

TRIP TO THE GALTEES – MAY 2023

2023 has been a busy year for trips away. Over the Easter weekend, the Ballyhoura Bears from County Limerick visited the Mourne and then in May, the Laune Mountaineering Club from Killorglin also spent the weekend here. During both visits, the Mourne Ramblers joined with the clubs to make them welcome and to provide whatever assistance we could. Both trips were a great success. (Or at least that's what they told us!)

When we visited the Galtees at the end of May, the Ballyhoura Bears were keen to return the favour, which they did – and then some!

Logistics

A total of thirty-five Mourne Ramblers took part in the trip, with thirty-two of us staying in the Cahir House Hotel in Cahir, a scenic town in County Tipperary overlooking the River Suir.

The hotel is well-used to walkers and to walking groups, and laid on a separate room for us to have breakfast and dinner. We also made use of their beer garden to enjoy the evening sunshine before our meals.

We had arranged a four-night Dinner, Bed & Breakfast deal, and some of the non-residents joined us for meals each night. Lunches were available either from the hotel or from a local Eurospar which had a deli counter as well as ready-made sandwiches.

Most people travelled on Saturday 27th May, stayed for four nights and left on Wednesday 31st May, although some had to leave early and others stayed an extra night or two. This meant that we had three full days walking.

The walkers were:

B Group: Andrew McKibbin, Robert Campbell, Malachy Devlin, Nigel Garrett, Karen Laurenson, Robert Marshall, Brige Turley, Ellen Greaney, Martin Rafferty, Ian Bates, Norman Elliott, Seamus Hughes, Denis Drinkell, Philip Gunn, Paula Daly, Pamela Quiery, Philip Appleton, Olwen Herbison and Brendan McCann.

C Group: Peter McGowan, Irene Cauley, Domnall McComish, Noel Rice, Bert Rima, Dermot MacDermott, Stephen Kennedy, Gordon McCreery, Teresa Hughes, Ian Stuart and Kingsley Thompson.

D Group: Raymond Gray, Fionnuala Carragher, Jackie Bates, Mary Joy and Gabriel McCauley.

The Walks

All walks were organised by the Ballyhoura Bears – a total of nine walks, with another local walking group, the Blarney Walking Club, leading a B group walk on the Sunday, whilst the A members of that group were hiking the Galtee Crossing.

Sunday 28th May 2023

There were four walks organised for the Sunday, with the A group tackling the Galtee Crossing, whilst both B and C groups took on the Cush Loop and D group hiked a loop around Lough Muskry:

- Galtee Crossing: Temple Hill, Lyracappul, Carrignabinnia, Slievecushnabinna, Galtymore, Galtybeg, Greenane and Farbreaga. *33km with 1,700m ascent (in 8 hours and 45 minutes!)*
- Cush Loop: a circuit of Lough Curra, taking in Galtymore, Galtybeg and Cush: *12.5km with 1,025m ascent*
- Knockastackeen/Lough Muskry loop: *9km with 500m ascent.*

Poor weather at the start of the day (low cloud, a bit damp), but the weather was much better in the afternoon and this continued for the rest of the trip.

Monday 29th May 2023

All three walks were organised and led by the Ballyhoura Bears. Surprisingly, all the A walkers took part in the B walk today; it must have been the reviving effects of the liquid refreshment after the Galtee Crossing!

B group started at King's Yard car park, and were led on a guided walk across various river valleys, which sounds like a stroll in the park, except that they walked *18km with 900m ascent*

C group walked a loop of Lough Muskry, taking in Farbreaga, Grenane and Lochlann's Castle, as well as Knockastackeen. *14km with 760m ascent*

D group had been down to do a loop of Galtybeg, but they split into two with a faster group walking up Galtymore as well as Galtybeg, and the other group

leaving out Galtybeg, but still ascending Galtymore. *Galtymore walk: 11km with 620m ascent; Galtymore and Galtybeg: 13km with 750m ascent.*

Tuesday 30th May 2023

Again, all three walks were organised and led by the Ballyhoura Bears.

The B group walk travelled to the Knockmealdown Mountains for a guided walk taking in the ridge and main summits. This challenging walk covered *18km with 1,100m ascent*

C group stayed in the Galtees and walked a loop taking in Carrigabinnia, Lyracappal and Knockatertiff. *12km with 765m ascent*

D group again split into two with one group venturing out into the hills to say a fond farewell to the Galtees, walking *17km with 690m ascent* around the Galtees Rivers, whilst the other group kept to the lower slopes of Galtymore around the Monabrack Stream, but still managed *13km with 310m ascent*.

All in all, a very successful trip, not least because of the welcome from the Ballyhoura Bears and the beautiful weather.

Peter McGowan