



ELLON HILLWALKING CLUB

Newsletter September 2012

Secretary: Alan Murray, 2 Batchart Steadings, Aberdeen, AB12 5YQ. Tel: 01224 865515 email: alnj.murray@gmail.com

Programme:

Monday 10th September 2012

**Swimming the Corryvreckan – Rohan Betts
Station Hotel Ellon 20:00**

Sunday 15th / 16th September 2012

**Cairngorm and The Shelter Stone
Focal Pt Malcolm Leach (01358 723314)
Community Centre Car Park 07:00**

Cairngorm and Shelter Stone (OS Sheet 36)

Mike Taylor

As the September walk is fairly challenging and it is quite a long drive to Aviemore, arrangements have been made for a club camp on the night of Saturday 15th at the Coylumbridge Campsite (£8pppn). Those who want to take part in the walk but not to camp will meet up with the campers at the Cairngorm Ski Car Park at 9.30 on the Sunday morning.

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 in the camp and/or the walk, please let Malcolm Leach (01358 723314) know by Thursday 13 September

Forthcoming Events

Oct 14th Geal Charn (Nethybridge)
Oct 27/28th Sail Mhor Bunkhouse Weekend
Nov 18th Monamenach & Bar Supper

The Lairig Ghru – Gordon Spence

Thirteen walkers boarded the bus for Braemar on what promised to be a beautiful day arriving at the Linn of Dee car park just after nine. On getting out of the bus to put on our boots we were immediately swamped with midges so we didn't hang around too long, setting off towards Derry Lodge and Mike leaving with the bus to drive around to Aviemore.

After an hour we reached Derry Lodge and had a short break before continuing through Glen Luibeg.

On reaching Luibeg burn some people elected to go across the water and the rest went upstream to use the bridge. Once we had regrouped on the other side we set off after Ian and George who were setting a brisk pace and were soon out of sight. We finally caught up with them opposite Corrou Bothy where we had our lunch. The view across to Braeriach and Cairn Toul was brilliant but after a little while the midges started to get annoying so we got going again with Ian and George out front again. After a couple of hours we reached the highest point of the walk where we could look down to Coylumbridge some 9km away. From here it was down hill to Rothiemurcus forest at which point it started to rain but thankfully didn't come to anything. We made our way through the trees to the Cairngorm Club footbridge. 2km further on we came to junction - some of us thought we should turn right while others thought it was the next track on the right - so we decided to try both and see who would get to the bus first! It turned out that the first turning was the right one the other track didn't seem to go anywhere.

We eventually made back to the bus and after changing out of our boots and getting rid of the midges in the bus it was off to Aviemore for some well earned refreshment before the long drive back to Ellon and an end to what had been a perfect day. The Lairig Ghru has never looked so good.

I would like to add big thank you to Mike for doing all the driving.

Swimming the Corryvreckan - Monday 10th Sept

Due to a cancellation, we have been lucky to secure Rohan Betts to speak to the Club on her exciting swim across the notorious Gulf of Corryvreckan between the islands of Jura and Scarba. The author of 1984 and Animal Farm, George Orwell, was almost drowned there in 1947 when he and his son were shipwrecked on the skerry of Eilean Mor (south of the whirlpool) when boating in the gulf. Although not, as is sometimes believed, formally classified by the Admiralty as unnavigable the Admiralty's West Coast of Scotland Pilot guide to inshore waters calls it "very violent and dangerous" and says "no vessel should then attempt this passage without local knowledge". This will be a fascinating talk so please come along and support the Club by ensuring a good turnout for the meeting.

Corryvreckan Whirlpool



October Bunkhouse Weekend 26-28 October

Sail Mhor Croft Dundonnell

We are visiting one of our favourite bunkhouses this October. I will use their own advertising:

'Sail Mhor Croft is a small luxury hostel which is situated at Dundonnell on the shores of Little Loch Broom. The mountain range of An Teallach, which has the reputation of being one of the finest ridge walks in Great Britain, is right on our doorstep and the area is a haven for walkers of all experience as well as for photographers. Whether you wish to climb the summits, walk along the loch side, have an afternoon up Sail Mhor or just soak up the tranquillity of the area, you know the scenery can't be beaten anywhere in the country'

It is situated 1.5 miles west of Dundonnell on the A832 (GR 064893 on OS Sheet 19). We have booked the whole hostel for the weekend. It can accommodate 16 people in three dormitories. All bedding is provided and there are self catering facilities. There is a pub in Dundonnell which offers bar meals

If you want to go, please let me have £29, which is non returnable, by Monday 24 September. Please make cheques payable to Ellon Hill Walking Club and if you can't catch up with me in person send them to Loch an Eilein, Newmachar, Aberdeen, AB21 0UQ.



Lairig Ghru Photos – Gordon Spence

