



# ELLON HILLWALKING CLUB

## Newsletter April 2017

Secretary: Irene Jamieson, Mains of Leask, Slains, Ellon. AB41 8LA. irenemjamieson@hotmail.com

**Programme:****Monday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017****Equipment from Craigdon Mountain Sports  
Station Hotel Ellon 19:30****Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2017****Mount Keen from Glen Esk****Focal Pt. Dan Carr: 0777210558****Riverside Car Park 07.30****Mount Keen from Glen Esk (OS Sheet 44)****Mike Taylor**

The most easterly Munro, Monadh Caoin, gentle hill, is indeed a gentle, smooth mountain unbroken by any real cliffs. Of the two main routes up Mount Keen, the one from Glen Esk is generally judged to be the more interesting. The route starts in the Car Park where Glen Esk divides into Glen Lee and Glen Mark (445803). Glen Mark is followed for just over 3km to the Queen's Well, a memorial commemorating Queen Victoria's crossing of The Mounth in 1861. A track is then followed up the narrow glen of the Ladder Burn out on to the open hillside. A little further on, the track forks. The Mounth road goes North and our track, slightly to the East of this, goes to the summit. There is a large summit cairn so even if it is misty we should know when we are there! The walk is a total of 18 km with about 700m of climbing - probably 6 - 7 hours. It is straightforward without any steep climbs and should be suitable for any reasonably fit member of the club. If you want to join us, please let Dan Carr (07772120558) know by Thursday 13 April. A minibus has been booked for the trip to and from Glen Esk.

**Forthcoming Events**

May 8th Ben Nevis Tony Richardson  
May 13/14 Skye Weekend  
May 14th Clachnaben  
June 12th Goval Woods walk  
June 17/18 Ben Nevis  
June 18<sup>th</sup> Mayar and Dreish

**Cromdale Hills.****Dan Carr.**

Eleven club members headed to Cromdale in March on what promised to be a fine day. Some wind and showers were forecast to the west but we arrived in sunshine. As we started out we saw a sign indicating a race would be taking place on part of our route. However, as it was starting at half one we would probably be too late to participate. Following the path round the top of the wonderfully named Claggersnich Wood we came to a junction. To our left, the Pipers Stone, and to our right, the path up to the ridge. There were no takers for the very short walk to the Stone so we started to ascend. As we headed up the wind picked up quite a bit, plucking clothing from the unwary. It was strong enough for us to take shelter behind the George and

Alexandria cairn, just like last time. And just like last time we decided to turn away from the south west summit, Creagan a' Chaise, and head north east to Carn a Ghille Chearr and the plane wreckage. As we walked we could see clouds rushing in from the north west, eager to dampen our spirits. The next few kilometres were very windy, boggy and damp with bouts of hail and sleet, but we made the shoulder of the final ridge eventually. We cut right towards the head of a burn and finding the wreckage in amongst the bog decided to lunch nearby. From the crash site we headed north towards a cairn which marks the eastern end of Carn a Ghille Chearr. At this point the hail was travelling horizontally so everyone stood facing away until it eased a bit. My fingers were starting to hurt so I put some larger gloves on, which improved my mood if not my style. Eager for a change of climate we headed back along the shoulder via the trig point, and after regrouping decided to head straight down the side of the ridge to get out of the wind. We could see the road we wanted to be on so it was just a matter of taking a shortcut. One burn crossing and three barbed wire fences stood in the way but with some teamwork everyone made it over. By this time it was nearly five o'clock so the runners were long gone as we ambled back to Cromdale, thoughts of supper in our mind. We arrived at the Mash Tun in Aberlour only an hour late and had a very fine supper. I've done these hills twice with the club now and both times we've missed off the highest point, Creagan a' Chaise (last time was because of the wind as well!) so third times' the charm. But it wasn't an easy walk even so. The wind chill might well have been -15 degrees as forecast. That and the full stomachs made for a quiet minibus back.



Photo- George Slesser

## **Tyndrum By the Way.**

### **Mike Taylor**

As we drove through St Fillans, the evening sky was a beautiful water colour of blue and pink and the dark surface of Loch Earn took on a rosy tint. It was going to be a nice weekend. The forecast was good, and the sky suggested that the forecast would be correct. Six of us met up in the Tyndrum Inn, Gordon, Kenny and Neil having come straight off the hill. They had completed Cruach Ardrain and Beinn Tulaichean, finishing the walk in the twilight. We then settled into the By the Way Bunkhouse and made plans for Saturday. John would join the other three to tackle An Caisteal and Beinn a'Chroin. Sheena and I planned to walk a little of the West Highland Way from Blackrock Cottage to Bà Bridge and back. As promised, we woke to a beautiful day on Saturday. Sheena and I drove to the Glencoe Ski Centre Car Park, which was surprisingly busy as there was, apparently, a reasonable amount of snow up in the bowl. We set off southwards along the W Highland Way in the warm spring sunshine and met a few, but not too many, people on the way. These included a 77 year old from Kidderminster who was spending a month wandering the hills on his own, 'wilding' (which I assume means wild camping) much of the time. The ruins of Bà Cottage, which must have been quite a substantial building at one time, prompted the usual discussion on how many people had lived here and what their lives must have been like. Lunch on Bà Bridge was shared with a little bird which didn't like celery or ham but was very fond of peanuts. On our return to the car, Sheena decided to have a look at Blackrock Cottage. She was met by some of the ladies of Ladies Scottish Climbing Club, which owns the cottage, who were reasonably welcoming once she dropped the name of someone we know who had been a member of their rather exclusive club. The four guys arrived back at the bunkhouse not long after us, with suntanned faces. As the photographs show, they had bright sunshine on snow, with excellent visibility. They had met a fair amount of snow on the ridges so the walk had been testing at times. When I asked them for something notable to report, other than having had a fine day, they mentioned disappearing in waste deep snow and everyone falling over now and then! A weekend in the Tyndrum By the Way Bunkhouse at the end of March has been a feature of the calendar for a few years now. It is purpose-built, very well run and maintained and is one of the best bunkhouses I know. It has plenty of hills nearby for the Munro Baggers and a lot of fine walks for those wanting something at a lower level. Tyndrum Inn is within walking distance and provides good food. We talked about going somewhere different next March but ...why?



*View from Bà Bridge- Mike Taylor.*



*Tyndrum Bunkhouse weekend - John Biggins*



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*More from Cromdale - George Slesser.....*



*.....and Tyndrum – John Biggins*

