**at the farmers' grub galore

**L**ap up, suck and gobble this gem

**Y**es, yes, yes...a sigh of peace

With apologies to JJ.



The Wednesday Walk of the 22nd May took place in Tinahely, Co. Wicklow with the completion of the Ballycumber Loop.



It was a beautifully warm day with a gentle breeze. The panoramic views were clear in the light. The fifteen participants (see Members Walk Routes for names, stats) rounded up in Murphy's Hotel in the Square of Tinahely for a fine meal and socialise.

Some stayed overnight and eight participated in the Thursday walk of Mangans Loop, again another breath taking day.

**Paddy McManus**



*Continued from page 1*

After dinner Myles introduced us to our guides for the 3 days of hiking – Michael and Agatha McGarrigle, an experienced husband and wife team based in Donegal. Following Myles’s words of welcome and background Michael gave us some details of what he and Agatha had in store for us. It was obvious that we were in for a very interesting few days.

After dinner some of the more intrepid Trekkers went out on the town, others of us retired early in anticipation of the energy we would need to store for the 9am starts over the next 3 days.



Wednesday 9 October 2019

Breakfast was at 7.30 – and having expected to wake at my usual 6.45 I was shocked on waking to see it was 8.30. I managed to make it to the coach at 9 (and even grab some breakfast) but learned my lesson and set my alarm from then on.

We were organised into our 3 groups, one led

by our guide Michael McGarrigle, the second by Kevin Carroll and the third by Malachy Hanley, and efficiently collected from outside our hotel by the coach.

Our first outing was from the Barnesmore Gap to the summit of Cruach Eoghanagh, one of the hills skirting the gap. The

Barnesmore Gap, is a mountain pass situated in the Bluestack Mountains dividing the higher Bluestack Mountains from the smaller hills heading south. The main Donegal to Ballybofey road, the N15, and former County Donegal

Railway (now defunct) run through the Barnesmore Gap, acting as the main route between south and north Donegal. The name in Irish, An Bearnas Mór, literally means The Big Gap. On our way there Michael gave us some interesting commentary about the locality, including the history of the Barnesmore Gap and tales of desperate bandits attacking travellers on their way north and south.



View East to Lough Mourne

Access to Cruach Eoghanagh (Croaghonagh) is from the N15 and we started out on our route to the top from the road, followed a forest path to a quarry and then on and up. After a while we stopped for some stretching exercises under Agatha's expert tuition. I think we all appreciated the beneficial effect of the stretching once we got going again.

We continued onwards and upwards over deep tussocky grass which likes to hold onto water - gaiters and waterproof leggings came in very handy.

An imposing communications mast stands at the summit and the hillside is scattered with windmills. A line of telegraph poles encouraged us to the top. The weather did not enhance the experience at the summit unfortunately and we ate our lunch huddled behind the concrete walls of the communications station.

We managed to glimpse a view of Donegal Bay from the top looking west, and on our way down the light broke through the clouds and we were able to see east to Lough Mourne.

View east to Lough Mourne

Our walk downhill was spurred on by the promise of refreshments at Bidy's O'Barnes - a local tavern serving hot soup, cups of tea and pints of Guinness

which were much appreciated.

Back at the hotel we scattered to our rooms, the swimming pool and sauna, and walks around town before meeting up for dinner again at 7.



Thursday 10 October 2019

Thursday broke bright and sunny (only joking) – the rain was torrential all night and so we were rather cautious about the walk we were undertaking today, to Sliabh Liagh (Slieve League).

In 1939 Robert Lloyd Praeger described the cliffs as follows:

*“A tall mountain of nearly 2000 feet, precipitous on its northern side, has been devoured by the sea till the southern face forms a precipice likewise, descending on this side right into the Atlantic from the long knife-edge which forms the summit. The traverse of this ridge, the “One Man’s Path”, is one of the most remarkable walks to be found in Ireland - not actually dangerous, but needing a good head and careful progress on a stormy day....The northern precipice, which drops 1500 feet into the coomb surrounding the Little Lough Agh, harbours the majority of the alpine plants of Slieve League, the most varied group of alpiners to be found anywhere in Donegal.”*

We had been asked to opt for one of 2 proposed walks up and around the cliffs, the longer one was the Pilgrim’s Path and the second option was to Bunglass Point overlooking the sea and cliffs. I decided to brave the Pilgrim’s Path.

