



ELLON HILLWALKING CLUB

Newsletter December 2011

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Programme:

Monday 12th December 2011

Christmas Party

Station Hotel Ellon 20:00

Sunday 18th December 2010

Creag nan Gabhar

Focal Pt Allan Brown (01358 722438)

Community Centre Car Park 08:00

Creag nan Gabhar (OS Sheet 43)

Mike Taylor

This Corbett lies between Glen Callater and Glen Clunie and offers a very pleasant ridge walk with good views in all directions.

The walk starts at Auchallater Farm from where the Glen Callater road is followed for just under 2km to the point where a track goes off to the right up Sron Dubh... From Sron Dubh it is a 3km walk along the gradually rising ridge over Sron nan Gabhar to the summit of Creag nan Gabhar. This is 6 km of walking with about 500m of ascent - probably between 2½ - 3 hours walking. The return can be made by descending eastwards to the track at the Bealach Buidhe and then walking down Glen Callater back to the starting point. This is about 7km so should take just under 2 hours.

This walk should be suitable for any reasonably fit member of the club but it is winter, so take plenty warm clothes including hat and gloves, full waterproofs and plenty food. If you're planning to go, please let Allan Brown (01358 722438) know by Thursday 15th.

Forthcoming Events

Jan 9th AGM

Jan 15th Ben Rinnes

Culardoch

Irene Jamieson

I was looking forward to another visit to Culardoch, it was my first walk with the club back in 2006 and quite memorable regarding weather!

No snow forecast for our walk this year though as 12 of us left the minibus at Knockan, near Inver to walk through beautiful Glen Fheardar., in clear autumn weather. The ground was dry and the good track made for easy walking.

Following the signs to Auchtavan we followed the road through numerous gates, enclosing sheep and cattle and past some old croft houses until we came to the first 'History with Boots' information sign. It showed the way down the steep bank to the remains of an old mill. We could not see it from the road and only Ian and Gordon felt they had the energy for this detour at the beginning of the walk but came back reporting it was well worth the effort.

We stopped for a snack at Auchtavan where lottery money has been used to help preserve some of the buildings and an information board tells of the original settlement. After taking time to explore and admire the view down the valley we continued, still on a good track, towards Culardoch. It grew increasingly windy and we took a short detour to find shelter for our next snack and a check of the map to determine the names of the distant hills. The group then spread out as the slope steepened and we each made our way, at our own speed to the summit.

Another group who informed us they were founder members of Aberdeen Mountaineering Club had beaten us to it, so to find some peace and get out of the strong wind again, we descended a few metres to shelter, eat our sandwiches and view the next part of the route.

The first part of the descent was very steep, then we crossed a peat moss before arriving at a deer fence we had seen from the hill. Finding no stile or gate the only way was to choose a strong corner post and climb over. The group had spread out again but we had made good time so we regrouped and enjoyed another relaxing stop where our path eventually met the original track. The rest of us did not want to miss out on seeing the old mill at Raitlich so chanced Ian and Gordon were telling the truth about it being worth the effort and headed down the bank. Indeed it was and we took some time to

admire the beautiful site and to reflect on the hardships of a past life before making our way back the way we had come to the bus.

Some welcome refreshment at the Kinnord rounded off a very pleasant day, thank you to Gordon who drove us safely there and back. Hopefully the long day has not put off a potential young recruit who did very well on his first outing.



Culardoch; Picture Irene Jamieson

2012 Hillwalking Programme

The walks and talks programme for next year has been prepared in draft form and this is enclosed with this month's newsletter. If you have any comments or suggestions please contact a member of the committee

2012 Membership Card Photo Competition Reminder

As you will all be aware the Club membership card now carries a superb photo taken by one of our members - usually from one of Club walks of that year or a previous year. If you have an interesting or impressive photo that you think is worthy of carrying on that tradition please send it in to Allan Brown (allan.broon@tiscali.co.uk) in jpeg format or hand in a copy at a forthcoming meeting. Allan will seek the services of an independent adjudicator to select the picture to be used for the 2012 membership card. There is, of course, a prize involved; the winner will have the honour of their name on the card acknowledging their skill and craft in being in the right place at the right time and having an eye for a beautiful photograph.

