



ELLON HILLWALKING CLUB

Newsletter August 2015

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Programme:

Please note - No Monday Evening Meeting in July or August

Sun 16th August 2015

Lairig an Laoigh

Focal Pt Irene Jamieson: 01358 711242

Community Centre Car Park 07:00

Lairig an Laoigh (OS Sheet 36 and 43)

Mike Taylor

This is a wonderful Cairngorm through walk linking Speyside to Deeside. It is less well-known than the Lairig Ghru, which does the same job, but just as interesting. It is an old drove road which would have been one of the arteries of the droving trade and, when droving was at its peak, must have seen thousands of cattle passing every year. The meaning of its name is disputed by the experts: some say it means Pass of the Calves, as it is easier than the Lairig Ghru, but the favoured meaning is that it is the Pass of the River Lui, which is nearby.

A minibus will deliver those walking to Glenmore Lodge where the walk starts. This will then be driven around to the Linn of Dee to pick everyone up a few hours later.

At first the walk passes through some woodland, much of which is natural pines and birch, and then goes by the side of the Lochan Uaine, which gets its green colour from the local fairies washing their clothes in it - this is the only explanation you'll get from locals! The track continues through the Ryvoan Pass after which you take the right fork signposted for Braemar. After a couple of kilometres there is a bridge across the River Nethy where there used to be a corrugated iron hut called Bynack Stable. The path now climbs to the highest point of the route at 790m with extensive views of the Abernethy Forest and Speyside as you climb. Keep left at the fork on the way up as the right fork goes up to the summit of Bynack More. Some of the party may want to make a detour to climb this which would add about 300m of ascent but not much distance.

The track goes up and down for the next 6km before descending to the Fords of Avon. Even if the weather has been dry you are unlikely to get across without wading; if there has been a lot of rain, it can be impassable. The very small Fords of Avon refuge is worth a look.

The path now climbs through the Lairig an Laoigh itself to the second high point of the walk at about 740m. After this it descends into Glen Derry and there is another potentially problematic river crossing at the Glas Allt Mor. After a beautiful walk through the Derry Woods, Derry Lodge, is reached. This was built by the estate in Victorian times and was used as a base for shooting parties. Sadly, the impressive building, which, like the rest of the estate, now belongs to the National Trust for Scotland, is boarded up and unused at present.

From here a land rover track, through Glen Lui following the Lui Water (origin of Lairig an Laoigh?), is followed to the car park at the Linn of Dee.

The walk is 29km long with a total of about 700m of ascent - probably 9-10 hours of walking. This is a long walk and anyone taking part needs to be prepared for a long day out.

If you're interested in taking part in this walk, please let Irene Jamieson (01358 711242) know by Thursday 13th August at the latest. This could prove to be a popular walk so places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Forthcoming Events

Sep 20th Shelterstone

Oct 18th Cairnwell Three

Oct 24/25th Loch Ossian bunkhouse weekend

Derry Cairngorm Walk Report

Susan Robertson

On a wet Sunday morning in July (well what else did we expect, despite the weather forecast being good), 8 of us met in Ellon ready for the off. The target for the day being Derry Cairngorm.

Driving over to Linn of Dee, it poured, however on arriving at Linn of Dee carpark a slight improvement was to be had. We met Dan, and suitably dressed in waterproofs and midge repellent started the day. Making good time to Derry Lodge and the rain having stopped, everyone enjoyed a wee break and had a good nousey at the new 'temporary bridge' - a substantial structure. We then carried on up to Derry Cairngorm, a steepish ascent at first, past Carn Crom, but then tailoring off until the final attack to the summit, arriving just in time for lunch. A chilling wind on the summit but the rain held off and we were rewarded with views across the Cairngorms.

Instead of heading back the way we came, the group opted to make the route circular and we headed north down from Derry Cairngorm to the bealach and then turning west and following the stream back past the Luibeg Bridge before picking up the main path back to Derry Lodge and onto the carpark.

A good walk had by all, just short of 9 hrs, a distance of 27km

Monday Evening Meetings July/August

Experience over recent years has shown us that Monday evening meetings in July and August are particularly poorly attended so for the past two years we have decided not to organise anything for these months. We will start again in September with a talk from Allan Brown on his trip to New Zealand. However, hopefully we will see most of you out on one of the hillwalks over the summer months.

