

MOURNE RAMBLERS NEWSLETTER

July 2018

A message from the Editor

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

- NEW MEMBER UPDATE
- THANK YOU
- MOURNE RAMBLING GROUP AT 50
- CONNEMARA TRIP MAY 2018
- NOTICEBOARD
- LIST OF PAID – UP MEMBERS 2018

Vincent Trainor, Editor

New members since the last newsletter (February 2018) **(up-to-date as at 30 July 2018)**

**Andy Borwell, Kevin Brazil, Adam Brett,
Robert Campbell, Maire Hanna,
Jana Hnojckova, Mark Patience**

We are delighted to welcome these 7 new members since February 2018. A special welcome back to Maire Hanna. This makes a total of 132 paid-up members this year – the biggest number we have had for years.

THANK YOU

Since the last newsletter, there have been quite a few events organised by members for the group. We would like to offer our thanks on behalf of everyone for the following:

- **Connemara (25 – 29 May).** This trip to Connemara was organised by Andrew McKibbin for an A/B group. Ray Gray organised the same trip for the C group. A special thanks to Andrew and Ray for doing the organising and leading. Thanks also to Ellen Greaney and Ray Gray for the reports on the trip (article below)
- **Annual Picnic (10 June).** Meelmore Lodge was again the venue for the annual picnic and there was a good turnout of ramblers present on a beautiful summer's day. We extend our sincere thanks to Carmel Quinn and Toni & Jan Taylor for their efforts in planning and providing the party. Thank you to everyone who came along and especially to those who brought items along. Finally, thanks to Meelmore Lodge for the use of their most suitable premises.

Mourne Rambling Group at 50

In 2019 the Mourne Rambling Group will have been in existence for 50 years, a great reason to celebrate. A sub-committee has been looking at what the most appropriate ways to do this would be. Currently we plan an activity for each quarter of 2019.

The first will include a **Launch Dinner** to which we may invite representatives from the print and broadcasting media, from other walking groups and rescue services. This will take place in middle to late January in a venue as yet to be chosen and replace the 2018 Christmas dinner.

Media sub-committee: George Acheson, Rennie Gribbin and Vincent Trainor;
Celebration and Launch dinner sub-committee: Ray Gray, Vincent McKenna and Fionnuala Carragher.

In May / June we plan to organise a **Challenge Walk** along the route of Harry's walk, the 20 mile stretch from Donard Park to Rostrevor or vice versa. Details of arrangements for direction and facilities for a shorter walk are yet to be worked out. We are still deliberating as to whether to make this a 'members' only event or to team up with an appropriate charity and make it open.

In the third quarter around July / August we plan a **Weekend Walking festival** around July / August with a less challenging family walk on Saturday and a range of walks on Sunday open to non-members who can thereby profit from the accumulated knowledge of MRG members over 50 years. Do we know every hole in the ground? Maybe not but we know where they congregate!

Sub-committee for the Challenge walk and the festival: Joe McKnight and Bert Rima.

The main celebrations will take place in October with a **dinner** planned for the **Slieve Donard Hotel** at which we will look back on the 50 years of MRG by publication of a magazine, slide shows, raffles and talks by members etc.

In the final quarter we will also hold a wine and cheese event to announce the winners of a **photographic competition** for the members of the MRG. Sub-committee: Harry Goodman and Rennie Gribbin.

The arrangements are in the early phases of development and as such not yet set in stone. Hence, the MRG committee is still able to entertain suggestions by members.

If you have any suggestions, email or phone Vincent, George, Joe or myself.

Vincent Trainor	Mobile 07835 128564	Home 028 4176 3101
Email trainorvj@yahoo.co.uk		
George Acheson	Mobile 07763 985499	Home 028 9334 0642
Email georgeacheson@hotmail.com		
Joe McKnight	Mobile 07725 649536	Home 028 9050 7589
Email joe_v_mcknight@me.com		
Bert Rima	Mobile 07971 633056	Home 028 9066 5905
Email bert.rima@talktalk.net		

Bert Rima

Connemara trip May 2018

‘B’ Group

Leader : Andrew McKibbin

Followers : Mark McGinley, Bert Rima , Marie Hoeritzauer , Joe Wilson , Noel Rice , Pam Quiery , Dermot MacDermott , Domnall McComish and Ellen Greaney.

The ‘B’ Group enjoyed 3 stunning walks over the May bank holiday weekend in Connemara, gallantly led by Andrew Mc Kibbin over forest track, bare crag and tussocky grass with a little bog thrown in, in South Mayo and North west Galway. We basked in glorious sunshine on all days and consequently the vistas were tremendous . To enjoy 1 such day in Connemara is a treat but we were really blessed to have 3 in succession.

