

# MOURNE RAMBLERS NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2020

## A message from the Editor

Welcome to the latest edition of the Mourne Rambling Group newsletter. I hope you will find articles and items of interest to you including:

- NEW MEMBER UPDATE
- SLIDESHOW
- NAVIGATION TRAINING WORKSHOP
- UFRC SPRING MEETING
- WHATSAPP GROUPS
- FOREIGN TRIPS, AN IDEA WORTH PURSUING?
- RISK ASSESSMENTS
- NOTICEBOARD
- LIST OF PAID-UP MEMBERS 2020
- MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Vincent Trainor, Editor

New members since the last newsletter (November 2019) (up-to-date as at 28 February 2020)

William Abernethy, Annie Brett, Paula Daly,

Yvonne Davis, Anne Dunlop, Sandra Hollingsworth,

Martina Jackson, Billy Jordan, Conor Mulvenna,

Chris Saunderson, Briega Turley

We are delighted to welcome these 11 new members since November 2019.

## Mourne Ramblers Slideshow

### Re-arranged ANNUAL SLIDE SHOW

Sunday 15 March 2020

Burrendale Hotel, Newcastle.

Members will be aware that the Slide Show arranged for Sunday 9 February had to be postponed due to 'Storm Ciara'. It has now been re-arranged to take place on Sunday 15 March at 7.30pm in the Glen Room, Burrendale Hotel.

This is very much a night for members and friends to get together to show/see digital images of their hill walking experiences both here in Ireland and further afield.

For anyone who wishes to attend directly from the club walk on that day, changing/hot showering facilities will be available at the Hotel at 5.30pm.

For those who wish to have a meal before the show arrangements are in place for a choice of meals to be available at 6.00pm in the CK Bistro (minimum charge £15). If you want to have a meal, pre-booking is required. To confirm contact me (Harry Goodman) by e-mail [harry.goodman1@outlook.com](mailto:harry.goodman1@outlook.com) or by telephone at 02892601030. In order that I can advise the hotel of the number wishing to have a meal, please let me know by Wed. 15 March at latest.

If on reading this reminder you feel you would like to show images please get in touch with me and give me details of your proposed show(s). Normally we allow 15-20 minutes for each sequence but members can of course show more than one. Only digital images can be shown. A digital projector will be available for this purpose and photos can be on either a memory stick or CD.

Harry Goodman

## NAVIGATION TRAINING WORKSHOP

Provided there is an appropriate level of interest from members, it is proposed a Navigation Training Workshop will be held as follows:

Day / Date: Saturday, 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2020

Location: Meelmore Lodge

Timetable: 9.00 - 9.30 Arrive at Meelmore Lodge. Coffee / tea and scones will be available

9.30 - 12.00 Classroom-based, covering use of maps and compass, navigation techniques, basic safety on the mountain

12.00 - 4.00 Application of skills learnt during the morning on the hills behind Meelmore Lodge

- 4.00 - 4.30 Return to Meelmore Lodge and debrief
- 4.30 Workshop finishes

### **Background**

Finding your way about the Mourne on a fine day with good visibility can be deceptively simple. Following the same route on a wet, misty day can become impossible if you are unable to competently use a map and compass and / or GPS. Everyone going into the hills, individually or as a member of a group, should have some knowledge of how to navigate.

This workshop will cover the basics of using a map and compass on the hills. Participants will apply the theory they have learnt in the morning through practical, small group, exercises during the afternoon. It will be similar to workshops that have been run successfully in previous years when those taking part found them useful, enjoyable and, at times, challenging in a good way.

Participants of all levels of capability are welcome. Whether you are a beginner or wish to refresh your knowledge this will be an opportunity to learn and to apply your navigation skills in a safe, controlled environment. Participants will be split into appropriate groups to maximise learning from the workshop. Maps and compasses will be available to borrow if you do not have your own.

If you would like to participate in this workshop please email Joe McKnight on [joe\\_v\\_mcknight@me.com](mailto:joe_v_mcknight@me.com) before the 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 giving your name, email address, mobile number and indicating your level of proficiency e.g. beginner, need some practice, etc.

More details will be sent to participants closer to the date of the workshop.

### **UFRC Spring Meeting**

All members of the Mourne Rambling Group are invited to the Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs, Spring Meeting which will be held at the Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Oxford Island on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March.

The meeting will start with tea and coffee at 9.30am and finish with a sandwich lunch around 1.00pm. Attendance is free.

