



Forfar & District Hill Walking Club

Newsletter 34 December 2009

www.fdhwc.org.uk

President's Column

Hello there! Thought that was appropriate greeting as Heather Reid retires from her weather job. How we will miss her, after seeing her for 15 years. In the last newsletter I said "Get ready for a good summer!" Well, as anyone who has been out on the hills during the summer will know, it was another wet, wet, wet year. Again, again, again. That's 3 in a row, Heather. Hope your successor is better!

The gloomy news continues regarding meet attendances. See graph. After a relatively good turn out for the traverse of Ben Lomond in April, the meet attendances plummeted during the summer and autumn months – lots of reasons :- illness, Duke of Edinburgh trips, injury and weather. A good attendance at the Ladder Hills was followed by a poor one on the Fara. The committee is trying to come up with ideas of what to do. Keep with us, please.

We did have another member 'compleat' the Munros over the last 6 months – Linda Sinclair (a face weel kent to me). Congratulations to you, Linda.

As 2010 approaches, we look forward to another year in the history of the club – the 47th, I make it. Hopefully, things will improve:- better weather, better attendances. Some social meets coming up :- Christmas, New Year, High Tea (Jan), Glen Clova (Feb).

May I wish all members and your families a Merry Christmas and a Guid New Year. I hope to see you all soon at one of the festive meets or at the High Tea meet.

Best wishes to all
Colin,
President

New Munroist

Congratulations to the club's newest munroist. Linda Sinclair "compleated" on Ciste Dubh on Saturday 24th October. Linda was joined by 26 members and friends on top for the usual clottie dumpling and whisky, followed by a bigger gathering in the Kintail Hotel. She became the club's 33rd Munroist. John Norrie (the Munro piper, see newsletter 33) piped her off and back at the Cluannie Inn. Linda was presented with an engraved goblet from the club and the club

Munro scroll was updated, and presented to Linda at the December open meeting in Queen Street Tavern.

Festive Meets

The traditional festive period walks will be held on Sunday 27 December and Sunday 3 January. Destinations being considered are Bachnagairn/Broad Cairn and Auchnafree Hill. Meet at the Myre car park at 08:00. These meets are weather dependent. Please see web site (or phone meet secretary) for latest details.

High Tea Meet Sunday 10th January

The Fungle Path (Aboyne to Tarfside) by bus leaving Luthermuir Hotel at 08:00. High tea at Luthermuir Hotel at 17:00. Please contact the meet secretary if you require a bus seat and/or coming for high tea. If coming for high tea, please state your choice of course.



The Sauchieburn Hotel

Luthermuir, by Laurencekirk AB30 1PX Tel: 01674 840587
Proprietors - H. J. Duckett & J. Clench
VAT No. 856 4354 08

High Tea Menu
@ £12.00 per. Person

Deep Fried Breaded Haddock
Gammon Steak with Pineapple
Beef and Mushroom Pie
Chicken Breast in a Pepper Sauce
Salmon with Cheese and Prawn Sauce
Vegetable Pie

Served with fresh vegetables of the day, chips or potatoes.

Followed by home made cakes, scone, clotted cream and jam and choice of tea or coffee.

Himalayas Trip

Our secretary, Graham Brown recently had a trip to this vast mountain range. Graham will be talking and showing pictures of his trip after the next club meeting on Monday 4th January in Queen Street Tavern at 19:30.

Winter Social Meet with BBQ/Games

The committee have arranged an extra social event on the calendar. This will take place on Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th February in Glen Clova at the Carn Dearg club hut. There will be a BBQ on 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.

'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). Please forward news of any worthy incident to a committee member. It is hoped to present this at the AGM on 1st March.

Photographic Competition

The club's annual photographic competition will be held after the open meeting on Monday February 1st 2010. For the 2nd year, the judge is Graham Wilkinson, president of Carnoustie Camera Club. Entries are to be handed to a committee member no later than Sunday 24th January. Although entries should be made on paper (i.e. a print), 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.

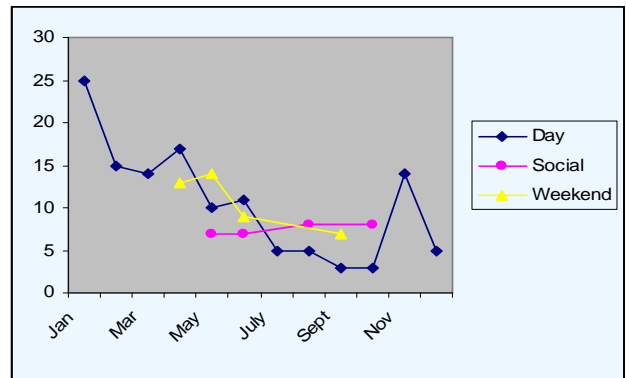
Extract for constitution

LIST OF RULES FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

- 1. The photos entered must have some connection with hill walking (the club preferred) and be taken not earlier than 1 year prior to the competition.*
- 2. There will be one class of entries. An entry can be one of the following: - a slide, a print from a film negative or a print from a digital image. Any size of print can be submitted.*
- 3. All entries to be handed to a committee member by the published closing date.*
- 4. A member can submit no more than 5 entries.*
- 5. The competition to be judged by an independent judge, appointed by the committee.*

Meet Secretary's Report June-Dec 2009

Last year at this time I seem to remember blaming the weather for dwindling numbers at the meets. We have had some good forecasts recently but still we do not get the turnouts we used to enjoy in years gone by. Hopefully the good weather of the last two meets will rekindle people's enthusiasm.