*“The Cosán an Oilithrigh or Pilgrims Path at Sliabh Liagh is a stunning 4km access route on to the plateau of Sliabh Liagh. It follows the ancient path up a U-shape valley nestled between Leargadachtan Mountain and the sea cliffs at Shanbally, overlooking the small fishing village of Teelin in South West Donegal. Following the old green road from the car park at Ballymore you round the corner where the wide green and impressive horseshoe-shaped valley unfolds in front of you. As you round the valley floor beneath you, you start climbing to reveal spectacular views over Teelin Harbour and the Wild Atlantic as well as Counties Sligo and Mayo beyond. Rounding the next corner, you climb up to the viewing area at the waterfall. This is as far as the wide track takes you, and unless you are an experienced walker with good equipment, or you have a guide with you please turn around here.*

*Going past the waterfall, the road narrows into a*



*rough track, that will lead you into a strong climb, taking you up to over 500m above sea level. As you reach the first plateau, striking views over Lough Agh and over the valley of Glencolmcille reveal themselves ahead. A short hike to the left will take you past the ruined remains of the chapel associated with the Saints Aedh Mac Bric and Assicus. Follow the route up onto the next plateau, and you have the most magnificent panoramic views taking in 7 counties. Please take great care in this area, the weather can change very quickly, and visibility can disappear in minutes. If in doubt, follow the yellow safety markings back to the top of the rough path leading you back down into the valley.”*

The above description of the walk is what you would see on a clear day, which unfortunately we did not have, however on our way down the sky cleared and we did get a view of Teelin Harbour which lifted our spirits significantly after being nearly blown off the top of the cliffs in the strong wind.

We heard from Michael that the walkers who had taken the second option to Bunglass Point had had to turn back due to the strong wind and rain and so some rejigging of travel arrangements had to be made.

We were collected from the foot of the Pilgrim's Path and taken for a short visit to Bunglass Point for a view of the cliffs and then back to the refreshment stop at The Rusty Mackerel where the other party were waiting (patiently). The Bunglass Point group returned to the The Central Hotel and we had an enjoyable hour or so in The Rusty Mackerel partaking of soup, tea, coffee and hot whiskey. All very much needed. We returned to the comfort of The Central Hotel and put our feet up for a while before dinner.

After dinner, while winding down following the strenuous day, we were royally entertained by some of the very talented singers in The Trekkers, Jim Ryan, Tom Fitzgerald, Colm Swords and Conal Harvey plus the rest of the "backing group" who were able to join in the choruses.



Friday 11 October 2019

Our final day of walking was as a full group into the Bluestack Mountains and along a stretch of the Bluestack Way to Lough Eske.

The weather was more promising today and we set off in optimistic mood. We were not disappointed – although there were a few showers we were blown dry in between them and had a very enjoyable walk through the wilds of Donegal under the expert guidance of Michael and Agatha who not only kept us on the right track but provided a fascinating

history of the valley and the regeneration of Donegal.

Again Michael and Agatha enchanted us with their knowledge of local history. We were all very touched by the story of the plane crash on 31 January 1944 when a Sunderland bomber on its way from anti-submarine patrol off the coast of France, was diverted to Enniskillen and flying in bad weather. The plane crashed into the side of Croaghgorm, the highest of the Bluestack Mountains, killing 7 of the 11 crewmen. 2 of the injured 5 were able to make their way to a remote cottage where they received help from a woman living there with her children. The woman only spoke Irish but the children could speak some English so were able to find out what had happened and go to the village for help. Villagers came up the mountain and rescued the 5 injured airmen (who all survived) and the next day would not leave the dead on the mountainside and so brought down the bodies from the mountain.

A poignant ending to the story was that many years later a visitor arrived at the local pub asking if anyone knew of the plane crash and explained that he was one of the 2 men who had made their way to get help. He became a regular visitor to the area and when he died it became known that he had requested some of his ashes be scattered at the site of the crash. However, his daughters did not agree with his request and it was never fulfilled.

Then back to The Central Hotel and our last dinner there before departing the following day.

Certainly a memorable trip, expertly organised by Myles and Kevin, and ably assisted by Malachy and the other Trekkers who swept and helped lead and generally made everything run smoothly and successfully. Thank you all.

*Catherine Almond*

# AGM 22 October 2019

Its been a busy year for Trekkers for those of you who might have missed the AGM heres Myles's report

The activity level of the Club in the membership year that ended on 30th September 2019 compares well with the high level of activity in the previous membership year.

