Upcoming Events 2015

TEACHER’S CLUB TALKS
5th February: Dave Ayton Trad climbing - head games, psychology and burning off your mates.
12th February: Dave Maddon - Summer and winter climbing in southern Norway.
19th February: Peter Norton on Mountain Environment Matters
26th February: Dave Flanagan
5th March: Gerry Galligan

UPCOMING MEETS
30th Jan - 8th February: Ice climbing trip to Hem sedal, Norway.
7th - 8th February: Winter Camp
27th Feb - 1st Mar: Connemara Meet
14th - 21st March: Costa Blanca Meet
29th May - 1st June: Lake District Meet
9th June: Midweek Evening Meets commence

NEW MEMBERS PROGRAMME
21st - 22nd March: Train The Trainers
28th - 29th March: Train The Trainers
2nd April: New Members Introductory Presentation
9nd April: New Members Indoor Session
12th April: New Members Introductory Day
16th April: New Members Evening #1
23rd April: New Members Evening #2
30th April: New Members Evening #3
7th May: New Members Evening #4
14th May: New Members Evening #5
16th - 17th May: New Members Multipitch Introductory Weekend
13th - 14th June: New Members Multipitch Follow-up Weekend

CAFREY’S WINTER WALKS
Meet at 9am in Laragh at or outside Anne’s Cafe.
Sun Jan 25th, Sun Feb 1st, Sun Feb 8th
Sun Feb 15th, Sun Feb 22nd
Further details in ‘Events’ Calendar on our website.

Front cover photo: Run of the arrows (HS), Gola Island, Co. Donegal.
Taken by Michael O’Dwyer
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Bolting is one subject which everyone in the climbing community seems to have an opinion about and it is a subject on which there are a lot of differing views.

The two articles below, each giving a slightly different view on the subject, might help us understand a bit more on the subject and help us come to our own conclusions.

From an All-Ireland final to a kick-about in the park.

By Sé O Hanlon

Rock-climbing is an art or a sport, take your pick. For me it is a sport but whatever way you choose to describe it the follow-on is the same - you owe it to yourself to do it as well as possible. You will need to perfect the right techniques to be efficient and train your body to carry out these techniques as well as possible. It goes without saying that you will have to develop the mindset that directs you towards continuous improvement. As well as personal satisfaction you will get recognition from your peers for your achievements and application. Because there is an element of risk there is a dimension to climbing which is only present in a minority of sports or arts.

Six of the qualities required for rock climbing are

1. **Strength** and endurance to complete the objective without becoming exhausted.
2. **Technique** to reduce the expenditure of energy and to make the best use of one's physical capacities
3. **Route reading**, which is required to plan and execute a new route or to select and follow the line of an established route
4. **Gear placement**, the ability to recognise opportunities to place equipment to minimise the consequences of a fall
5. **Mental strength** to face problems at the limits of your capacities, possibly with dodgy protection, and either overcome them or back off and retry another time.
6. **Confidence** in one's ability to complete what you set out to do.
All of these qualities interlock and support one another. They are all capable of being improved by practice/training and application. This is proven by the constant progress in the standards of difficulty that climbers at the top of the game have overcome. The lower-achieving climber also proves the point when he or she works their way up the grades to the highest level they can achieve. The principle of the parable of the talents applies and if you do not know this just ask your search engine.

Climbers who reach a ceiling in their ability still have the chance to try more difficult routes as seconds with partners of a higher standard. They can learn from their partner and can play an important part in the success of the partnership and need not be passive passengers.

Fixed equipment changes the whole nature of the game so that it becomes more like top roping. The leader only needs strength and technique. Route finding, gear placement skills and mental strength are no longer of great importance. Even the second avoids the need to stand in an awkward position wrestling with a well-engaged nut or friend. The atmosphere changes from that of an All-Ireland final to a kick-about in the local park.

We might ask whether fixed equipment affects anyone but the people who use it. Can those who want to do what we might call “the real thing” ignore the help and climb as if it is not there? I would argue that this is not possible. Even the smallest empty rock-face is a big and lonely place where the climber is totally dependent on their personal capacities. A face equipped with fixed pegs or bolts is much more comfortable, even for those who try to ignore them. Escape is never far away. The experience is not the same.

It would be a pity if we let fixed equipment became the norm in Ireland. We should each continue to try to bring our performance up to the highest standard we can achieve and not try to lower the standard to a level we are prepared to settle for. Let there be no reduction in the potential for challenge. And remember not to get discouraged. The worse you are the more scope there is for improvement and the easier it is to improve.

On the inevitable rise and use of bolts and other fixed anchors in Ireland.

By Noel Caffrey

The debate rages on and seems stuck in a time warp. The hue and cry of opposition is loud, persistent and dare I say it dogmatic. The dominant voice, which seems to echo around the crags … “Climbers say NO!” Is this right? Is this the only option? Is this best serving climbers on the island of Ireland? But first a wee story … delving into the experiences of two lads. It might be interesting to chart, even partially and based on their experiences, as to how climbing “technology” has developed. Too many years ago, two young kids robbed their mothers clothes lines from the back gardens, took off on their knackered bikes, cycling 12 miles to Mooghan in Co. Clare. A small quarry where rock was hand cut to build a Norman tower under the ancient stone circle fort of Mooghan. Where
over several years the kids learned their craft, mostly self-taught as it happens. Young, innocent and almost completely ignorant (they could tie some knots) of anything about climbing, except they wanted to move ever upward!

Mooghan turned into their Dalkey and over the following years developed into their go-to place. No money or transport was the limiter, confining them to Mooghan.

Nonetheless in bendy boots, clothes line, NO gear they made several first ascents over the next 3 years. Oh and by the way … the rope was tied around the waist in a single strand with a bowline. The leader did not fall and would belay the second using a waist belay.

Some summer job money allowed a hawser laid nylon ½ rope to be acquired for £4.00 or about €5.00, but still no gear. Purchased in Blacks of London by a sister and posted home it was real hi-tech.

No gear was the norm, until one saw a book with engineer’s nuts on homemade slings being used! Ah the first dilemma … do we succumb to artificial gear?

There was no argument and they moved onto leader placing a runner on the crux of new VS routes. Mind you still in bendy boots!

Then they discovered ‘rock boots’, called in the day PAs and one pair was shared. This drove on their confidence and new-routing. PAs developed by the French guide and alpinist Pierre Allen were yet another radical departure from the ethos of the day, but facilitating at least a grade increase in personal standards. Tying in, bowline around the waist was as awful as it sounds. Adequate to trail the rope behind but bloody dangerous if the leader fell because of a garrotte action. Out of the climbing world then appeared the first harness available in Ireland – The Williams Sit harness. A wholly disruptive and innovative product, which completely changed rope systems where for the first time tying onto the rope, was not a life taker!

As to their heads … wooly caps were the standard, until the famous Joe Brown helmet arrived. Weighing about 3lbs/1.5Kg, they hated it with a vengeance. Uncomfortable, heavy and hot to wear but it was all that was possible to protect the head. Again shared it between them, tossing it down the route to the second when it was his time to follow!

More summer job money and a trip to Dublin to the Richardson’s climbing gear shop opened the vista of chocks of a marvelous range of sizes, plus wonder of wonders - PECKs (if you don’t know, Google it! )

Six years in to the journey, the funds and the latest technology revealed kernmantel, 12.5mm rope. Now after several years and effectively racked up the lads were pushing themselves well beyond where they started. By the way … fully racked up meant six or so nuts in the mid to large modern sizes, plus two or three tape slings- home made of course!

All through this time the gear was becoming stronger, more reliable, and more versatile. In many ways less dangerous. Literally from the feet up. Every time new equipment, especially artificial gear placements were greeted with great thought and questioning.
There were a few moments of “Is this un-pure?” Every step we stopped, for a minute to ask themselves … is this too much “technology”? Are our roots being corrupted? This quickly waned when they saw what opened up for them in their climbing- better gear, better results, allowing them to move on in the own way?

The point in the story is like so many other developments in technology, both in sports and other fields, they create choices, open new opportunities and possibilities. To adopt a blank and absolute refusal to work out how the development can help the evolution of our sport runs the risk of becoming like the dinosaurs. Nowhere in the ongoing evolution of climbing technology and technique is the writer suggesting going wild and crazy. No one wants or needs “bolt city”

Memories of early days in Spain on first sports climbing were shocking. Bolts on some routes every meter! While looking positively at these venues we found bolts where no natural gear was possible, fixed anchors on belays, solid and reliable abs’ anchors. All of us know of questionable pitons, which really need replacing. Ab stations in precarious positions or not at all, tat which to be charitable has seen far better days, of routes where the first placement is just a little too far off the floor inviting possible ground falls.

The question which really needs airing and open debate about the use of bolts for protection and belay / ab’ stations, is not if but how, where and when!What may be a way onward is to have a process under our control. “Protecting” the ethos of leader placed gear & protection. So many routes are very well protected with leader placed gear. However we may be able to control possible use of bolts, while at the same time using the latest technology to further develop our sport. Yes … our sport.

It is up to us to decide how we should move on. No one person or minority can decide the majority. Last time I checked we still live in a democracy, where lively debate, dialogue, respect of your opponent on the issue were the way we conduct our affairs. Declarations of “Climbers say NO!” no matter from whom are simply an anchor into our past. It maybe time to declare what we all want in the sport, act responsibility and take control of the future of our sport.Looking to the future this debate needs refreshing and consideration by all of the climbing community. This could be done in a forum where all views and perspectives can be aired, considered in a calm respectful manner and decisions made for the betterment of our climbing over the next 20 years.

Steadfastly sticking to a decision, however made, in the past, which may not be in the best interests of climbing, it is reminiscent of the ostrich sticking his head in the sand in the face of change.

Tactically, perhaps the club needs a bolting officer, who’s remit will be to control and manage the process on crags we all use. To avoid a free for all where a few “radicals” may run riot placing bolts in a manner, which would destroy the spirit of climbing which has evolved so far. The BMC operate this process effectively and we could learn from that experience. No point in re-inventing wheels! In the best interests of climbing we need to manage our future in a manner and mode, which suits and respects our history, but with a sharp eye on how we can develop in the coming years.
A Long Walk South
By Sean Rothery
288pp Including maps and illustrations

Sean Rothery is a retired architect and architectural historian, he still lectures in Ireland and abroad. More importantly Sean is an Horary Member of the Irish Mountaineering Club and a lifelong lover of walking and mountaineering. A Long Walk South is the story of a journey, the entire GR5, the "Grande Randonnée Cinq". Sean travels the 2300km route from the Hook of Holland through the Dutch Lowlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and France. The Vosages and Jura mountains are traversed before Sean reaches the Alps and continues his journey towards Nice, on the Mediterranean. This book recounts the ups, downs, frustrations and elations encountered over the four month walk.

The book is in diary form starting on the 10th May where a naked run into the North Sea begins the massive trek to the Mediterranean. Freed from the slavery of the workplace and under a doctor's "advice" Sean starts to walk a few miles a day, complete with full backpack and passport! The early sections of the journey are flat and travel through small villages, suburban landscapes and along canal pathways. He journeys along meandering rivers and through forest trails in the Ardennes, site of the Battle of the Bulge. By the start of June Sean is fitter and convinced that he will reach Nice and complete the journey. One night in a Hotel he is awoken, by an annoying noise, which he describes as a "radio taxi"; Sean responds by shouting (and more than likely waking the entire hotel) that the noise is keeping him awake, "I stop" is the response. We could do with Sean down in the IMC Hut some nights!

Having travelled for nine days with walking companion Sally, Sean finds himself travelling alone again. A sense of that solitude is reflected when in June he reaches the Vosges Mountains, a natural frontier between France and Germany. The way-marks change as Sean encounters a bewildering maze of marked trails, this is certainly bewildering to most Irish people who only have to negotiate the likes of the "Little Yellow Man" as our way-marks! Later on travelling with two companions Sean reaches a "squalid" gite in the town of Novel from where they journey through Alpine pastures moving in the direction of Mount Blanc. With over 1600km completed, new boots are required before the mountain challenges and thunderstorms that the northern Alps gift to the long distance walkers.

Before reaching the Chamonix Valley Sean recounts the story of how his climbing career was cut short in an accident in the Alps. By the end of August Sean is in the Alps Maritimes, its warm the mood is good (how could it not be?) in one of the nicest places in Europe. Walking through the aches and pains the body demanding a proper rest Sean continues. There is a smell of the sea in the air, where a swim in the Warm Mediterranean awaits.

Hikers from all over the world take on challenges involving GR routes each year, I know many people, myself included, who have hiked the GR5 from Geneva to Nice, but reading Sean’s journey I feel like I took a short cut. For anyone with an interest in hiking, backpacking, travelling and long distance walking this is a great read. Sean leaves the reader with an understanding of what long distance journeying all this is about. If Nicholas Crane's "Still Waters Rising" is on your bookshelf then Sean's book should be beside it, if not, go out and buy both.