**The theme of this year's Spring Meeting is 'Developing Club Capability'** and the speakers supporting this theme will be:

*Harry Teggarty – Mourne Mountain Rescue who will speak about the work of MMR and safety on the hills.*

*Trevor Fisher – Tollymore NOC who will cover the training opportunities Tollymore has available for walkers*

*Helen Lawless – Mountaineering Ireland who will speak about her work as Access and Conservation Officer for MI*

After lunch UFRC committee member and Armagh Rambler Declan Moane has offered to lead a walk around Oxford Island for those who are interested.

To help with catering please RSVP to our administrator Duane Fitzsimons ([administration@ufrc-online.co.uk](mailto:administration@ufrc-online.co.uk)).

I look forward to seeing you.

Joe McKnight – Chair, UFRC.

## WhatsApp Groups

At a Meeting on the 4th February, 2020 the Committee agreed to the establishment of two WhatsApp Groups to include A&B Group Leaders and C&D Group Leaders. These WhatsApp Groups will be used by Leaders when they have completed their walk to inform other Leaders:

That their walk has safely returned to the starting point,  
The time at which the walk was completed, and  
The number of walkers in their Group.

The Committee has been using a recently established WhatsApp Group for communication and it was particularly useful on the weekend of the 9th February when walks had to be cancelled at short notice due to a severe weather forecast. The Committee believes the establishment and use of these WhatsApp Groups for leaders will enhance the overall safety of walks and members.

Joe McKnight will establish and maintain both WhatsApp Groups and will be in contact with those leaders for whom he does not have a mobile number.

**If you do not wish to participate in these Groups** please contact Joe directly on [joe\\_v\\_mcknight@me.com](mailto:joe_v_mcknight@me.com) or text him on 07725 849536.

## Foreign Trips, an idea worth pursuing?

One of the new initiatives that the MRG committee has been considering is organizing a foreign trip in 2021 for the members. We are currently just scoping what is possible and when, and to an extent we need help of the membership to get to the choice of location for the trip as well as to the time of the year.

Many of the Dublin based companies offer walks in Spain's mainland (Picos de Europa or the South Coast in Andalusia) or the Canaries (for the winter time?) but other tour areas and operators are available. Many of them will organize specific tours for small parties but most set an under limit of about eight people to make it profitable for local guides, etc.

At the moment we are exploring this idea. I suggest that we would look to be away for about one week at least to make it worthwhile flying out.

If anyone has any suggestions to make or good experiences to share, contact me on 07971633056 or email [bert.rima@talktalk.net](mailto:bert.rima@talktalk.net). We will try to make a decision in the next few months by means of a small survey that would assess the most popular options. Any reactions welcome!

Bert Rima

## **Risk Assessments**

Following a recent training event on mountain leadership and dealing with emergency situations, the MRG Committee felt it was time to review some of our health and safety procedures. Risk assessments have always been part of the preparation for planning and leading a walk. However, over time, with advances in technology, improvements in kit and equipment and lessons learnt from accidents both in the Mourne and further afield, new thinking has emerged over how risk assessments should be carried out. In this context the Committee agreed to review our procedures on this.

Although there is a brief section on the route card for identifying potential hazards it was felt that more guidance should be provided to leaders on the type of risks they should be considering. Many other hill walking clubs have specific risk assessment forms to be completed by leaders. We looked at those of 5 clubs across the UK and Ireland. Taking the main themes that were common to the best of these we prepared a generic risk assessment form for use by MRG.

It covers things like the basic navigation and emergency kit leaders should have with them at the outset, before considering the potential risks that may be encountered on a walk and the control measures to be undertaken to either eliminate or substantially mitigate them. Such risks include adverse weather, slips, trips, falls, getting lost, illness, encountering livestock, crossing stiles, streams, ditches, etc, the list is not exhaustive.

Not all risks identified in the generic form will apply from week to week. It can either be completed in advance by ticking off those risks that apply to that day's walk or it can be used as an aide-memoire by the leader when completing the potential hazards section of the route card.

But dealing with hazards and risks is not all down to the leader. Each club member has responsibilities in this regard both for their own welfare and that of the group. This includes things like being properly attired and equipped for the walk, bringing sufficient food and water, informing the leader of any relevant medical conditions, and following the leader's instructions, especially when it comes to navigating through potentially hazardous terrain or dealing with rapidly changing weather.

The full risk assessment form can be viewed in the Leaders' Information section of the website and all members are advised to read it. Hill walking is a very enjoyable pastime for all of us and while it is not without risk, those risks can be eliminated or significantly reduced by following the control measures we have set out.



