

Slieve Aughty Walking Trails

Siúlóidí Sliabh Eachtaí

Ireland's Longest Mountain Range – An sliabhraon is mó in Éirinn

Gortnamanagh Loop

- Services: Kilchreest Village 10 minute drive/5km from village to carpark
- Distance/time: 6.5 km/ 1 hour 30 mins
Follow blue arrows
- Difficulty: Moderate
- To Suit: Medium level of fitness
- Min Gear: Walking boots, fluids
- Terrain: Good gravel forestry road and also tarred public road. Obey any signs and stay on the marked trails.
- Views: Open mountain, commonage bog, forestry and farmland

Old Sonnagh Loop

- Services: Kilchreest Village 10 minute drive/5km from village to carpark
- Distance/time: 7.2 km/ 1 hour 40 mins
Follow purple arrows
- Difficulty: Moderate
- To Suit: Medium level of fitness
- Min Gear: Walking boots, fluids
- Terrain: Mix of forestry trails and public road
- Views: Open mountain, commonage bog, forestry and farmland

Old Curragh Road

Linear Walk

- Services: Kilchreest Village 10 minute drive/5km from village to carpark
- Distance/time: 1km/ 15 mins
Follow green arrows
- Difficulty: Moderate
- To Suit: Medium level of fitness
- Min Gear: Walking boots, fluids
- Terrain: Uneven gravel surface with some stone steps also timber bog bridge (stepped) can be wet and slippery at times. Obey any signs and stay on the marked trail.
- Views: Open mountain and commonage bog

GRADING LEVELS FOR WALKING TRAILS

Multi-access

These trails are suitable for all users including people with reduced mobility, wheelchair users, people with a vision impairment, using crutches, with a buggy, with small children, older people and so on. Normal outdoor footwear can be worn.

Easy

These trails are generally suitable for family groups including children and older people. Normal outdoor footwear can be worn.

Moderate

These trails may have some climbs and may have an uneven surface where the going is rough underfoot with some obstacles such as protruding roots, rocks, etc. The routes are appropriate for people with a moderate level of fitness and some walking experience. Specific outdoor walking footwear and clothing is recommended.

Strenuous

These routes are physically demanding trails, which will typically have some sections with steep climbs for long periods and the going underfoot can be extremely rough including many obstacles. Suitable for users accustomed to walking on rough ground and with a high level of fitness. Specific outdoor walking footwear and clothing required.

Very Difficult

These routes are predominantly in remote upland areas. They will typically include steep slopes and very variable and rough underfoot conditions on sometimes indistinct trails. They may be unmarked so the use of a map and navigational skills will be required. Suitable only for the very fit and experienced. Specific outdoor walking footwear and clothing required.

SÁBHÁILTEACHT

Bróga feiliúnacha, Éadaigh báistí, tabhair aise ar na carráigeacha agus iad fliuch. Fón póca.

SAFETY

Good hiking Footwear, Rain gear, take care when rock surface is wet. Mobile phone

NÁ FÁG DO LORG

NA PRIONSABAIL

- 1 Pleanáil chun cinn agus bí uilinn
- 2 Smaoinigh ar dhaoine eile
- 3 Bíodh meas agat ar ainmhithe feirme agus ar thiadhlúra
- 4 Fág gach rud mar a fhaigheann tú é
- 5 Faigh réidh le bruscar mar ba choir

CLÓ LEIS AN CÓD IS TÚ AR AON TURAS AMUIGH FAOIN AER

LEAVE NO TRACE

PRINCIPLES

- 1 Plan Ahead and Prepare
- 2 Be Considerate of Others
- 3 Respect Farm Animals and Wildlife
- 4 Leave What You Find
- 5 Dispose of Waste Properly

PLEASE ADHERE TO THIS CODE IN ANY TRIP TO THE OUTDOORS

Your Safety is your own responsibility. No liability can be accepted by the producers of this walks programme, for any loss, injury or damage to or in respect of any property or persons in connection with these trails.

Is orsa atá an fhreagracht féin. Ní féidir le táirgeoir an chláir siúlóidí seo aon díteanas a ghlacadh, as aon chailleanas, díobháil nó damáiste éileon mhaoin nó do dhaoine i ndáil leis na rianta seo nó ina leith.



