

Castlegregory Walking Festival

28-29th Sept 2013

Saturday

A. Mt Brandon . Difficult. 6 hours. 12km.

This is a "must do" challenge for all discerning hill walkers. The route follows the ancient pilgrim's path to the summit of Mt. Brandon which is Ireland's second highest mountain at almost 1,000m. Mt. Brandon enjoys an historic association with St Brendan the Navigator from whom it gets its name.

On the return journey walkers will leave the Pilgrims Path shortly after the Eisc and turn southeast to follow the river joining the necklace of lakes and waterfalls known as the Pater Noster Lakes. The walk will return via Loch Croichte and exit on the track leading to the Mullach Bhéal road.

B. B. Brandon Point-Sás Creek-Teer. Moderate. 4.5 hours. 8km

This is a coastal walk beginning at Brandon Point and follows the line of the cliffs towards Duílí Point overlooking Brandon Bay approximately 100m above sea level. The route meanders in a south-westerly direction traversing two valleys followed by steep uphill climbs. The view out over the sea and into Sás Creek on a clear day will make the walk worth the effort.

From Sás Creek the walk will swing southwards across the bog to meet the track from Arraglen for the return journey to Teer.

C. C. Teer /Sás . Easy .4 hours. 8km

The walk follows a track from Teer towards the deserted village of Arraglen . Walkers will leave the track after about 30 minutes and follow a bog road for a short distance. They will then travel uphill across the bog and emerge onto the edge of the cliff which looks down on Sás Creek (Sás = trap). This is a U- shaped inlet with high, steep scree-strewn slopes masking a sheer descent to the seashore 300m below.

Sunday

A. Caherconree Ridges .Difficult .5 hours. 12km

The walk begins with a steep climb on the southern side of the Slieve Mish Mountains. The first section of the walk will be the ascent to the promontory fort at Caherconree (625m) which is the highest promontory fort in Ireland. It is also famous in folklore as the stronghold of Cú Roí Mac Daire, a chieftain who, according to legend, fought a major battle on the mountain with Cúchulainn, who had set out to win the heart of Cú Roí 's wife , Bláthnaid.

Bartregaum (851m) which is the highest point on the Slieve Mish Mountains is accessed by following a narrow grassy ridge downhill to a saddle. This is followed by a short climb on rocky terrain to the summit which is marked by a large cairn and trig point.

B. Teer-Slieve Glas .Moderate .4.5 hours, 12km.

A 2km track from Slieve Glas leads to the valley of the Owenafeana River. After leaving the track the walk route will follow the course of the river uphill in the shadow of the Faha Ridge. The remains of aircraft which crashed in the area during the period 1940 to 1944 will be visible in the valley and on the slopes of the nearby hills. In all four aircraft crashed in the Mt Brandon area during that period mainly caused by poor weather conditions.

C. Macha na Bó .Easy .4 hours. 8km

This walk through the Glennahoo valley follows an old track through the mountain pass which was the route taken by travellers on their way to Annascaul. This is a spectacular example of a u-shaped valley formed by the glaciations of the ice-age thousands of years ago.

The track gives way to a steep uphill climb after passing the remains of long abandoned houses to a ford in the river. After a traverse across open bogland to link up with the track again walkers will find themselves overlooking Annascaul Lake.