



ELLON HILLWALKING CLUB

Newsletter June 2015

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Programme:

Monday 8th June 2015

Map & Compass Exercise & Short Walk

Sands of Forvie

Meet Newburgh Carpark 19:00

Sun 14th June 2015

Beinn Bhreac and Beinn a'Chorainn

Focal Pt Alan Murray (☎: 01224 865515)

Community Centre Car Park 07:00

Beinn Bhreac and Beinn a'Chorainn (OS Sheets 36 and 43)

Mike Taylor

These hills occupy a large area of high ground on the east side of upper Glen Derry. They are separated by a vast featureless plateau - the Moine Bhealaidh - at an altitude of 850m. This will provide an interesting navigation exercise if the visibility is poor!

The starting point for the walk is the Lin of Dee car park. The track is followed to Derry Lodge and from there up the east side of Glen Derry for about 2km before striking up the hillside towards the 673m col between Meall an Lundain and Beinn Bhreac. The final climb is NNE up the broad ridge to the summit of Beinn Bhreac (speckled hill) at 931m.

The 5 km walk to Beinn a'Chorainn is NW then N across the peat bog which drops to only 850m. On a clear day, there are wonderful views west to Ben Macdui and Beinn a'Bhuird. Eventually the bog gives way to heath, gravel and stones up the broad ridge to the summit of Beinn a'Chorainn (Hill of the Rowan) at 1082m. This is 15km from the Lin of Dee with 810m of ascent.

The best way back is to descend SW for 1.5 km then W for 0.5 km to the summit of the Lairig an Laoigh at 740m. This track goes S to Derry Lodge and then back to the Linn of Dee car park.

The total walk is about 28km with 810m of ascent - a long day of 8-9 hours at least.

This is a demanding walk but it is June so there should be plenty of daylight and bright, sunny weather! A minibus has been arranged which will leave the community centre car park at 7.00 am.

Please let Alan Murray (07825002385) know by Thursday 16th if you intend to join this club outing.

Forthcoming Events

Jul 19th Derry Cairngorm

Aug 16th Lairig an Lui

Sep 20th Shelterstone

Clachnaben

Irene Jamieson

The weather was clear and sunny as seven of us including new recruit -George (another George!) left Ellon to meet up with Margaret at the car park. It was warm and the sun was still shining as we set off along the path to Clachnaben. A popular hill, we soon caught up with other small groups of walkers.

Everybody was keen to extend the walk by including Mount Shade, so we took a sharp right after the stile into the woods and headed quite steeply up through the trees. Checking the map we could see a track to take us up Mount Shade forking off the Landrover track coming over from Greystane hill. We spent some time looking but eventually gave up and set off through the heather. Later at home we traced the path using Google maps and saw we had missed it, possibly due to the erosion and high bank of the Landrover track. It was tough going and we were glad to stop and regroup in a sheltered spot, have some refreshment and enjoy the sun and the views. Fortunately we had not gone much further when there was a shout from Dan - he had found the path - to the relief of some tired legs! A sharp hail shower saw us fighting the

wind for waterproofs but it was short-lived and the only precipitation on the walk all day. We did not stay long at the top, the cairn was too low to give shelter from the wind, but followed the path to Clachnaben dropping steeply down into the valley. As we neared the summit our narrow track joined the main well built path and pitched stone steps helped ease the steep ascent. It was quite busy and we were hungry, so keeping to the left found a sunny spot under the granite slabs to have lunch. Despite the very strong wind most of us then scrambled up as far as we each dared to sit on the rocks and admire and photograph the wonderful panoramas from Bennachie to the snow topped Cairngorms.

The wind now on our backs, we descended by the main path, keeping to the left of the trees and following the Mill Burn, a very attractive area. It was good to see sheep on the hill and the Blackface lambs were also enjoying the sun. Before reaching the car park, just after the stile into the trees, we saw the Landover track to Greystane hill which could have extended the walk further....maybe next time.