KEEP DOGS ON LEADS

TEAGMHÁIL ÉIGEANDÁLA: I gcás éigeandála glaoigh ar 999

EMERGENCY CONTACT: In the event of an emergency call 999

Palces of Interest

Slieve Aughty

The Slieve Aughty hills contain vast tracts of some of the most desolate landscapes in Ireland. The mountains are often referred to by their Gaelic name Sliabh Echte. The Lady Echte, granddaughter to Finde, one of the Tuatha de Danann gave her name to these hills. She married Fergus MacRuairi, who held those hills and mountains by his right of cupbearer to the King of Connacht. He bestowed the mountain valleys to Echte to feed the cows, which she brought with her as her dowry. Two of these cows had been previously remarkable for their fruitfulness and great flow of milk and were placed one each side of the river which divide the fertile land from barren land. Hence the river has been called "Abhainn Dá Lóiloch" – the river of the two milk cows. The less fortunate animal naturally reduced her milk flow. This river flows from the Derrybrien mountains to Lough Cutra.

The hills extend from our own parish of Kilchreest to the Shannon and offer some spectacular scenery. The chief rock formations are old red sandstone. Many people still speak of coal and slate being found on the Roxborough mountain.

MacLonan sang the praises of the Aughty mountains in a long poem of 132 lines beginning – "Delightful, delightful, lofty Echte".

He mentions the hills, villages, fords, rivers, lakes, woods, etc. and he also gives an account of the many tribes and warriors who inhabited or hunted on these mountains including Fionn Mac Cumhaill. In the Annals of the Four Masters, it is recorded that Mac Lonan died in 892 A.D.

The mountains also provided inspiration for some of the poetry of Yeats and it is impossible to estimate

their influence on the writings of Lady Gregory. One of her best plays

"The Gaol Gate" is set against the background of a mountain village. The wild lonesome call of the mountain is found in the music of some of the greatest exponents of traditional music like Joe Burke and Joe Cooley.

As one travels along the mountain roads on a winter evening one

cannot but be affected by a deep and abiding sense of the past. Here and there are scattered ruins of whole villages and isolated houses and the abandoned schools that remind us of the many families who worked their small holdings and cut their turf on the many bogs in the valleys between the mountains. Alas, the landscape has changed considerably since the 1950's with the development of forestry in the Aughties but it is still very beautiful. How many people in Sydney, Philadelphia, London and elsewhere can trace their roots to these isolated mountain valleys. Many Slieve Aughty emigrants did well in their adopted lands. The story of the Durack family is recounted in the classic Australian historical work "Kings and Grass Castles". The Duracks employed many Slieve Aughty emigrants in their farming empire.

Dr. Fahy, writing around 1890, mentions the many ruins of the houses of the former industrious poor. So it seems that in the early 19th century the population in the mountain valleys must have been very high. The famine wiped out many families. Today Slieve Aughty is more desolate than ever and there was a massive exodus when families got holdings on the Roxborough estate after 1927.

On the north slope of the Roxborough mountains



Sliabh Eachtaí

Tá tírdreacht na Sléibhte Eachtaí ar na tailte is sceirdiúla in Éirinn. Is minic a déantar tagairt dá ainm Gaelach, Sliabh Echte, a ainmnítear i gcumhne an bheantiartha Echte, garínion Finde, duine den Tuatha de Danann. Phós sí ar Fearghus Mac Ruairí a raibh teideal aige do na sléibhte ós é a bhí ina dháileamh do Rí Chonnachta. Thug sé na gleannta sléibhe d' mar bholacht dá cuid ba a thóg sí léi mar spré. Bhí cáil ar phéire de na ba seo mar gheall ar thorthulacht a gcuid bainne agus cuireadh iad ar dhá thaobh den abhainn a roinneann an talamh saibhir ón talamh seasc. Tugtar "Abhainn Dá Lóiloch" – abhainn an dhá bhó bhainne air an abhainn a shruthann ó Dharach Uí Bhriain go Loch Cútra.

