



# Forfar & District Hill Walking Club

Newsletter 46 December 2015

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

## **President's Column**

Another year goes by. Good hillwalking days have been few and far between recently, certainly at weekends. You just have to seize the opportunity while you can. At present, it's a mild and rather dreich period of weather, but hopefully winter will arrive soon, with its capping of snow on the hills. Time to be prepared. See the meet secretary's report for the need for more gear, and the knowledge of how to use it. For those who would like trained in winter hillwalking, there are various courses run by Glen More Lodge and Mountain Aid. I would encourage you to attend.

I got a real surprise at the last meet when I saw Frank with his beard. Some liken him to Roy Keane. Why do many hillwalkers (at least the men) have beards? Worth an article in the next newsletter? It reminded me of Muriel Gray's book "The first 50" when she classified male hillwalkers into 2 types - "pink fluffy men" (it was in the 80s and the arrival of fleece material) and "tartan shirted beardies". Well the age of the tartan shirt has gone, but the beards are still there.

In the last newsletter, we reported the death of a much loved club member, Brian Coull. This edition of the newsletter has some articles with some fond memories of Brian.

Reading the newsletter from a year ago, I see I talked about my comeback. Ha, ha, it didn't last long - another year of pain and physiotherapy. So here is some news of my most recent comeback - I've actually attended the last 2 meets, and have had 3 fabulous winter's days out - the Saturday at Bridge of Orchy on Beinn Mhic Mhonaigh, the Sunday of Bridge of Orchy on Ben Inverveigh and the December meet on Carn Tuirc and Cairn o' Claise. Good to be back out. But look forward to my slow careful descents though!

I wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Let's hope for a good hillwalking year in 2016. Hope to see you on one of the festive meets.

Best Wishes,

Colin,  
President

## **Festive Meets**

### **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December - Airlie Ridge**

The plan is to walk along the Airlie Ridge from the monument side and descend by the Minister's Path into Glen Clova. We will leave cars at both ends and if enough interest for a shorter walk, there could be an out and back walk from the monument.

Total distance is 7.5 miles and should take 3 to 4 hours assuming a fairly leisurely pace. We will then head along to Glen Clova Hotel for refreshments (unless anyone has a better suggestion for somewhere else).

Meet at Myre at 08:00 or at carpark at Dykehead (opposite old hotel) at 08:30.

### **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January - Loch Lee circuit**

Meet at the Myre at 08:00 or Edzell 08:30 more details will appear next week on the web site.

## **High Tea Meet**

### **Sunday 17<sup>h</sup> January**

This meet will be a traverse of the Angus Glens from Glen Moy to Glen Lethnot (either west-to-east or east-to-west depending on the wind direction and strength. The meet is by bus, leaving from Sauchieburn Hotel, Luthermuir at 08:00. High tea will be taken at the Sauchieburn Hotel at 17:00. Please contact the assistant meet secretary (Neil - contact details on web site or meet card) if you require a bus seat and/or are coming for high tea. If coming for high tea, please state your choice of main course to Neil by Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January.

#### **Menu - £14**

- Deep fried breaded haddock
- Braised beef and beer casserole
- Chicken breast in pepper sauce
- Loin of pork with apricot and bacon stuffing
- Grilled salmon steak with herb butter and salad
- Cheesy vegetable quiche

All served with fresh vegetables of the day, chips or potatoes.

Followed by homemade cakes and scones with clotted cream and jam, tea and coffee.

## **Meeting Reports**

**10<sup>th</sup> August** – The Falls of Drumly Harry on the Noran Water. 13 members and 2 guests attended. It was a 1km walk to the falls of Drumly Harry along a muddy track. 2 ropes were set up for abseil. 11 members abseiled to the falls, some in the gloom as darkness started to fall. Nicola dropped her phone, which she recovered. However, her battery is in the water. Back to the cars just before 10pm. An enjoyable evening. Thanks to Bob Railton for researching.

**7<sup>th</sup> September** – a good attendance. The planned speaker called off, so there was a re-run of the Mountain Mind Quiz photographs.