Reviewed by Niall Ennis
There is more to Vienna than Music and Coffee

When mentioning Vienna most people think of music, coffee and cakes. The last thing which enters their minds is rock climbing. The Austrian mountains are believed to be in the West of the country, mostly in the Tyrol. However, there are formidable mountains not far from Vienna. They are not quite as high but nevertheless very impressive. The climbs can be accessed easier and the weather is better than in the Tyrol.

The biggest mountains near Vienna are the 2000 m high Schneeberg and Rax in the South West. It takes one and a half hours to get there by car. Only an hour’s drive away is the Hohe Wand, a 1000 m high table mountain with over 200 climbs of grades UIAA 2 to 8 (D to E5). The majority of climbs are South facing, they are between 150 and 250 m high and consist of 4 to 12 pitches. Nearer still is the Peilstein, a smallish but rather awesome outcrop of the Eastern Alps with some 200 climbs of 1 to 3 pitches, graded UIIA 2 to 11 (D to E11). All the rocks are limestone, most routes are bolted. Best protected for sport climbing is the Peilstein which used to be a training ground for some of Austria’s top climbers such as Kurt Diemberger and Fritz Kasparek. In the Hohe Wand the bolts are more sparsely placed and in the Rax and Schneeberg they are at times even scarcer. It is advisable to bring nuts, friends and hexes.

Because the bad weather normally comes from the West, all the rain goes down over the Tyrol and Salzburg. As a consequence Vienna enjoys a benign climate, the climbing season is long, especially in the Hohe Wand where one can climb from March to November, sometimes even during the winter months. Most crags in the Hohe Wand can be reached in less than half an hour’s walk and after finishing the route one does not find oneself in the hostile environment of a glacier but on a lush pasture in a hut with hearty food and drinks.

Over the years many of my Irish climbing friends have visited me in Vienna: Gerry Moss, Liam Convery and John Duignan in 2005, Gerry again in 2009, Brendan and Rose Burke in 2007, Brendan without Rose 2013, Michael Scott 2009 and the late Joe Reville in 2010 and 2013.

My last visitor to date was Brian Lawless in June 2014. We enjoyed good weather and were able to do one of the more ambitious routes in the Rax, the Direkte Preinerwandplattent.

Climbing Around Vienna - H. Herzmann
This is a 200 m climb with seven pitches (UIIA 3 to 5/VD to VS). The first three pitches (3, 3+, 4+/VD, MS, HS) are on poor rock with little protection. The remaining four pitches (4+, 5, 4+, 4/HS, VS, HS, S) take you on good rock over a delicate slab, then via an overhang on to a long crack, followed by an interesting traverse and a delightful finishing slab. To get to the start we had to walk up 800 m in three hours, the climb took us 4 hours and the walk back to base another three hours. Add to that 3 hours driving from Vienna and back and you get a very satisfying day.

If one ventures a bit further West, about three to four hours drive from Vienna, one reaches the Ennstaler Alpen. The biggest range of mountains there includes the Dachstein, a 3000 m high limestone mountain with a glacier on top. Michael Scott and I went there in 2009 and climbed the easy but dramatic Dirndl Überschreitung. To reach the start you have to drive up a toll road to the cable car station, then take the cable car to the glacier and walk on the glacier for about 45 minutes. The climb leads you first to the top of the Hohes Dirndl (UIIA 3, 3+/VD, MS). You can enjoy the view over the glacier 200 m below on your left and 1000 m all the way down the Dachstein Southface on your right. You
then descend to a ramp at the edge of a deep incision between the Hohes and the Niederes Dirndl. You have to abseil airily 20 meters to the bottom of the gap, dangling over the 1000 m deep abyss. From there you climb up the Niederes Dirndl (4+, 3+/HS, MS), descend again, traverse on bands to the left and finally abseil 150 m down to the glacier. We did all that, missed the last cable car and had a cold night out under the starry summer sky. In another part of the Ennstaler Alpen is the National Park Gesäuse. In 2010 Joe Reville and I went there and climbed Pelikan Riebe on the Kalbling mountain, a 200 m climb with 8 pitches. The beauty is that one can drive directly to the hut from where it is only one hour’s walk to the start of the climb. Walking back from the top of the Kalbling to the hut takes between one and a half and two hours. The climb is graded UIIA 4 (S), but a Gesäuse 4 is more like a 4+ (HS) or 5- (VS) in the Hohe Wand. We only learned that later and, not surprisingly, found the route harder than expected.

We also went off route a few times and had to retrace our steps. Another thing we were not aware of was that after finishing Pelikan Riebe one has to climb another 200 m (2 to 3/D to CD) on rotten rock with no protection to the summit of the Kalbling Mountain. We arrived there at 10 pm in bright moonlight and got back to the hut at midnight!

There are excellent climbing guide books to all these areas, however they are all in German. There also exists a comprehensive Website – bergsteigen.com – again in German. If anybody is looking for information I will be happy to be contacted.

Herbert Herzmann
herbertherzmann@gmail.com
Dolomites Trip – October 2014

On 29 September 2014 Kevin Coakley and I flew to Treviso and then travelled up to Caprile (in the Italian Dolomites) where James Aitken was renting an apartment. Next morning James’s wife Liz kindly drove us up to Passo Pordoi (2229m) and the start of Via Ferrata Cesare Piazzeta – Piz Boe. We had a perfect blue sky day and so brilliant views on our walk up to the start 1½ hours away. This is a top grade 5C VF (per the Cicerone guide) “hard and strenuous, especially the first 100m” and “sometimes you have to clip under pressure, which is unusual on VF’s”, so the guidebook recommended carrying a ‘safety rope’ (which James had). Sure enough, as is common with VF’s, the hardest section was right at the beginning (I have always found this to be the case on the higher grades - my reckoning is they do it on purpose to ensure that anyone who really shouldn’t be on it is scared off straight away and doesn’t freeze halfway up). No problem for rock climbers though of course. Off we went up nearly vertical rock until we arrived at a suspended wire bridge across a short chasm, which had rungs rather than planks on it. As we walked across this (safely clipped to a guide wire) we could look down the plunging drop between our legs, “sure-footedness and freedom from vertigo required” as the guidebook puts it.

When we finally topped out of the actual climbing section (about 2½ hours later) we were greeted with stunning views all around, and a short delicate traverse over to simple trekking/scrambling terrain up to
the summit. Within the hour we were on the top of Piz Boe (3,152m) among galloping hordes of daytrippers, who had come up on the Passo Pordoi cable car, which was about 40 minutes away. The views were tremendous, with the distinctive lunar landscape of the Sella Massif all around us, and much of the Dolomites in view spread out all around under a pure blue sky. This was only spoiled when James ‘opened his lunchbox,’ which contained one of the stinkiest blue cheeses I’ve ever smelt, which James and Kevin then attacked with relish. I declined, professing “I don’t believe in putting anything into my mouth which smells worse than my socks do right now”.

The lads decided to save their knees and so opted for the cable car back down to Passo Pordoi. I like a good scree run (if conditions are good) and as various people were heading down the steep path from the saddle below the cable car I decided to give it a lash. It turned out to be a stomping scree descent and I made it down in half an hour and well before the lads who turned up a while later off the cable car.

The next day was wet but the forecast was good after that so the following day we were away early again, this time with full backpacks for a few days in the mountains. At Passo Falzarego we got the cable car up to Lagazuoi and the Rifugio Falzarego (2,762m). Lagazuoi has extensive WWI tunnels and military emplacements and is worth a visit in its own right.

We offloaded most of our gear at the rifugio and so were able to travel light the 1½ hr approx to the start of VF Tomaselli. This is again a top grade 5C VF. It was a beautiful cold crisp 2nd October morning, with great views over to the Marmolada (the highest mountain in the Dolomites). The guidebook warned that “the route is immediately strenuous and airy as it climbs and then traverses round an awkward bulge”. After 150m or so we arrived up onto a very large ledge which had a tantalising view through to the mountains out south east and a 150m odd vertical drop on our side. There was an escape route trail here leading off south east which we kept in mind as the clouds were beginning to bubble up fast and it looked like we would be lost in mist soon enough.

Being October with little risk of a thunder storm breaking out we were happy to head on and see how the day progressed so we climbed on off up into the clouds and kept slogging upwards in the mist on quite steep cable. Our perseverance paid off because by the time we reached the top it was completely clear again. Just before the top, as the guidebook put it: “there is a broken groove...best climbed by bridging, leads up to an airy à cheval stance (if you don’t speak French and you’ve not met this climbing term before, you’ll understand it when you get there!)”. Yee har horsey. Great views awaited us at the top, but then, the sting in the tail, the descent from the summit required down climbing a grade 3C via ferrata, which while 2 grades lower, was tricky in places because we were down climbing it.
However, we had no problems and soon we were on a steep scree descent, and then a traverse to a col (where there were more tunnels and military emplacements, and brilliant views of the Croda da Lago ‘the dragon’s back’), and finally a traverse back over to Rifugio Falzarego arriving back mid afternoon. The sunset at the rifugio was magic and we enjoyed the views, some vino and excellent food in 5* mountain luxury that night.

Next day we woke up to see that there had been a dusting of snow during the night on everything above 3,000m. Our target today was the Via Ferrata Lipella (Grade 4C) and the summit of Tofana di Rozes (3,225m) but the day was bright and clear so we decided we would give it a go. We finally got to be ‘real mountaineers’/’donkeys’? today as we hefted up full rucksacks, with rope, food, stove, etc and headed off for a long mountain day to trek over to the start of VF Lipella and on over the mountains to the bivouac Cantore on the other side.

After 1½ hour or so of easy traverse we arrived at the start of the VF and a short climb to a tunnel heading into the mountain. This is another impressive war time tunnel climbing up through the mountain, for 150m or so, which has a small barracks and observation rooms at the top. While cloud had bubbled up and we entered the cave on the southern face in thick cloud, we popped out on the western face in clear blue sky and with great views up the valley. We moved on to a long trail traversing across long scree slopes on the western flank of the mountain.

After a little while we started ascending a series of ledges which went on for quite a while and so it was after 2pm by the time we reached the junction which offered a handy lower level walk out to the Bivouac if needed. However, we were keen to have a go for the summit so we continued on the VF.
We traversed along a big ledge and arrived at the next steep climbing section, only to find that the first short section of it (that was in view) had ice running under it. Just beyond the cable the ledge was completely blocked by a steep snow chute plunging down the cliff face. However, with the escape route just a few minutes back we decided it was worth climbing this first section to see what it was like and to see if the wire moved away from the line of ice. So I led off up, it was little tricky given the ice underfoot, but it was OK. As soon as I got over the top of the short steep section I was delighted to see that the wire indeed moved off right onto clear dry rock and so we were off again. It seemed to take forever but we finally arrived at the memorial plaque to Giovanni Lipella.

It was now about 4pm, but still clear and bright, so myself and James took off up the last slog up to the top 200m above. Cloud was sweeping over the summit, so we only got limited views from the top, but we satisfied the summit bagging demon within. On our way down off the col we immediately encountered an odd, permafrost like, frozen condition, where everything looked dry, but it was slippy as hell. We had to pick our way down at a snail’s pace and so it was almost dark when we arrived at the Rifugio Giussani about an hour or so later, and it was fully dark by the time we arrived at Bivouac Cantore which was just a little below that.

James had told us that the Bivouac Cantore was the spookiest bivouac in the Dolomites, and arriving in murky conditions in the dark it looked like something out of horror movie, nestled under a cliff among dark boulders, surrounded by the ruins of an old WWI garrison. James had found a spring nearby the previous year, but we searched for quite a while and couldn't find any water so we had to survive with the scrap we had left in our water bottles. So, 5° yesterday, and now 0° today, how fast things can change in the mountains, but at least we had a roof over our heads. We locked the door that night and were glad that it wasn’t Halloween yet, or Friday 13th, though with Kevin and James now spending the night ‘cold turkey’ with no beer or vino to be had, I did worry about possibly waking up in the middle of the night to find one of them pacing around the room delirious and mad eyed with an ice axe in hand saying “here's Johnny”, and I wondered if maybe outside would be safer?

We were up and gone bright and early the next morning and the top of the Croda da Lago looked other worldly rising up out of a big white cloud. By about midday we had completed the long traverse back around the mountain and across under the flanks of Lagazuoi to arrive back at Passo Falzarego. After some food and drink we managed to hop a bus ride and so saved a 5km odd hoof down to the approach route into the Col di Lana. The Col di Lana is a handy Grade 1A trek/scramble which traverses a long ridge which has WWI trenches and tunnels all the way along. The Austrians and the Italians held bits of it for most of the war and sometime in 1917 the Austrians blasted a huge crater in a subsiduary summit, kicking the Italians off that bit. It made for a very interesting and scenic hike back to civilisation. After a well deserved rest day it was time for the last hurrah and one of the flagship Dolomite VFs, the Marmolada West Ridge to the summit. Although technically graded 4C (one below the highest grade) per Cicerone “it is regarded as a serious mountaineering excursion, with conditions subject to icing and quickly changing weather” and “ice-axe, crampons and a full rope are essential and previous experience of glacier crossing is recommended”. The route in the guidebook approaches from the SW, but more convenient from Caprile was a trail starting on the SE side of the massif which James had done before. James decided he really couldn't abandon Liz again for another few days so he let myself and Kevin off to tackle this ourselves. So this time we set off up the trail truly as donkeys, with full packs including ice-axe, crampons and a full rope and slogged our way up slowly, first to a high alpine farm, then on up to a rifugio nestled spectacularly under the southern flank of the Marmolada massif, which rose vertically several hundred metres above.
We were at about 2,400m at this stage, and the afternoon consisted of a slow slog up through high alpine vegetation which soon petered out to boulder fields and scree rising gradually to a pass. The views were tremendous, with a huge rising wall of rock of the southern flank of the massif on our right. It was late afternoon when we finally arrived at the pass and bivouac Marco dal Bianco at 2,800m. This is little more than a big tin can dropped on the side of the mountain. Even with only 2 of us in it, it felt slightly claustrophobic, especially when the weather closed in.

