



ELLON HILLWALKING CLUB

Newsletter September 2015

Secretary: Alan Murray, 2 Batchart Steadings, Aberdeen, AB12 5YQ. Tel: 01224 865515 email: alnj.murray@gmail.com

Programme:
Monday 14th September 2015
New Zealand – Allan Brown
Station Hotel Ellon 19:30

Sun 17th September 2015
The Shelter Stone
Focal Pt Dan Carr: Text 07772 120558
Community Centre Car Park 07:00

The Shelter Stone (OS Sheet 36)

Mike Taylor

The Shelter Stone (GR 002016) or *Clach Dhion* lies on the south side of the head of Loch Avon and is the largest of many boulders lying below the Shelter Stone Crag. When it fell, it landed on some smaller blocks leaving a natural stone chamber underneath it. The sides have been packed with stones and heather so inside it is reasonably dry and wind tight. It is comfortable for about 6 people to sleep in but can hold more. It was described in 1974 in *The Statistical Account* as 'a retreat for freebooters holding 'eighteen armed men'. The first climbing club in Scotland, *The Cairngorm Club* was founded at the Shelter Stone after the night of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee on 24 June 1887.

The walk starts at the Ski Centre Car Park (989060 alt 630m) from where a good track goes up to the Ptarmigan Restaurant and on to the summit of Cairngorm at 1245m. For those who have developed a taste for scrambling over the last couple of years there is an alternative route which is about 2km longer and is described in the SMC Cairngorm guide as 'an interesting summer ascent involving easy scrambling'. This is the Fiacail ridge which separates Coire an Lochain from Coire an t-Sneachda. See how you feel on the day!

From the summit of Cairngorm to the Shelter Stone and back to the plateau involves some steep descents and ascents, whichever route is chosen. I suggest descending via the Allt Coire Raibert and ascending by the Allt Coire Domhain. There are tracks on the east sides of these burns but they are steep and loose in places. The return to the car park from the plateau could be made without re-ascending Cairngorm by going down the Fiacail a'Choire Chais.

This is a grand walk through some wonderful mountain scenery and is about 14km with 1200m of ascent. It is difficult going in places so is likely to be a 7-8 hour day.

The walk should be suitable for any reasonably fit member of the club and, if you are happy with a little easy scrambling, the Fiacail Ridge should not cause any problems.

If you want to take part in the walk, please let Dan Carr (Text 07772 120558) know by Thursday 17 September

Forthcoming Events

Oct 18th Cairnwell Three
Oct 24/25th Loch Ossian bunkhouse weekend
Nov 15th Meall a Buchaille and Bar Supper
Dec 20th Ben Rinnes

Lairig An Laoigh Walk Report

Irene Jamieson

By the time Ingrid dropped us at Glenmore and we had put on the boots etc. it was nearly 10 a.m. when 14 of us, including Kathleen and friend Sandra all the way from Newtonhill, started our walk through the Lairig an Laoigh.

It was a clear, dry day and we set off at a cracking pace stopping briefly to look at the Lochan Uaine then turning on to the Braemar path. Most stopped to take off jackets as the day warmed up and the path climbed steadily. Nine of us opted to climb Bynack More. It was a steady uphill climb but on a good track and we soon gathered on the top for some lunch and to admire the views towards the Moray Firth and Aviemore. There was a sharp wind, and aware the others would be waiting we took some photos and left to find our route down. This proved a challenge being quite steep, but despite the occasional slip we all made our way safely down crossing the burn to pick up the path along the valley. We regrouped at the Fords of Avon and had a look at the refuge. There was a slight worry about the water levels of the crossings on this walk due to recent heavy rain but it was not too deep and the Fords of Avon then farther on the crossing at Glas Allt Mor, were quite easily crossed albeit with varying degrees of success at keeping feet completely dry! It felt a longish trail through Glen Derry and the path was narrow and full of boulders. The weather had improved however and the sun was shining as we eventually entered Derry Woods where an adder crossed the path between two walkers. Midges prevented us resting too long at Derry Lodge before the very familiar walk to the bus at Linn of Dee, It was now 7o'clock so we set off for home stopping only to refuel the bus. Thank you very much Ingrid for all the driving.

Unfortunately, during the walk, Kathleen tripped over a boulder and fell resulting in a swollen wrist. As it was still sore a couple of days later she went for an x-ray to find she had broken a bone so is now in plaster. We all wish her well and look forward to seeing her out with the Club again.

Minibus Charges

Everyone who has been on the new Dyce community minibus will agree that it is a much improved travel experience than the previous workhorse - no more gale force winds funneling through the side window and a much quieter ride. However, minibuses are expensive vehicles to purchase and run and the Dyce Community has had to increase their charges to cover the costs of providing this facility for the community. In turn this means that the Club will have to increase charges to members using the bus; despite having a full bus, we incurred a significant loss on the recent Lairig an Laoigh trip and cannot afford to keep subsidising the trips at such a level. A round trip to the Glen Shee area will result in bus charges of -£150 and to the Aviemore area of -£180. Accordingly the committee has decided to increase trip charges to £15 per person for a trip to Braemar / Glen Shee area and £18 per person to the Aviemore / Cairngorm area. This still compares very favourably to the use of private cars when costed at the full AA recommended price of 45 pence per mile and is more sociable. Members will be able to discuss this topic at the forthcoming AGM in January.