The Club arranged 147 walks in the established categories plus a Social Walk every 2 to 3 weeks. The Social Walk concept was an initiative that Micheál Cotter introduced and he would be delighted to see this category become part of the Club walks programme. Taken together, these walks covered almost 2,100 kilometres - equivalent to a hike from Amsterdam to Naples! Almost 2,400 participants took part – an increase of 160 from the previous year. Interestingly, there were 11 A Walks this year compared to 8 the previous year. There were 41 B Walks compared to 38 the previous year.

The members who walk the longest distances through the year were Mary Murray (811 kilometres); Dermot Murray (721 kilometres) and Paddy MacManus (687 kilometres). The Trekkers who scaled the greatest total height in the course of the year were Dermot Murray (27,231 metres); Paddy MacManus (20,440 metres) and Mary Murray (20,421 metres).

We have 190 members on the Roll – 167 full members; 20 honorary members and 3 associates. Of these, 34 did not participate in any walks in the course of the year. We welcomed 25 new members to the Club and to each of them attending their first AGM may I say 'Céad Mile Failte!'. The level of the participation of new members in Club activities is impressive. Newly recruited members participated in A Walks on 16 occasions; in B Walks on 50 occasions; in C Walks on 51 occasions and in Wednesday Walks on 149 occasions. The most active new member is Catherine Almond who has participated in 44 walks covering a distance of 587 kilometres since joining Trekkers last December!

## Training

It is vitally important that walk leadership expertise in the Club is sufficiently broadly based. . Some 55 members have participated in the Walk Leader Workshops conducted in Glenmalure by Charles O'Byrne. Some 20 members have completed Map-reading and Navigation training conducted by Pauline D'Arcy.

## Events

The 2018 Christmas Party took place in Killiney Golf Club on Sunday 15 December. It was well attended and both the meal and the entertainer, Carmel Dickenson, once again raised the spirits of everybody! The annual Commemoration of Deceased Trekkers took place on Saturday 13 April in Glenmalure. This short ceremony followed the established pattern and concluded with dinner in Glenmalure Lodge.

The 2019 Summer Party took place in the National Yacht Club in July and featured entertainment provided by Carmel Dickenson. The Club was delighted to confer honorary membership on Monty & Evelyn Tinsley, Dick Ryan and Brendan Bracken in recognition of the exceptional service each of them rendered to the Club over many years.

## Away Trips

It was not possible after Micheál Cotter became ill to undertake the Away Trip to France that he had planned for September. But I am glad to report that Ryanair refunded all air fares and were most sympathetic to the circumstances that had unfolded. Micheál was very pleased with that outcome.

John & Neasa Hegarty joined Trekkers in September of last year and they spend some time each year at their home in Dingle. They, with the support of Malachy & Anne Hanley conceived and led a very successful 4-day Away Trip to Dingle Peninsula and

the Great Blasket Island in the first week of May that attracted almost 40 Trekkers.

That was followed by an overnight based in Tinahely conceived and led by Paddy MacManus that attracted 10 participants. I would like to thank John & Neasa, Malachy, & Anne and Paddy for their hard work connected to these successful trips.

### Club Policies and Guidelines

The Committee reviewed and amended, where appropriate, policies and guidelines to ensure that the activities of the Club are conducted in a manner that fosters efficiency, effectiveness and the safety and the wellbeing of walkers.

### Benefit of Walking

When I tell you that Trekkers are a component of an exclusive minority elite in Irish society it might raise one or two eyebrows! Only 1 of every 3 people in Ireland are active on a regular basis and most people in the country, aged 65 and over, are inactive. The majority of the adult population fail to achieve the minimum recommended level of physical activity - 150 minutes per week. When compared to the sedentary majority, Trekkers, through their regular walking, achieve better bone health; better breathing; the moderation of high blood pressure and the potential to reduce the chances of developing a chronic disease by up to 50%; as well as the risk of premature death by 20% to 30%. Trekkers are also better placed to maintain their weight at a healthier level; to maintain muscle tone and strength and to feel happier by eliminating stress, anxiety and depression. There is no better experience than that of immersing yourself in the elements of nature – the sights, the sounds, the smells and the mystique of nature to unwind from the frenetic pace of the information-driven 21st century lifestyle!

### Thank You

Our Club has continued to grow and develop and this is reflected by the commitment of the membership and the interest of others seeking to join the Club. It has been a great honour for me to serve on the Committee. I have served for three years – one year as Secretary and two years as Chair. The progress achieved would not have been possible if I had not been supported strongly by my fellow Committee members. My deepest thanks

are due to Paddy, Mary, Alan and Dymphna for their dedicated work this year and to Ita Lawton for her hard work last year

My thanks are also due to Joe Murray for his expertise in ensuring that our web site and public profile is maintained to a high standard. I would also like to commend Aurimas Paršonis for the training videos that he produced on the use View Ranger and which are available on the web site.