Afterwards, James said that it had been ‘interesting’ with 5 people and he had kept his helmet on at all times when in the hut.

I went off to explore an old ruined building and an elevated man made cave which had been carved into the rock face on the other side of the pass. By the time I returned to the bivouac it was spitting rain. The rain stopped late afternoon and so in order to escape the claustrophobic cabin we went outside and practiced organising and tying into the rope at one third intervals for glacier crossing. However, the weather soon closed back in and it got dark fast. After dinner, Kevin decided to get a mini Halloween bonfire going (outside the hut thankfully). However, it was just too cold and damp outside for my tastes so I left him out there huddling (solo, if that’s possible?) by the fire. Rain turned to snow that night and we awoke to find there had been a light dusting of snow around the bivouac overnight. We were greeted with a stunning red sunrise, with a cloud inversion sitting in the valleys below and Dolomite peaks rising up out of clouds all around.

Today was the big day so we hot footed it from the pass (sadly back down about 250m) to the turn for track 606, and then slogged back up 300m or so to the start of a short VF leading to the col. The wind had picked up steadily over the morning and we looked up with concern at clouds travelling at some speed over the top of the Marmolada. It was bitterly cold as we put on our harness and VF kit. Looking up at the fresh snowfall all the way up the VF to the col we wondered what we were getting in for. It turned out to be ‘interesting’, because unlike many other VFs, it was only minimally engineered. Yes it had a very good brand new cabling that filled us with confidence, but there were no stemples on any of the traverse sections that didn’t have much of a foothold. So in snow covered and frozen conditions it meant we had to man-haul and hang out of the cable quite a few times even as the drop increased steadily. But, we had no problems, and soon we were on the col.

Looking up the West Ridge VF proper we could see a lot of snow swirling around in high winds sweeping in from the Northern side. From the tricky ascent we had had on the short frozen VF section leading to the col it was clear that to head on up the VF would have been very challenging and a very serious winter mountaineering undertaking given the conditions. So, it was a unanimous decision to abandon and instead to head on down the other side for a traverse around the northern flank of the Marmolada. However, we weren’t even close to being out of the woods yet, because the descent of the VF on the much snowier northern side was a much trickier undertaking than the ascent we had just done. Firstly, we had to kick snow steps back climbing down a snow gully (though all the while protected by the VF cable) and then we had a slow delicate descent over snow, rock and ice for some time before we dropped onto the glacier. We had 2 traverses kicking along a precarious little snowy ledge with a big yawning drop behind us, so it was not for the faint hearted. But soon enough we were down on the glacier. There was an obvious enough track across the glacier so we followed this to the other side. Soon we were back on normal rocky scree trail traversing around the northern flank of the Marmolada. We looked up at the high hanging glaciers with raging snow storms swirling around in the high winds and both agreed “thank god we aren’t
Eventually we arrived back at civilisation under the cable car (which was now closed) and made our way down to lake Fedaia and the road below. We stood patiently at the roadside trying to hitch hike for over 1 hour, only to have less than 6 cars go by, and not one of them looked twice at us (well what stylish Italian in their plush Alfa Romeo is going to jam on to pick up 2 dishevelled [male] mountaineers with great big packs on?). It was now after 3pm so we decided we would start walking to Malga Ciapella, trying to hitch as we went. In the end we ended up walking all the way back to Caprile (an epic 20+km hike to finish off the day!).

For our final day, James had suggested a multi-pitch climb. He had a nice route ear marked on the Sasso di Stria near Falzarego. However, the weather was mixed the next day, and we were both still tired from our Marmolada epic, so instead we went for a pleasant stroll up the spectacular gorge that runs down from Malga Ciapella. Here we found a number of fine bolted routes at various intervals along the gorge, as well as a placard showing many impressive looking ice climbs which are dotted all along the gorge during winter, so a nice wind down last day.

Trip info:
Fly to Treviso (c.€100+bag cost) with Ryanair, or Venice with Aer Lingus – Treviso is nearer though.

Train Treviso to Belluno: (c€12), Bus to Caprile (c€6), Buses generally about the place (c€3-€4).

Mountain Rifugios: Half Board - Bed, Dinner & Breakfast (c€50). Most rifugios closed by 30 September, although most (but not all) Rifugios have emergency winter quarters with beds and blankets). See: http://www.cai.it/ “I Rifugi”

Mountain Bivouacs: Free but some have a donation box. Most, but there are some notable exceptions, have mattresses and blankets.

We used the Cicerone guide to VFs of the Italian Dolomites: Volume 1. Also have used Volume 2 for the southern Dolomites.

Some useful websites:
https://alavigne.net/Outdoors/FeatureReports/ViaFerrata/index.jsp?navpage=bestof
http://www.vieferrate.it/relazioni.html
http://www.italiarail.com/
http://www.dolomitibus.it/dolomitibus/jsp/index.jsp “Cartina (Map) & Orari (Timetable)”
Environment Canada – Weather Alert

Whitewater – Lac du Bonnet – Pinawa
3:15 PM CST Monday 30 December 2013
Wind Chill Warning

Extreme wind chills again tonight and tomorrow, more snow to follow.

An Arctic ridge of high pressure over Manitoba has ushered in very cold Arctic air over all of Manitoba. This frigid air, combined with winds of 15 to 25 km/h, is expected to generate extreme wind chill values between minus 45 and minus 50 in southern portions of the province tonight and Tuesday morning. At these extreme wind chill values frostbite on exposed skin may occur in less than 5 minutes.

Remind me why I’m here? There goes the plan for today, no outdoor activities if you want to avoid a major brain freeze. Imagine that ice cream induced brain freeze on a beautiful Dalkey summer evening, now move it up to E5, and those tourist folk trapped on the MV Akademik Shokalskiy in the Antarctic think it’s bad! They say it’s colder here than on Mars!

Being the first day of shops open after Christmas, I’ll zip into town, collect my mail from the post office and return home to finish off my IMC waffle for Ian Christie, after all, a promise is a promise! In my mailbox, a laminated card from the positive lady indicated a parcel for collection. No Indian Post Office delays here! Just in and out. On returning home, the parcel, a present from Donal, Gosh! a copy of Ramabang, signed by the author, who surprisingly prompted me to start this newsletter reminiscing saga a few years back. Sorry, Ian, got to read!

Wow! How do you go from Dalkey to exploration and new routing in the Himalayas? I guess its just, hill walking, indoor climbing, bouldering, sport climbing, trad climbing, ice climbing and mountaineering to give the expeditions and exploration finale, a sort of progression through the vertical world.

To do it safely is another matter. Last year’s Wicklow area mountain rescue statistics were horrendous, so what’s wrong? Were all those motorist rescues climbers on their way to Glendalough ice? Were all those slips and falls climbers making their way to their allotted crag? Were all those lost soles, climbers making their way back to their allotted crag after a mid day bevy? The mountain bikers and runners were obviously the ones eager to get on the rock first. No, many were most likely out of their comfort zone when it came to being in/on/through the hills. Given the right knowledge, training, experience and a proper mountain apprenticeship, the MR teams could expect to see fewer clients in the future. The motoring aspect is unbelievable, hefty rescue charges should be levied. From the rock climbing perspective, it would appear that the requisite experience is being gained, be it on the indoor circuit, the Dalkey courses or the real approach of the Barnbawn Academy. Congratulations to all involved here.

For leaders, the indoor to outdoor progression often comes as a shock to many. If it’s to a sport climbing venue, you just have to look for the holds, no coloured plastic here, move up, then it’s probably only necessary to remove a quick draw from the harness, clip to the bolt, clip in the rope and climb on. If it’s a trad crag, there is not only the looking for the holds but also some reassuring protection and this is where the difference really comes to light. With no bolt to clip and to show the way, a whole new realm develops.
What size gear, where is it on my harness, will it fit, is the rock sound, is it sufficiently nested, will a fall pull be in the right direction. All this while standing on small holds, with only one hand keeping you in balance and with the help of your reassuring companion close by. As height is gained, loneliness creeps in, if by the ocean, the restless tide masks communication and urgency can sweep in with the rising tide. If in the mountains, your calls disappear in the wind. As one progresses up, where shall I belay? Is there a ledge? Is there sufficient rope? The enquiring screams for beta from your now out of sight companion below, goes un-answered. Remember, it’s a scary place up there if you are not ready for it and even when you are. The apprenticeship has begun. Good luck.

Wicklow.
Glenmalure:
Ciunas: rumours of climbable rock filtered down from the north side of Glenmalure following the ascent of Leftieswell, named after a certain damaged ankle. ‘Ciunas’, my wife Margaret said, as I was asking for route name suggestions, I disturbed her watching of the Late Late Show with Gay Byrne.

Proctors Slab: Brendan need his name on something, then I could not stop him as Stone Maiden, Granister quickly followed that dull winters day.

Anticyclone: Jimmy was always good for a name, the weather was favourable that day, after all, it was August.

Lough Dan:
Chuckling Pig: a strange rock feature resembled, in my mind, the said pig.

Hat Trick: a hat trick is three in a row, I have no idea where the second route went! After writing this I went to make scrambled eggs, then three double yolked eggs in a row, weird or what! Time for a lottery ticket!

Clare
Burren Limestone:
The Peter Owens 2009 guide book included my take on the discovery of this magnificent area of limestone cliffs and their potential as a rock climbing venue.

Dancing Ledges: named after the prominent area at Swanage in southern England

Mirror Wall: what else could you call such a magnificent piece of limestone?

An Falla Uaigneach: an abseil down the dark cleft features at either end of this wall told me it was a lonely place; others suggested the Irish version of my initial name.
The dark satanic features were not climbed.

**Genesis:** what better a name for the first route on the cliff, no doubt influenced by all my religious associates and the surrounding antiquities.

**Nutrocker:** when I could no longer gain height by free climbing, I resorted to my meagre selection of nuts to complete the route. I don’t remember how many I used but the selection was small!

**Obscene Sardine:** This was climbed during the first IMC meet to the area that was tooted as Steve’s “Sea Cliff, Sardines and Salami meet”. The name was my response to Bob Richardson’s American food theme. The route was somewhat greasy or was it the result of the oily fish and meat I had for lunch! Chalk was still only for snooker!

**Peanut Butter Special:** climbed during the first venture away from the Dancing Ledges. With an incoming tide, the only way out was going to be a new route. The current guide seems to miss the subterranean venture into the chimney and the wobbly flake walk has perhaps fallen into the sea.

**Moon Rill:** a prominent corner that had a cosmic feature about it, and a fight over who was to lead.

**Purl One:** omitted from the 2009 guide, perhaps it had fallen into the sea. It was a slab beyond Boulder Wall, done as an exploratory climb to assess access to sea level at the south end of the cliff. Named by Leslie Wooton, perhaps she was secretly knitting baby socks in readiness!

**Cornish Raider:** during a fabulous brief visit to Clare while on holiday from Cornwall, Dave Walsh started me on a tour of non-sea cliff venues, however we only managed to visit the Black Head area. The name seemed fitting.

**Distrust the Starts:** my 1979 Dalkey guide created so much controversy it lingered on till the mid ’80’s, the stars I attached to Distrust were obviously exaggerated, nobody seemed to like loose rock except for me and so we concluded it was good to “distrust the stars”. Interestingly, this route got two stars!
Loop Head area:
An area offering huge and intimidating possibilities for ascents, traverses and presumably deep water soloing! Initially explored with Jimmy Leonard and Brendan Proctor with the final frightening with Pat Brennan.

Black Space: the abseil on a single #2 laid rope caused me to spin during my descent to the green slippery ledge up which rushed the mighty Atlantic, it was like something out of NASA’s astronauts training program. My brain continued to spin although my body just kept ‘slip sliding away’. The ascent was all black and space to America.

Steve’s Slab: not my name!

Tension: the abseil from the dodgy ESB stake was enough, tension was high.

Bird’s Nest Crack: what else do you call a climb with a birds nest in a crack.

Crystal Crack: what else do you call a crack lined with beautiful quartz crystals. If it had been diamonds we would have kept stum!

Croan Rock:
Puffin’, Pullin’, Punchin’: these were the techniques used this day on these three routes.

Illaunonearaun Slabs:
Finger Lick’n Crack: nearing the top, we found we were following the line of the local garbage dump into the sea, broken glass, bleeding fingers

Ethereal: delicate slab work in space.

Black Bottom: the colour of the limestone I think.

