



# ELLON HILLWALKING CLUB

## Newsletter May 2013

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**Programme:**  
**Monday 13th May 2013**  
**Reefs and Rainforests – Alan Murray**  
**Station Hotel Ellon 20:00**

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2013**  
**Mount Keen from Glen Esk**  
**Focal Pt Irene Jamieson (01358 711242)**  
**Community Centre 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.

Mitchell (Mitchell, 1998) assigns the first recorded ascent to a namesake of mine, also from England. John Taylor, a Thames bargeman, undertook a three month journey in Scotland in 1618 as a bet; he would tour Scotland without a coin in his pocket and neither beg nor borrow. He succeeded and published an account of his travels - 'The Pennyless Pilgrimage'.

'.....I travelled over an exceeding high moutaine, called Mount Skeene ..... when I came to the top of it.. I could not see thrice my length either way: withall, it yielded so friendly a deaw, that it did moysten thorow all my clothes; where the old proverbe of a Scottish miste was verified..... the way is so uneven, and full of bogges, quagmires, and long heath, that a dog with three legs will out-runne a horse with foure.....' Spelling may have changed in the last 400 years but the Scottish weather and terrain hasn't.

The old Mounth road which crosses the shoulder of Mount Keen and passes about 600ft below the summit will have been travelled by many before Taylor. Perhaps that's all he did. If he could only see 'thrice his length', could he be sure he was at the top without a GPS to confirm his position?

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 now 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're going to join us, please let Irene Jamieson (01358 711242) know by Thursday 16 May.

Mitchell 1998: Scotland's Mountains Before the Mountaineers, Ian Mitchell, Luath Press

### Forthcoming Events

|                      |                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Jun 16 <sup>th</sup> | Carn an Righ             |
| Jul 14 <sup>th</sup> | Schiehallion             |
| Aug 18 <sup>th</sup> | Jock's Road              |
| Sep 15 <sup>th</sup> | Cairngorm and Ben Macdui |

### August Walk - Jock's Road (OS Sheets 43&44)

If there is sufficient demand, we will organise a minibus for this excellent through walk. The committee has decided to subsidise this and charge a 'special' price of only £12. If you would like to take part it is important that you let Gordon Spence (01358 788998) know by the end of May so that we know whether or not we have sufficient demand to justify hiring the minibus.

The Tolmount Track runs from Braedownie in Glen Doll to Auchallater in Glen Clunie and is one of the most rugged through walks in Scotland as it climbs to 910m and crosses a large tract of exposed high plateau with few landmarks. This right of way was the subject of an action in the Court of Session in 1886-87, and in the House of Lords in 1888, when it was proved that it had been for long the practice of drovers to take sheep from Braemar over the Tolmount to the market at Cullow, near Kirriemuir (Bartholomew et al, 1995).

The walk is 20 km long with an ascent of 20 km from the Glen Doll side and 570 km from Auchallater - probably about a 6 hour walk. The minibus will drop the party off in Glen Doll and be driven around to Auchallater to meet everyone at the finish of the walk.

From Glen Doll the walk starts at the car park near Braedownie (GR 284762) with a very pleasant woodland walk alongside the White Water. Once out of the forest the track climbs steeply up to the plateau; this part is Jock's Road, said to be named after a John Winters (Watson, 1975). On the way up to the highest point on Crow Craigies a small shelter, Jock's Bothy, is passed. After Crow Craigies the track descends towards Glen Callater with fine views of Coire Kander to the West. The track goes along the East side of Loch Callater then down a Land Rover track to Auchallater.

#### References:

Bartholomew et al, 1995, Scottish Hill Tracks, Originally compiled by Moir in 1947, revised by Bartholomew, Bennet and Stone in 1995 Published by Scottish Rights of way Society

Watson, 1975: The Cairngorms, Adam Watson, SMC

### Lochnagar

#### Malcolm Leach

After a few late call off's 6 of us made the trip to Lochnagar. The weather forecast was not good with rain and high winds expected. The weather remained dry until we reached Deeside where we found the rain. The road to Loch Muick was like a river with every burn in spate, the result of rapid snow melt and rain. We arrived at an almost deserted car park in pouring rain and discussed the chances of crossing the burn at Allt-na-glubhasich. We were just setting off when a group of walkers came back to the only other car saying that they did not even reach the burn due to the thigh deep slush.



*A Welcome Break from the Rain in Glas Allt Shiel Bothy -  
Picture: Les Pratt*



*Glas Allt Waterfall in Full Flood - Picture: Les Pratt*

A walk round the loch now seemed the most sensible option until we saw the sign on the gate saying the path on the south side was closed due to high avalanche risk. Our options were becoming quite limited so we decided to follow the track on the north shore to the Glas-allt-shiel bothy. We headed to Allt-na glubhasich and in the distance could see the raging torrent that would have been impossible to cross. We followed the land rover track and now the wind was getting stronger and the rain heavier. We reached the bothy and had a snack.

Before returning we had a walk up to the waterfall behind the lodge and noticed that the path that comes down from Lochnagar was blocked by another raging torrent.

As we made our return the weather improved, the rain stopped and the sun came out. We could now see all the cornices high above the path on the other side of the loch which caused the path to be closed and also the evidence of previous avalanches.

We were all amazed at the volume of water coming off the hills every stream was fast flowing and many areas were flooded. We continued back to the car park in warm sunshine and looked back to see the snow covered Lochnagar against a clear blue sky. Although not the best day it was never cold and at least we had a walk.