

BOOTPRINTS

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MAY 2010

Poem by Danusia Lokii-Braese.

I went to Ireland not knowing what to expect
Only that I would trek and trek
And trek I did through the far away lands
Becoming the most accomplished hiker that I can
I was one with the holly and enchanted trees
And my knapsack and I reveled in the breeze
The sun shone on me and there was a bit of rain
But being one with nature and the rainbow
Kept any discomforts contained
My trip to Ireland was a dream come true
A true hiker I am now, thru and thru.

IRELAND or BUST! (Our adventures there...) ~ By the Dolgoff

March 18 through March 28, 2010

... It all started up with our whirlwind trip to NYC's Kennedy Airport, from up here. Cindy, to her credit, followed me (G.D.) all the way here from here, with me weaving through endless traffic, her right behind me, each of us with three passengers, four to a car. We arrived at the place where the cars would be kept for the duration of the trip, only three minutes behind schedule!

Once on the plane, we breathed easy sighs of relief, but poor Norm - who bravely decided to drive one of the two cars in Ireland (Marcia was the other driver) - got NO SLEEP on that plane, and after disembarking, we had to drive over three hours to our first destination. The next day, after a longish drive, we arrived at a charming little town called Glengariff. There, in broad daylight, was a cheery band with assorted musical instruments, playing some nice, local music. They invited Marcia to sit with them and participate, which to her credit she did (Cindy & I have a gr-reat! pic of her doing so, in her glory. I also participated in the fun, for a bit...

And then onward to our destination, wherein we would stay for four nights - the town of Castletownbere, on the southern side of Ireland (the roads were insanely narrow and unforgiving - parts were two-way roads, only one lane wide or so... Truly an adventure-road!). No tourists here, it seemed, except for us. Everything in the area was old, and mostly well kept; loaded with atmosphere.

The next morning we began our first hike. We were stunned by the sheer beauty of it all: the craggy, lowish mountains, the deep blue sea, and the landscape ... yah, the windswept ruralness of it all... Cindy & I were

worried that we'd have major trouble doing the 10 miles or so required to complete this hike, and yet, we did fine. And this hike, like many of them, ended in an old-timey+pub...

From Cindy's Travel Journal, Sunday March 21, 2010

We set out for hike #1. All eight of us (me, Gary, Danusia, Marcia, Norm, Dona, Diane and Sheila) crammed into the seven-seat Mitsubishi, after we dropped off the other rental car at Allihies. We drove over to the Dursey Spur for the beginning of our hike. The drive seemed overly long, and I was worried about my capacity to complete the hike. A long winter of working extra hours in an office had left me in not-so-hot shape. I asked Marcia what would happen if I couldn't finish. She said I could exit the trail to the road and someone driving by would probably pick me up, if I flagged them down, and drop me off at our ending point in Allihies (O'Neil's Pub). Well, I just wanted to have a Plan B.

We got started at 10:20 a.m., when we left the Dursey Spur. The first part of our hike was uphill, which is a good way to get warmed up. It was a beautiful day out . about 54 degrees, sun shining, a little bit of wind.

The views were spectacular and it was a great hike for several miles. Our view was the ocean and we saw cows and sheep along the way. We nicknamed the path The Trail of Turds, for all the animal droppings.

Norm had teased me at breakfast that this hike would separate the wheat from the chaff. I was happily hiking along, believing I was a Wheat Hiker. Then we couldn't find the next marker. We wasted an hour going up and down the road, and finally realized it was a road that Gary and Norm had previously scouted but hadn't walked along far enough.

I was getting tired when we stopped for a late lunch. But our view was still awesome. We sat on a hillside, overlooking the ocean.

Our après-lunch pace picked up and now I was considering myself a Chaff Hiker. We crossed many pastures and ladders straddling barbed-wire fences. I mis-stepped and sank up to my knees in mud.

Getting tired now. Thanks to Sheila's ibuprofen, I was able to keep going. By the time we reached the beach and saw the town in view, it had started to rain. The last leg of our hike was wet. Dona, Diane, Norm and Danusia were ahead of us. Way ahead.

We walked by a car and the Irish driver asked where we hiked from. I couldn't remember so I replied somewhere really far from here.+

Finally we made it to our meeting point, O'Neil's
For continuation see Ireland page 2

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Pub. Gee, that Guinness tasted swell. Total hike distance = 14 kilometers. That's 8.69 miles, but probably longer given that we spent almost an hour looking for the trail entrance.

Hike #3 . March 23, 2010

Today's hike was Ardgroom to Lauragh. We spotted cars once again. It took awhile to find both ends of the trail. We got started around 11:30 a.m.

The first two miles of the hike were on the road. We had some scenic views of the Ardgroom Harbour, which was just to our left. Then our path snaked off to the right, away from the road. We saw our first set of stone circles.

It was intermittently raining and after a few hours we decided to stop for lunch. It was a quick one, as there was no cover. We were now hiking through an expansive sheep pasture with lots of rocks to the side. Note: sheep are not friendly. We tried to pat them but we couldn't get close.

Next we came to a water crossing. Danusia and I opted to walk across a shallower area, but a few of the hikers went over the deeper part with rocks. No one fell in, luckily.

We encountered the only other hikers we ever saw towards the end of the hike. They were a group from France. We asked them how far the end was and none of them spoke English. So we all tried to dust off our long-ago vocabulary from high school French class and deduced that we still had about an hour to go.

Next was our favorite part, which we nicknamed The Enchanted Forest. It looked like a scene from Lord of the Rings. Most of our hiking to this point had been through non-woody areas. The huge old trees and moss everywhere were a delightful change. There was one area that was like a woody tunnel.

