

## Autumn Newsletter 1999

With only four walks of our current program left, the countdown is on to the end of yet another hillwalking season for the club as we look forward to the year 2000; but more of this later in the newsletter, including a summary of the remaining outings.

Hikes this year have generally been well attended, and as always we welcome new members to our club. It is becoming important that you continue to support your club with your attendance on outings, so that we do not suffer the fate of other clubs in the area, which have seen reduced numbers, and in one case - Grampian Transport Club - folded. Why not, therefore, make a commitment to come along to some of our remaining outings, and phone bookings secretary Alex Joiner to secure a place?

Weather this summer has been so much better than last year, and we've enjoyed good days in the hills. My personal recollection is of the green rolling hills of Perthshire with visits to the Drumochter Hills, Beinn Dearg, Ben Lawers (which for most of us was *Wet, Wet, Wet!!*), and more recently Glen Tilt, from Blair Atholl to Linn of Dee.

I'm sure you will also have your own memories of favourite walks. Now is the time to write them down and submit them to our secretary, Heather Eddie so that they can be considered when we prepare next year's program of outings.

### Week's Hike 1999

The North West Highlands was the setting for our Week's Hike at the end of May, staying three nights at Tongue Youth Hostel, three nights at Inchnadamph Lodge Bunkhouse and the last two nights at Ullapool Youth Hostel. The weather was mixed with high winds during the first part of the week at Tongue and some wet days at Inchnadamph and Ullapool. Nevertheless, the party of seventeen enjoyed good walking from the high tops of Ben Klibreck, Ben Hope and Ben More Assynt to the low-level walk by Sandwood Bay - not to mention the Coffee Shop at Elphin!

During the week we were joined by Brian Donald for a few days at Inchnadamph, and one evening he entertained the group with a selection of slides from previous Week's Hikes. The evening was well attended despite competition from a *lesser event* - a European Cup Final live on TV. Because of the increased numbers this year, we had to use a car as well as a self-drive mini-bus. Our thanks are again due to all the drivers, Jim and Sally Henderson (car), and Frank Kelly and Colin Allan (mini-bus) for successfully transporting us to and from the various destinations.

## Current Program

By the time this Newsletter reaches you, we will be well into the latter part of the 1999 program of outings, with only four walks remaining.

On 26 September we head for Gartly and walk through Clashindarroch Forest, which covers a large stretch of countryside between the Bogie and Deveron rivers. At the end of the walk, the route leaves the forest to descend into the Deveron valley, finishing very conveniently at the Grouse Inn.

For the next walk on 10 October we travel slightly further west to Glen Rinnes. We climb Ben Rinnes and then descend to Glack Harnes, where we take a forest track round Meikle Conval hill and through the Glach-en-Ronack to rejoin the bus near Dufftown Golf Clubhouse.

On 24 October, we return to home territory, to one of the Mounth tracks on Deeside in this case, the Builg Mounth - crossing from the Bridge of Bogendreip in lower Glen Dye, past Kerloch, to Dellavaired in the Braes of Glenbervie.

The last walk in the program on 7 November takes us on forest tracks from Corse near Lumphanan over the hills of Mortlich and Craiglich to the Loch of Aboyne and then into the village itself

## Winter Program

The committee have now finalized the social and walking events for the coming Winter season, and the dates for your diary are as follows:

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Wednesday 24 November 1999 | 7.30 pm at New Telecom House Slide Show presented by Frank Kelly entitled <i>Yosemite - the Hidden Valley</i> -,<br>Also slides of previous walks to be coordinated by Bill Marr; |
| Friday 26 November 1999    | 8.00 pm in the Station Hotel<br>John Muir Trust and North East Mountain Trust<br>joint ceilidh featuring Hallyrocket;   |
| Wednesday 1 December 1999  | 7.30 pm at New Telecom House<br>Week's Hike 2000 meeting;   |
| Sunday 5 December 1999     | 9.00 am start from New Telecom House<br>Walk: Glenkindie - Kildrummy;   |
| Sunday 9 January 2000      | 9.00 am start from New Telecom House<br>New Years Walk: Keiloch - Inver, followed by a meal at the Inver Hotel;   |
| Wednesday 2 February 2000  | 7.30 pm at New Telecom House<br>Annual General Meeting-;  |
| Sunday 13 February 2000    | 9.00 am start from New Telecom House<br>Walk: Gamrie - Pennan.  |

## **Next Year's Program**

The committee are planning next season's walks and we again request your assistance in producing an interesting and varied selection of new and 'old faithful' outings. Members are therefore invited to submit suggestions on the enclosed sheet, which should be returned to the secretary, Heather Eddie, or any committee member by 24 October 1999. Details of the starting and finishing points, with six figure map references if possible, would be appreciated, together with your name so that we can refer to you for further details if necessary.

## **Millennium Event**

It has been suggested that we hold some kind of special event to mark the new millennium. The committee had a brief discussion on the subject and now invite your suggestions on the format of such an event. Initial thoughts include a sponsored walk or special weekend excursion. This event need not be at the start of the year, but could be held at any suitable time during the year. What would you like to see happen, and what would you be prepared to support? Please send any suggestions to secretary Heather Eddie, again by 24 October 1999.

## **News Items**

For the latest in their 1:25,000 *Superwalker* series, Harvey's of Doune, Perthshire, have published a map covering Kintail, adjoining the previously issued sheets for Torridon and the Cuillins of Skye. As usual, the reverse of each sheet carries useful information such as details of access and translations of place-names. The maps cost £6.95 each and are printed on waterproof paper.