Donegal
Malin Beg:
The day these climbs were made, a substantial group of IMC would be sheep rescuers risked life and limb, only to see the sheep walk away unaided.

Shark Back, Shark Fin, Rig Jig and Keel: maritime names for a maritime venue.
Ben Cormac:
Sun Seeker: Jimmy and I left the camp site at Lough Barra intent on breaking my Dublin to Donegal speed record. I was obviously not concentrating on my driving having noticed a meandering slab line way off on the right. We geared up, others passed on their way home, we raced up, did the route, I think the sun was hiding during the climb. Back in the car, we roared Dublin bound till a ‘culchie gobdaw’ stopped his car without warning in the center of Mullingar. The crash was diabolical. Jimmy shouts, we're banjaxed, the eejit replies, I only stopped for some “peggy's legs and taytos” for the babby’s. Jimmy escaped with seat belt bruising, the rear seat contents of the car was in front with us and somehow the car was undamaged! ‘twas a miracle’ Jimmy murmured under his breath. Alas to say, we did not break the speed record but we did learn, don't try it again on a Bank Holiday Monday afternoon.

An Port – Berg stack:
The Wedge: why Jimmy and I drove down this obscure road to the coast can only be explained by my ever inquisitive hunt for new rock or was it mention of stacks climbed by Brendan Walsh some years earlier? It certainly was not planned. It provided a fine route up an offshore stack that I had completely forgotten about till I saw a photo on the Colmcille Climbers on-line guide. It showed the stack, bespeckled with 10 routes and a pleasant comment from Iain Millar. The line was as if a wedge had been cut from a block of cheese.

North Mayo:
A remote and beautiful area that deserves more attention from the adventurous, stacks for Iain!

Googliox: this was a 700 scree slope that provided access to the pristine boiler plate slabs of Great Expectations and others. The name was from Donald's chemical engineering text book, where it was some awful chemical reaction concoction.

Great Expectations: a line we had drooled over for months on a photo, a line we had tried to reach on several occasions but thwarted by the approach routes. Eventually Donal took the lead experience.

Baby Power: it must have been the previous night's whiskey that got us up this fine and improbable route. Could I ever find it again, that's the question; it’s certainly not wheel chair accessible!

Tir Na nOg and Quidnunc: of Donal's making

Sea Brink: the exposed edge of the slab, one step from the ocean.
Westmeath:
The Seven Wonders of Fore:
1. The Water that Will Not Boil
2. The Wood that Will Not Burn
3. The Monastery Built on a Bog
4. The Mill Without a Trace
5. The Lintel Stone No Man Could Lift
6. The Water that Runs Uphill
7. The Anchorite in a Cell

Salvage: it has been said that this climb is the ‘eighth wonder of Fore’, a wonder that anybody in their right mind would drive all the way to Co. Westmeath to do a new route. To put the story right, it was done to ‘Salvage’ what we could from a long wet weekend in Donegal, that up till the time we reached Fore consisted of a night in a ‘sheep shit’ covered bothy near Dunlewy with Dave Walsh, a look at the crumbling Sturrall, a granite route at Ballagheeha Buttress, be in existing or new, I care not, it was so miserable! The whole weekend also encompassed a study into the old wives tale of ‘do cows lie down when it’s going to rain? Since it was raining all the time and some of the cows were seen to be standing, it was concluded it was county, time and ‘are we about to be milked’ dependant!
Ireland's Eye:
Octopus and Squid: good maritime names for a coastal cliff, the upper crack on Squid should have gone on forever!

Rubber Duck and Big Bear: no idea, don't even remember the routes. Sometimes the memory can be right, in "Why's dat climb called dis", I remarked I had no memory of Time Passages at Luggala, in fact, it was a Higgs and Ryan route. (New Climbs FMCI 1979)

Theft: a controversial ascent. Joe and I climbed the new route as far as Hamilton Crack then the dynamic team of Dave Mitchell and Joss Lynam completed the line via the more difficult finish, snapping at our heals. An apt name, proposed by Joss, accepted by all.

Memorable routes of destruction
An urgent e-mail received in May 2010 from John Duignan indicated the need for collective action to prevent further desecration of the Holy Grail of Irish climbing, namely Dalkey in the area of Mahjongg and Levitation. The thought of crushed rock crossed my mind and reminded me of the frailty of our routes in the developer's quest for aggregate and the local planners need for garbage disposal.

Avondale Railway Quarry.
Located close to Rathdrum on the east bank of the Avonmore River, this old quarry provided rail ballast for the main line to Wexford. Routes done here in 1973, had a Gaulic flavour, Oberlix, Obliquix, Asterix, Cuppla Tix, Britvitix and feeling old back then, Geriatrix, all went sky high under the blasting that started in 1984.

Green Lizard Cliff.
Located close to the Green Lizard Hotel on the old N11 routes done here disappeared under the new road between Ashford and Dublin.

Avoca Ballymurtagh Open Pit.
Part of the old Avoca mines where during the 1970's an area of old mine workings was open pitted to reduce mining costs and to recover mineral left behind by the old timers. A splendid corner ran the full height of pit hanging wall; High Tails (HVS) was later buried under thousands of tons of domestic garbage. Bell Rock close by has been developed into a bolted sport climbing venue, the original route (in Wiki) called Rocky's Climb is in fact Karl's Klimb.

Finally, Ramabang, what an excellent read, the book sits in my bookcase alongside signed copies of Royal Robbins Spirit of the Age and The Burgess Book of Lies. I look forward to Gerry's next adventure.

S.R. Young
Lac Du Bonnet,
Manitoba,
Canada.

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13.01.14
The Irish Mountaineering Club would like to provide a service to all members, which will allow them greater access to the Irish Mountaineering Club library and the entire Mountaineering Ireland library consisting of 3,000 books in total, which are dedicated to climbing and mountaineering.

Members of the IMC that wish to avail of this service can simply request the book they wish to borrow and collect them from Ruth at Awesome Walls on a Tuesday night or after the indoor meet at the Teacher’s Club on a Thursday evening.

Just select the books that you wish to borrow from the catalogue available at: [http://www.irishmountaineeringclub.org/library-imc/](http://www.irishmountaineeringclub.org/library-imc/) and email your request to library@irishmountaineeringclub.org.

An arrangement will then be made to collect or drop back the books to Ruth at the agreed location.

All books are borrowed on a three week basis, if you wish to borrow them for longer just enquire with the librarian to check availability for an extended period.

Any members that have borrowed books that have exceeded this length of time are asked to contact the librarian to arrange a collection or an extension.

**Ruth Whelan**
**SUNSTONE *** 30m E3 6a T. Ryan, D. O Connell, 25/5/83. An excellent route with a steep and technical start. It follows a right-trending ramp and crack right of Marchanded Crack. Make difficult moves onto the ramp and continue up and right to the steep crack. Sustained climbing to the top.

**The secret of Sunstone**

There is a secret to Sunstone. If you get the top moves right, you can float up it as easily as a VS. Sunstone is the only E3 I can lead clean on Aran wall at Ailadee and it always smiles at me. Cleptomaniac just to its right spits me out half way up at its thin crack crux and when I eventually heave myself past it I am left with zero reserves to tackle the manageable but steepening final quarter. The challenges of the bouldering start on Lucy vary depending on the arrangement of the boulders below but from there on it is easy peezey as far as the cave with the stinky nest at two thirds height. It suddenly shows its grade (only an E2) once you step out onto the face. It is continuously overhanging all the way to the top with too many hand jams (my nemesis) for holds for the first few moves. Hanging around to place protection always leaves me exhausted and terrified as I can't quite see the damned nut and can never be sure it will take a fall. Even when I have been brave enough to chance it and climb on through, muscle fatigue always gets the better of me before the top. Sunstone on the other hand has it all. The crux move given 6a is right at the start and has bomb proof protection. You can sink 3 tiny wires deep into the fine crack at the back of the hanging corner start. If you are tall, you can place them from a stance on the boulders. If you are small like me, a tall belay partner (good old Dave) will mean you can avoid having to make the placements from a very strenuous position. When tall belayers are in short supply, the trick is to back climb to the ground once the gear is placed for a rest before starting again and continuing on past the gear without having to stop. The sequence of moves here are very technical for a shortie like me. It is a case of balance, twisting the body, holding a lower than you would think hold with the right hand and reaching to absolute stretch with the left to a “holy fuk!' good edge above. This sequence of moves drains most of my strength but the beauty of Sunstone is that at the point at which you are pooped, it gives you an easy ramp totally on the feet all the way up to the Y shaped crack at mid height. This crack is easily climbed up to where it splits in two. Once again, Sunstone considers the climber and offers a thin ledge to stand on and a wide crack into which one can sort of wedge an arm and sort of rest the hands. Some climbers have been known to place a final piece of gear here and race to the top without stopping to place any more due to the increasingly strenuous nature of the climb. As I have described above,

Aran wall steepens as the top is approached rapidly sapping the dwindling reserves of strength. A fall from the top of Sunstone in such a case goes a long way down and I often wonder if one would hit the ramp below! Obviously these brave souls have missed the secret of Sunstone! Here, if bravery were replaced with logic, intelligence and patience......(hell!... all they need to do is read the rock!), there would be no need to bolt for the top. This frantic race to the top is also caused by the fact that from the split in the Y upwards, all the horizontal holds become slopers. To try and place gear while hanging on to one of
these and then another and another, is very strenuous indeed leaving the climber too sapped of energy to make it to the top. The nature of the divided crack with the steepness of the face makes it difficult to see the abundant foot holds, increasing the sense of panic.... We all know the feeling.

I once watched Eddie Cooper dance his way up Ice Queen, an E5 to the south of Aran wall. He never stopped moving, even when placing gear. This is the first thing to think about when on the upper part of Sunstone. Never stay still. The only other word you need to know is 'sidepulls'. All the cracks on Sunstone large and small, have fabulously sharp edges in opposing direction to the marvelously deep cracks into which you can sink the feet. Memorise these as you climb past them so you know where to place them when needed. You can dance back and forth on these and place a good selection of gear if you feel the need. Close to the top are a couple of excellent finger locks if your body is tiring of sidepulls where more gear can be unloaded and away you go.

I only managed to get to Ailadee once this year and I was alone. I set up a shunt on Sunstone (I always have to climb it when I am there) and abseiled down to the boulders below. Sunstone smiled at me as it always does but this time it was mocking me! The winter storms had rearranged the boulders exposing an extra meter at the bottom of the climb. I spent and hour trying to figure out the new moves just to get to the original start of the climb. The cliff is very undercut there adding a very strenuous element to an already strenuous start (overhangs, my other nemesis). I could not get it clean.

If climate change continues to provide wild extremes of weather to these latitudes on a regular basis, we may well see a dramatic boulder shift every winter. Maybe next season they will be in a more favourable setting for Sunstone and it will smile with me once more. That is... if Aran wall itself does not collapse into the sea......
It’s that time of the year again when we reach for the stiff boots and axes and head off into the hills looking for frost covered adventures. It’s also the time of year where we need to keep our wits about us when navigating in the hills. Even as experienced navigators we can get into trouble when we’ve paid too little attention to our location and the mist en-cloaks us and we wished we had reached for the map 30 minutes earlier! Below are my top 10 tips for navigating well in winter conditions.

**TIP ONE**

Losing your map or compass or ending up with a soggy unusable map can cause a disaster. Make sure you attach your map / compass in a way that it’s secure but readily accessible. Make sure that the map is either perfectly laminated or in a waterproof case, with the area you are using pre-folded. I have taken to attaching my compass to my wrist and tucking it into my sleeve. This way it’s always close by and I don’t have to open a pocket to the elements to use it. (Pic Needed)

**TIP TWO**

Think ahead and don’t be afraid to change plans. Many times when I am on a mountain I start with plan A and might end up with plan F or G as I have adjusted my plans as the day has panned out. Do you have enough time to make the summit? Will you have to navigate off in the dark or in a whiteout?

**TIP THREE**

Plan your journey with a mind as to what the weather HAS been doing and what it will be doing. Knowing previous wind directions can help understand where cornices / drifted snow and avalanche prone slopes will be and where the easiest and safest routes will be. If you’re as sad as me you can draw little marks as to where you expect these hazards to be and compare this to what you observe when you travel.

**TIP FOUR**

If going out as part of a group make sure everyone is equipped with a map and compass and knows how to use it. This way if the group gets separated everyone has a good chance to navigate themselves to safety. Including everyone can help develop skills and make everyone feel part of the experience.

**TIP FIVE**

Goggles! If you don’t have them with you… you’ll will wish you did! Most of the time they will be in the bottom of your rucksack but for that 10% of the time when the wind is blowing spindrift in your face you will be rewarded!
**TIP SIX**

Carry a Bivi / Kisu and a head torch. Again they hopefully won’t leave your bag but better to have a place to shelter or the ability to navigate and see at night than not. Even the smallest LED torches will mean you can read the map and see hazards ahead. Carry spare batteries in a waterproof bag.

**TIP SEVEN**

Don’t neglect yourself or rush. I’ve seen very experienced navigators make basic errors because they are exhausted and have failed to take in sufficient food and drink throughout the day, and therefore lose concentration. Make sure you stop and take on food and drink. If the weather is harsh and there is limited shelter then it might be a good time to use your Kisu from Tip 6!

