



ELLON HILLWALKING CLUB

Newsletter October 2016

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Programme:
Monday 10th October 2016
Kilimanjaro – Gordon Spence
Station Hotel 19:30

Sun 16th October 2016
Carn a'Mhaim
Focal Pt Alan Murray: 07825002385
Riverside Car Park 07:00

Carn a'Mhaim OS Sheet 43

Mike Taylor

The gaelic word Mam means breast but can also refer to a pass in the hills. The view of Carn a'Mhaim from Glen Luibeg could easily make it 'cairn of the breast' but as it stands at the southern end of the Lairig Ghru it is usually translated as 'cairn above the pass'. Carn a'Mhaim is dominated by its close neighbour Ben Macdui and one of its finest features is the narrowing ridge to the NW of the summit which is the start of the route to Macdui.

The walk starts at the National Trust car park at the Linn of Dee. The track through the forest soon joins the Land Rover track up Glen Lui to Derry Lodge. 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. It has, however, been reported that the National Trust for Scotland is seeking planning permission to convert the lodge into a hostel, which would be very good to see.

After the lodge, the Derry Burn is crossed by the temporary footbridge which has replaced the one that was washed away a couple of years ago. Initially the path can be boggy but soon becomes a very pleasant footpath. Just before reaching the Luibeg Burn, you go through some regenerated woodland. This area was fenced in a number of years ago to keep the deer out and allow the wood to regenerate. It has worked: the fences are now gone and it's a lovely natural wood.

If the water level is low, the Luibeg Burn can be forded. If there's a lot of water about, a detour to the bridge about four hundred metres upstream is necessary. As the path climbs up from the Luibeg Burn, look out for a path to the right which climbs NW up steepening slopes onto Carn a'Mhaim. There are two summits and, as usual, the furthest away one is the highest.

To return to Linn of Dee, we retrace our steps. The round trip is 22.5 km with about 650m of ascent - a day out of between 7 and 8 hours. This is a fairly demanding walk so anyone taking part will need to be in good shape. A minibus has been booked for this outing which will leave the Riverside Car Park at 7.00. Anyone interested in taking part in the walk should get in touch with Alan Murray (07825 002385) by Thursday 13 October.

Forthcoming Events

Oct 29/30th Bunkhouse Weekend
Nov 20th Coyle of Muick
Dec 18th Bennachie

Glas Maol Walk Report - September 2016

Dan Carr

September's walk to Glas Maol and Creag Leacach attracted eight participants, two of whom were new to the club.

After leaving the cars at the Aberdeenshire/Perth and Kinross border we headed up the land rover track. The lack of a walk in to warm up was lamented by some, but we were over Meall Odhar before long and facing the steepest up of the day, the north west face of Glas Maol. Everyone just set their own pace and we were soon gathered in the shelter atop the first munro! The cloud was all around but sometimes we caught a glimpse of a valley below.

After something to eat we took a compass bearing (visibility was still poor) and set off to find the shoulder to Creag Leacach. One of the group had done this walk recently and foretold of a stone wall. Sure enough after following the iron fence posts for a bit we saw the wall. Then as the cloud parted we saw our second munro ahead. We followed the wall, sometimes walking on the Angus side, then crossing over to Perth and Kinross, then back again, for it seemed that the path was always even on the other side. After a gentle ascent we were up on Creag Leacach, and the cloud base had lifted so everyone got their cameras out. The sun was shining down on parts of the A93 and we could even see the cars where we had left them.

We had a look at the map and everyone was happy to do the loop described in the newsletter; to drop down into the valley and up the other side onto the Leacann Dubh ridge. We headed down across the rocks towards Meall Gorm then cut right, trying to stay high to make crossing any water easier. This part was very boggy and steep and when we made it to the bottom of the valley we all needed to catch our breath.

Those who were struggling a bit showed great resolve in resisting the temptation of walking back along the side of the A93 and we started the last up of the day as one group. Once on the ridge the path was good and we could see the end in sight. We also had a grand view of the tank barrier by the Devil's Elbow down below. On my map there was a lower path bypassing the ski tows but as I couldn't find the start of it we came back down on the land rover track again, which seemed even steeper this time!

Possibly the greatest test of navigation came driving through Ballater, where a cycle festival road closure scheme had detoured all traffic south of the river! We were all set to rendezvous in Banchory instead when we saw a sign for Dinnet, took a sharp left across a bridge I didn't know was there and ended up in the Loch Kinord to look at one another's photos.

Ellon Community Resilience Group

We have received a request from the recently formed Ellon Community Resilience Group to provide details as to whether the Club is willing to provide volunteers to assist the Ellon community in the event of serious flooding or a similar emergency affecting the Ellon Community.

The committee felt that they were not in a position to volunteer on behalf of the Club's members particularly as a significant number live outwith Ellon. However we would encourage anyone interested to get in touch with the Group via their website: <http://www.ecrg.uk/>

During, and subsequent to, the severe flood experienced in Ellon during January 2016 a number of groups within the town very kindly provided their services voluntarily to help flood victims with a range of support ranging from sand bagging through to house stripping, rubbish removal, house repair, pastoral care visits, "tea and cake" doorstep visits.

The group's aim is "To Harness, be prepared for, and if necessary mobilise that same community spirit in the event of a serious emergency affecting the town in the future."

Please get involved if you can.

Glas Maol and Creag Leacach September 2016



All photos Dan Carr