On Saturday morning we eyed that day’s target , Mweelrea , from the hotel terrace ,at 8.30 its peak was masked by a thin veil of cloud but otherwise there was scarcely another cloud in the sky. Having driven around the north side of Killary, we parked at the newly renovated Delphi Adventure resort. We set off up the forest track, shortly after leaving the trees behind we took to the open hill onto the flank of Mweelrea, the terrain was grassy by times and boggy at others , as we climbed the view over the fiord below opened up to our left and over the broad glaciated valley to our right. After a steep ascent we gained the Southeast spur-Derreennawhinshin, then down to the saddle, there we lunched surrounded by flying insects which we figured were mayfly on their brief flight, could they really have made it up here out of the depths of Lough Lugaloughan 100metres below? Next it was more climbing to the summit of Mweelrea at 814m. From there we viewed the curve of Glasillaun beach on the rugged coastline on the south side of Killary with the Twelve Bens further on and beneath us, Silver Strand on its northern side. Then down again to the saddle at 645m, a brief respite then up again onto the arête to Ben Bury as we climbed we looked

down into a steep drop to boggy lowlands, ahead of us was Doo Lough with green hills of Sheefry behind. As we walked towards Ben Lugmore we had a terrific view down onto the corrie track coming in from Doo Lough as it wriggled its way up an impossibly steep route up onto the arête. From here we could see our way back to Delphi laid out below us. Heading downwards southeast along a spur from Ben Lugmore East Top, we negotiated some difficult terrain, the worst of which was the aforementioned tussocky grass with its hidden holes and pools of water. Some of us went in deep and some lost sections of poles but we laboured on to the next obstacle- a stream to be crossed on a treacherous iron bridge but once that was cleared, the track homewards was just on the other side and we were happy to have our 1st peak bagged.

Stats: 14 Km ; 1250 m ascent ; 7.5 hours .

Next morning, Sunday, almost the same crew, minus Noel but plus Domnall , set out with Andrew to walk in the Bens, motoring in along the Inagh Valley, to our right we had the Bens ranged up beyond Lough Inagh while the Maumturks were to our left. We parked at Derryclare Nature Reserve, then followed the forest track to access the lower slopes of Derryclare. The ascent took us up gently at first, then more acutely over ice scraped bare rock slabs on a spur to the summit of Derryclare at 673m. looking northwards our next objective, Ben Corr was etched against a blue sky , it seemed just a little drop down to the saddle and a little climb up would have us there in a jiffy, but first some sustenance, while we munched on ham & cheese or should that be cheese & ham we took in the view below, of the broad Inagh Valley with the Maumturks stretching SE acing as its full stop, far out to the west lay the Aran Islands and to their south the suggestion of the Clare coast. Moving on down, we negotiated a lot of bare rocky slabs then up to reach the pinnacle of 711m . With Ben Corr at our back we set our face towards home , the route was obvious, a bare rocky spur stretching east down to the forested valley floor west of Lough Inagh, having stepped our way carefully down we then dropped off the spur into a river valley with rough grazing, soon to be the summer quarters of a herd of bovines, which we met being escorted up by 2 young men cheerfully carrying materials to fence off the valley's mouth. We crossed the stream , then took the forest track back to where we left the cars earlier.

Stats: 11Km ; 880m ascent ; 6 hours

Monday's walk in the Sheefry Hills had long been one I myself wanted to attempt. Basically this is a ridge stretching east west, rising to 760m which is laced by corries on all sides each corrie drained by a many branching stream. The same core group toggled out but today, Joe & Donal absented themselves on other important business. Driving north we parked on a lay-by off the R335, north of Doo Lough. From there we walked up a gentle spur above Lough Alisheen, soon the grassy slope became steeper and the view more open as we neared the tabletop summit of Barclashcame North Top , here we took a breather to appreciate the view of Mweelrea looming to the west with a black surfaced Doo Lough in between, while to the north beyond the coastal lowlands, lay Clew Bay with its many islands . Next came a demanding , steep stepped rise to Barclashcame , a broad flattish top Here we broke for lunch and again we were surrounded by insects, large olive green with darkish spots, they were to be seen later all along the sharp ridge as we walked towards Tieveummera. We continued on this ridge, on our left the corrie walls fell away steeply to where the peat hags took over, they in turn gave way to forested lowlands and beyond lay the coastal plains with islanded Clew Bay further north, ahead of us to the north east the

chapel on Croagh Patrick glinted white in the sun. How did we get so lucky to enjoy such great walking with splendid views for the 3rd consecutive day? Following the ridge a little further, we then descended the steep grassy northern slope projecting onto the undulating peatlands, from above, examining our way west, we anticipated some yielding, wet boggy ground, but in fact it proved to be dry and firm as we made our way back, crossing a couple of deeply etched streams to descend again by the spur above Lough Alisheen to reach the cars on the R335. Some fancied a quick explore in Louisburg, others just wanted a shower, a rest and a drink back at the hotel. Another satisfying day!