**TIP EIGHT**

Navigating in harsh winter conditions can be stressful and doubt often creeps in. Practice these skills when the weather is good. Therefore, when you end up in a whiteout and you need to walk on an accurate bearing for a given distance you trust your skills and don’t doubt yourself! Remember the compass has no emotion! If used correctly it will give you an accurate direction to walk in. If your gut tells you to ignore it and walk in a different direction then it’s likely to get you into trouble!

**TIP NINE**

Practicing skills such as pacing in winter is important. Just because you know your paces for 100M on good summer terrain it can change significantly if wearing Crampons and walking through deep powder. So take time to practice!

**TIP TEN**

When navigating to a feature find 3 reasons why you are where you think you are. It’s easy to make 1 or 2 thinks fit but often very hard to make 3 things fit. I.e.: We have travelled 500 meters based on the pacings, we are at the bend in the river and the terrain falls away to our right as expected.
St Jeannet meet November by Harry Mc Gee

When you open the front door during an Irish Winter to get smacked in the face by horizontal rain, the offer of five day’s climbing in the sun-kissed South of France is very tempting.

And that temptation becomes irresistible when you find out that Kevin Coakley has found a time slot for the trip where the flights into Nice cost €60 return (including taxes) with accommodation at about €20 a night. Less than €200 all in.

That was as near as you get to a sure thing. What could possibly go wrong?

Well the small print in this particular deal of the century went something like this:
When you open the door in the sun-kissed South of France during the winter, you get smacked in the face by horizontal rain. And not just horizontal rain. Vertical rain, diagonal rain, anti-gravity rain.

Unluckily for us, our visit coincided with the worst winter along the Côte d'Azur for a generation, with deluges and widespread flooding.

Not for all of it. There were two glorious days of sunshine, a half day of dry and cloudy weather, and then the beginnings of the torrent.

There were a few plot twists too. One involved the extraordinary phenomenon of outdoor rock climbing while the rain bucketed down only metres away. The other was bit of a nightmare, a sting in the tail right at the end, involving a delayed flight. But to find out what they were, you are going to have to wade through the rest of the meet report first.

In total, a party of 20 arrived on the Cote d'Azur for five days of sports climbing in two well-known rock climbing areas, both within striking distance of Nice. Kevin’s organisation and attention to detail was
salutary - and it included cooking a meal for everybody upon arrival in the gîte where we were staying. The first destination was St Jeannet, less than 20 kilometres to the east of Nice; the other was to be the well-known and wonderful routes of La Turbie, overlooking the pampered little principality of Monaco. In the event we never made it to La Turbie because of the change of weather.

The group provided a good mix of age, ability and personality - unusually for mountaineering types, the group also included some people who weren’t self-obsessed, opinionated and headstrong Type-A personalities!

St Jeannet is a pretty village of great antiquity, perched on a height. It has the look of a seasonal place, touristy during the summer, somnolent during the winter. We arrived two days before the bakery shut down for its annual holiday, signalling true hibernation. The IMC group all stayed in a gîte that rambled across two old townhouses in the centre of the village - across the road was the town’s climbing shop, where the very accommodating patron dispensed patient advice about routes.

The village is dominated by a massive limestone outcrop called Le Beau, which towers over the village. These craggy cliffs extend a few kilometres either side, offering a huge variety of sports climbing from single pitch to 20-pitch epics (some of the longer routes are run-out and need a rack of trad gear).

The great attraction of St Jeannet was the accessibility of the climbing. One needed to walk only a few minutes through the village to arrive at the impressive La Source crag, with a big array of single pitches of all grades. Some of the most popular were a little shiny but there was huge variety.

A short steep hike up to the Beau brought you to a fork in the path. To the left was the most accessible multi-pitch of the whole range. To the right was the Balcon - like a box of Milk Tray offering two layers of chocolatey caramel climbing.

That multi-pitch was the Arrete Sud which traced a line up the nose of the old Beau. The five-pitcher is about as perfect an introduction to multi-pitch sports climbing as you can get. It follows an aesthetic line, is very well protected, without too much exposure. Two of the pitches are of French grade V but both involved only two difficult moves near the anchor point. There is also the attraction of a hanging belay of a tree. Despite being well climbed, there was still a few very loose rocks. The long (very safe) traverse on pitch three wasn’t great either.

Over the two and a bit days when climbing was possible, most of the group did this climb. The only other multi-pitch that was completed was Le Malet, a thirteen-pitch odyssey up the main face. A few of the pitches are tricky. Changing conditions over the years has meant that some graded as French 3 are in reality French 5 pluses.
Peter Wood has a full report from an earlier meet. This time it was completed by Ian and Eric and most of it seemed to be doing Santa Claus impressions in reverse - hauling themselves up strenuous, narrow and difficulty chimneys.

On Sunday afternoon, the rains came in with a vengeance. Within half an hour it became obvious that there would be no more climbing. Small groups went on sodden hikes along remote waymarked trails. As they were doing this, two enterprising members of the group, Colm and Susan, made a discovery as they returned from the Source.

There was an alcove cum cave above Le Source called Le Grotto, where the rain could not reach. There were about a dozen climbable routes, from grade 4 upwards. About 12 of the group spent half a day climbing there, until the rain began to seep too close for comfort. It was an extraordinary sight: dry outdoor climbing on some interesting routes; and only metres away the rain came down in a continuous downpour.

On Monday afternoon, people began to evacuate towards Nice for the final night. At this stage, nobody was under any illusion that the majesty of La Turbie would be for another occasion. As the flight was late on Tuesday night, people either mosied around the town or went for walks or cycles.

All seemed to be heading towards a low-key end in rain-soaked Nice. But there was a final twist and not a particularly welcome one. We all boarded the buses that brought us out to the Ryanair jet on the apron. But after an interminable wait, the buses headed back to the terminal. There was a technical problem with the flight caused by bad weather. It meant the flight was delayed until the following morning. It took hours and considerable hassle to arrange accommodation but the last of the group were given their rooms at 1am. We finally arrived back in Dublin 12 hours behind schedule.

It was a great trip - thanks again Kevin - despite the inconvenient weather and Ryanair’s force majeure. We are all looking forward to hearing the ballad which Ian Christie is busily composing recalling the heroic exploits of those five days!
In June this year, three of us went to Peru’s Cordillera Vilcabamba with the main objective of an attempted ascent of Nevado Salcantay (6721m) by its NE ridge. (Rob MacCallum - Scotland, Doug Bartholemew - Scotland, Gerry Galligan - Ireland). Salcantay - a Quechuan word – means wild, savage, uncivilised and invincible. Sometimes such adjectives aren’t to be taken lightly, and this was tragically proven in 1954 when Fritz Kasperek of Eigerwand ’38 fame while making the mountain’s second ascent, fell through a cornice near the summit to his death on the SE face. The mountain is seldom climbed; until 1986 there had been only around 16 ascents, and there have probably been no more than 20 since then. But none of this was to deter us from attempting it. The usual preparations were made; organising an agent for logistics, gear hire, flights, time-off work, physical preparation, accommodation etc.

A few days in the nearest city Cusco (3399m) offered some initial acclimatising, and a visit to the prominent Inca site of Machu Picchu influenced a cultural mood.

Our expedition achieved mixed results. A two and a half day trek saw us at base camp (4650m), adjacent to the NE ridge. The mountain appeared impressive; being a wide, imposing structure of granite and ice, with glacial retreat exposing its flanks, and rendering its faces in particular hazardous to rock and ice fall. The NE ridge is graded difficile. With BC established, a recce climb was done partially up it to determine camps en route. However AMS got the better of me. Having being first felt at the valley floor 500m below, it crept up, creating headaches, loss of sleep and appetite, and leaving me stumbling around BC with no energy or will to do anything. I had never experienced it so badly before. The two others had to go alone. They climbed the ridge, of sections of rock and ice, to a rock island at a height...
of 5200m. All went well. But on return to BC Rob declared himself out of any further ascent attempt – the load-hauling would exact too much of a price. Doug was the only one capable of proceeding. However as my condition hadn’t improved – it had been four days – we all agreed a change in strategy was a good idea, plus descent was needed.

Taking light packs and provisions we left BC and descended to the neighbouring Sisaypampa valley. Here over five days we explored various sections of the valley, which formed part of an Incan trail network, and made several ascents of the surrounding minor peaks of up to 5300m. Though much improved I still wasn’t feeling a hundred percent and was content to explore at low heights. For the others, ascents were mainly on bare volcanic rock and scree, and for the most part, of scrambling variety than technical climbing. Despite the setback on Salcantay as a collective we managed to achieve something. Rob and Doug made what we believe is the first ascent of the WNW ridge of Cerro Cruzjasa (5039m), a conical peak immediately south of Salcantay. The route is a medium grade scramble with two moderate-grade rock pitches and approximately 450m in length. Near the summit the lads were rewarded with the sight of a small flock of young fleeing condors which they had inadvertently disturbed. Thus the proposed new route name Condor Ridge.

We returned to BC and the boys attempted a route on Chuyunco, a 5125m neighbour of Salcantay but were repelled by unstable rock near its summit. We broke camp, awaited our horsemen and exited the valleys by the same way we came in, arriving at the roadhead after two days. In summary it was a worthwhile expedition, conjuring many good memories that will remain: such as seeing lightening storms at night over the Amazon basin; condors freewheeling above base camp; farmers herding llamas and cattle in the uplands; witnessing the same fella marshalling pigs with slingshots; eating their produce - hot baked potatoes in our tent when we were hungry; giving a lift to an eighty year-old hitch-hiking woman with a top hat and cane, in the middle of nowhere; visiting Incan settlements and sights – marveling at their sophisticated farming methods; and of course, experiencing the magnificent natural Andean environment all around us, day and night, quiet and timeless.

Altogether we may not have done what we intended, but were satisfied nonetheless. And unlike the unfortunate Kasparek, we came home in one piece.
Training Programme 2015

March
Saturday-Sunday  21-22  Train the Trainers Weekend IMC Members with Rob Davies
Saturday-Sunday  28-29  Train the Trainers Weekend IMC Members with Rob Davies

April
Thursday 2nd April 8.00pm – Teachers Club, Introductory presentation for new members.

Thursday Evening  9th 6.30pm Onwards, Awesome Walls , Belay Skills , Locking off , Knots, Anchors with bolts, Fundamentals of Movement, Warmups.

Sunday 12th 10.00am – Introductory Day  Dalkey Quarry.

Thursday Evening#1 16th  5.00pm onward Bullock Harbour , Placement of Natural Anchors, Building Belays.

Thursday Evening#2 23th  5.00pm onward – Introductory Evening, Dalkey Quarry.

Thursday Evening#3 30th  5.00pm onward – Introductory Evening Dalkey Quarry.

May
(Note 4th May Bank Holiday)
Thursday Evening#4  7th 5.00pm onward – Introductory Evening Dalkey Quarry.

Thursday Evening#5 14th  5.00pm onward – Introductory Evening Dalkey Quarry.

Saturday-Sunday  16th-17May  Bearnagh Slabs , MultiPitch Introduction (confirmed Meelmore Lodge nights15/16th with Breakfast ).

June
(Note 1st June Bank Holiday)
Saturday-Sunday  13th -14th June  – Glendalough Weekend – IMC Hut Glendassan, MultiPitch Improvement.
The weekend started well, collecting Eugene from a hotel car park, getting blocked in to the car park, and a mad dash for the ferry being very close to missing it (last car to board).

We meet a small (Gerry+Mags, Cillian+Kieran, Gary+Dorota) but perfectly formed Climbing Club nearly all present and correct (Aidan, Niall and Gearbhall deciding on the slower boat).

A large breakfast was consumed and plans were made to drop the bags at the Hut in Bethesda and with the forecast good get a Classic Rock in the Pass done early.

The group divided to tackle two of the drier routes on offer on Clogwyn y Grochan with Gerry+Mags and Gary+Dorota climbing the 4 pitch classic Nea*** VS(4b), while Myself+Eugene and Cillian+Kieran tackled Phantom Rib, a 4 pitch 2 star VS(4c).

This is a superb climb and worthy companion to Nea. The major difficulties in the dry would seem to be the exposed climbing of the rib in Pitch2. The climbing here is delightful and delicate. In the damp conditions I found traversing to the rib with suspect gear the most intimidating, but the hardest moves were the hanging groves on Pitch3, which I left to Eugene to tackle.
Eugene on Pitch1 tackling the tree on Phantom Rib

Kieran enjoying the relief of topping out of his lead of Pitch2

Cillian looking very fashionable in his red jacket finishing Pitch2
Saturday we awoke to wind and rain – and five of us opted for “Climbing on Demand” Pant Ifan – Upper Tier is Wales’ answer to a gritstone outcrop. It catches whatever wind there is, being high and out of the trees, and is a great choice of venue when the weather is bad. Unfortunately others made the same decision. We arrived to find an instructor had got here before us and two university clubs followed quickly behind.

