



# Forfar & District Hill Walking Club

Newsletter 35 June 2010

[www.fdhwc.org.uk](http://www.fdhwc.org.uk)

## **President's Column**

As I write this, it seems a long time since the doom and gloom of my words in the last newsletter. At that stage, meet attendances had shrunk to the low single figures, for a variety of reasons and the very existence of the club was threatened. Things have improved since then. Attendances are well up.

It's hard to think of this being the 35<sup>th</sup> newsletter. While typing up the short article on Boots Across Scotland (see below), I remembered the first newsletter going out around the time of our first Boots adventure...1992 in fact. As they say, there's been much water under the bridge since then.

Rita's article stimulated some thoughts too about our membership over time. It's interesting to plot the faces into different time periods. Taking snapshots over 5 year periods shows an ever-changing membership. People come and people go, but always a healthy number of long-termers. We're always keen to gather new members to the club. The long awaited advertising campaign has started. The committee ended up choosing Carolyn's "Pap of Glen Coe" photograph for the new poster. You should see it out and about soon. Please let us know if you see it.

I have to thank the past year's committee for all their hard work. Special thanks go to Mel, who stepped down off the committee after 5 years sterling service, 4 years as secretary and a year as assistant meet secretary. Congratulations on gaining your qualification and may we all wish you well in your new career.

Don't forget to look out for "incident of the year". Word has filtered round of a few things of late that might qualify. Hope to see you all soon.

Best wishes to all  
Colin,  
President

## **Newsletter Archive**

The previous newsletters are available on the club web site.

## **'Far I wi Noo' plaque**

Remember to note any worthy events for "incident of the year". Previous winners are Sinclair's Leap (2008); Ray's "I may be gone some time" (2009). None was awarded at AGM 2010. Please forward news of any worthy incident to a committee member. This will be presented at the next AGM.

## **Girds 2010**

This was held in Cullow Market, Glen Clova at May 10<sup>th</sup> open outdoor meeting. Thirteen members competed, and the event was won Steve Wilson. Refreshments were taken at the Drovers in Memus afterwards.

## **Forfar Path Network**

The Outdoor meeting 31<sup>st</sup> May was held in Forfar. Bob Railton guided as round some of the path network, taking in Balmashanner and the quarries beyond, where some real live climbing was taking place. Thanks Bob.

## **Boots Across Scotland**

This charity has been wound up. The charity was set up in 1987 after a serious head injury to Davy Pearson during a trip to the hills. The charity organised safety lectures and skills courses as well as donating money to Mountain Rescue. The trust fund has been split up and donated to 6 other bodies. The club missed the first "Climb all the Munros at the same time" event in 1988 but took part in the same charity events for Boots in 1992 (Meal nan Eun), 1996 (Beinn a' Ghlo), 2000 (Slioch), 2004 (Beinn Mhanach).

## **Inchnadamph Revisited**

Another great weekend at Inchnadamph was had by all in May. The weather was cold but clear. This was the club's 4<sup>th</sup> stay there :- May 2004, June 2000, October 1997 being the three previous visits. See meet reports.

## **Photographic competition**

Congratulations to the 2009 winner, Graham Brown. Results can be seen on the club's Picasa web page. See link from club web site. Entrants can see comments from the judge on all photographs on the web site.

## **Social Meet with BBQ**

The social meets have been published and are included in the meet calendar. The BBQ event (postponed from February) will now take place over 2 days (18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> September) in Glen Clova at the Carn Dearg club hut. Hopefully, a walk will take place on Saturday followed by a BBQ about 17:00 the afternoon of the Saturday, with games of various sorts (weather dependent). Some food will be provided by the club (but you may want to bring more). The hut is also booked for the night, so anyone who wants to stay on can do so. Sleeping is on two raised platforms. You will need a sleeping bag. There is no shower, but there is a toilet. Those that stay may want to walk on the Sunday before leaving. See the web site for more details.