5 July 2009 Mystery Meet

Five members attended the mystery meet to Beinn a' Chaorainn and Beinn Teallach at the west end of Loch Laggan reservoir. The walkers started from Roughburn and followed a forest road for a kilometre and up through a very boggy firebreak out into the open hillside skirting round the west side of Meall Clachaig and ascending the south-east slopes up to the south top at 1049 metres then along the broad ridge for ½ Km to Beinn a Chaorainn (1052 metres) where a lunch stop was taken in the sunshine with excellent views all around. The small group then continued along the ridge to the north top (1045 metres), descended north-west to the bealach at the source of Allt a' Chaorainn and climbed up the steep slopes to reach the north-east ridge and up to the summit of Beinn Teallach (915 metres) for the second stop of the day. The descent was down the grassy south slopes of Beinn Teallach and across the Allt a' Chaorainn to pick up the forest road back to Roughburn.

16 August 2009 Beinn a' Ghlo

Five members attended this Meet, including, according to the attendance sheet, "W Mather (aged 5)". I believe he was in the charge of a Mr G Brown. The weather turned very nasty as we climbed the steep path up Carn Liath. The wind gave us a severe buffeting and, coupled with driving rain, did not make for pleasant walking. As we took shelter behind the summit cairn, the cloud suddenly lifted and the rain stopped. The remainder of the day was clear and dry but very windy. The main talking point of the day was a solo walker who appeared suddenly from behind us as we sheltered at a col. He disappeared from view very quickly although the path could be seen very clearly for quite a distance ahead of us. At the next col, the same walker appeared behind us again. We watched him climb all the way up to the summit ridge of Carn nan Ghobar. When we got up there, the kilometre-long ridge was deserted. Explanations, both conventional and supernatural, will be most welcome.....

The walk out to the track leading to the cars at Loch Moraig was a very boggy one. All in all, this was an enjoyable day after a not very promising start. Three new Munros for Kate, which is what kept us going in the early stages.

Sunday 30 August 2009 - Glen Uig

Seven members attended. Despite a mix-up over the meeting places, all attendees set off from Wester Lednathie westwards through Glen Uig. The weather was fair but overcast, though visibility was very good. After dropping into Glen Quharity, the group climbed eastwards over Clinking Cauldron and Cormaud tp Monthrey, where they descended back to Wester Lednathie.

13 September 2009 Glen Doll

This meet was scheduled to be a through walk along Jock's Road but due to low numbers the bus had to be cancelled. In the end **three** members completed an interesting walk which took in part of the intended route. An early start was made from the Glen Doll car park. We took the path to Corrie Fee, quickly gaining the high plateau where we would stay for most of the walk. We took in the top of Mayar before heading north towards Tom Bhuide over featureless ground, all the while looking for the fabled white cairn as expounded in the memoirs of John Dawson. Looking for anything became very difficult as the cloud came rolling in and the day soon became a very useful navigation exercise. We took a dogleg route from Tom Bhuide to Tolmount to stay on the high ground and ended up almost doing a circuit of Tolmount before finally climbing it. The cloud had disappeared by this time and we enjoyed a warm, sunny walk along Jock's Road back to Glen Doll.

25-27 September 2009

Glen Etive Weekend

The Grampian Club hut was booked for the weekend as this had been popular on a couple of occasions in the past. Numbers were poor this time however (only 7). On Saturday all the group started from the Glen Etive road and followed the private road across the river Etive, five members headed for the North East ridge of Ben Starav for a long and unrelenting climb up the steep slope and a scramble over the granite boulders to the summit of Ben Starav (1078 metres) in low cloud, gusting winds and rain, after a short stop the group continued East to Sob Coire Dheirgh down to the Bealach and up to the summit of Glas Bheinn Mhor (997 metres). The descent was via the East Ridge into the corrie at the head of the Allt Mheuran and down the path back to Glen Etive. The other two members climbed the tree lined gully above Coileiter for 800 metres leading directly to Beinn Chaorach around the edge of Coire Glas and up to the large summit cairn of Stob Coir'an Albannaich (1044 metres), the continuation to Meall nan Eun (928 metres) required accurate compass work in the cloudy conditions. The return to Glen Etive was via Glen Ceitlein and along the track back to the starting point. No walking took place on Sunday due to poor weather.