## NOTICEBOARD

- Sincere thanks again to Robert Roulston for printing the annual programme of walks for 2020
- The annual club picnic will take place at Meelmore Lodge on Sunday 07 June. Further details nearer the date
- An up-to-date list of paid up members is appended at the end of the newsletter
- By the way, members who were paid for 2019 have still not notified the Treasurer of their intentions re. remaining a member for 2020
- A Membership Renewal form is attached for any unpaid members who wish to renew
- Please let the Treasurer know if you do not intend to renew
- The next issue of the club Newsletter will be in July 2020.

## MEMBERS 2020

The list below contains the names of all members who have paid for 2020 (up to and including 28 February 2020). Please check to see that your name is on the list. If your name ought to be on the list and has been omitted, please accept our apologies. Please contact the Treasurer on 078 3512 8564 for clarification.

(117)

Abernethy William	Goodman Harry	McAllister Catherine	Pridgen Maggie
Acheson George	Goodman Stephen	McAuley Catherine	Proctor Ian
Aitken James	Gray Raymond	McCauley Gabriel	Quiery Pamela
Appleton Philip	Greaney Ellen	McCavera Dora	Quinn Carmel
Bolwell Andy	Green Wilf	McClelland Gillian	Reid Ken
Brett Adam	Gribbin Rennie	McComish Domnall	Rice Noel
Brett Annie	Gunn Philip	McCreery Gordon	Rima Bert
Browne Gary	Hamilton Joan	McGinley Mark	Roulston Robert
Browne Geraldine	Hanna Maire	McGivern John	Russell Trevor
Calvert Joan	Hanratty Patrick	McGowan Peter	Saunderson Chris
Campbell Robert	Henderson Helen	McKenna Vincent	Scott Barry
Carragher Anna	Herbison Olwen	McKibbin Andrew	Smyth Hazel
Carragher Fionnuala	Hoeritzauer Marie	McKnight Joseph	Smyth Raymond
Cauley Irene	Hollingsworth Sandra	McLean Bernard	Sochor Cecilia
Chapa Patricia	Hughes Seamus	McMahon Hilja	Stevenson Graeme
Connolly Gerard	Hughes Teresa	McManus Owen	Stuart Ian
Connolly Patricia	Hughes Thomas	McParland Alice	Taylor John
Connolly Raymond	Hussain Rafia	Miskimmin Mark	Taylor Toni
Coyle Loretto	Jackson Martina	Moore Anne	Templeton Helen
Cummings Thomas	Jordan Billy	Muller Janet	Thompson Kingsley
Daly Paula	Kelly Pat	Mulvenna Conor	Trainor Vincent
Davis Yvonne	Keown Ann	Murphy Shelagh	Tumilty Pat
Doran Marie	Knox Victor	O'Connor Damian	Turley Briege
Drinkell Denis	MacDermott Dermot	O'Connor Nuala	Tweed John
Dunlop Anne	Mackey Francis	O'Dea Mary	Wales Jackie
Elliott Norman	Magowan Reg	Oldfield David	Watson Linda
Farrington Gerry	Magowan Rodney	Overend Martin	Webb Donna
Fawcett Laura	Magowan Terry	Patterson Wendy	
Franklin Roisin	Marshall Robert	Patton Norman	
Gilmore Seamus	Matson Neill	Pettyfer Mel	

## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS 2020 (5)

Ciaran Hanna, Liz Osborne, Robert Osborne, Jonathan Shields, Anne Trainor

## HONORARY MEMBER

Christina Mackle, President



# Mourne Rambling Group

## Membership Renewal Form (January 2020)

\* **Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

(Only include information below if amendments are required)

\* **Address:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\* **Postcode** \_\_\_\_\_

\* **Phone No:** \_\_\_\_\_

\* **Mobile No:** \_\_\_\_\_

\* **Email address** if available: (for receipt of newsletters and information from the committee)

Please let us have the email address where you wish to be contacted.

\_\_\_\_\_

### Please tick as appropriate:

Full Membership at £25 per year (or part of year)

Associate Membership (non-walking member) at £5 per year (or part of year)

#### Return to:

Vincent Trainor, 34, Grahamville Estate, Kilkeel, Co. Down, BT34 4DD

(Cheques made payable to Mourne Rambling Group. Please do not send cash in the post.)

Members may pay their annual subscription by internet banking if they wish. Should you wish to avail of this option please e-mail Vincent at [trainorvj@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:trainorvj@yahoo.co.uk) and he will be more than happy to forward details of the group's bank details.