Síneann na sléibhte ó pháráiste Cill Chríost go dtí an Sionainn agus tá radharcanna mórtáibhseacha ann. A mhórpháirt déanta de síleá tá carraig eile ann chomh maith, aolchloch ach go háirithe. Cuimhnítear go háitiúil ar ghuall agus ar scáta a thóchailt ar shliabh Roxboro. Scriobh an file MacLonan faoi na hEachtaí in amhrán fada molta, 132 líne i bhfad a thosaigh leis na focail – "Delightful, delightful, lofty Echte". Déanann sé tagairt do na sléibhte, sraidbhailte, áthanna, albhneacha, lochanna, coille an imeacht mór teaghlaigh i ndiaidh 1927 nuair a bhronnadh gabháltais bheaga ar theaghlaigh ar thailte éastait Roxboro.

Ar thaobh ó thuaidh Sliabh Roxboro is iontach an radharc é na rósábhrais faoi lán bhliath ar lá Meithimh. Bhí fianna fluirsach tráth ar na sléibhte, agus ansin bhí ann am nuair a bhí siad beagnach díothaithe ach anois tá siad ag dul i méid arís. Is é Caiseal Droma Leathain an pointe is airde sna sléibhte, agus i bparóiste Chill

the rhododendrons in full bloom in June are a sight to behold, though an invasive plant. Deer were once plentiful on the mountains but after becoming almost extinct are now returning in great numbers. The highest point in the Aughty mountains is Cashlaundrumlahan and the highest point in the parish is Scalp.

Sruthán na bhFionn – The Winestream

This stream, located in Gortnamanagh is mentioned in the Kilchreest N.S. Folklore Collection. According to the folklore account the stream changes into wine on the 6th of January each year when the clocks strike twelve at midnight.

Coill Buidheen

This area, situated in Gortnamanagh, is named after St. Buidheen. According to folklore the saint had a gamble line through the mountain from Co. Clare to Roxborough. It is also said that he built a leachtán (pile of stones) and placed a cross in the centre which was venerated for many years. There is a tradition that people visited the cross in times of trouble.

The Soldier's Bridge

This bridge is one of three famous bridges in the parish of Kilchreest- the other two are the Seven Eye Bridge at Kilaspic and the Volunteer Memorial Bridge at Roxborough. All three span the Roxborough River which connects Roxborough and Coole – the two places central to the life of Lady Gregory. According to folklore this bridge is named after a local man named O'Loughlin who served with distinction in the British Army. The people who lived south of the river had to cross it by using stepping stones before the bridge was built.

Christ is é Scealp an pointe is airde.

Sruthán na bhFionn

Déantar tagairtí don sruthán seo i mbailiúchán béaloideas Scoil Náisiúnta Chill Chríost. De réir an sraidbhailte fiú agus tithe scoile tréigthe a chuireann i gcumhne duinn go raibh teaghlaigh ann tráth ag saothrú mionghabháltais agus an tóchailt móna ar an iolomad portaigh bheaga i ngleannta na sléibhte.

Coill Buidheen

Tá an ceantar seo suite i nGort na Manach agus é ainmnithe i gcumhne Naomh Buidhin. De réir an bhéaloidis bhí gamble line aige tríd na sléibhte, ó Chontae an Chláir go Roxboro. Deirtear, chomh maith, gur chamaigh sé leachtán, le crois ina lár ar tugadh urraim dó le fada an lá. Tá traidisiún ag an dtobarhann daoine cuairt ar an geros in aimsir an ghaithair.

Droichead an tSaighdiúra

Tá Droichead an tSaighdiúra ar an trí droichead cáiliúil i bparóiste Chill Chríost, is iad an peire eile na Droichead an Seacht Súil ag Cill an Espaig agus Droichead an Óglaigh ag Roxboro. Trasnaionn an trí droichead Abhainn Roxboro a shruthann ó Roxboro go Cúil, dhá áit lárnaigh i saol Lady Gregory. De réir béaloidis ainmnítear an droichead seo i gcumhne duine áitiúil darbh ainm O' Loughlin a bhain cáil amach in arm na Breataine. Sular tógadh an droichead bhí ar dhaoine a raibh cónaí orthu ó dheas den abhainn dul ar clochain leis an abhainn a thrasnú.