Mount Blair and Duchray Hill

Alan Murray

It wasn't a great forecast for November's walk to Mount Blair and Duchray Hill in Glen Isla but we are ever hopeful and there was a bit of chatter on the bus as we headed up Deeside. Things quietened as the early start took its toll and then became ominously so as we headed over the Glenshee ski centre and down the other side through all the twists and turns in the road. Apparently rucsacs were becoming airborne as we went over the bumpy road and it was a close thing as to whether we would be asked to make a very quick stop to let a couple of people out to regain their stomachs! However, we arrived safely at the start of the track up Mount Blair and managed to park off the narrow road.

There was a good track up the hill and we made fairly short work of the climb but as we drew near the top and the communications mast finally took shape out of the mist we could only imagine the beautiful views that were promised in the guide book. The wind was sharp and the associated wind chill meant that a stop for a drink and a snack



On the summit of Duchray Hill (Alan Murray)

were sensibly postponed until we had descended out of the cloud and into some shelter from the wind.

On arrival back at the minibus there was a bit of discussion as to the best route up Duchray Hill – mainly consisting of pointing vaguely up the hill into the mist – however, we were soon tackling what proved to be the first of a number of barbed wire fences. My trusty sit mat (Vintage 1970s) was pressed into use to help protect vulnerable trousers and legs and we were soon ploutring across a particularly boggy section into the mist, out of which loomed another barbed wire fence – a double one this time with a wee burn immediately on the other side – this hill wasn't going to give itself up without a fight. Once over this obstacle we ascended on drier ground and thinning cloud to the summit. As if in recognition of our perseverance in getting to the top the cloud lifted and we were rewarded with views of Cairnwell, Glas Maol and hills as far as Beinn a'Ghlo and beyond. The summit of Mount Blair stubbornly refused to clear but finally a brief gap in the cloud appeared and the summit was captured in digital pictures for posterity. With the benefit of good visibility we managed to pick a slightly better descent route and made good time back to the minibus.

The day was rounded off with a well deserved drink and a fine meal at the Boat in Aboyne – with thanks to Malcolm and Mike for doing all the driving.

Draft 2012 Walks and Talks Programme

Month	Date	Event	Time	Focal Point
Jan	9 15	AGM & Jordan Slide Show (AB) Ben Rinnes	20:00 08:30	
Feb	13 19	Mountain Video Brown Cow Hill & Bar Meal	20:00 08:00	
Mar	12 18	Swimming the Corrievreckan – Rohan Betts Tulloch Station bunkhouse weekend; Alternative Sunday walk: Convals (Duffton)	20:00 08:30	
Apr	9 15	Outdoor Gear Update Ladder hills	20:00 07:30	
May	14 19/20 20	Antarctica – Jack Orr Skye Weekend – Broadford Backpackers bunkhouse Glen Buchat	20:00 07:30	
Jun	11 17	Leask Heritage Tour Lairig Ghru	19:00 07:00	
Jul	9 15	Gight Woods Cairn an Tagairt Mor – the Stuic	19:00 07:00	
Aug	13 19	Collieston Coastal Walk Mayar and Dreish via Corrie Fee	19:00 07:00	
Sep	10 15/16	St Kilda ?? Camp at Coylumbridge and walk to Shelterstone – Sunday walkers to join on the day	20:00 07:00	
Oct	8 14 27/28	Lands End to John o'Groats Cycle Ride? Geal Charn (Nethybridge) Sail Mhor Bunkhouse Weekend	20:00 08:00	
Nov	12 18	Cowal Way Walk?? Monamenach & Bar Supper	20:00 07:30	
Dec	10 16	Christmas Party The Buck and Tap o'Noth	20:00 08:00	