We eventually came out to the road again, and saw some horses. Finally made it to the end and gave out a loud WHEAT cheer. We lingered at the pub for libations and a peat fire. Another awesome hike. Total distance, about 8 miles.

The trip was so much fun. We were impressed by the overall down-to-earth friendliness of the Irish people, and wouldn't hesitate to recommend a trip there, to anyone...

Our last day, we stayed overnight in Dublin ... what a wonderful city! Memorable street performers, great European urban walking (for me, the day ended much too soon there), and the multi-room, old-fashioned Temple Bar made this a boss conclusion to an ultra-boss adventure-vacation!

Hats off to Marcia for organizing such a great trip (she's done many of 'em).

PVHC Merchandise

To show your club spirit we offer a small selection of t-shirts, patches, and decals with the club logo. This is a

courtesy and goodwill gesture and not a fundraiser. Short sleeve performance shirts are available for \$20.00, \$22 for long sleeves. Patches are available for \$2.00 and a limited supply of car window decals for \$1.00. They can be purchased before and after club meetings.

PVHC Scholarship Policy

In the past, we have offered reimbursement of up to \$25 for those active Club members who wish to partake in pre-approved leadership or outdoor skill training courses that directly benefit the good of the Club. In 2010 we plan to continue to offer this benefit to our members. If there is an interest in a particular activity, enough notice should be given for the Board to briefly review the course, and perhaps offer the opportunity to other club members. Once approved, a receipt of payment is required -to our treasurer- who will reimburse the appropriate amount up to a maximum of \$25.00.

Important Notice

The following memberships are up for renewal:

May Renewals:

Icelene Campbell
Amy Dane
Brenda Doucette
France DuVal
Curt & Sheryl Freedman
Karen Giard
Linda Goodman
David Herships
Susan Kelley
Jeffrey Kern
Betsy Loughran
Ron Morrissette & Family
Crystal Nepus
Michael Reed
Sean St. Marie
Robert & Georgene Trombley
David Vibber
Bruce & Jennifer Wade
Janice Webb
Joe Zawrotny & Family
Celeste Ziemba & Family

June Renewals:

Bill Burgart
Stephanie Bustos
Allison Cook
Paige Darden
Gina Geck
Sonja Goodwin
Bill Grygiel
Cindy Hibert
Joan Huhtanen
Roger Jones & Family
Eva Kealey
Ron & Sandy Kistner
Edward Kleciak
Larry Krainson & Family
Katherine Merritt
Claire Norton
Donna Porfilio
Martha Spiro
John & Marianne Swiatek
Christine Ventulett & Jay Buckley
Lirong Wen
David Williams

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers & Committees

Ann Marie Visconti, President
Marcia Kelly, Vice President
Gail Carrier, Secretary
Deb Gebo, Treasurer
Scott Cook, Wilderness Experiences Unlimited
Ray Tibbetts, Founder

Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Plan: Sue Forest & Ann Marie Visconti
Backpacking Coordinator: Rick Briggs
Trail Maint.: Chip Pray & Rob Schechtman
Web Page Editor: Ron Morrisette
Email Correspondent: Rob Schechtman
Email List: John Klebes
Quartermaster: Mike Carrier
Bootprints Editors: Marie Babbitt and Mike Reed

Bootprints is a publication of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. Send your story contributions to the editor at: marie_babbitt@hotmail.com

Russ's Caper in September

Russ Seelig has graciously offered to host a weekend on the Cape in September to coincide with low tide so we can hike all of Great Island on Saturday. Sunday will be an opportunity to either kayak or hike the dunes in Provincetown. Limited space on first come basis at his lovely home and camping available nearby which we can assist you with. Reservations \$\$ and deposit required. contact Marcia Kelly

Dear members

Mike Reed will be filling in for me as PVHC email coordinator for the next few months. If you have correspondence for distribution to our club email list such as schedule changes and additions please contact Mike Reed. Sincerely, John Klebes

New members

February - Lewis Popper
March - Kathleen Boyce
March - Patrick Conway
March - Eunice Marcelina
March -Richard Perreault
March - Lorraine Plasse
March -Dianne Provost
March -William Shea
March -Linda Silk
March - Kevin and Robin Withers





UPCOMING ACTIVITIES & THE USUALS

- May 15 - (NY) NYC Carpool (\$)
- May 16 - (MA) Mid-State Trail - Spencer
- May 23 . (VT) Hamilton Falls
- June 18-20 - (NH) White Mountain Sampler (\$, Res)
- July 2-5 (NY) Adirondacks Kayaking & Camping
- July 10-11 . Tully Lake car camping or dayhike
- July 16-18 - (NY) Adirondacks Camping (&, Res)
- July 24 . (MA) Mid-State Trail- Rutland
- July 25 . (MA) Gloucester Whale watch & Fisherman's Memorial
- Aug 7 Sat - (MA) Lake Wyola Hike/Picnic
- Aug 14 - (MA) Peach Festival Hike @ Rice Farm
- Aug 29 . (MA) PVHC Summer Picnic
- Sept 17-19 - (NY) Adirondacks Backpacking JBL Lodge
- Every Monday - Morning hikes, various locations
- Every Wednesday - Evening walks
- Every Thursday - Afternoon hikes

IMPORTANT NOTICES

- ❑ Next Club Meetings:
June 1, 2010, 7pm at **FBC**
July 6, 2010, 7pm at **FBC**
- ❑ Submission deadline for next BootPrints is: June 18, 2010

FBC . First Baptist Church, West Springfield

***** Check out our web page at:**
www.pioneervalleyhikingclub.org.

Members may join the PVHC Email List by sending a message to:
pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com

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