### **New Members**

The club would like to extend a very warm welcome to two new members:-

Aileen Pearson, Kirriemuir  
Martin Gledhill, Forfar

## **Walking with Ghosts** **by Rita Norrie**

Being reduced to low level walking is no bad thing when it comes to gems like Loch Muick. So being in the area for a few days, we (the Norries) recently decided to revisit the loch and walk round it on the very well made path, and being contrary, went in an anti-clockwise direction. The Land-rover track on the west side of the loch was pleasant – the sun shone, the birch trees were brilliant green and silver and the water calm. We didn't even wish we were taking the path to Lochnagar instead (a sign of the times)! By the time we reached the Glas Alt Sheil we had to take shelter in the unlocked bothy from the drizzle to have our sandwiches, but were impressed with its good condition especially the upstairs sleeping quarter, which was clean, bright and spacious. We walked on through the wood and round to the end of the loch and there they started. The memories of the many times and in different conditions and with so many people we had been there with – on that little sandy beach or passing through to Sandy Hillocks via the Streak. They were all there – so real we could have spoken to them.

The next part of the path is still narrow and just above the loch and again we enjoyed the scenery, looking back to Broad Cairn where John had his last Munro celebration – another series of happy memories, but it was when we got to the end of the loch that it all happened. We stopped at the woods where the commemorative pictures are always taken on the anniversary walks and there they were – all the ghosts from 40, 30, 20 years ago, crowding into the picture. We could name them all, the

members who are no longer with us and others who for different reasons are no longer members. But to us they are real. We remember their faces, their voices, their mannerisms, their kindness and sense of fun, while to most present day members they are names in the minute books or old photographs.

They were so alive, our ghosts, we could hear them, the laughter, banter – we could see the old style gear – no walking poles, just sticks; no lightweight warm clothing, just woolly jerseys and freezing cold cagoules. We shared all that with them and survived!

But we miss them – Stan Taylor, Bert McLaren, Dorothy Towns, Gib Wilkie, Dave Murison, Bill Yule, Reg Fawcett, Ben Lancaster (so laid back), Janet Grant (who sang at the top of her voice when she was happy), Jack Tibbs, Rod McIntosh, Norman Knight to name a few. And it was good to spend a few minutes just letting the memories and ghosts take over, and leave feeling grateful that we can still enjoy our walk round Loch Muick in such good company.

We would like to think that when the present day members visit the wood at LochEnd in the future, when they no longer Munro Bagging, that we will be included in the host of ghosts that will greet them – but not yet!

## **Long May weekend meets.**

Recent discussions took place at the Inchnadamph weekend about locations for the long May weekend. Here is a list of all the locations since the long May weekends were introduced in 1992. Note that 2001 was cancelled due to restrictions for foot and mouth disease. Note also that accommodation is already booked for both 2011 (Skye) and 2012 (Arran).

Before 1992, the club held its winter weekend in April. From 1992, the winter weekend was moved to March and the long May weekend was added.

2010	Inchnadamph
2009	Inverie, Knoydart
2008	Durness
2007	Skye
2006	Barrisdale, Knoydart
2005	Kinlochleven
2004	Inchnadamph
2003	Arran
2002	Inverie, Knoydart
2001	None, foot & mouth
2000	Cannich
1999	Dundonnell
1998	Rum
1997	Barrisdale, Knoydart
1996	Lairg
1995	Torridon
1994	Dundonnell
1993	Dundonnell
1992	Torridon

## **Thanks**

I would like to say a huge thank you to all those in the club who have supported me over these last two years. As you may well know I have been going through a career change and have spent the last two years at Dundee College. I have now completed my HND in Sports Coaching with Sports Development and as of 1<sup>st</sup> July, I shall be self-employed as a freelance outdoor instructor. This change has not been an easy one although I had grown accustomed to my "poor student" status! I appreciate all the lifts on day meets and weekends and to those who listened to my moans about essay deadlines and tedious subject matter.

I would also like to say thank you to those who completed a questionnaire for my college research project and to those who agreed to be interviewed. My subject was "Land Based Outdoor Activities within the Angus Glens and the Environment – Can the Two Go Hand in Hand?" My Research project was a make or break for my HND and involved a lot of blood, sweat and tears not to mention many hours spent in front of the computer. Thankfully I received an "A" grade pass with which I am delighted. I would like to give special thanks to Colin & Linda Sinclair, John Dawson, Willie Mather and John & Rita Norrie. Thanks for the cuppies and free food!!!

Hopefully I shall have more time to come on the club meets although this summer looks to be a busy one. I am working for the Ancrum Outdoor Centre again and I am also employed by Angus Council as a Sessional worker. I have ad hoc work with three private outdoor companies and hope to add more to my list.

