



ELLON HILLWALKING CLUB

Newsletter – August 2011

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Programme:

Monday 8th August 2011

Collieston Coastal Walk

Meet Ellon Community Centre carpark 19:00

Sun 14th August 2011

Cairngorm area and the Shelter Stone

Focal Pt Brian Milne (01358 720040)

Community Centre Car Park 07:00

Cairngorm and the Shelter Stone OS Sheets 36

Mike Taylor

The Shelter Stone (GR 002016) or *Clach Dhion* lies on the south side of the head of Loch Avon and is the largest of many boulders lying below the Shelter Stone Crag. When it fell, it landed on some smaller blocks leaving a natural stone chamber underneath it. The sides have been packed with stones and heather so inside it is reasonably dry and wind tight. It is comfortable for about 6 people to sleep in but can hold more. It was described in 1974 in *The Statistical Account* as 'a retreat for freebooters holding 'eighteen armed men'. The first climbing club in Scotland, *The Cairngorm Club* was founded at the Shelter Stone after the night of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee on 24 June 1887.

The walk starts at the Ski Centre Car Park (989060 alt 630m) from where a good track goes up to the Ptarmigan Restaurant and on to the summit of Cairngorm at 1245m. For those who have developed a taste for scrambling over the last couple of months there is an alternative route which is about 2km longer and is described in the SMC Cairngorm guide as 'an interesting summer ascent involving easy scrambling'. This is the Fiacail ridge which separates Coire an Lochain from Coire an t-Sneachda. See how you feel on the day!

From the summit of Cairngorm to the Shelter Stone and back to the plateau involves some steep descents and ascents, whichever route is chosen. I suggest descending via the Allt Coire Raibert and ascending by the Allt Coire Domhain. There are tracks on the east sides of these burns but they are steep and loose in places. The return to the car park from the plateau could be made without re-ascending Cairngorm by going down the Fiacail a'Choire Chais.

This is a grand walk through some wonderful mountain scenery and is about 14km with 1200m of ascent. It is difficult going in places so is likely to be a 7-8 hour day.

The walk should be suitable for any reasonably fit member of the club and, if you are happy with a little easy scrambling, the Fiacail Ridge should not cause any problems.

If you want to take part, please let Brian Milne (01358 720040) know by Thursday 11 August.

Collieston Evening Walk – Monday 11th July

We will meet at the community centre car park in Ellon and then head out to the car park at Cransdale. This can be reached by turning left in Collieston down towards the sea just before the hall (car park signposted). Our walk will then take us towards Old Slains Castle – about 3 miles – and then back to the cars by retracing our steps or using the single track public road.

The cliff top ruins of Old Slains castle is an ancient seat of the Hay family, Earls of Erroll. The lands of Slains were gifted to Sir Gilbert Hay by King Robert the Bruce of Scots (1306 - 1329) for his loyal service during the 'wars of Independence' against the English. In 1594 both Old Slains and another seat of the Hay family, Delgatie castle, were destroyed by King James VI of Scotland (1567 - 1603) in retribution for the Hays involvement in the Roman Catholic/Spanish plot.



The Stuic and Carn an t-Sagairt Mor

Malcolm Leach

After parking the cars at Keiloch the first decision for the six of us was waterproof jacket or not. Within a few minutes the decision was made as the first of the forecast showers arrived. Warm and damp, ideal conditions for midges, but not today.

We crossed the old brig at Invercauld and made our way through the Ballochbuie forest and followed the Feindallacher Burn looking for a suitable crossing point. This proved difficult as the burn was in spate and very fast flowing. We came across the remains of a foot bridge and later the point where it had been situated.

By the time we had found a safe crossing we were only 2.5k from Carn an t-Sagairt Mor. We stopped to have a break and discussed the options. If we continued on the planned route we would have to cross the Allt a'Choire Dhuibh not knowing what difficulties it held. We decided that we would make our way directly to Carn an t-Sagairt Mor, making a note of the grid reference of the crossing point.

The weather was a lot better than forecast with just occasional short sharp showers with good visibility.

Our goal was in sight and we were soon at the summit. We just sat down to have lunch when another shower hit us, probably the heaviest so far but again short. The views were excellent and after looking round the aircraft wreckage we made our way off the hill.

We made our back to the crossing point and followed the burn which was now showing some more possible crossing points as the water level had dropped.

We made a stop at the impressive Falls of Garbh Allt before continuing our way back to the cars. We stopped at Dinnert and enjoyed a drink outside in the warm sunshine.

Forthcoming Events

Sep 18th Carn an Righ

Oct 16th Culardoch

Oct 29/30th Kinlochewe Bunkhouse weekend