11 October 2009 Glen Lethnot

A club "Social Meet" to Glen Lethnot was attended by **eight** members and guests. The plan was to walk up the track in the direction of the Shieling of Saughs before taking to the high ground and walking round some of the tops. We were walking into a strong headwind all the way and as a result no-one was too keen to head any higher. We therefore regained the landrover track and simply followed it all the way to the Shieling where a very considerate landowner had provided some tables and benches for our lunch stop. The walk back was a bit quicker with the wind at our backs. The rain very considerately held off all day until a few minutes after our arrival back at the cars.

18 October 2009

Ben More & Stobinian

Another poor forecast resulted in a very poor turnout with one or two calling off at the last minute. A few hardy souls did venture out to Ben More and promptly called it a day rather than go any further

8 November 2009 Ladder Hills

This was a new area for all, other than the most dedicated of Corbett-Baggers. It seems to be an area which has been overlooked by the club in the past. Perhaps it was for this reason that we had the best turnout for a number of months (thirteen members and a guest). It was a crisp, frosty morning as we set off for Strathdon. The ultimate target was the Corbett, Carn Mor, which lies to the east of the Lecht. Excellent views were enjoyed most of the day in the cold, clear air. We met one of the largest groups we have ever seen on a hill, around fifty members of a rambling club from Forres. We swapped stories about the problems experienced by our respective clubs, their main problem being that the committee found it embarrassing that they could not stop making profits, no matter how much they reduced the bus fares! The route back across the tops from Carn Mor was quite tiring as there was a large area of peat hags to negotiate. We were grateful for the recent frosty weather as it would have been a very boggy route otherwise. We reached the cars just a short time before dusk.

13 December 2009 The Fara

An excellent forecast unfortunately did not result in a good turnout. **Five** members travelled by car to Dalwhinnie, parking at the top of the hill beyond the village. We followed a track across a difficult fording of the Allt an -T-Sluic before heading up the open hillside. The main summit was quickly reached and for the rest of the day we enjoyed a high-level stroll along the elongated ridge of the Fara, stopping frequently to appreciate the crystal clear views in all directions. We could see the orange glow of the sun reflecting off a snow-plastered range away to the north. The general consensus of opinion was that we were looking at the Glen

Strathfarrar or Glen Affric hills. It was with a bit of reluctance that we turned back and retraced our steps north-east to the end of the ridge and down to the cars.

One fewer Munro, one more Corbett

In September the Munro Society published the results of several surveys it undertook during the summer with the result that one Munro, Sgurr nan Ceannaichean near Achasheen has been demoted to Corbett status being short by 57cm! This now makes it one of the many Corbetts that are only just a few metres short of Munro status. This hill was only promoted to Munro status within the last 20 years. The results of the surveys are as follows.

- 15th May 2009, Beinn Teallach (NN361849) north of Loch Laggan: 914.60m, just retains Munro status
- 16th May 2009, Ben Vane (NN277098) west of Loch Lomond: 915.76m, comfortably retains Munro status
- 14th July 2009, Sgurr a'Choire-bheithe (NG895015) above Barrisdale in Knoydart: 913.32m, retains Corbett status
- 15th July 2009, Sgurr nan Ceannaichean (NH087480) south of Glen Carron: 913.43m, requires to be reclassified from Munro to Corbett status.

The Ordnance Survey has checked the figures for Sgurr nan Ceannaichean and is in agreement with them.

Who's a Radio Star!

Two ex-presidents of the club, John Norrie and Willie Milne took part in a radio broadcast for the "Out of Doors" programme on Radio Scotland. They accompanied presenter Mark Stephen from Glen Doll car park to Davy's Bourach. They had two slots on the programme, one as walked up

Jock's Road and the other up at the bourach. John and Willie described the story of the 1959 tragedy and the history of the building of the bourach, including the club's involvement and now the club's maintenance responsibilities.

Posters

You may have seen some posters of club events in October/November at various places. This was a short-term step by the committee to encourage new membership. The committee are currently working on a more permanent poster and advertising leaflets.

Questionnaire

All members will shortly receive a questionnaire about club activities. This is an attempt by the committee to gather input from members about what they feel is working OK and what should be changed. The questionnaire will be anonymous though anyone wanting feedback would require to give a name.

Email addresses

It is important that you keep your contact details up to date. The new web site (yes, it will finally be here soon) allows you to administer the details yourself. The latest contact list will be securely held in a database on the web server and all club email broadcasts will be made through that list.

Mallorca revisited

The president, treasurer and their wives spent an enjoyable week in the north of Mallorca in October. This was their first visit there since the club meet in October 2000. The mountains are stunning and it was great to walk in shorts in the sunshine. Worth another club meet at some point!



Carolyn Smith & Bob Railton
Seana Bhragh - Saturday 20th June 2009



Linda Sinclair
Ciste Dubh - Saturday 24th October 2009