Stats : 14Km ; 930m ascent ; 5.75 hours.

Ellen Greaney

Mourne Rambling Group

Connemara trip - 25 to 29 May 2018

C Group report

There were twelve in total at varying times that made up the C Group - Irene Cauley, Ray Gray, Domnall McComish, Elaine MacFarlane, Hilja McMahon, Alice McParland, David Oldfield, Marty Overend, Norman Patton, Noel Rice, Toni Taylor & Kingsley Thompson.

Norman, Kingsley & I had spent a couple of days in the area over St Patrick's weekend to do a recce. We therefore had a fairly good idea of what to expect and to plan three suitable walks for the C Group. We were looking for routes that were enjoyable, not too strenuous but not lacking an element of challenge. After realising (the hard way) that Connemara deserves respect, I think we got there in the end!

On the Friday that we arrived, seven of us-Elaine, Norman, Kingsley, Noel, myself and Mark and Dermot of the B Group, walked up and down Diamond Hill as a "curtain raiser" This is a walk of around 8km with 500m of ascent. The walk took us two and a half hours and was well worth the effort for the views at the summit.

Now for the real walks!

Day 1. Lettergesh & Garraun (otherwise known as The Benchoona Horseshoe)

The weather was magnificent and the views were equally so from start to finish. This walk was around 12km with over 800m of ascent. The first hill, Benchoona is around 600m above sea level and as we started from sea level (we parked on Lettergesh beach) the first couple of hours were a real "grueller" It was very steep in places, particularly the second half of the climb but the summit area was most interesting as it included quite a few small lakes and rocky areas. We descended via Garraun and Altnagaighera. The walk took us almost 6 hours and we called for a welcome coffee and a bun afterwards at a beach café.

Day 2. Leenane Hill

This was intended to be the big day, and so it turned out! Again, the weather was superb; wall to wall sunshine, very little breeze and not a cloud in the sky! An added bonus was that we started (and finished) this walk from our hotel as we were staying at Leenane. We covered over 14km with around 900m of ascent. Our main objective was Leenane Hill (618m above sea level) and this was reached after visiting a neighbouring hill along the way. This was meant to be Tonalee but in the event we

changed our minds and paid our respects to the adjacent hill with no name. This seemed like a good idea at the time. We had lunch near the summit of Leenane Hill and we descended via more unnamed hills and the Laghyfahaghaun river valley. Magnificent views over the Maumturks to the south and Killary Harbour, Meelwrea and the Sheefrey Hills to the north. What a day!

Day 3. Mweelin

This is a horseshoe adjacent to Diamond Hill and includes the summits of Benbaun, Benbrack and Knockbrack. It was an excellent walk to finish our visit to Connemara. It was the shortest of the three main walks we did at ten and a half kilometres. Nevertheless, there was over 800m of ascent and we were on the hill for five and a half hours. The first hill we climbed was Benbaun and I will remember it as being one of the steepest hills I have climbed! Thankfully at 477m asl there was not too much climbing! This area is in the Connemara National Park and there are splendid views over the Twelve Bens. From the summit of Benbaun there is was a further steady ascent over rocky terrain to the summit of Benbrack. This would have been a great place for lunch had it not been for the midges! We therefore moved on to Knockbrack for lunch where there was a welcome breeze to keep the midges at bay. The descent from Knockbrack was short but very steep. It was then a short drive back to Leenane where we enjoyed a pint (or two) and entertainment from a Yorkshire folk group, The Wild Geese. A perfect end to a perfect day!

I would like to thank everyone for their input on this trip. Again, my special thanks to Norman for his assistance in leading the C Group.

We hope to be returning to Connemara next year - same place, same time! There is plenty of walking in this area.

Ray Gray

NOTICEBOARD

- The trip to Wicklow takes place from 10 – 13 August. Three days of walking are planned with the welcome assistance of the Irish Ramblers. There will be B and C group walks on Saturday and Sunday led by members of the Irish Ramblers. There will be a short walk on Monday before setting out for home. This will also be led by Irish Ramblers. In addition, a group of our members plan to go up Lugnaquilla on the Friday. A great weekend is planned for all. Sincere thanks to the Irish Ramblers for all their help. We hope to reciprocate their kindness when a group of Irish Ramblers visit the Mourne at the end of October.
- Our Annual Bring-a-Bag day will take place on the walk from Carrick Little on Sunday 30 September. On that day members are encouraged to help clean up an area of the Mourne by taking off the mountain some of the litter they encounter. Bags will be provided for the purpose.
- **The Annual General Meeting of the Mourne Rambling Group will be held on Sunday 07 October at 4.30pm in the Tollymore National Outdoor Centre. Formal notification and an agenda will be forwarded to all members nearer the time. Members who wish to bring forward motions to be considered at the AGM are advised of the procedure to be followed.**