The Ordnance Survey has published the first two Scottish sheets in their new 1:25,000 series. Older members may recall the blue series covering 10km x 10km, which was replaced by the 20km x 10km Pathfinder series in green covers, and occasional Outdoor Leisure sheets in yellow jackets covering 22km x 30km. It is intended to replace the Pathfinders with 20km x 30km Explorer sheets in orange covers, and those for The Trossachs and Pitlochry/Aberfeldy have been published. The latter covers Ben Vrackie and Schiehallion.

The John Muir Trust has recently purchased Schiehallion, or at least the eastern half of it, with its eyesore of an over-used path - this is a mountain that is being loved to death. Schiehallion is a prominent hill. It is the mountain viewed down the twenty mile trench of Glen Tilt, and is visible as an isolated cone from the Sidlaws to Glen Coe.

Schiehallion is also important in scientific history for experimental observations of the deviation of plumb lines from the astronomical vertical due to the *attraction of mountains*, i.e. Schiehallion's own gravity. From this they were able to determine the Universal Gravitational Constant and the mass of the Earth. The work was directed by Astronomer Royal Nevil Maskelyne in 1774 - only 29 years after the '45. Contour mapping was invented in the course of the experiment.

Needless to say, the Trust is looking for financial help with both the purchase of the hill and the repair of the footpath. The John Muir Trust and the North East Mountain Trust can also be supported by attending their joint ceilidh featuring Hallyracket in the Station Hotel on Friday 26 November at 8.00 pm.

The Scottish Rights of Way Society has published an enlarged, fully revised edition of their guidebook *Scottish Hill Tracks*, including a double-sided map showing all the routes. The price of the new edition is £16.

The Hillphones Scheme run by the Mountaineering Council of Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage, which lets hillwalkers know in advance where stalking is due to take place in the hills, has been expanded this year to cover more areas in the East Grampians. The scheme operates from early July to late October, covering the stag season. There is no stalking on Sundays, of course.

Areas and associated telephone numbers for information are:

Glenshee	01250-885288
Callater and Clunie	01339-741997
Invercauld	01339-741911
BalmoraULochnagar	01339-755532
Glen Clova	01575-550335.

Free leaflets giving full details of the scheme are available by sending a stamped addressed envelope marked *Hillphones Leaflet, to:*

MC of S, 4a St. Catherine's Road, Perth, PHI 5 SE.

Information is also available on the SNH web-site at [www.snh.org.uk](http://www.snh.org.uk).

### **A Spot Of History (1)** by Bill Marr

Since I mentioned at the 1996 AGM that we had reached the fiftieth consecutive year of operating a summer program of walks, members have asked me on several occasions to put something down in writing about the history of our Club; so I offer you in this and future Newsletters some information based on available records and my own recollections.

The beginnings of the Club were in the 1930's when hillwalking started to be popular. The Club originated among a group of Post Office employees and became known as the Post Office Hiking Club. The only record I can recollect of this period was seeing after the war a photograph of the party at Spital of Muick on an outing to Lochnagar. However, the outbreak of war in 1939 closed this chapter.

The end of war in 1945 and the lifting of some of the wartime restrictions led to revived interest in outdoor activities. A meeting was convened in Telephone House, Bon Accord Street on 11 April 1946 to discuss reconstituting the Club, and twenty people turned up. Although pre-war the Club appears to have attracted mostly postal staff, the majority of support now came from telephone staff, mainly operators and engineers. The meeting appointed a committee of six to draw up a program of walks, with the following recommendations:

- (1) The membership fee to be one shilling (five pence);
- (2) Notices giving details of the program of walks, including costs, to be displayed on notice-boards in the various offices;
- (3) Tickets for outings to be sold by Committee members with no returns accepted later than the Friday preceding a hike;
- (4) Members to be allowed to bring relatives and friends on outings provided all members who want to attend get priority for seats on the bus;
- (5) If possible, arrangements to be made for tea at the finish of the outing.

A program of seven day outings and one weekend outing was subsequently carried out. These were:

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 12 May       | Bennachie, from Auchleven to Pitfichie, followed by high tea at the Burnett Arms Hotel, Kemnay; (This turned out to be a bright, sunny day for the first outing.)   |
| 26 May       | The Fungle, from Feughside to Aboyne-,  |
| 16 June      | Morven, from Logie Coldstone to Burn of Vat;  |
| 7 July       | Corgarff to Glen Gairn, via Glen Fenzie, followed by high tea at the Alexandra Hotel, Ballater;   |
| 18 August    | Mount Keen, from Invermark to Glentinar;  |
| 25 August    | Weekend at Linn of Dee staying in one of the empty buildings in the Canadian log camp; On the Sunday, they walked by White Bridge and Bynack Sheiling to Loch Tilt; |
| 8 September  | Lochnagar, from Spital of Muick;  |
| 29 September | Clachnaben, from Glen Dye to Feughside.   |

At the following AGM in February 1947, it was reported that the past season had been very successful with good attendances on the day outings.

## Lost Property

In the course of the season, several items of property have been left on the buses. Most have eventually been returned to their rightful owners, but we still have a few items left over. Do you know who they belong to?

- Gaiters - well used, faded blue colour
- Navy Regatta fleece jacket
- Nike hat

Any items uncollected by the end of the year will have to be disposed of

## Discounts

We'd like to remind you that the following shops will give paid-up members discount on production of a signed current membership card:

Black's, George Street	10%;
Craigdon, 5 St Andrew Street	20%;
Graham Tiso, 26 Netherkirkgate	discount on club sales nights only-,
Hill Trek, Aboyne	10%;
Marshall's, 186 George Street	10% (not on Visa sales);
Outdoor Gear, 88 Fonthill Road	10%.

And finally, do you have any interesting articles, stories, poems or anything with a hillwalking theme that you would like to share with others? *If* so, please send the details to our secretary and get them published in the next issue of the newsletter.