**12<sup>th</sup> October** – a good attendance to hear our own Nicola Hay on the "Camino de Santiago".

**2<sup>nd</sup> November** – 18 members attended the annual quiz night. 4 teams were drawn randomly. Quiz master Colin presented 50 questions mainly based on the local Angus Glens. The team led by Graham B won narrowly (though later proven to be a tie due to dodgy addition of scores)

**7<sup>th</sup> December** – 18 members attended. Meeting was followed by a talk on "Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance" by Ally Ballingall (aka Ally Bally from Radio Tay). The talk was enlightening, informative and entertaining. The SCAA acts as a supplement to the NHS in Scotland, and it is totally funded by charity. The NHS have 2 helicopters, and one of them was used for Roy H on Stob Coire Ardair on the May 2008 meet. The club presented a donation to SCAA. Thanks to Debbie for organising this.

## **283 and a' that**

by David Sinclair

In 1891 Sir Hugh Munro identified 283 Munro summits. The SMC began managing the list in 1921, at that time demoting 24 Munro summits and promoting 17 to Munro status. Further updates followed: in 1933 3 summits were demoted and 3 promoted, in 1953 1 was demoted and 2 promoted, in 1974 7 were demoted and 9 promoted, in 1981 15 were demoted and 12 promoted, in 1984 1 was demoted and 2 promoted, in 1997 2 were demoted and 9 promoted and in 2010 1 was demoted and 1 promoted. To complicate matters recently, the Munro Society have undertaken several re-measurements resulting in 1 summit being demoted in 2009 and a further 1 summit being demoted in 2012. So, after all that messing around how many Munro summits are there currently?

(Courtesy of <http://www.hills-database.co.uk>)

## **Brian's Brain Problems**

by David Sinclair

I joined the club at 5 years old and attended lots of meets during my growing up years. Brian was usually always present. He was keen to get my brain ticking, so he used to give me problems to solve. As you know, he was a maths teacher, so knew many problems. Here are some that he set for me. Answers on last page.

1) Join these dots with 4 straight lines, without taking your pen off the paper (clue - think outside the box):

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• • •  
• • •

2) If you lay a piece of string around the surface of the world, and suspend another piece one metre above the surface all round the world, how much longer is the second piece of string? (clue: hungry!)

3) Match Stick Puzzle. I can't remember the exact puzzle, but it was something like this. 17 match sticks are laid out in 6 squares as below. Remove 5 to leave 3 squares.

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## **Photography Night**

The club's annual photographic competition will be held on Monday February 1st. For the 8<sup>th</sup> year running, the judge will be Graham Wilkinson from Carnoustie Camera Club. Entries are to be submitted by Saturday 23rd January.

Note that changes to the rules were made at the AGM in March 2015, introducing a 2<sup>nd</sup> award of "best collection". Entries can be in purely digital format. Of course, prints and slides are still acceptable too. Please send/email entries to [colin.sinclair@btinternet.com](mailto:colin.sinclair@btinternet.com). If sending images, make sure you send them at 1024\*768 resolution or greater. You may need to send one at a time. Make sure your emails say "1 of 5" etc. Each entrant is allowed a maximum of 5 photographs, taken in the last 12 months. For full rules and naming guidelines for prints and images, see the rules at the end of the constitution.

[www.fdhwc.org.uk/docs/fdhwc\\_constitution.pdf](http://www.fdhwc.org.uk/docs/fdhwc_constitution.pdf)

If entering a print (rather than a digital image), Graham would also like to receive a digital image or negative, in order to help with his summary and to suggest any improvements to the photographs.

## **Beinn Eighe Mountain Trail.**

by Bob Railton

This walk was highlighted on the BBC "Out of Doors" programme with Mark Stevens and Euan McIlwraith, they described the route with such enthusiasm that I made a mental note to do this should I ever be in the area.

The Kinlochewe club weekend found me in the right place, with the other members going up to higher places, Clare Stewart and I decided to give it a go, and what a walk it turned out to be.

We started from Kinlochewe and walked through the woodlands to the Lochside car park on Loch Maree, from there the route runs for 6.5 km and climbs to 550m. The circular route has been well marked by the Ranger Service with places of interest marked by named cairns and fully described within the booklet that you can pick up in the car park.

I would recommended taking a clockwise direction starting at the Woodlands Cairn taking you to such places as Tansley Bog, Geology, Trumpet Rock, Conversation Cairn (Summit), Lunar Loch, Fault, Fossils, Gorge, and Ice Age. Please stop at the "Fault" and look down to the right and be amazed at what you are looking at. This natural fault is so deep that a 16 storey building could sit within the abyss. The views of the back of Beinn Eighe and Loch Maree and the surrounding areas are just outstanding.

