



GET THE OUTDOOR HABIT IN 2004

THE IRISH DIARIES

Thursday 30th October 2003

By Nigel Bolter

The Thursday started with stormy clouds and heavy rain; essential ingredients in producing the Emerald Isle. By mutual consent we took the hired cars to Kinvara, a pretty village on the banks of Galway Bay and descended on the tea shop. The tea did not have the necessary magical powers and the weather persisted. Most of the group settled for a short walk after seeing a demonstration of smoked salmon production but Dawn and Nigel somehow missed the rendezvous and ended up spending the rest of the day at Ailwee Cave.



The cave complex was interesting with a farm shop, guided tours of the caves and cafe but they were no way as impressive as Dan-Yr-Ogof and many of the main European systems. Dawn and Nigel then completed an interesting way-marked route on the Burren Hills above the caves including limestone pavements and great views of the bay.

All returned safely to base to share the days tales, prepare the evening meal and prepare for yet another ordeal of ice-cool Guinness consumption.



AN ODE FOR THE ROAD

**There was a young noggle of Nogs
Who went plodding around the bogs
They headed for Moher
Got slower and slower
And got home as tired as dogs**

THE FINAL DAY

By Jackie Roberts

The alarm seemed to go off very early on Saturday morning, today was the last day in Ballyvaughn and as we drove away from our peaceful setting, the sight of Galway across the bay looked ever inviting.

Dublin by midday was achieved to return the hire cars and we then had a bit of a wait at the airport before boarding for our flight, which left at around about 3 pm. A perfect view of the south Wales coastline completed our airborne adventure and our drive home to Newport and Cardiff was without a hitch.

Those of us on the trip i.e. Dave, Sarah, Stella, Iris, Nick, Maggie, Dawn, Nigel, Norman and myself had just experienced what must have been one of the most relaxing NOG trips ever. During the week we had an opportunity to walk every day, which Norman and I had done, with just one day in Galway City during which it poured with rain. The other day it poured with rain was Thursday when we visited Kinvara and walked from the Martello tower nearby with Stella. On Wednesday we walked with Maggie. Sunday, Monday and Friday were with most of the other members of our group.

Evenings were filled with food, wine and Guinness, Norman having the chance to relive memories of the recent Heineken Cup game with Munster at Newport (their victory) with somebody who enjoyed Newport's hospitality on that occasion. Yes, her name really was Mary!

O'Loughlan's bar was the best with Burren Highland Bar a close second. O'Brien's was OK and Greenes.....? We did not have the opportunity to experience any proper traditional Irish music in the evenings, but there is always the next time, Dawn!



ITEMS FOR SALE!

I have acquired a pair of nearly new size 6 ladies walking boots, NO WISECRACKS PLEASE (one previous careful elderly owner). The previous owner wishes outdoor group funds to benefit from a donation if anyone benefits from the boots. Contact self (Nick Meyrick) via NOGS

YOUNG PERSONS AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

By Dave Green

We want to continue to encourage members to bring their children on group events; as will be the case this weekend. However, with there are legal implications regarding child protection if young people attend events, therefore the committee

have agreed the following policy to protect both young persons are our adult members. We hope this will in no way discourage parents and guardians bringing young people on group activities:

"Young persons under 18 years of age are only permitted to attend group activities with a parent or guardian, who will be responsible for supervising the young person in their charge at all times. It is also the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that a particular activity is suitable, to give appropriate instructions and guidance and to ensure that the young person is properly equipped."

If any member has any concerns regarding the protection of young persons, they should inform a member of the committee immediately.

FIRST AID TRAINING

On a cold Sunday in February, 11 members were in Pontypool at 9-00am to give a day of their time to be trained in basic first aid skills relative to our group activities. The course covered resuscitation techniques, bandaging and hypothermia and many other useful tips.

Dave, Sarah, Elizabeth, Angela, Chris, Adrian, Sophie, Phil, George, Dawn and Bob are all fully certified as trained in "Emergency Aid for Youth and Adventure Leaders" by St Johns Ambulance.

PS: George said "Annie" the resuscitation dummy was the best looking girl he has kissed on any NOG's event.

FREE HOSTEL NIGHT FOR NEW MEMBERS

The committee has agreed an introductory offer for new members. Anybody who joins the group will get a voucher for two hostel nights for the price of one. Hopefully this will encourage new members to go a weekend where they will get to know people better and feel a part of the group. I would encourage all members to make anybody new to the group welcome.

Like all good offers "Terms and Conditions Apply", which are as follows; voucher is only valid on official group weekends, offer is only available to new members not former members re-joining the group; vouchers are not valid for London hostels, bed and breakfast weekends or overseas trips, vouchers are only valid for 1 year after joining the group. Vouchers can be used on Rent A Hostel trips or any normal hostel weekends.

LOGO COMPETITION

At the last AGM we agreed to have a competition for a new logo. We had a total of 8 entries including the old logo, a modified version of the old logo and 6 entries submitted by members. After the initial vote we had no clear winner so we had a second vote on the two preferred options from the first vote.

After this lengthy democratic process we have agreed on a modified version of the old logo, which is illustrated to the right.

Cynics might say the mad axe man lives on!



3 PEAKS CHALLENGE

Congratulations to Ian Reese, Ian Kerr, Dave Fareday, John Cullan, Norman Roberts and Mark Warren who all successfully completed the 3 peaks challenge walk organised by the Cardiff Outdoor Group. This is a 20 mile walk that includes climbing the Bloreng, Sugar Loaf and the Skirrid.

Let's hope we can have a few members completing this walk next year. To get people in training perhaps we could do a 2 peaks version around a month before next years 3 peaks?

CONGRATULATIONS TO KEN!

Well done Ken who for the second year running completed the charity London to Brighton cycle ride. Ken along with 27,000 others completed the 50 mile route along closed roads, so if you would like to contribute to Ken's sponsorship in aid of the British Heart Foundation, all donations will be welcome.

If Ken can raise sufficient money, we will get a priority entry form for next year's event, when hopefully we will get a few more entrants; you can start training now!

BACK TO FRONT COMMUNICATIONS

On Group walks, people at the back who have become detached from the rest of the party has been a continual problem, particular on Monday evenings when we have fairly large numbers. The issue was raised at the last AGM and the committee has been trying to address the problem with back markers being appointed. We think things are getting better, but the problem has not completely gone away.

Therefore we have purchased a pair of 2 way radios with a range of around 0.5 mile, so that the leader can communicate with the back marker. The radios were first used on my mid-summer evening walk and seemed to work well!