We started with a peach of a route Quatrefois Direct** VS(4c). Most of the difficulties being in the finger lock on the slanting damp crack at the bottom. As I climbed higher, the rain stopped and the wind took all moisture from the top cracks.

Next lead was Eugene’s and he followed Niall’s recommendation up a climb that I would say was easily worth two stars, Bulging Wall* HS(4a). The awkward grove was dispatched with a long reach to a solid handhold after which the difficulties eased to delightful climbing.

The E1(6a) climb was all that was left on this buttress, but that was still too damp (leave something till next time), but Niall had spied an opening on the main face and dragged me over to a “thin technical wall” Rammer’s Route* VS(5a). This took delicious flakes, nothing thuggy, just opposing handholds and feet placement balancing up to the horizontal breaks.

Niall led Mad Dog*** VS(4c), for myself and Eugene to follow. Problematic twin cracks, but I found it just perfect for hand jams.
My last lead was Gwynedd* VS(4b). Cearbhall had started this, only to be put off by the lack of protection and I had convince him to climb the neighbouring Rammer’s route knowing the gear was good. I am always attracted to a problem others have not yet unlocked, but Cearbhall was right, there was scant protection after climbing to the letterbox and it took a small leap of faith to climb beyond and receive good wires.

On Sunday we woke up to more rain and even stronger winds. No rush for myself and Eugene to jump on anything wet, we went back to Eric’s Café in Tremadog for a lazy cup of tea. The plan had been in my head to re-climb one the 3 star classic, Christmas Curry. Talking to other climbers around the café it seemed there would be quite a queue. Gerry had been talking up another classic One Step in the Clouds*** VS(4c), so ignoring the strength of the wind, across the road we went to Bwlch y Moch. Only one other party was climbing the route, a pair of climbing instructors who were over from Manchester. They didn’t hold us up much, and I belayed lower down from the tree at the belay of the first pitch to be out of their way. I was surprised to see Eugene carrying a full rucksack when he came to meet me.

Pitch 2 is sublime, every bit as good as the cover photo of my new guidebook promised. The wind attempted to pull me off the face, and as I climbed I wondered how Eugene would fair with the rucksack so prominent on his back. But the holds keep reassuringly appearing and the belay comes far too soon. There are some great belay ledges in this world; Burn-Up in Fairhead,
The Ramp in Ailladie, Nightmare Ledge in Glendo. This seat felt as good, the view looking out over Tremadog, seeing birds of prey swooping beneath you and listening to “Ivor the Engine” tooting on his way.

Eugene quickly arrived and then dispatched the third pitch. We took a long moment to enjoy the top with a cup of coffee. I really mean cup - Eugene had carried a proper cup for me all the way from the bottom.

One last climb before we leave for food Yogi* VS(4b), a delightfully contrasting two pitch climb. It's described as a technical first pitch which gives access to the well positioned upper flake crack of the second pitch.

And that was the end of the climbing for the weekend. The ferry company had decided to cancel the 4pm fast ferry and offered to put us onto the late slow ferry. The thought of arriving back into Ireland in the early hours of Monday morning and going to work the next day did not appeal so we grabbed a little sleep and caught the 2am ferry.

I was back in time for the dogs early morning walk, but in my mind I was already planning next year's trip with a visit to the Great Wall of Clogwyn Du'r Arddu well overdue.
1 Adoption of minutes of 2013 AGM

Proposed by Sé O’Hanlon and seconded by Gerry Galligan.

2 President’s address

A Chairde

Thank you all for attending this evenings AGM, as stated over the years it is as an important event in the clubs calendar as any other meet. As meets go I and the committee are delighted with the good turnout and interest shown in the clubs workings.

This year has been a brilliant year for the club as evidenced through the level of activity amongst it’s members. This is as a result of hard work by the committee and other members who continually give their time, the net equation is they get even more back.

Whilst safety is paramount to our activities and thankfully we had no serious incidents involving club members. I would like to reflect for a moment on our compatriots who have unfortunately passed this year and further back. Including this summer tragically in the Alps, Peter Britton [ex IMC] and his climbing partner Colm Ennis, as well as Emmet Goulding who recently passed at his home in August after fighting a long illness.

On behalf of the membership I would like to thank the committee under the stewardship of Se o Hanlon for their work. The committee proposes, analyses, debates, agrees and disagrees on the future course of actions in the club, the overriding spirit within the committee within the club is that it persists. It is the actions and activity outside committee meetings that are the measure of its performance. Therefore I can only conclude that the performance is superb.

Publicity and Webmaster – I would like to thanks Ian Christie for his tireless efforts in great communications, the newsletter is a great reflection on the club, the website content, it’s blog.......I would encourage even more participation and diversity. Cearbhall Daly, Peter Wood and Martyna ............for delivering a vision, on time and in full [although I believe more will come]. The image if the club has never been presented better to a wider audience – WWW, FB and the printed form.

Hut – Thanks to Christy Rice for his great work for the last year. I used the hut several times personally with family and friends; and with club members and recommend the same to all. My kids are convinced it is theirs, they are right. It is a testament that we are a successful club and it opens up access for us across so many initiatives. I would also like to thank Tony Groves for stepping in the last few weeks to manage the hut and all members who participate in work on the hut in the last year.

Training – Thanks to Kevin and all the mentors for running a seamless training course and taking on new initiatives like a switch in running the training weekend at Bearnagh Slabs which by all accounts was a great success, this was made even more effective when Glendalough was run in conjunction with the annual BBQ which made for a lot of hungry mouths. The training initiative for Mentors I feel was the best training initiative in the club in my memory and I trust it will find its way formally into our training process in the future. Many members continue to bolster the training programme, to
mention a few Niall Ennis, Rob Davies, Cillian Russell, Cearbhall Daly, Jon Smith, Ambrose Flynn to name a few.

Treasurer and Membership Admin – Thanks to Declan Finnegan for tremendous work. Efficiency and Accuracy at its best - the auditors are more than pleased and have expressed high praise. I would also like to thank Moira and Noel for their work and guidance.
Membership Officer – Cillian Russell. Cillian is like the glue between the functions and is always on hand.

Librarian and Archivist – Thanks to Bénédicte Reau for her care of our most unwieldy asset, for opening up its access and her assistance in many functions. Thanks to MI for its facilitation.
James for his continued participation and taking on our environmental and access representation
The Meets Teams – What’s Next. A special thanks to Vanessa Sumner and Sinead Rickerby, they have been the biggest catalyst for energising the club. Our diaries are continually full due to their work and persistence. They have reignited Thursday nights and as for having a spare weekend I wish there were two of me. To all those who organised the greatest events, what is the best meet ever? The one you are on at that point in time. The organisers you know who you are, I won’t steal Vanessa’s thunder, many thanks to all of your. [John, Apologies for double booking a weekend in September, I must do it again since we had ~50 combing the two meets]. A special mention about Andy Kirkpatrick Talk on December 18th supporting 3 Mountain Rescue Teams close to our hearts – Mayo, Dublin – Wicklow and Glen of Imaal. I am looking forward to the rest of the year’s activities and more to come in 2015.

Se O Hanlon and David Madden – Your work, stewardship and your loyalty to the club is greatly appreciated

Thanks to the officers stepping down, our sincerest thanks. Enjoy more climbing, take a well-earned break and come back with another idea or project, the more ambitious the better and don’t forget to give some others a nudge.

The future, there is nothing of consequence to hinder our ambitions. On the contrary, the club has huge resources to make dreams reality. I would encourage anybody to work on an idea that is fitting for the club’s purpose and get involved.
For the new committee I would like them to be mindful of team work, the purpose of the club and to exercise their duties in the spirit of the club using the constitution and historical practices as guidance and not barriers.

It is an honour for me to serve as president of the Irish Mountaineering Club, thanks to all for the encouragement and kinship over the year.

Go raibh mile maith agaibh, is mise le meas
Tony Barry, President

3 Receipt and Approval of Officer's Reports

3.1 Chairperson

This a report is about what the Committee did as a group and does not deal with the work of individual officers or the progress of the club overall. It tells of
Committee successes and also of our failures. It is very important that, even if we do fairly OK, we all look at our weaknesses and try to improve in the future instead of sitting around clapping one another on the back and telling ourselves how great we are.

At our first meeting Cearbhall Daly, Webmaster, was co-opted to the Committee.

The Committee of 13 members met seven times during the year and will meet for an eighth time after this report was written. Attendance was quite good. 9 members attended six or more meetings or were unavoidably absent. Special mention must be made of Christy Rice who was an unfailing attender despite a round trip of 200 miles. Our President, who is under no obligation to come along at all, sat in on 4 meetings.

Our major project was the completion of the new website which was started by the 2012/13 Committee. This project was led by Peter Wood and he deserves all our thanks for his extraordinary commitment of time and thought. In addition to his work in liaising with the excellent designer, Martyna Lebryk, he sat in on 4 Committee meetings to report on progress and to get agreement for action.

We worked on the basis that the Committee administers the business of the Club in line with the Constitution and with policy decisions by AGMs. Every now and then an idea might come up that is better than what has been agreed by the Club in the past and in these cases the Committee felt entitled to do the new and better thing immediately. Any such change must be put before the next AGM for approval if it seems to be the way forward and worth making permanent. If it is not thought worth making permanent it lapses.

- The Training Officer proposed, and the Committee agreed, to move the new members’ weekend away from Glendalough to Bearnagh Slabs where there are less committing multi-pitch routes. Unfortunately there was no detailed report on the Beginners’ Programme to the Committee (I do not remember any such report since the AGM laid down in 2001 how the Programme should be carried through) so the Committee never discussed the subject and there is no proposal to continue with Bearnagh Slabs.
- Members were confused by the fact that we have a Membership Officer who does not handle membership administration and a Treasurer who does. We agreed to change the titles to “New Members Liaison” and “Treasurer & Membership Administrator” respectively. The Committee did not feel it worthwhile to propose a permanent change to the titles in the Constitution at this meeting. In the absence of anyone else making such a proposal we will therefore revert to the old titles.

We defined what we were meeting for and how we should set about our work. We recognised that that the IMC has a purpose which has not changed in the 60+ years of its existence but the ways to achieve it have changed. We should hold onto the good ideas from the past but we should be coming up with new good ideas and passing them forwards.

- The standard required for Full Membership is that a person should be able to lead V Diff. and make their way safely around the hills. If they cannot do this after a reasonable period there must be something wrong with the person or the club. We considered making this the yardstick of our value as a club and the target of our training activity. Success might be if we have no members of more than two years standing who are still incompetent. We talked about whether, as well as an Introduction to Rock Climbing in the summer, we should have an introduction to mountain skills at another time to bring people up to basic mountaineering level. The idea of having the training aspect of certain parts of
the Introduction to Rock climbing handled by professionals was also mooted. A subcommittee was appointed to put together ideas on these subjects. There were no ideas.

Anecdotally we know that many members gave unselfishly of their time to mentor new members during the Introduction to Rock Climbing and that lots of people enjoyed the outings but this is not a good enough measure of success in training. It is an indictment of the Club through many years that we blindly go out and do the same things every year, maybe with tiny cosmetic changes, without reviewing in detail how effective our work is and how the same amount of effort could get better results.

• In pre-internet days the Club issued 4 Newsletters a year to keep members up to date and involved. We now have a reduced number of much better looking newsletters produced at unpredictable intervals. These are backed up by a mailing list, a website and Facebook page. A mailing list is only as good as the number of addresses it contains and the number of times mails are sent out. A website and Facebook page are very important but they lie passively waiting for members to come to them. The Committee recognised that we needed to give a bit of thought to coordinating these means of communicating and to actively tell members what will be happening and encourage them to join activities. We delegated a member to give some thought to the subject and come back with ideas. After a period of denial the project was abandoned.

• In 2012 Andrew O Connor carried out a survey of current and ex-members and analysed the results to learn how the Club should function to give the most satisfaction to the greatest number of members. Obviously the Committee should lead in applying the lessons from Andrew’s work. Unfortunately we were the third successive Committee to put this item on the agenda but fail to do anything.

• Tragic accidents in recent years resulted in Club officers being approached for comment and information by journalists. We have realised that the Club should have a policy about who would do what to answer such questions tactfully and at the same time keep our members informed. We agreed that the Secretary, Chairman and President, convening in person or by telephone, will determine a plan of action for each case as appropriate and draft any statements. I hope the next serious accident is far in the future but I also hope that when it happens the Committee of the time will remember this idea.

• Maybe 10 or more years ago an effort was started to encourage officers to write up guidebooks on how best to do their jobs with the intention of preserving the lessons from their experience. It was intended that these would help new officers in getting a grip on their role and also that they would be amended and added to from year to year as ideas and methods changed. Thanks to a push by Cearbhall Daly we now have 5 roles documented (25% improvement in one year) and only 5 more waiting to be written up. Not bad for 10 years.

• The Committee felt that the Club is not short of money and that it is important that we be seen to spend more money on the members’ behalf instead of squirreling it away. With this in mind we bought a 100m abseil rope which had a number of outings this year. We have also decided to buy a mess tent with a separate groundsheet which can be used for convivial gatherings at club meets, particularly during bad weather when there is no pub nearby, and also for sleeping together as a community. Finding a suitable tent which can be carried more than a few metres from a car is not proving as easy as expected and it may be that this project will be passed to the incoming Committee.

