



# ELLON HILLWALKING CLUB

## Newsletter July 2017

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

### Programme:

**No Monday evening meeting.**

### Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2017

**Cairn Toul**

**Focal Pt. Dan Carr tel: 07772120558**

**Riverside Car Park - 07:00**

### Cairn Toul OS Sheet 43

#### Mike Taylor

At 1293m, Cairn Toul is the fourth highest mountain in Scotland. The name is the anglicised version of Carn an t-Sabhail, peak of the barn. This description is most likely to refer to its barn like shape when viewed from Ben Macdhui and the mountain is sometimes known locally as Sabhal Beinn Macdhui, the Barn of Ben Macdhui

It is a spectacular mountain in a spectacular setting. The west side of the Lairig Ghru is dominated by the Garbh Coire (rough corrie) and its mountains, the Braeriach plateau and the peaks of Sgor an Lochain Uaine and Cairn Toul. To the SW, Cairn Toul slopes gradually towards the Moine Mhor plateau and the steep sided Glen Geusachan. To the north and east there are cliffs and corries.

The walk will start from the Linn of Dee car park and the route goes via Derry Lodge, Luibeg and Corrour Bothy. This is about 17km with about 1100m of ascent. The return is by the same route, making a round trip of 34 km. This will be a seriously long day – between 10 and 11 hours - suitable only for very fit members of the club. If you are interested in taking part in this outing, please let Dan Carr (07772120558) know by Thursday 13th July.

### Forthcoming Events

August 20<sup>th</sup> Craig Meagaidh

Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> NEMT talk

Sept. 17<sup>th</sup> Little Glas Maol to Cairn o'Claise

### Our Ben Nevis trip.

#### Irene Jamieson

George and I both decided to go on the trip to Fort William. I was hoping to join the group climbing Carn Mor Dearg with the option, weather permitting, of reaching Ben Nevis via the arete. George, who has not been walking much recently, thought he would try the Mountain Path in his own time and see how he got on.

Various ideas were discussed when the fourteen of us met in the bar at the Glen Nevis campsite. Two groups were hoping to do the arete, from different ends, but everybody decided due to the weather forecast, to start off up the Mountain Path.

Parking spaces were already very scarce at the Centre and it took a wee while for us all to park, dress for the wet, foggy weather and join the long snake of walkers aiming for the summit.



Photo: John Biggins

It became obvious our CMD group, starting at the Youth Hostel (where I should have been) were ahead, so I hurried on with the intention of waiting, where the path splits, for the others if I didn't catch them.

I am still amazed at the amount of people on the mountain. Overtaking was not easy as there were also groups descending but fortunately I caught up with Mike, Ingrid, John, Emma and Dan just before they turned off the main path.



Photo: Gus Al-Hassani

We left the multitudes to follow the path round into the corrie



Photos: John Biggins

beneath the cliffs keeping the Allt a' Mhuilinn river down to our left. We then stopped briefly at the CIC hut for something to eat. Although we could not see the arete through the fog we were keeping our options open, though not very hopeful.

After a tricky burn crossing we took a bearing and held on up the hill. There was no path, and it was very steep! Two of the team had chosen to return but the rest of us gradually worked our way upwards, often using four points of contact to scramble over the loose boulders and scree. Many stops were required to draw breath and rest aching legs. (Thanks for waiting Dan!) As we gained height the very strong wind, and lack of visibility confirmed the arete was not a good idea and the achievement of reaching the summit of Carn Mor Dearg would be enough.

Conditions at the top of Ben Nevis ensured the other group also left the arete for another day.

After a brief rest on the summit we carefully retraced our steps through the mist and persistent rain, very glad to eventually descend to grass and see the valley open out in front of us.

Stopping briefly at the CIC hut we noticed it was occupied and farther along met a couple who had booked to stay the night. As we trudged along the path we kept meeting more and more people aiming to stay there that night – it was getting cosier by the minute!

At last we reached the main path again to fall in behind the groups going downhill, it was still quite busy despite being after 5p.m.

I reached the car only half an hour after George who had enjoyed his climb up the Mountain Path to the top of Ben Nevis.

Mike and Ingrid kindly joined us in the restaurant while we tucked into a hearty meal and recounted the day's adventures. We left quickly as we were driving home that night, both having enjoyed the challenges of the day and the camaraderie of, for us, an unaccustomed trip away with the club.



Photo: Gus Al-Hassani



Photo: Richard Paton