



SPRING NEWSLETTER 2005

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Spring is in the air, with snowdrops and crocuses over and daffodils in full bloom. As we emerge from dark winter days to lengthening daylight and warmer weather, the new season of walks planned some time ago turns into the reality of walking in the countryside and climbing hills.

Our walks were well attended during winter, and we look forward to a new, exciting program. Even at this early stage of the year, we have had some good days such as the coastal walk from Bullers of Buchan to Collieston, as well as not so good days - the Mortlich-Craiglich walk was wet and misty with low cloud most of the day.

I am encouraged to see new members on our outings, and we extend a warm welcome. We look forward to getting to know you better during the year, and hope you enjoy the Club.

As most of us know, Jim Brebner died early in 2004 aged over 80. A long-standing member, he was an endearing character, now sadly missed. In appreciation of the Club, Jim left us a £1000 bequest! We have to decide what to do with the money, and welcome any ideas for a memorial.

AGM

Around twenty members attended on Wednesday 2 February 2005 to transact business necessary to operate the Club in the coming year. The Committee's draft program of outings for 2005 was approved subject to a switch of dates for the Blair Atholl circular and Invermark circular walks.

Treasurer Sally Henderson presented the financial statement for the year ended 31 December 2005, showing Club funds healthy, with just over £2000 in our bank account. Over the year, bus costs balanced out despite escalating fuel costs. As this

trend will likely continue and we applied the maximum fare of £12 quite a few times in 2004, the AGM increased the maximum from £12 to £14.

Gratuities for both Braemar Mountain Rescue Team and Mountain Rescue Association of Scotland were increased from £50 to £75. Our affiliations to North East Mountain Trust and Ramblers' Association were continued.

The £10 annual membership fee remains unchanged. There was little support for reducing it to the £5 rate of a few years ago.

The following were elected: -

President Frank Kelly
Vice President Jim Henderson
Secretary Heather Eddie
Treasurer Sally Henderson
Booking Secretary Alex Joiner
Committee Members Colin Allan, Colin Chapman,
David Garwood, Kris Howard, Bill Marr,
Graham Sangster, Vi Walker

Auditors Marjory McLeod, Rosemary Kelly

Overall, we start the new season in good heart, and look for your continued support to ensure the Club goes from strength to strength.

SWEATSHIRTS, TEE SHIRTS & POLO SHIRTS

Some years ago we produced Club accessories, and a bus survey has confirmed sufficient interest to justify ordering new clothing embossed with a revised Club logo. If you missed the order forms circulating on outings, please contact Sally Henderson for details of colour, sizes and range of goods available, all at competitive prices.

DISCOUNTS

We remind you that discounts are available at the following on production of a signed 2005 membership card, which you receive on paying your annual membership fee. For those who have yet to renew, a form is enclosed to return to Treasurer Sally Henderson (South Loirston, Nigg, Aberdeen, AB12 3LJ) with a £10 cheque payable to *Aberdeen Telephones Hillwalking Club*. Your membership card will be sent to you.

- Blacks, George Street 10%
- Craigdon Sports, 5 St Andrew St 10%
- Millets, Union Street 10%
- Nevisport, 186 George Street
10% on selected lines
- Graham Tiso, 26 Netherkirkgate
Discount only on club sales nights when up to
25% discount is available on selected lines
(6.30 - 8.30pm, first Monday of each month)

Frank

EDITOR'S CHAT

I hope you enjoy reading this Newsletter and if you have any interesting articles or stories with a hillwalking theme, please send details to Editor Kris Howard or Secretary Heather Eddie for publication in the next issue. I would like to thank all contributors to this edition. Photos were supplied by Graham and the Hendersons.

For the sake of brevity, the Editor reserves the right to edit texts submitted, but every effort is made to retain the author's meaning.

The Club has a copy of the Ramblers' Association's *Accommodation Guide* available, listing B&Bs all round the UK.

WEATHER FORECASTS

- BBC1 about 6.25pm
 - Radio Scotland Mon - Fri 6.58pm
Sat 6.58am, 6.58pm
Sun 6.58am, 7.58pm
 - Mountain Call East 0906 850 0442
 - Mountain Call West 0906 850 0441
 - Climb Line 0900 165 4669
 - Mountainline 0900 120 0807
 - Met Office 0900 344 4900
- The following website has useful links
<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/~aus039/links.htm>

But maybe you have a better source - let me know
kris_howard@ntlworld.com.

STOP PRESS

This is to remind members how important it is to book on to the bus. On 24 April, Gordon brought his largest bus, a 47-seater, but 48 walkers were looking for places, so we had to leave behind an unfortunate member not booked on. Kris

TREASURER'S CHAT

Drivers will be aware of rising fuel costs, which apply equally to buses. As quotes for outings are up on last year, the AGM increased the maximum fare to £14. Hopefully, this will apply to few outings. So far this year all fares have been under £10 because of good attendances and staying close to home. When we travel far, the distance is greater and so is the time we are away, both affecting the cost of the bus. Hopefully, outings will be well supported, and we will not need to charge £14, but those not at the AGM need warning of the possibility of fares up to £14.