So here's to the future!  
Thanks again,

Mel

## **Our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!** **by Colin Sinclair**

The meet in April 2010, Linda and I celebrated an anniversary with the club. Our first meet with the club was in April 1980. We had just moved up to the area, me to start a new job in NCR and Linda to start work with Angus District Council in Carnoustie High. Some research took us to Forfar & District HWC, where we were made most welcome. John Norrie was president at the time. Marie Laing (Brian's mum) was meet secretary. The meet was entitled "Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> April – Bridge of Orchy 7a.m." It was by bus, a big bus, and there were lots of people on it, all ages, some just kids. We were allocated a walking group...our leader was Iain Shepherd (or Sheepie), at that time in his late teens. We set off from Achaladder Farm and walked out along the railway towards Beinn a' Creachain. The pace was cracking, the ascent was steep.

What had we come across here? We reached the top and traversed the ridge to Beinn Achaladder and then the rain started. We remember getting soaked walking out below Beinn an Dothaidh to the bealach above Bridge of Orchy and then dropping to find the bus at Bridge of Orchy station. Ladies changed in the bus (nothing has changed) and the men changed in the tunnel under the railway. It doesn't seem like 30 years have slipped by since then. We still continue to enjoy lovely (and some not so lovely) days out with the club. Of all the the members then, only the Norries, the Coulls and the Fergussons are still members of the club.

## **Meet Secretary's Report** **December 2009-June 2010**

Much has been made of the milder winters recently and the lack of snow on the hills. Well, those of you who like walking in winter conditions have had your fill this winter, with tons of snow and prolonged periods of low temperatures. This was followed by some dry spring weather which has seen an increase in turnouts for the day meets. Could this be the start of an excellent summer of hillwalking? Only time will tell.

### **27 December 2009** **Bachnagairn**

Only three members ventured out after a substantial snowfall. The original plan was to go as far as Broad Cairn but progress was very slow in the knee-deep fresh snow. At the pony shelter above Bachnagairn a decision was made to turn back. Although the distance covered was not great, it was a good work-out on a fine winter's day.

### **3 January 2010** **Glen Ogil**

Five members attended this Meet. Perhaps surprisingly, conditions underfoot were good given the amount of snow which had fallen (complaining about too much snow already?).

### **10 January 2010** **High Tea Meet**

The original plan to walk the Fungle Path from Deeside through to Glen Esk had to be abandoned as the amount of snow would have made such a walk very difficult. The bus company was also not confident of getting a bus to the start of the walk on Deeside. A hastily rescheduled plan took us to the coast for a very bracing walk from Lunan Bay to Arbroath. Due to the icy conditions on the road, the bus driver dropped us off before the descent to Lunan Bay, resulting in an extra kilometre of a walk to the beach at the start. A walk along the beach was followed by a steep rope-assisted climb to the cliff tops, from where we followed

the coastline to Auchmithie and eventually to Arbroath, a distance of about 18 kilometres. This was followed by an excellent High Tea at Sauchieburn Hotel. Eighteen members took part in the walk, while another twelve attended the High Tea.

### **7 February 2010**

#### **Beinn Dorain, Beinn an Dothaid**

Ten members attended this meet. It was a difficult day of poor visibility with crampons needed for much of the time. The group went up to the bealach between the two Munros and headed south to tackle Beinn Dorain first. With conditions deteriorating, the group felt they had had enough by the time they reached the summit and abandoned plans to tackle the second Munro, heading back to the cars and the warm pub instead.

### **7 March 2010**

#### **Fersit**

This was a pretty adventurous meet for March, taking a bus with the intention of climbing the Eassains. It paid off, however, with a turnout of nineteen, including five newish recruits and guests. We were still in the grips of a long, cold winter and expectations of a good day were high. The journey was notable for the amazing sight of a completely frozen Loch Laggan. A party of four decided to head for Stob Coire Sgriodan, with any ideas of also bagging Chno Dearg quickly being abandoned due to the depth of snow. The other fifteen members headed for the Easains on the other side of Loch Treig. Similarly, they had to settle for one Munro only due to the underfoot conditions. It was a late return to Forfar after a very enjoyable day in winter conditions.