## **The Prodigal Report**

by John Norrie

On a winter's night in the late 70s, I was invited to R.M. Condor's freezing cold cinema to hear a talk given by two Royal Marine officers on their ascent of the north face of the Eiger. After the event, I asked one of them if he would repeat the presentation to the club, and he said yes he would, and later on this was held in the Meffan Hall.

After the main talk, he announced that he would be leading a combined services expedition to the Himalaya in 1980.

The committee asked the audience for donations to support the expedition and raised the large sum of £35 (that was 35 years ago).

The expedition was in the main successful, except sadly there was a fatality on the walk out. Being a solely service personnel expedition, the leader was obliged to submit a detailed written report to the Admiralty, copies of which were sent to selected sponsors which included FDHWC (all because of £35). The club's copy of the report has been missing for 35 years, but recently turned up in a box of mountaineering books that I was asked to dispose of by a former club member. Any club member interested in reading it?

## **Corryvreckan Whirlpool**

by Bob Railton

This is the 3rd largest whirlpool in the world. This has been on my "bucket list" for some time and spending a few days in the Oban area gave me the opportunity.

I travelled by crossing over the beautiful Atlantic Bridge onto Seil Island to board the "Sea Leopard" operated by Seafari Adventures. The 5 hour trip took me down the Sound of Luing chasing the dolphins, seals, and the sea eagles to come eventually to the whirlpool itself which lies between the Isle of Jura and Scarba.

The Captain explained that he would be taking the boat into the centre of the pool, and to hang on! The experience was outstanding, although the whirlpool is a bit of a misnomer as the pool actually upwells, so it is more than likely to spit you out should you go overboard. This probably saved the lives of George Orwell and his party of children when they tried to cross in a small boat in the summer of 1947 (while writing his great novel "1984"). They managed to scramble onto Jura and were rescued by a passing fishing boat the next day.

## **Meet Reports July to December 2015**

by Graham Brown

The post summer walk programme got off to a fine start on **August 16<sup>th</sup>** with a bus meet from Glen Callater to Glen Muick. Eleven members and two guests attended and we were all blessed with a good days walking in fine conditions with all the summits clear.

Unfortunately the **August and September social meets** were both cancelled, so our next outing was to Glen Lochay on **September 13<sup>th</sup>**. Due to the non-availability of both current meet secretary's, Ray successfully reprised his previous role with 3 members and 2 guests attending. The weather was really good with the cloud staying clear of the tops all day and a cooling breeze most of the time. Creag Mhor was climbed.

**September 25-27.** The first weekend of the 2015/16 season was back to an old favourite, Kinlochewe, although by all accounts the club might not be in a hurry to return to that particular bunkhouse. Eleven members attended. On Saturday, 4 completed a 17 mile round trip into Maoile Lunndaigh in West Monar; 3 slogged up Slioch and around the horseshoe; 2 went exploring to Meall a'Ghiubhais, with one continuing to Ruadh stac Beag; 2 covered 9 and a half miles of woodland walks in Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve. Some had a good dinner in the hotel, while others enjoyed first class catering in the bunkhouse. All gathered there later for nonsense and hilarity. Sunday - Most members headed home after breakfast, recognising the big- scale nature, and time-consuming demands of the Torridon/Kinlochewe hills and the looming "work on Monday" after a 4

hour drive back. Four members made the most of even better weather conditions and set off for a half day on Sgurr Dubh, a Corbett opposite Liathach and Beinn Eighe.

The **October 18th** day meet was to the Monadhlaiths near Newtonmore on the 18<sup>th</sup> 10 members and 2 guests attended a long, fine day in the hills. The three main Monadhlaith summits were taken in with great views all around.

**November 8<sup>th</sup>** - Brown Cow Hill was next up. It is becoming the club's bogey man of a hill, the second time we've had to reschedule due to inclement weather, some day we will get there, I promise! A look at the weather forecast resulted in a morning's dash up and down Ben Tirran before the rain came down at lunchtime, five optimistic members turned out.

**November 20-22.** The second weekend meet of the autumn was at the Glen Coe Ski Club hut at Bridge of Orchy when 9 members attended. On Saturday there was a group of 5 on Stob Coire Odhair and Stob Ghabhar, and a group of 4 on Beinn Mhic Mhonaidh. Sunday saw a group of 4 on Ben Inverveigh and 3 in Glen Dochart, the remaining 2 eating their way home. A weather window in gloomy November - Saturday wasn't bad at all, but Sunday was gorgeous with snowy tops, blue skies and sunshine.

