



# ELLON HILLWALKING CLUB

## Newsletter November 2013

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

### Programme:

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

**The West Highland Way – Mike Taylor**

**Station Hotel Ellon 20:00**

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

**An Socach**

**Focal Pt Irene Jamieson (01358 711242)**

**Community Centre Car Park 07:30**

### Canness Glen (OS Sheets 43 and 44)

#### Mike Taylor

Canness Glen (Cadha an Eas - pass of the waterfall) is a dramatic little glen at the head of Glen Isla.

The start of the walk is at Auchavan (GR 191696) at the end of the minor road up Glen Isla. The route follows the River Isla under the crags of Creag and Torraidh and on past a wood opposite a hill called 'Spying Hillock' - what went on here I wonder? About a km after the wood is Bessie's Cairn. This is a substantial stone edifice with seats all around it. It was built in 1852 by stalkers to shelter Lady Londonderry. There are a couple of other interesting names on the 1:25 000 map near here - King's Seat and Trooper's Haugh - but I can't find any stories about them. After another 1km at GR 196757, the track branches 3 ways and it's the right branch we take into Canness Glen. A little way along this path the waterfalls cascading into the glen will be seen.

The return will be made by retracing our steps. The round trip is about 16km with only 200m of ascent - probably about 5 hours. It should be suitable for any reasonably fit member of the club but it is November so be prepared for winter weather. Lots of warm clothes, good footwear and plenty food are essential.

A minibus has been booked for this walk and we plan to have a bar supper somewhere on the way home. If you're interested in taking part in this walk please let Irene Jamieson (01358 711242) know by Thursday 14 November.

*Canness Glen from Monega Hill*



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### Forthcoming Events

Nov 17<sup>th</sup> Canness Glen & Bar Supper  
Dec 9<sup>th</sup> Christmas Social  
Dec 15<sup>th</sup> Cruidhie Crom and Little Pap

### An Socach Walk Report

#### Malcolm Leach

Depending on which mountain weather forecast you saw the day was going to be very good or nae bad. It was with this in mind that 7 members left Ellon at 7.30 on Sunday.

We had just arrived at the start of the walk when the rain started and some took the decision to put on the waterproofs. A wise move as the rain became much heavier at times. Our route followed the track on the north side of the Baddoch burn for about 5k then we headed up the hillside on a very muddy path that would take us on to the ridge. The pace was steady, some felt a little too quick, but good progress was made and after a brief stop for a cuppa the ridge was reached. Visibility was poor but with the aid of the GPS the highest point of 944m at the western end was reached at about 1pm.

We found some shelter and had a short rest until we saw a large party of walkers approaching. We had seen a numbers of cars arrive as we set off for the walk and this was them doing much the same route as us. We headed east along the 2k ridge following a well worn path that took us to the 938m point.

Our route from here was to following an ESE bearing that would take us back to the Baddoch burn. The visibility was still very poor and with the aid of the GPS we headed down soon reaching a path going in the right direction. We continued on this path, quite steep in places, when suddenly the clouds parted giving us a splendid view of the glen below. A look back showed that An Socach was still in cloud but now the hills to the south and east were clearing and we were able to pick out Cairnwell. The improved weather meant we could now dry out, and we were soon back on the track arriving at the cars almost exactly 6 hours after leaving. Following a quick change we on our way to the Kinnord Arms for a well earned drink, all non alcoholic. Everybody enjoyed the day despite the worse than expected weather.

### 2014 Membership Card Photo Competition

#### Allan Brown

As you will all be aware the Club membership card now carries a superb photo taken by one of our members from one of the club walks. 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](mailto:allan.broon@tiscali.co.uk)) in jpeg format. Allan will seek the services of an independent adjudicator to select the picture to be used for the 2014 membership card. There is, of course a prize involved; the winner will have the honour of their name printed on all of the cards acknowledging their skill and craft in being in the right place at the right time and having an eye for a beautiful photograph.

Entry criteria: it is of an Ellon Hillwalking Club outing stating the name of the contributor, the location and date the photo was taken.

## October Bunkhouse Weekend

### Alan Murray

Again there was some variation in mountain weather forecasts between MWIS and the Met Office for our suggested walk up the Glen Affric Hills - winds of 65mph gusting 85mph said MWIS and winds of 20mph gusting 30mph said the Met Office - so there was nothing else for it but to go and see. It was a steady climb on a good path initially up through Caledonian Forest and then open hillside. It was extremely wet underfoot following the heavy rain of the previous day but we had a bit of sunshine to help us on our way.

We turned northwest up the Allt Toll Easa heading for the bealach between Toll Craigach and Tom a'Choinich. As we climbed the top of Tom a'Choinich started to disappear in cloud but the bealach was still clear; however, as we got nearer the wind started to rise blowing us upwards. When we reached the col it was clearly MWIS 1 - MetOffice 0! Kayleigh was blown over by the gusts and it was decidedly difficult to stand at any time. Lying flat on the ground behind a cairn was the only way to escape the blasts. Following a quick discussion we decided to head up a bit further to see if this was a local funneling effect caused by the topography of the land - so up we went into the teeth of the gale with some great views back down into Glen Affric - only spoilt by the fact that one's eyes were streaming with tears as they were battered by the wind. Having moved 250 - 300 metres or so from the bealach the wind showed no sign of abating, so we took the decision to move back down into shelter and leave the tops for another day.

The effect was dramatic - having descended no more than 100 metres in height it was an almost windless day - a very striking example of how quickly, both in terms of time and distance, the weather conditions in the mountains can change from benign to potentially dangerous. Although there was the suspicion that we had just arrived at the wrong time and a freak blast of wind had caused us to retreat, we could still see the clouds scudding across the sky just above the bealach - it was no freak and we had made the right decision. So it was back to the very comfortable bunkhouse for tea and some more of Kayleigh's mum's wonderful fudge. It had still been a good day in the hills and two tops to come back to another day.

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## 2014 Programme

The committee has drafted some ideas for a programme of walks and talks for 2014. However, there is still plenty of scope for new ideas so if anyone can suggest a different walk - or just one that they haven't done and would like to do, please get in touch with any committee member and we'll try to include it in the programme. Thinking up new ideas for speakers for the Monday evening meetings is always a particular challenge so if you know of someone who has an interesting story to tell and would be willing to come and talk to the Club, please let us know.



North East Mountain Trust  
Winter Lectures  
**Compass, Contours, GPS and Digital  
Mapping**

Nigel Williams  
Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November  
Sportsman's Club  
11 Queen's Road Aberdeen  
Admission £4



**Mountain Safety Evening**  
**MCofS Mountain Safety Adviser**  
**Heather Morning**  
**Tuesday 5th December**  
**Cotswold Outdoor Union Square Aberdeen**

As any keen explorer will know, wherever you are in the world, be it skiing on Scotland's very own slopes, scaling Scafell, climbing Kilimanjaro or taking on Mount Everest, nature can surprise you. Attendees will get the chance to be trained and educated in Mountain safety, learning how best to prepare for a winter expedition and how to adapt their skills and techniques for colder weather conditions. If you want to come along, just pop into the store! Tickets are £2.00 with all proceeds going to the Mountain Safety Trust.