I wish to give public recognition for the enormous moral support that Patricia has given me on the Committee - despite having to cope with her own health challenges. I also thank all walk leaders for their unstinting dedication and the membership as a whole for your courtesy, engagement, friendship and goodwill. The management and staff of the National Yacht Club also deserve our thanks for their unfailing service, efficiency and support.

### Gaye and Joe

In conclusion, let me tell you that two Trekkers, Joe **Devine** and **Gaye Maguire** climbed some significant peaks during the past year. They conquered 6,154 metres peak at **Stok Kangri**, a component of the Stok Range in the Himalayas in Northern India. Their achievement is, we believe, the highest altitude ever climbed by a Trekker. Both are distinguished role models for others in the Club to emulate!

*Myles Duffy*

### Paddy Dowling - RIP

Trekkers will be saddened to hear of the death on 11 October of Paddy Dowling owner of the Glenmalue Lodge. Myles expressed his sympathy on behalf of the club and received the email below from Paddy's wife Ann.

*Hi Myles*

*On behalf of myself and our Family may we extend a huge thank you for your lovely email and kind words regarding Paddy, we all miss him terrible and the whole valley as well.*

*We look forward to seeing yourself and you fantastic walking club The Trekkers Mountaineering Club in the Glenmalure Valley soon.*

*Kind Regards,*

*Anne Michael Steven Danny & Mo*

# Looking after the Knees

Karen from the Mapel Clinic in Booterstown give a talk at the AGM on Hiking and Knee pain. Her notes below discusses common problems and ways to avoid potential injuries

The knee sits between the hip and ankle. Because it is formed by the bones which also form the ankle and hip joint it is very much influenced by issues at the foot and hip. When looking for the source of the pain we can look at three areas:

The foot itself; in particular, the arch of the foot, whether it is flat or normal, and whether there is a tendency for the ankle to roll inwards slightly when walking.



The hip; whether there is weakness at the hip in the gluteal muscles which cause the thigh bone to turn inwards at the knee. This means there is misalignment between the thigh bone, shin bone and kneecap which together form the knee joint. This misalignment and associated muscle imbalances can then lead to knee pain. You can check if this is a factor in your knee pain by looking in a mirror to see if your kneecaps point directly forwards which is good (leg to the right in the photo below) or turn inwards which is a sign of weakness at the hip (see the leg to the left (

The knee joint itself; wear and tear at the knee or under the kneecap is itself a source of pain. It is termed osteoarthritis and can vary in terms of severity. In mild cases the goal is to improve strength around the knee and hip and allow you hike for longer without discomfort. In more severe cases, it can require referral to an orthopedic surgeon for injections or surgical intervention.

## The gluteal muscles and a credit card

The gluteal (or buttock) muscles are the muscles that help you transfer your weight over your foot as you hike uphill. When they are weak, they can also cause your thigh bone to turn inwards at the knee. This means the knee joint is not aligned properly so can lead to pain under the kneecap, or to the inside or outside of the knee.

Watch your knees as you stand up from a seated position and note if your knees come inwards towards each other as stand up. This is shown in the top picture. If they do, it can be a sign of gluteal weakness. Ideally, they would stay in line with the centre of the foot where your laces would be (bottom picture above)



**We looked at some simple exercises to strengthen the gluteals:**

### Sit to stand – knees over laces

From a seated position, stand up, but keep your knees over your laces as you stand up. Resist the tendency for them to drift inwards. Try 10 of these once a day



### Sit to stand – squeeze the gluteals

As you stand up out of a chair, try to squeeze your gluteals as you stand up. Imagine that you are holding a credit card between your gluteals. You should notice a sense that they are lifting you out of the chair. It would be great if you could also keep your knees over your laces as you do this too so both exercises are combined efficiently into one exercise. Try 10 of these once a day. There is no benefit from squeezing your

gluteals as you sit back down. Both these exercises have the advantage of also strengthening the front of the thigh (the quadricep muscles) which work hardest when walking downhill. This is beneficial for knees with osteoarthritis.

### Other ideas to incorporate these actions into daily life:

1. As you go up a stairs or a set of steps, try to keep your knees over your laces and squeeze the gluteals as you step up.
2. As you climb steep ground, step up a peat hag, or even up board walk steps – try to keep your knees over your laces and squeeze the gluteals. This is easier to do on steep ground rather than a gradual incline
3. If you are confident perform squats where you keep your knees over your laces as you lower down and raise up, but squeeze the gluteals as you straighten back up.