The final day meet of the "term" saw nine members and a Brazilian guest out in Glen Shee on **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December** A beautiful still cold winter's day with fantastic visibility. The group climbed Carn a Tuirc and Cairn o' Claise descending by the Sron na Gaoithe ridge. A round trip of around 13km with 650m of ascent. 5.5 hours walking. Abortive trip to stop at Bridge of Cally hotel on way home, but closed.

See separate sections for the forthcoming festive meets and high tea meet.

On behalf of the committee I would again like to thank all the members who have supported the walks we have organised and look forward to seeing you all back out again soon.

We got a taste of benign winter weather on the December meet, but winter is coming (sometime, probably in May) and it is very important that those going out in the winter carry ice axe and crampons with the knowledge of how to use them. If any member doesn't have these items of equipment please get in touch with either myself or Neil and we will fix you up with the kit you need. There is no excuse as there is plenty surplus kit floating about within the club. Winter can be the best time of the year to go out walking, so let's keep it safe too!

Have a great Christmas and a happy new year of walking!

## **For sale**

Waterproof salopettes (Slioch). Red with black strength patches, full length zips, 29" inside leg, hardly used. £45. Contact John Norrie.

## **Dundee Mountain Film Festival 2015**

After attending for the previous 2 years, the club didn't have a stand at the festival. Several members attended various sessions of the festival, and gave their approval of what they saw.

## **Smile Train**

John Norrie reported that he raised £65 for the "Smile Train" charity from the sale of ex-president Willie Milne's book collection at the open meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> December. Thank you.

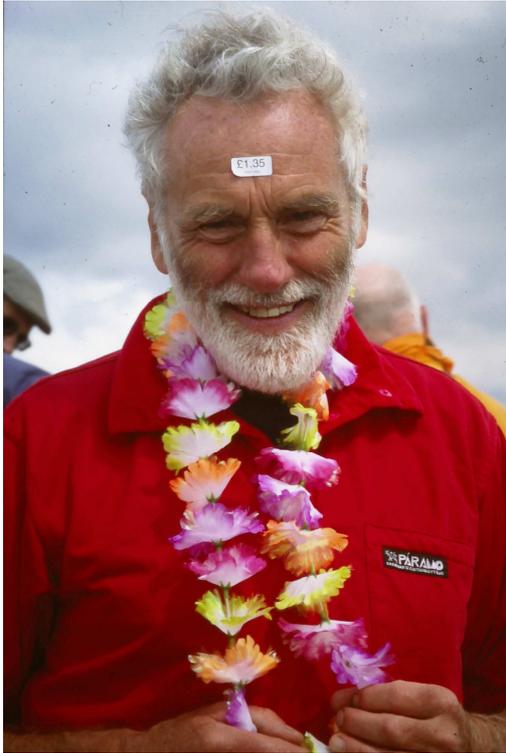
## **Brian Coull – the stories go on!**

by John Norrie

Brian was well known for telling stories against himself. Here are a few as he told them to me.

- It was a dreich Sunday afternoon and Brian was in a miserable sort of mood when he announced "I'm going for a run round the loch". "Can I come with you?" asks Alistair. "No; you'll never run that distance" states Brian. Eventually Alastair wins and is allowed to run round the loch with his father. Having nearly completed their run and turned into Taylor Street, Alastair then, says Brian rather dejectedly "He took off up Taylor Street and beat me home. I wouldn't have minded if he had been 10, but he's only 9!"
- Do you know that Brian once shaved off his beard, wore a hat, went as usual to school and nobody recognised him. Surprise, surprise.
- In a certain youth hostel, Brian considered it was time for clean underpants. After much searching of bike bags, almost accusing fellow hostellers of hiding them, even wearing them, he discovered that he had put them on and was in fact wearing 2 pairs.
- On the return leg of the trek along the Tarmachan Ridge on a fantastic winter's day, we were enjoying a seat in the snow in the sunshine, when walking towards us was a not very happy group with a Herr Gruppen Fuhrer type leader. Brian remarked "They are not going to speak to us" and they didn't. "How did you know they were going to ignore us?" I asked. "Because we are last of the woollie jumper brigade" he replied.
- Cross-country skiing over for the day, gear packed into car boot and off home. Next week, off to ski – but no poles. Oh dear I must have left them in the estate car park. Drives back up to the car park, finds a note pinned to fence "Your poles are in the estate office – you neep".
- At Brian's funeral, Brian Batson made the remark "that Brian only insulted his friends". I feel privileged to have been insulted so many times.