### **19-21 March 2010**

#### **Invergarry Weekend**

Ten members attended, staying at the very comfortable hostel in Mandally. The snow cover had receded a bit, making for faster progress on the hills and allowing some serious Munro-bagging to be done. Loch Quoich was the area of choice for many, with six members climbing Gleouriach and Spidean Mealach on Saturday and returning on Sunday to tackle Gairich on the other side of the loch. Three members (the Corbett-baggers) ventured further along the KinlochHourn road, where Sgurr nan Eugallt was the target. One intrepid member drove to Glen Carron (a further 65 miles) to climb Surr Ruadh and Beinn Liath Mhor. On Sunday two members bagged another Corbett in Glen Roy (another of the many Carn Deargs) while the remaining two enjoyed a low-level walk in the Invergarry forest.

### **18 April 2010**

#### **Arrochar**

Fourteen members attended this meet. We had a choice of three routes with the bus dropping off and picking up at various points. Six members opted for a traverse of Ben Vorlich,

being dropped off at Ardlui and picked up at Inveruglas. The other two groups were dropped off at Butterbridge on the Inveraray road. Five walkers took on the biggest walk of the day, a through walk to Loch Lomond over Beinn Ime and Ben Vane, while the remaining three started at the same point and climbed Beinn Luibhean and the Cobbler before being picked up at Arrochar. The day turned out to be a bit accident prone, with two members stumbling and injuring fingers and shoulder respectively. Happily, no serious damage was done and both managed to walk off the hill unassisted.

### **30 April-3 May 2010**

#### **Inchnadamp**

Three members decided to make the most of the holiday weekend by starting early and climbing Am Faochagach on the way to Inchnadamp on the Friday. On Saturday, five members climbed the nearby Munros of Ben More Assynt and Conival, visiting the Traligill caves on the way. The remaining walkers headed for Quinag, climbing all three Corbetts included in this complex mountain. The fourteen members attending made full use of the weekend, heading into the hills again on Sunday and climbing Seanna Braigh, Suilven, Stac Pollaidh and Glas Bheinn.

### **16 May 2010**

#### **Deuchary Hill**

This was the first Social Meet of the year. Ten members attended, starting near Loch of the Lowes and following the track up to Mill Dam. Stopping for a brief refreshment, the group were rewarded with the sight of an osprey hovering over the loch. The walkers went on to Deuchary Hill, where the final short but steep climb provided the only hard work of the day. The Cairngorm peaks could be identified quite clearly from the top, many of them still completely covered in snow. The descent was then made to Loch Ordie where the group spent some time lazing in the early summer sunshine. This was followed by a leisurely walk back to the cars.

### **23 May 2010**

#### **Crianlarich-Balquidder**

The recent good weather had started to encourage more members to come out with seventeen attending this through walk. The forecast was good although we left Forfar in torrential rain with several members questioning the sanity of those wearing shorts. Timing is of the essence, and the rain stopped just as we reached our destination and the waterproofs were consigned back to their rightful place at the bottom of the rucksack. An hour later, many walkers were flagging in the searing heat as the sun shone down from a cloudless sky as we made our way up An Caisteall. From An Caisteall we made our way to Beinn a' Chroin before descending to the road-end at Ardcarraig.

## **6 June 2010**

### **Linn o' Dee**

Ten members attended this bike meet. With formidable clouds hanging around, not to mention the first onslaught of the year by midgets, the group set off along the track to White Bridge. The group continued a further three kilometres beyond the bridge before leaving the bikes. Only eight made it this far, one member having fallen off his bike and another accompanying him back to the car park. The remaining eight continued on foot, climbing steeply to Carn Cloich Mhuillin and on to Beinn Bhrotain. By this time they were walking in heavy rain and visibility was very poor. The group pressed on to Monadh Mor before returning via Glen Geusachan to the bikes and a rather wet eight kilometre cycle back to the car park.

## **18-20 June**

### **Torrison**

Thirteen members attended. On Saturday five members started from Kinlochewe and traversed Beinn Eighe from east to west taking in the Munros of Spidean Coire nan Clach and Ruadhstac Mor. Seven members decided on an east to west traverse of the pinnacled ridge of Liathach climbing Spidean a' Choire Leith and Mullach an Rathain. One member made a solo trip to Beinn Alligin to climb Sgurr Mhor and Tom na Gruagaich. The weather proved to be kind with excellent views of the spectacular Torrison mountains. On Sunday one member made the ascent of Sgurr nan Lochan Uaine and Sgurr Dubh, three members opted for a low level walk along Loch Coulin, five members headed east to climb Ben Wyvis while the remainder made the journey home.