



# ELLON HILLWALKING CLUB

## Newsletter April 2012

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### Programme:

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

**Antarctica – Jack Orr**

**Station Hotel Ellon 20:00**

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

**Ladder Hills**

**Focal Pt Malcolm Leach (01358 723314)**

**Community Centre Car Park 07:30**

### Ladder Hills

(OS Sheet 36/37)

#### Mike Taylor

The Ladder Hills are a ridge of rolling uplands with broad summits which form a dividing line between Donside and Glen Livet. There are a number of routes over them but the starting point which the club has used in the past is the car park at the Lecht Ski Centre which nicely reduces the ascent. This is a through walk which ends 334159 near Torrancroy (334159) on the road that runs in a circle through Glenbuchat from Bellabeg so a car will need to be left here before going on to the Lecht. At the end of the walk drivers will have to be taken up to the Lecht to pick up car(s) and then return for the walkers who by the time they return could probably have walked the 3km to Bellabeg. It's worth telling the folk at the ski centre that cars are being left there. We didn't do this the last time I did this walk with the club and we got a row from them as we had caused them some worry.

The walk starts with a steep climb NE up to Meikle Corr Riabhach then NW to a summit at 747 then the ridge is followed over Carn Liath and on to Carn Mor. This is a Corbett and at 804m the highest point on the ridge. Apparently, there are good views from the summit of Ben Avon in one direction and Ben Rinnes in another. After Carn Mor, the route goes over Dun Muir before it meets the track from Glen Livet to Glen Buchat. Last time we were very pleased to reach this track. It was a misty day. I remember following a fence along the county boundary for some of the way from the Lecht but we decided that it was deviating from the route we wanted to follow so we left it and got some serious navigation practice until we reached this track. The track is followed SE to the ruins of Duffdefiance. This strange name is said to date from the time that a crofter, Lucky Thain, squatted here. He was able to build a house and have the lum 'reekin' before he was challenged by the local laird, a Duff, and so he sat there in defiance of him. From here the route goes through the woods, following the Water of Nocht, via Aldachuie to the road.

The walk is about 16km long from the Lecht to Torrancroy with about 500m of ascent – five to six hours of walking – and should be suitable for any reasonably fit member of the club. If you are interested in taking part, please let Malcolm Leach (01358 723314) know by Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> April

### Tulloch Bunkhouse Weekend - Aonach Mor & Beag

#### Mike Taylor

Eight club members arrived at the Station House Bunkhouse, Tulloch, on Friday 16 March for the bunkhouse weekend.

The forecast for Saturday was promising. Barbara and Malcolm opted for a visit to some of the Grey Corries. The rest of us, the daughter and father partnerships of Kayleigh and Gordon and Ingrid and I, along with Margaret and Susan, chose Aonach Mor and Beag from the head of Glen Nevis. I remembered this as a fairly straightforward walk. As we drove to the start, we could see a moderate amount of snow on the summits and some serious looking clouds and showers about. The walk up through the Steall Gorge with the river tumbling over rocks below was as impressive as ever, as was its opening out into the green valley with the Steall waterfall pouring over the cliffs facing us.

Walks in this area start not much above sea level so it was a long haul up from the ruins of Steall Cottage to the SW ridge of Aonach Beag, where the snow cover started, and then on to the summit at 1234m. This took some time. We were rained and snowed on from time to time but did have occasional glimpses of the mountains around us through the clouds. As we descended to the col between Aonach Beag and Mor, a fairly serious snow shower restricted our visibility for a little while so we got a little navigation practice with our maps and compasses. However, as we climbed up Aonach Mor the skies around started to clear and by the time we reached the

summit at 1221m (lower than Aonach Beag but the bigger mountain) we could see all around. The Grey Corries, to the east and the Carn Mor Dearg Arête to the west were particularly spectacular.

We spent some time on the summit admiring the view then set off back in good spirits with wonderful views of the Ring of Steall in front of us. These quickly dampened when we saw the steep, snow covered, crag infested way down from the col to the valley which would take us back to the ruin. It took us a while to get down but we managed without serious incident and then followed a good path all the way back to the cars which we reached just as darkness was falling. Margaret and Susan, who are relatively new to walking in the Scottish mountains and had been promised a fairly easy day by those of us who should know better, deserve some congratulation. It turned out to be a long, challenging day!

The bunkhouse was very comfortable. The eight of us were very cosy together in one of the rooms although there was a fair amount of railway activity overnight. We had a very pleasant meal together in the bunkhouse prepared and served by the owners.

Another very enjoyable bunkhouse weekend!

### Forthcoming Events

May 19/20<sup>th</sup> Skye Weekend

May 20<sup>th</sup> Glen Buchat

Jun 17<sup>th</sup> May and Dreish via Corrie Fee

### Antarctica Presentation by Jack Orr – Mon 9<sup>th</sup> April

Many of you will know Jack as a regular walker with the Club. We are delighted that he has agreed to come and speak to us on his recent trip to Antarctica – with stunning scenery and wildlife and Jack's geological knowledge and expertise, this is going to be a presentation not to miss – hope to see you all there.

### Skye Weekend

18-20 May

#### Mike Taylor

As usual, the club will be going to Skye in May.

We have booked beds in Broadford Backpackers Hostel for the nights of Friday 18<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> - [www.broadford-backpackers.com](http://www.broadford-backpackers.com)

We haven't used this bunkhouse before but were unable to get a booking with any of our usual places. It looks very nice and costs £37.50 for the two nights

If you want to reserve a bed at the bunkhouse for the weekend, send a cheque for £37.50 to Gordon Spence (01358 788998), by Saturday 28 April. Beds will be allocated on a first come, first served basis on receipt of the £37.50, which is non-refundable.

*Loch Coruisk and the Cuillin - Skye*