• In appreciation of the services rendered to our members by Dublin/Wicklow, Glen of Imaal and Galway/Mayo mountain rescue teams the Committee has agreed to pay the costs of a lecture in Dublin by Andy Kirkpatrick and donate the gross proceeds to these teams.
• We lost the services of our Hut Warden, Christie Rice, when he resigned because of inept handling by the Committee of a proposal from another Officer that a review of fire and other safety in the Hut be commissioned. The question of who would carry out the review and their qualification was left open. There was no consultation with the Hut Warden before this proposal was drafted and he was late getting to the meeting at which it was decided to accept the proposal before he arrived. It is significant that this all happened without any review whether all of the recommendations in the professional report which we received last year had been carried out. Our thanks go to Tony Groves who jumped in to fill the void. I feel that it is worth remembering that resignation, while satisfying, prevents the resigner from pushing their case on the subject that is important to them.

Down the years some officers have not had time to carry out the task they took on because there was a family which made reasonable demands and/or a job which made unreasonable demands lurking in the background. These were enthusiastic, well-meaning people who volunteered their services when nobody else would step forward. I hope that it may be possible for more of our members who have some free time or are well organised to step forward for positions in the future.

Sé O Hanlon
Chairman

Adoption of the above report was proposed by Conor O’Connor and seconded by Nick Keegan.

The Chairperson’s report (as presented at the AGM) was accepted by majority vote.

3.2 Treasurer

The treasurer really has two roles – one is managing the clubs finances and the second is membership administration. I’ll speak about the clubs finances first and I have prepared a short presentation to go with this report.

The IMC currently has 3 bank accounts – Club a/c, Hut a/c and a PTSB 40-day notice account. The club financial year finishes on the 30th of September.

I’ll start with the Club Account and go through the major or unusual items. I’ll display the other figures in the presentation and if anybody has a question about individual items please make a note of it and ask me at the end.

Club

The income from Membership Fees for the year was €9075. A further €247 was collected from the members who attended the Mournes meet to cover the deposit which was paid in advance by the club. This brings the total income to €9322.

Total Expenditure was €11,555.93 which means the club spent €2233.93 more than it took in last year. The closing balance was €1671.
Mountaineering Ireland Fees accounted for €4,907.75

The New Website was the next biggest cost at €2000 plus €150 for the forum migration. It was decided to use some of the money from bequests which has been given to the club to use purposes that promote mountaineering in Ireland.

Several Club members rushed to help with the search for their fellow IMC member Geoff Rowden on Mwealrea last year. In recognition of this the committee decided to reimburse them for expenses incurred such as fuel costs.

€400.00 was approved for train the trainers training for existing members before the intake of new members. This proved to be a great success and was very good value as Rob Davies gave us a very good discount.

Traditionally the club does not spend money on climbing gear. An exception was made this year for a 100m abseil rope, carabiners and rope bag which cost €293.17. This is communal equipment used for the benefit of many club members and has seen a lot of use.

The other expenses and breakdown of costs as a percentage of the total spend are shown on a slide 3 and 4 of the presentation

*Hut Account*

The income from Hut Fees was €10023.45

The total expenditure for the Hut was €8455 and is shown on the slide 5. They are by and large as to be expected with maintenance, wear and tear, travel expenses and ESB. We did get a great new fridge along with other improvements. I’d like to thank Christy Rice for his diligence in keeping his receipts and his help with lodging and collecting hut fees as well as Tony Groves for his help in the last few months.

I decided to transfer €10,000 from the Hut account to the higher interest PTSB account. This is still available for use with 40 days’ notice if required.

The surplus on the Hut activities was €3568.09 and the closing balance was €4675

*PTSB*

There was a closing balance of €70,994

*Overall*

The overall summary is shown on slide 7. The overall closing balance was €77,313 which is almost a 3% increase on time last year.

*Club Membership Admin*

I show a bar chart on slide 8 with membership totals to give an idea of the split in membership. These numbers are roughly the same as last year.
The current membership admin system is based on a spreadsheet and all records are updated manually. I want to apologise to any members that have had problems this year due to mistakes I have made, missed communications or had unacceptable delays. I want to thank my predecessors, Lloyd Moore and Geraldine Murphy – I only really appreciated the work you had done after I took over, and it’s clear from the records you left behind that you did an excellent job. This year Sé O’Hanlon stepped in to help me on many occasions when he saw me in need and I want to thank him for all his help, it was greatly appreciated.

The committee has decided to move the membership records to an online management system. This was delayed slightly by the introduction of the new website but it is going to happen very soon. It will take out a lot of the human error and I’m sure will make the overall experience of club members much better as well as reduce the workload on the administrator.

Declan Finnegan, Treasurer

Adoption of the Treasurer’s report was proposed by Sé O’Hanlon and seconded by Harry McGee.

3.3 Publicity Officer

How many people actually read the newsletter?

I sometimes wonder about this. I know of a few people who read it cover to cover, one being my father in law, and I am sure there are some who use it for lighting the fire. But the beauty of the newsletter is that it is as much about the writers as it is about the readers. It promotes involvement and after all involvement is what any club is about.

The weakness of the newsletter is that because most people will only write when asked it means that most people writing are people I know. The danger is that it becomes the newsletter of people Ian Christie knows. There is a silent majority out there who are involved in all sorts of stuff that I don’t know about and my aim, if elected next year, is to reach out to those silent majority and drag them kicking and screaming onto to the pages of the newsletter.so to all those malingerers, you can run but you can’t hide, as Liam Neeson says I WILL FIND YOU.

This year if elected I have asked Gary smith to go 5050 with me on this job and he has kindly agreed

The second aspect of publicity is the website. The enormous amount of work put into this by Peter and Martina and Cearbhall and myself should not be underestimated. It is looking great and it is on a contact management system now that will enable this new website to develop with the club. I see a bright future for this fledgling and I will borrow one of Fianna Fails election slogans for this “a lot done, more to do”

Being on the committee can be a rewarding and very interesting experience. I personally have learned a lot by being on the committee. It gets a lot of bad press but I genuinely feel privileged to have served and I would encourage anyone who has an ounce of energy to sign up. So I suppose I better shut up and just like to say thanks to Declan Craig who actually sets the entire newsletter and is responsible for the polished modern look it has. Also thanks to Cearbhall peter, martyna, shay,
declan, cillian, Benedicte, dave, tony, james, Christy, declan Finnegan, and also all the contributors to the newsletter during the year, and if I manage to get elected next year I will endeavor to make the NW a better, more interesting, and more inclusive rag, and maybe a few more will read it before lighting the fire.

Adoption of Publicity Officer’s report was proposed by Declan Craig and seconded by Kevin Byrne.

3.4 Membership Officer

Total number of paid up members 2014 (September) 231 members

Number of new members in 2014 53 members approximately

Number of approved for full membership 11 members

Activities

Established communication with all new members via email and via the website.

The official club weekly climbing meets were held on Thursdays in Dalkey Quarry throughout the summer and autumn aimed at new members. These were well supported by established members. A small group also met on Tuesday evening and the mid-week meets organised by Declan and Cearbhall were also very accommodating and supportive of new members.

The outdoor weekly meets have been replaced by the Tuesday indoor meet from the Beginning of October so as not to clash with the Thursday lecture series.

In addition to the New Members programme organised by the training officer, two meets were organised aimed specifically at new members, Barnbawn on July 19th and Glendalough August 8th followed by the annual BBQ. Both were well supported by members although sadly less so by new members.

Comment:

In my report to last year’s AGM I spoke about the role of the Members officer being unclear and that it overlaps with the roles of other officers. In 2014 the overlap in role with the treasurer was discussed by the committee and responsibilities agreed and clarified for both officers. The treasurer is now responsible for all aspects of membership administration. The role of the membership officer is essentially to provide support to the new members and in this regard worked closely with the training officer.

As with previous years we have seen an extremely high level of dropout by new members despite the considerable support on offer to them from the other club members. I do not know why this is. I suggest that perhaps it is simply that new members are not sufficiently interested in the sport, find it too challenging or do not have the time to participate. The small cohort of new members who did ‘Stick with it’ have progressed extremely with many leading at least one VS climb and almost all seconding single and multipitch up to a VS or higher grade.
Where, in my view the main role of the member’s officer is one of contact and support for new members I don’t believe that this should be seen as the role of one person only. Where I know that consideration will continue to be given to the needs of new members when organising club meets, we should also include by whom and how that support will be given as happens with those activities specifically planned for new members. The club need to on one hand formally factor the needs of new members into its meets and other scheduled activities and on the other recognise that some of these activities will not always be suitable for beginners.

One of the issues discussed by the committee was the progression of associate members to full members and the required competencies needed to become a full members. I propose a two year progression route is mapped signposting development opportunities using the existing activities of the club. These should include for example the excellent training organised by Kevin Coakley and provided by Rob Davis (although I believe that participants should contribute to the costs); the training provided by Calvin Torrans, new members programme, our regular meets, the winter walking series, night navigation and winter camp.

Overall I have found 2014 to have been a very active and vibrant year for the club demonstrated by a very busy quarry, a fantastic meet schedule, winter walks, camps etc. As members officer I would like to thank club members and a very active committee for their camaraderie, and the support and commitment shown to new members.

Cillian Russell, Membership Officer.

Adoption of the Membership Officer’s report was proposed by David Jacobs and seconded by Kieran Kelly.

3.5 Training Officer

We had a successful year from the aspect of training new members and reinforcing the skills levels of our existing members.

We started our training year by participating in the winter snow camp in January, we had 10 people for this event and a number of people learnt how to break tent poles, ruin food, and deal with hypothermia! A good time was had by all and joking aside some useful lessons learnt. I hope this year’s event has a much bigger turnout.

We followed with a February traverse of Saint Kevin’s Bed which included some escape abseils and night navigation.

Recognising that navigation and mountain skills are an integral part of Mountaineering we organized a number of Sunday hikes which included training in Navigation, we had a poor turnout for these with only 10 people on some days.

In discussion with fellow committee members the planning for the introduction to rock for new members we concluded that the club needed more uniformity in the way we were introducing people to climbing. We decided to run a series of workshops loosely titled “train the trainers”
It was agreed that we needed a professional trainer to give sufficient authority to the role given the long years of experience of some of our trainers. We asked Rob Davies to take on the role, and he was very generous with his time and his discount!

The sessions worked very well and generated a lot of discussion on different styles of training or advising. We put approx. 25 people through the programme and we reaped the benefits when the beginners programme started.

For the Introduction to Rock climbing we had approx. 38 people turn up to the first Sunday in the quarry and a good follow up over the next 3 evenings. We changed the venue for the multi pitch weekend to the Mournes as it was decided that Glendalough Crag was perhaps a big ask for people new to climbing.

We did a final evening at Bullock Harbour on anchors and the various combinations that were possible. We booked Meelmore Lodge for the weekend but it rained so much no climbing was available. We made good use of the time and a hike was led by Niall Ennis taking some people to the top of the highest peak in Ulster a new experience for them. We revisited the Mournes some weeks later when 25 people finally got their multi-pitch day in glorious sunshine.

We organized a refresher day in the quarry for new members in September concentrating on the setting up of anchors and setting up abseils on mountain crags this event was attended by approx. 20 persons. Training events planned, Tony Barry will be running the Bivvy out night and Niall Ennis will run the winter snow camp early next year.

I would like to thank all the club members that helped with the training and give their time year after year asking no reward. I would particularly thank Cillian for his work on training and with new member development

Kevin Coakley, Training Officer.

Adoption of the Training Officer’s report was proposed by Peter Wood and seconded by Paddy O’Leary.

3.6 Meets Secretary

Beginning with the indoor meets season last year, we were very happy with how this went and particularly with the support we received from our own club members so we’d like to start with some thank yous:

A number of IMC members gave their time to prepare and deliver slideshows here in the Teacher’s Club. This was greatly appreciated. A massive thanks to:

Peter O’Neill
Sé O’ Hanlon
Niall Ennis
Gerry Galligan
Woodsey (Peter Wood)
Bénédicte Reau
The Dream On Team of Ambrose Flynn and Vincent Astier
Rowan Kavanagh (and the DWMRT members who presented with him)
Colm Peppard

Our apologies if we have left anyone out from this list.

The slideshows were in general very well attended by our members particularly when the speaker was a fellow IMC member, so thank you all those who made the effort to come along to the Teacher’s Club. It’s great to see the loyalty and support for each other within our club and may it continue for many indoor meets seasons to come.

We can’t stress enough that attendance is massively important to the continued success of the indoor meets so we’d encourage all members to please keep checking the IMC website, Facebook page, and your emails for details of upcoming talks and come along to the Teacher’s Club on a Thursday evening as often as you can. There’s a great buzz about the place on the nights when lots of people show up and it fires the speaker up too and makes it worth their while coming out.