I would like to add my appreciation of those who make a point of bringing change on outings. Collecting fares would be a nightmare without their welcome handfuls of coins. Sally

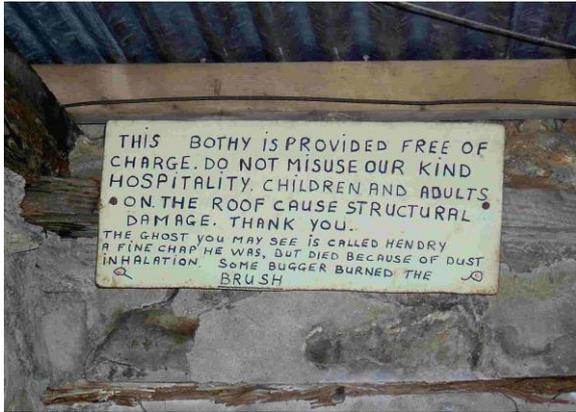
Reporters' Notes

12 September 2004: Schiehallion



Alan, Fiona & John view Loch Tummel from the Summit

Twenty ascended Schiehallion from the west. The ascent was steep with no path, and is not recommended for future walks. The descent was the splendid new John Muir Trust path. Six hardy souls unwilling to ascend in driech, windy weather, traversed the south side where paths were animal tracks making for hard work. The only benefit was a bothy for lunch out of the rain. Jim



Inside the Bothy

26 September: Glen Clova - Glen Muick



John, Linda, Fiona and Alan at Sandy Hillocks
This walk was to start at Glen Isla, but the Committee decided the distance and available daylight might mean slower walkers arriving at the bus in failing light. From Braedounie in Glen Clova, ten headed for Bachnagairn, and four others came with me via Jock's Road and lonely Loch Esk. Misty conditions near Loch Esk tested navigation skills, but a good day was had by all. We had a short stop for refreshments at the Prince of Wales in Ballater en route to Aberdeen. Graham

10 October: Corriehabbie Hill



Wilma, Frank, Kris, Alan, Ian & John

Only three out of 34 walkers completed either of the recommended routes. Some crossed a bridge too soon, traversing rough boggy country to get back on track. Although the route sheet advised following the Landrover track up Glen Livet for six miles, some walkers headed directly up the south end of the ridge, and found they had the easier route, over short heather along the gently undulating ridge, whereas the glen track was in a poor state of repair. Despite the good-luck charm, few managed the last stretch without passing through sharny dubs. Sally



The Good-Luck Charm

[While crossing a field of sheep near the start of the walk, Kris heard a noise like empty plastic canisters being banged together. In fact, the noise was made by two sheep butting each other - empty vessels indeed. Ed.]

24 October: Rocks of Solitude



The North Esk at Rocks of Solitude

There was a good turnout. It started wet, continued wet and ended wet, a miserable day with low cloud, mist and constant rain. Burns were like miniature rivers, and in the end, we had to wade across, with no dry place to stop for lunch. There was rough walking on tussocky grass, sedge, heather, peat hags and bog. I have never seen the North Esk so high and fast flowing. Daredevils braved the torrent in kayaks. Just walking along

the road was like wading in shallow water, and we were thankful to arrive at the bus in Edzell - altogether a lovely day!
Alex



A Very Wet Break

7 November: St Cyrus - Inverbervie



View North to Johnshaven

It started bright, and continued fine and sunny all the way to Inverbervie. We sat in the sun for elevenses, and it continued very pleasant to Johnshaven and Gourdon, where we all relaxed on seats along the sea wall. With clear blue skies, it was surprisingly warm and I discarded my polo shirt to walk with only a T-shirt. It was very pleasant for the time of year.
Alex

5 December: Duff House - Macduff

Thirty-one members enjoyed this low-level walk to end the 2004 program. The walk commenced at historic Duff house in fine sunny weather, and followed estate tracks west of the Deveron to the magnificent 1772 bridge spanning the gorge at Alvah. The return to Macduff followed various farm tracks, a path along the east bank of the Deveron and over Hill of Doune. Other places of interest were an icehouse, the Earl of Fife mausoleum, two follies and the Macduff war memorial. At Montcoffer Mains, we were joined by a brown spaniel, difficult to shake off, but

after a mile, we managed to transfer her to a hiker going the opposite way!
Colin Chapman



Amy, John, Ena and Linda View the Deveron Estuary from Hill of Doune

9 January 2005: Hill o Fare (Echt - Raemoir)



Coffee at Hill of Corfeidly bothy



Relaxing after Dinner at the Feughside Inn

The day was cold and clear as we set off along the forest track from Wester Tillyshogle on the Echt-Raemoir road. Tree-felling operations were in evidence as our group negotiated frozen ruts on the track and headed towards Greymore. A small group chose to climb to the comms mast at Meikle