Gort na Manach

Tá dhá bhailte fhearrainn i nGort na Manach - Gort na Manach Thoir (413 acria) agus Gort na Manach Thiar (426 acria). Tá sé suite i bparóiste Chill Chríost i mbarúntach Locha Riach, ag bun na sléibhte Eachtaí. Tá go leor leor stair bainte leis an greantar. Bhailigh Joe Cormican, duine áitiúil a bhí ag obair le Coimisiún Béaloideas na hÉireann sna 1930aí, bhailligh sé an t-uafas de shaothar luachmhár sa cheantar seo. Tá taifead na leabhair deachúna 1829 de Patrick Hawkins, Sarah Lynch agus Robert Power ag ioc deichiúna i nGort na Manach Thoir. Ba leis Robert Power Gort na Manach Thoir agus cheannaiigh sé Gort na Manach Thiar tríd Cúirteanna na nEasat i bhFiacha in 1851. De réir an bhéaloidis níor chaill Gort na Manach aon teach le linn an Ghorta Mhoir ach bhreagnaíonn an taifead oifigiúil an míotas seo. Idir 1841 agus 1851 thit líon na dtithe i nGort na Manach Thoir ó 25 go 14 fad agus a thit an daonra ó 157 go 73 - laghdú de 54%. Sna deich mbliana céanna thit líon na dtithe i nGort na Manach Thiar ó 10 go 8, agus an daonra ó 57 go 37, laghdú de 37%. Léiríonn Griffiths Valuation 1856 go raibh tithe ag Patrick Hawkins, Stephen Hawkins, John Walsh, Patrick Deely, Martin Deely, John Lally, Francis Carty, William Carty agus Mary Carty i nGort na Manach Thoir. Léiríonn an foinsé céanna teach scoile sa cheantar, agus tá fianais láidir ó bhéaloidis go raibh scoil scéiche sa cheantar chomh maith.

I measc úinéirí tithe i nGort na Manach Thiar bhí Bartholomew Buckley, John Dooley and Martin Lally. Bhí Robert Power ina Chláraitheoir Contae i nGaillimh agus ina Thiarna Talún maith.

Ba mhínic a thug an file Ráiféaraí cuairt ar Ghort na Manach agus é ag taisteal tríd Deisceart na Gaillimhe, luath san 19ú aois, agus tá sceál greannmhar i mbailiúchán Joe Cormican faoi chuairt Ráiféaraí ag faire sa cheantar.

Gortnamanagh - The Monks' Tillage Field

Gortnamanagh is divided into two separate townlands – Gortnamanagh East (413 acres) and Gortnamanagh West (426 acres). It is situated in the parish of Kilchreest in the barony of Loughrea in the foothills of the Slieve Aughty Mountains. The whole area is steeped in history and folklore. Joe Cormican, a local man who worked for the Irish Folklore Commission in the late 1930's, collected a wealth of material in this area. The Tithe Applotment books of 1829 recorded Patrick Hawkins, Sarah Lynch and Robert Power as tithe payers in Gortnamanagh East. Robert Power owned Gortnamanagh East and he purchased Gortnamanagh West through the Encumbered Estates Court in 1851. Folklore claims that Gortnamanagh did not lose any house during The Great Famine but population statistics do not support this claim. Between 1841 and 1851 the number of houses in Gortnamanagh East declined from 25 to 14 while the population dropped from 157 to 73 – a 54% decline. In the same decade the number of dwellings in Gortnamanagh West declined from 10 to 8 while the population reduced from 57 to 37 – a 35% decline. Griffiths' Valuation of 1856 records Patrick Hawkins, Stephen Hawkins, John Walsh, Patrick Deely, Martin Deely, John Lally Francis Carty, William Carty and Mary Carty as householders in Gortnamanagh East.

This primary source also records a schoolhouse here and folklore strongly supports the existence of a hedge school here.

Householders in Gortnamanagh West included Bartholomew Buckley, John Dooley and Martin Lally. Robert Power held a position as Recorder for Galway and he was a benevolent landlord.

Raftery, the poet often visited Gortnamanagh in his travels around South Galway in the early 19th century and his attendance at a wake is the subject of an amusing story in Joe Cormican's Collection.



Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040

Ar dTíorthaí Tuaithe Our Rural Future



COILLTE



Rural Recreation Officer

With special thanks to: Local Historians Gerry Daly and Martin Forde

For more information on the area go to: www.slieveaughtytrails.com

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