At the meeting we did one standing exercise for anyone keen to strengthen the gluteals with additional exercises. This is the exercise below:

### Dog and Lamppost

1. Stand fully upright, you can hold on to something to help you if you wish or stand right up to a wall to stop you leaning forward.
2. Turn your foot outwards, then bring the leg diagonally behind you WITHOUT moving the upper body
3. From this position pulse it diagonally backwards for the outlined number of repetitions. There should be no movement of your back
4. Return the foot to the floor. Do 10-30 of these 3 times a week.

Note: ensure that both hip bones face the wall in front of you. This controls unwanted rotation of the hips/pelvis backwards.



### The foot and the knee

The foot can lead to knee pain if you have feet that roll inwards excessively a motion called pronation (the left foot). Sometimes this can be due to weakness in the gluteals. To check if this is the case for you, stand in bare feet. Notice how your body weight feels through your feet, toes and heel.

Pay attention to your arch. Now squeeze the gluteals and notice if you feel your arch lift. If it does, gluteal strengthening will benefit your feet. The insoles of many hiking boots are flat. If you have flat feet, or have feet that roll inwards a lot, a separate insole with an arch support may be beneficial. These could include simple insoles like Superfeet, or customized insoles from a physio or podiatrist.



### Osteoarthritis and the knee

Osteoarthritis of the knee joint is common and can present as knee pain after a day of hiking deep with in the knee, or under the kneecap. It varies in severity. In mild osteoarthritis the goal of a physio is to strengthen the muscles around the knee, so they take some impact pressure off the knee itself. This can help reduce symptoms hoping enabling you to hike at your preferred level for longer. The sit to stand exercises above would be an example of an exercise that could be prescribed to help strengthen around the knee joint itself. A more comprehensive exercise plan would need to be tailored to you individually in a clinical setting.

# Recent Walks



WW 1 May



B walk 15 June



A walk 8 June



A Walk June



B Walk 21 July



WW July



B walk 22 June



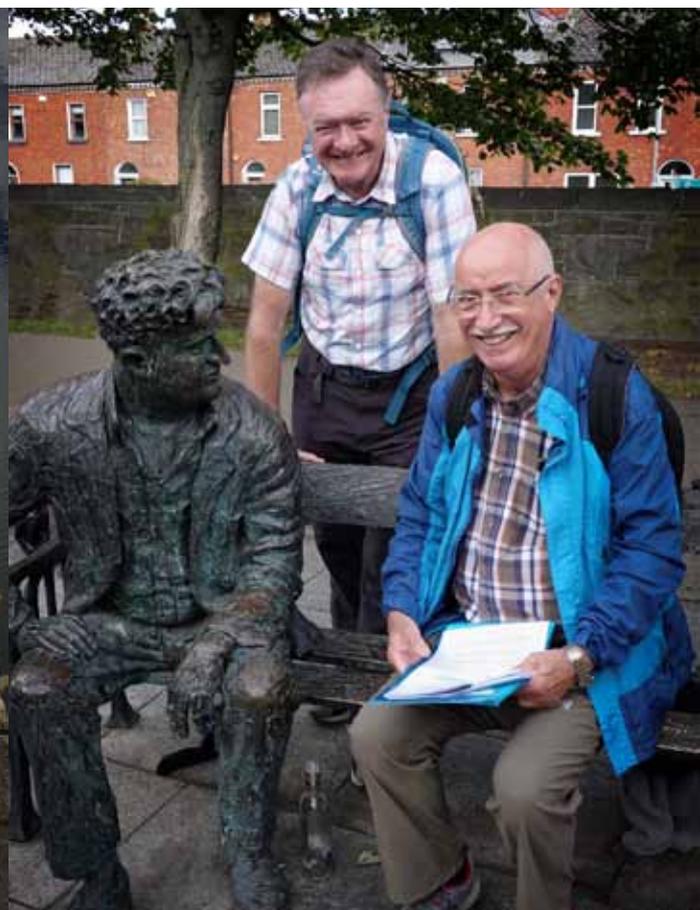
B walk 31 August



B- walk



B walk



“Along the banks of the Royal Canal”



C Walk 24 August





Wednesday Walkers, led by Rita Higgs, paused at the statue commemorating Luke Kelly (1940-1984) at his native Sheriff Street.

This statue is the creation of Vera Klute, the multi-disciplinary visual artist who is a native of Germany but who has resided in Dublin after graduating in 2006 from Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology



# “The Wonders of Creation”