Moving on now to the outdoor meets season and what a great season it was! Sinead and I certainly had a ball anyway so here comes another list of thank yous. And once again sincere apologies if we have left anyone out. Thanks to:

Cearbhall Daly and Declan Finnegan for organising the really successful weekly evening meets to various different crags around Wicklow. These meets were loads of fun. As amazing as Dalkey is it’s nice to sample a wide range of local crags.

Ian Christie for organising the training hikes in preparation for last year’s Moonlight Challenge in aid of Glen of Imaal MRT, the upcoming Spain Meet and a kind of unofficial ‘let’s test this place out’ meet to Wales which Sinead and I gladly hijacked and had a great time.

Niall Ennis for leading numerous hill walks throughout the year. We wish him well with his blog of epics ‘The Shite Spider’ – Google it if you haven’t heard of it!

Noel Caffrey for leading numerous hill walks also and providing hours of endless banter along the way!

Tony Barry for organising what turned out to be a balmy winter bivi, a not so balmy snowy winter camp and an amazing meet in Kerry
Jon Smith and Ambrose Flynn for organising the Fairhead meet – lots of laughing done at that one too

Declan Finnegan for organising the wild camping meet on Gola – the climbing there was unbelievable, as was the snorkeling and yoga!

Our training officer KC for organising two meets to The Mournes, the Nice Meet, the beginners rock climbing program and last but certainly not least the St. Kevin’s Bed Traverse epic – see The Shite Spider for further details!

The legendary Gerry Moss for organising The Lake District Meet and The Wales Meet, regular climbing days in Barnbawn over the Winter and for simply being a motivating, encouraging, and experienced presence around the place for members

Gary Smith for organising the meet to Ireland’s Eye

The Three Amigos Conor, Nick, and Jason and anyone who helped them out for organising the BBQ in the IMC hut

Cillian ‘angry bear’ Russell for co-ordinating the pre-BBQ climbing in Glendalough, organising a meet to Barnbawn, and across the board being such a great support for our new members on every meet he attended

Ambrose and Vincent for organising the Dunsevrick Meet

John Duignan for organising the Connemara and Luggalla meets

I think we can look forward to another great season of IMC climbing in 2015!

The upcoming season of meets is all we have left to mention now. We have a great season of indoor meets lined up, so once again keep checking the IMC website both the forum and the events calendar, Facebook page, and your emails so you don’t miss any. With the odd exception they will continue to be held in the Teacher’s Club Thursdays at 9.15pm. Thanks to Naomi Sturdi who gave an introduction to yoga class in AW and to Dermot Shiels who kicked off this year’s indoor meets season here in the Teacher’s Club last Thursday with a really motivating slideshow on his rock climbing experiences in various different locations around the world.

Naomi Sturdi is currently running a 6 week yoga course in Awesome Walls. This is full now but keep an eye out for further classes. The exercises in them really benefit your climbing.

Also most of you are probably aware we are hosting a talk by the well-known climber, author, and comedian Andy Kirkpatrick on Thursday the 18th of December in Trinity College. This should be a great event.

You can buy your ticket online for €10 through the IMC website or Facebook page. All money raised will be donated to Glen of Imaal, Dublin-Wicklow, and Mayo Mountain Rescue teams so please spread the word, buy a ticket and encourage as many of your friends as you can to come along too.
We’d like to say a huge thank you to Cearbhall Daly for all his help publicising this event, and for setting up the online tickets sales facility. And thanks also to Declan Craig for printing the posters for us and to Liam McCarthy for all his help securing Trinity as the venue for this event.

The talk will be over around 9pm and after it we are going to hit the town for an IMC Christmas night out. Hope to see you all there!

Thank you,

Vanessa Sumner and Sinead Rickerby

Adoption of the Meets Secretary’s report was proposed by Jon Smith and seconded by Sean Barrett.

3.7 Hut Warden

I only took over the Hut Warden job at the end of September, so forgive me if the report is a bit short.

First, I would like to thank Christy Rice for leaving the Hut in great condition and for helping in the changeover. Christy asked me to pass on his thanks to Tommy Irving, Bénédicte, Sé, Krystof, Moira, Joff, and anybody he might have forgotten, for their help with plumbing, painting, woodwork, and other maintenance. Christy also organised some new kitchen equipment, replaced the fridge, provided two new picnic benches, and a lot more. He thanks the outgoing committee and wishes the incoming warden well and offers his support.

I would also like to thank those who helped during my short spell, especially those who turned up to help during the work weekend, including Kieran, Sé, Vincent, Joff, and Christy, and anybody I might have forgotten. Work done includes electrics, painting, plumbing, gardening, and general maintenance.

Income during the year was over €10,000, similar to previous years, and the operating surplus was over €3,500. These are healthy figures.

The Hut has improved enormously in recent years, and the emphasis in the last couple of years has been mainly on safety issues. A fire safety report was received about a year and a half ago, and its list of recommendations is being steadily ticked off. For example, fire doors have been fitted, heat/smoke alarms fitted, ceilings reinforced, emergency exit signage posted, and there is still a lot more to do. I am confident that the work in this area will continue, and I offer the incoming warden whatever help I can give. I note that the outgoing committee has decided to commission another fire report at a cost of €1000, while the works are ongoing.

Finally, I would like to assure members that full records of bookings are kept; cross-referenced against payments received. The bookings file contains records going back to 2004. The auditors are welcome to check the records any time; they only have to ask.

Tony Groves, Hutwarden (interim)
Adoption of the Hut Warden’s report was proposed by James Flanagan and seconded by Kieran Kelly.

3.9 Librarian

The IMC Library was eventually finished and all books are now catalogued and available in the MI office in Blanchardstown. The old or damaged books have been catalogued as « cannot be borrowed to be read in the library ».

The link to access the catalogue is available on the IMC website.

Archives

The year 1955 have been completed by Catherine Coleman who gave all notes of her dad (Jack Coleman). It has been stored in the hut.

Paddy O’Leary has done a lot of research and requests for his book of the Irish Mountaineering history.

The archives have been indexed up to 1955. Still a lot to do for the next archive/library officer.

Adoption of the Librarian’s report was proposed by Se O’Hanlon and seconded by Ian Christie.

3.10 Secretary

The Secretary extended his and the committee’s thanks to Tony Groves for taking up the position of interim Hut Warden at very short notice in October following the resignation of Christy Rice.

4 Receipt and Approval of Auditor’s Report

The auditors examined the financial records processes and procedures of the IMC to assess accuracy of record keeping, and examine whether key risks are adequately addressed.

Specifically we examined the following items:

a) Club financial accounts
We examined the overall system for record keeping and checked on the larger transactions to ensure back up receipts and relevant documentation was available. The accounts are very well kept, the established process is highly transparent and has been maintained to a very high standard by the current treasurer Declan Finnegan. **No further action required.**

b) **Hut account**
Separate accounts are maintained and a separate bank account for the IMC hut. The accounting process is not as detailed in this case partly due to split responsibility between hut warden and treasurer. Random examination of transactions showed accounts to be accurate and well kept. **We recommend however that as far as possible a record should be kept of hut bookings to make it easier to cross check incoming payments (i.e. record who made booking for when and how many people at what price)**

c) **PTSB account**
A third bank account is maintained as a deposit interest generating savings account with the PTSB which represents the proceeds of the sale of the forest. The auditors viewed this statement but as there are no transactions other than interest received there is no need to seek any further detail. There was one transaction – transfer of €10,000 excess from hut account. **No action required**

d) **Committee roles and procedures**
The roles/ duties/ tasks of committee positions have been partially documented and these are now available on the website. This is very important to ensure a smooth transfer of processes and best practice from one committee to the next and to facilitate succession planning. It is easier for people to decide whether or not to step forward for a job if they know what the role entails, and it will greatly help new committee members take on the task quickly if the role is clearly defined, rather than reinventing the wheel in the event that no handover can happen. **We recommend that this should be completed ASAP and that a complete set of role descriptions should be maintained freely visible on the club website**

e) **Membership levels – process of promotion to full member**
The 2 different levels of membership – i.e. full and associate – is an essential element of the governance of the club to ensure that key decisions are made by full members (who have voting rights) hence leaving the future of the club clearly in the hands of climbers. While the current process of requiring a completed form with two members’ signatures to allow for a member upgrade should be maintained as one avenue for promotion, we strongly recommend that the process as laid down in the constitution which was the practice in the club until very recently should be revived immediately. This process allowed the committee as advised on the constitution to upgrade a member at their discretion. IN practice this was an informal standard discussion at each committee meeting whereby members who qualified for an upgrade were listed and if two committee members vouched that they were qualified they were automatically upgraded. The current process of requiring the form in all cases is bureaucratic and unwieldy and is against the spirit of the
We recommend that a regular informal process of upgrading at each committee meeting should be re-established immediately as described above.

f) Voting processes at the AGM.

It has come to light that at recent AGMs many people voting were not full members, and indeed people were elected to the committee without full member’s status. This is partly due to the processes discussed in bullet e) above. We recommend that a simple voting system (e.g. voting cards for full members) should be established at the AGM whereby full members only can vote.

g) Hut Insurance

We have viewed the hut insurance documentation – both the standard fire and theft insurance and also the third party coverage provided under the club insurance provided by the MI. Insurance is in place for these risks, however we are concerned that in the absence of a fire certification provided by a third party qualified professional the fire insurance may be deemed invalid. Our understanding is that a formal tender process is underway to choose a provider for fire certification and that the provider should be chosen by Nov 30 2014, the work on assessment to be carried out by end of year 2014. This fire certification is in our view an urgent priority.

h) Library

The auditors have examined the library at location in the MI offices, and the procedures for lending and securing books – i.e. following up on loans outstanding etc. In our view the library is well managed and secure, particularly in view of the fact that any books deemed valuable cannot be borrowed and can only be viewed.

Auditors: Noel Caffrey, Moira Creedon

Adoption of the Auditor’s report was proposed by Kevin Byrne and seconded by Se O’Hanlon.

5.2 Election of Officers and Committee members

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<th>Position</th>
<th>Elected</th>
<th>Proposers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td>Niall Ennis</td>
<td>Ian Christie/ Cillian Russell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Tina Ennis</td>
<td>Dave Madden/Moira Creedon</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Kevin Coakley</td>
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<td>Ordinary Committee member</td>
<td>Sinead Rickerby</td>
<td>Vanessa Sumner/ Kevin Coakley</td>
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5.3 Non-committee roles

Cearbhall Daly to stay on as Webmaster.

Peter Norton to stay on as Conservation and Access Officer.

5.4 Auditors

Moira Creedon and Noel Caffrey were re-elected. Proposed by Ian Christie and seconded by James Flanagan.

6 Motions

6.1 Motion no 1

Se O’Hanlon and Nick Keegan propose that the fourth paragraph under “The Course” in the policy for the Introduction to Rock climbing be amended to read: “Will continue with 4 night-time sessions in Dalkey Quarry, one session at the wall and will conclude with two day sessions at Dalkey or Glendalough or Bearnagh Slabs as appropriate.”

Motion was passed by majority as re-worded.

7 Any Other Business

Peter Norton and Paddy O’Leary were offered the option of presenting the Access and Conservation Officer report and the Expedition Report respectively. However, due to the lateness of the hour it was not possible to cover these during the AGM. The Access and Conservation Officer and the Expedition Panel Reports are available in full on the Member Info section of the IMC website.

Due to time pressures and the fact that no further items were put forward for discussion the President brought the 2014 AGM to a close.

3rd January 2014, Dave Madden
### Club Income and Expenditure to 30th September 2014

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<td><strong>£11,470</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>£11,470</strong></td>
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**Surplus / (Deficit) on club activities**: £6,878

**Adjusted Surplus / (Deficit) on club activities**: £6,878

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### Hut Income and Expenditure to 30th September 2013

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<th>2013</th>
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</table>

**Surplus / (Deficit) on hut activities**: £6,877

**Adjusted Surplus / (Deficit) on hut activities**: £6,877

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### Treasurer’s Report for Year ended 30th September 2013

**Club Income from fees was**: £9,075

**Adjusted surplus for the year**: £6,878

**Hut Income from fees was**: £10,023

**Adjusted Deficit for the year**: £3,546

**Opening balance at 1st Oct 13**: £168

**Transfer to Club account**: £175

**Closing balance**: £243

**Total surplus for year**: £3,546

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**Bank Balance as per Sept 30, 2014**

- **Club Account**: £0
- **Hut Account**: £0

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**PTSB Savings Account**

- **Opening balance at 1st Oct 13**: £0
- **Transfer from Club account**: £10,000
- **Closing balance**: £10,000

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**Closing balance at 30th Sept 13**: £10,000

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**Bank Balance as per Sept 30, 2014**

- **Club Account**: £0
- **Hut Account**: £0

---

**PTSB Savings Account**

- **Opening balance at 1st Oct 13**: £0
- **Transfer from Club account**: £10,000
- **Closing balance**: £10,000

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**Closing balance at 30th Sept 13**: £10,000

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**Overall**

- **Operating balance**: £473,149
- **Income**: £287,175
- **Expenses**: £164,011
- **Closing balance**: £473,133
Dave Trunk enjoying some superb slab climbing on the 575m long Captain Hook, 5, in Setesdal, Southern Norway. With Dave Madden on a recent trip to Norway.