A coffee and cake stop in Banchory finished off a lovely day - delighted we managed the May alternative walk this year!

Skye Weekend

Kayleigh Spence

Gordon, George and I arrived at the layby at Lundie on the A87 shortly before 10am on Friday to start our ascent across Cairn Ghluasaid, Sgurr nan Conbhairean and Sail Chaorainn. The first signs were good; no wind and clear(ish) skies over head as we climbed the stalkers path up the shoulder of the first summit - reached without too much bother. The walk to the second summit was fairly steep terrain and alas, we were met with the all too familiar low cloud, battering winds, horizontal rain and of course, no views!

With the second summit reached, and a quick lunch taken in the sheltered cairn, we were very careful to ensure we did not make the same mistake as last year and so out came the map, compass and GPS leading us on to the correct, third, Munro... The walk over is quite gentle, with ups and downs, until you get to the final pull, where it is a bit steep.

And so, the third summit reached, we made our way down. A fairly steep descent, we slowly made our way down through, at times, wet and boggy terrain, till we eventually hit the bottom, crossed the stream and opted for the short walk along the road back to the car. The weather may not have been on our side, but all in all an excellent day out on three relatively easy hills with good paths, and great company! A well-earned fish supper in Kyle of Lochalsh was had before we hit the road to Sligachan Bunkhouse.

Upon arrival at the bunkhouse we quickly realised we were the first to arrive - highly unusual! After having freshened up, we decided that the rest of the crew must be at the pub and so off we went; only to meet them in the car as they pulled up the drive to the bunkhouse! A much smaller group for Skye; Les, Wendy and Malcolm joined us for a few at the pub before we retired to the bunkhouse to have a few more and make plans for the next day. An assessment of the weather, with high winds

and rain predicted, we made a consecutive decision to stay as one group and head for Rubha Hunish.

The Walk Highlands website describes Rubha Hunish as beautiful, the northernmost point of the island, a magical place and as the best walk on Skye for seabird and marine mammal watching. And it surely is!

We parked up in the car park, which is just up the top of the side road by the red phone box and set off on the path marked Rubha Hunish. The path was very good underfoot, a bit boggy in places, but we made steady progress and were rewarded with views across Duntulum Castle and the Western Isles. After a wee climb up a small hill we reached The Lookout Bothy and decided to settle up for a bite to eat before making our steep descent...

We opted to scramble the steep descent down the rocky cliff leading to the headland which looks much trickier from the cliff top outside the bothy; but once on it is much less daunting and capable of being tackled by anyone who is reasonably fit. Once at the bottom, we took some time to explore the cliffs and as promised were treated to some lovely views, the sea breeze and happened upon some cormorants (or shags) nesting on the cliffs!

We had initially opted to walk the return trip along the edge of the beach, however as we walked back along the headland we were hit by a wave of horizontal hail and gusting winds so harsh I'll not need to exfoliate until the

next time! The weather may not have been kind but this is a great walk with spectacular coastal scenery, an unusual bothy and a bit of mid walk scrambling to make the blood pump!

Suitably wet and wind blasted, we hit the road back to camp for hot showers, comfort and food! After a fine feed at the Sligachan Hotel, complete with the "ambience", courtesy of our candle lit table and Malcolm... the talk of the ambience being a bit much, we headed back to the bunkhouse for even more animated conversation, food and a fine selection of wine, whiskies and of course, cupcakes. Entertainment for the evening included a game of Man versus Fire in which participants attempted to light the fire minus kindlers and firelighters. Let's just say that we lost and there was delirious talk of bringing through our sleeping bags to sit in for warmth; all whilst Gordon sat cheery and apparently suitably warm in his short sleeved shirt! As always, the company and banter made for a fantastic weekend, even if the weather was not on our side and our group was only six.

Club Facebook Page

The Club now has a Facebook page which will be used to upload pictures from recent walks and give more up to date information on Club events. Why not visit the page and "like" us?



Summit of Clachnaben

Photos by Dan Carr



Lunch at the summit