Ideally, proposals should be passed in writing to the Secretary, George Acheson, 26 Ballymena Road, Doagh, Ballyclare, BT39 0QR, by 31 August, in order that they may be included in the agenda circulated to the membership. However, the Constitution allows motions to be added to the agenda at the start of the meeting, provided a majority of members agree. All motions must have a Proposer and Seconder, at least one of whom must be present at the meeting.

- **Please make a note that because of the dinner being held in January 2019 as the first event in the celebration of the Mourne Rambling Group 50th Anniversary, there will not be a Christmas Dinner for the group this December.**
- A group of the Irish Ramblers (Dublin) are coming to the Mournes at the end of October. They wish to join us on the walk on Sunday 28 October from Meelmore Lodge. Hopefully we will have a very enjoyable walk in their company. We may also accompany them on their Saturday walk if they wish us to help out. I will keep you informed by email of developments as we get nearer the time.
- The next issue of the club Newsletter will be in November 2018.

MEMBERS 2018

The list below contains the names of all members who have paid for 2018 (up to and including 30 July 2018). 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.

(132)

Acheson, George	Green, Doreen	McCavera, Dora	Parkinson, Alan
Agnew, Joseph	Green, Wilfred	McClay, Monica	Patience, Mark
Aitken, James	Gribbin, Reynold	McClelland, Gillian	Patterson, Wendy
Appleton, Philip	Gunn, Philip	McClelland, Michael	Patton, Norman
Beck, Patricia	Hamilton, Joan	McComish, Domnall	Pridgen, Maggie
Blair, Andrew	Hanna, Maire	McCreery, Gordon	Proctor, Ian
Borwell, Andy	Hanratty, Patrick	McDowell, Yvonne	Quiery, Pamela
Brazil, Kevin	Henderson Helen	McGinley, Mark	Quinn, Carmel
Brett, Adam	Herbison, Olwen	McGivern, John	Reid, Ken
Browne, Gary	Hnojckova, Jana	McGowan, Peter	Rice, Danny
Browne, Geraldine	Hoeritzauer, Marie	McKenna, Gerry	Rice, Noel
Calvert, Joan	Hughes, Seamus	McKenna, Vincent	Rima, Bert
Campbell, Robert	Hughes, Teresa	McKibbin, Andrew	Roulston, Robert
Carragher, Anna	Hughes, Thomas	McKnight, Joseph	Russell, Trevor
Carragher, Fionnuala	Hulme, Joan	McLean, Bernard	Scott, Barry
Casey, Hugh	Hussain, Rafia	McMahon, Hilja	Shields, Jonathan
Cauley, Irene	Kelly, Patricia	McManus, Owen	Sloan, Elizabeth
Connolly, Patricia	Keown, Ann	McMillan, Marlene	Smyth, Hazel
Connolly, Raymond	Knox, Victor	McParland, Alice	Smyth, Raymond
Corcoran, Bernie	MacDermott, Dermot	Moore, Anne	Sochor, Cecilia
Coyle, Loretto	MacFarlane, Elaine	Moore, Bernie	Stewart, Derek
Cummings, Thomas	Mackey, Francis	Muller, Janet	Stuart, Ian
Dean, Liam	Magowan, Reg	Murphy, Shelagh	Taylor, John
Doran, Marie	Magowan, Rodney	Murray, Kevin	Taylor, Toni
Farrington, Gerry	Magowan, Terry	Newell, Sarah	Templeton, Helen
Fawcett, Laura	Marshall, Robert	O'Connor, Damian	Thompson, Kingsley
Forsythe, Anthony	Martin, Laura	O'Connor, Nuala	Trainor, Vincent
Franklin, Roisin	Matson, Neill	O'Dea, Mary	Tumilty, Pat
Gibson, Christina	Matthews, Jim	O'Hagan, Joan	Tweed, John
Gilmore, Seamus	Matthews, Lynn	Oldfield, David	Wales, Jackie
Goodman, Harry	McAllister, Catherine	Osborne, Robert	Walsh, Marion
Gray, Raymond	McAuley, Catherine	Overend, Martin	Walsh, William
Greaney, Ellen	McCauley, Gabriel	Papafio, Nancy	Webb, Donna

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS 2018

Ciaran Hanna, David Reid, Anne Trainor

HONORARY MEMBER

Christina Mackle, President