## **John Norrie's photos of Brian**



His last Corbett – Saturday July 1st 2006 in Glen Etive on Beinn Maol Chaluim (907m).



June 1992 - mastering the pipes (might have been taken at Barbara Redford's last Munro on Stobinian)

## **Thirty-three Thistles**

By Linda Sinclair

On a meet I'd been talking to Brian about 5 year old David who had to see a speech therapist because his "th" were "f" and his "s"

were "th". Sometime later on the same meet Brian said to David, "Say Thirty-three thistles". David replied "Firty-free fithles".

## **Unscheduled events to come**

Some extra events are planned for 2016. These include

- Abseiling
- Picnic/BBQ/games

Dates will be published in due course. The abseiling will be held on a dry night in April, probably at Balmashanner quarry, as in 2013.

## **Migrating members**

Reports came in during this period about certain members on their world-wide travels. The "Twa Birds" were spotted in Northern Spain and the Tweedles (this time, Dumb and Dumb-er) were reported as harassing the natives in Patagonia.

## **Boules 2015**

This was held on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October at the Glen Clova social. 16 players contested a round-robin in 8 pairs. It was played in 2 round-robin pools, with the winners of each pool playing in a final, where Carolyn and Janet beat Susan and Rita by a score of 2-0, and they were declared 2015 champions. A boules trophy is currently being prepared. (The editor apologises for the quality of photo – it was dark and it was taken on my phone!)



## **New members**

The club extends a warm welcome to the following new members, who have joined since the last newsletter.

- Fiona Gilbert
- Graham Harris

## **Davie's Bourach Work Party**

The pre-winter work party finally took place on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December. Colin and Graham H went up to find the bourach above the snow line. Despite that they managed to locate turfs and fill all of the holes of the back and side walls. Graham had carried up Bob's 2<sup>nd</sup> red pole and this was placed on the opposite side of the path on the Clova side. This may be relocated next summer.

**Monday Meetings coming up**

- Jan 11<sup>th</sup> Willie Mather, "Patagonia"
- Feb 1<sup>st</sup> Photographic competition
- Mar 7<sup>th</sup> AGM (+ possibly a video)
- Apr 4<sup>th</sup> Members Night
- May 9<sup>th</sup> Boules and Cricket/Rounders
- June 6<sup>th</sup> Kinpurney Hill ramble

Full details will be on the web site.

**Glen Clova Social Meet**

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October. Carn Dearg Hut (old). 19 members attended, gathering in the afternoon. The event started with the 2015 boules competition which was keenly fought for (see separate report). This took place in the gravel area behind the new hut, as the BB refused permission to use their drive! We had asked politely.

A banquet followed, with Carolyn and Nicola providing soup, and 2 main courses. All members provided desserts/cheese to be shared on the table.

Then there followed a Halloween party, organised by Carolyn and Nicola. We then took part in various games: - pin the witch's nose (while blindfolded), dress the mummy (with toilet paper) and touchy/feely involving blindfolds and dipping one hand into jars (but no smelling!) with some horrible sensations. Great fun was had by all. The evening concluded with a short firework display, where the favourite was the big-bang box! Like last year, no one stayed the night in the hut. It was a very successful event. Thanks to the organisers.

**Semi-recent memories of Brian on great days out**

by Colin Sinclair



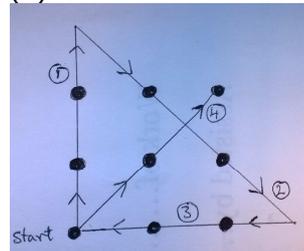
New Year meet 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2005 – Glas Maol



Top of Ben Aden – Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2006 – from Barrisdale – he raced me to the top, and won! Just me and him. Lovely day. FDHWC meet at the White House, Barrisdale, May 2006.

**Answers to Brian's Brain Problems**

(1)



(2)

Pi = 3.14159, one of nature's magical constants  
\* means "multiplied by"

Circumference = Pi \* Diameter

$$C = \text{Pi} * D$$

Diameter increases by 2m (1m either side), so new diameter is (D+2)

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Difference is then } & \text{Pi} * (D+2) - \text{Pi} * D \\ & = \text{Pi} * D + 2 * \text{Pi} - \text{Pi} * D = 2 * \text{Pi} = 6.283\text{m} \end{aligned}$$

It doesn't matter whether this is done to something as small as a penny, to a football, to the Earth, or to something as massive as Jupiter or the Sun. The answer is always 6.283m. Amazing! Nature's magical numbers.

(3)