Tap before rejoining the path around Greymore, continuing via Blackydubbs to the Hill of Corfeidly bothy. Views were now limited by darkening skies and low cloud, particularly over Lochnagar. A chill wind hurried us off the exposed top towards The Skairs and the sheltering forest. We descended to Raemoir, skirting the hotel via the Home Farm stables, reaching the bus near the old school. The walk proved a good bracing start to the new year, ending with a very enjoyable meal at the Feughside Inn.
Frank

We headed south from Bullers, with stunning views all along the cliff-tops before late elevenses at Slains Castle. A lovely beach walk the length of Bay of Cruden led to lunch below the village of Whinnyfold [known locally as *Finnyfaal*. *Dis onybody ken, fit div Finnyfaal fowk dee nou the fishin's awaa?* - Ed.] There were more classic coastal views all the way to Collieston. The last walkers arrived at Gordon's bus just on time, concluding that it had been a long, tiring but very worthwhile walk.
Graham

6 February: Dinnet - Ballater 7 Bridges



Julie, Bill, Jim & Linda at Polhollick Bridge

Starting along the railway line from Dinnet, the weather was dull and overcast, but brightened by the time we reached Ballater for the seven bridges walk - a stroll through woods and briefly on the road before dropping down to the lower path to the bus at Ballater. With plenty hostelryes for a dram, chips, and such, there was no tea. A pleasant trip home left early, a few snoozing on the way.
Alex

13 March: Pitreadie - Bogendriep



Fiona, Margaret, John, Wilma, Alan & Linda between Melmannoch & Little Kerloch

Aberdeen was very icy with a scattering of snow, but clear beyond Cults. The walk started bright and sunny with a very keen wind at the farm road, uphill virtually all the way to Little Kerloch. With snow on the hills, there were magnificent views. The air was clear with an icy wind but there was some heat in the sun. Patches of snow were firm, but sometimes we were up to our knees after breaking through the surface, or struggling through long heather. We continued to Kerloch trig point for a rest and a cup of something hot while admiring clear unobstructed views of sea, Clachnaben and Scolty. It was downhill all the way to the bus at Bogendriep, then home through Strachan and Banchory to drop off everyone in Aberdeen.
Alex

27 February: Bullers o Buchan - Collieston



Slains Castle

What a start to this year's program - blue skies and sunshine and 44 walkers in spite of a good few regulars missing. The North Sea was calm, so the usual roaring of surf in the Bullers Pot was absent.

27 March: Corse - Aboyne

The first day of summer? What a joke! A good turnout headed through boggy fields under soggy trees up featureless hills. The only spectacular thing about the day was incessant drizzle, gradually soaking and chilling us to the bone. More positively, I doubt if a future walk can be as bad, so there are better days ahead!
Colin Allan



Jim in the Mist on Mortlich

April 10: Auchallater circular



Jim on the Glen Callater path

There were 29 participants, and it was lovely to welcome four new people. Nobody walked in from Invercauld, but there were various walks from Auchallater. After Callater Lodge, five of us set off for Cárn an t-Sagairt Mór, then across the plateau to Fafernie, with quite a bit of snow on the south side, and on to Knaps of Fafernie, finding a lovely grassy slope down into Glen Callater. It was very windy on the plateau, with snow-white hares and ptarmigan. Vi

14 April: Claik Night



Vi and Mhairi in heavy claik during Graham's quiz

Thirty Club members attended the Claik Night at the Health Board Club on King Street. Graham prepared a picture quiz entitled *So you Think you Ken Aiberdeen*. Frank Kelly won on a tiebreak. Mhairi provided great traditional Scottish music for dancing and sing-along. Everyone had a good time and we thank Vi for organizing a very popular event. Graham

PARC NATIONAL des PYRÉNÉES (PNP)

Stretching for 400km from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, the Pyrenees have for centuries formed a natural frontier between France and Spain. Second only to the Alps among the mountain ranges of Western Europe, the Pyrenees are much less frequented, but still offer an exciting combination of steep rocky peaks, small glaciers, forested valleys, mountain tarns and little-trodden summer passes. Well equipped valley campsites and dramatically situated mountain refuges are linked by an extensive network of marked trails and paths on both sides of the frontier.

In 1967, the French designated this irregularly shaped mountain area between Atlantic France and Mediterranean Spain as a National Park. The PNP stretches mostly as a thin ribbon from the mountains south of the town of Lescun east as far as the Neouvielle massif, a distance of around 100km with an area of 45,700 hectares.

For those interested in visiting the area, I intend organizing a two-week walking holiday during the second half of August or early September, depending on transport availability, based at the ski centre of Cauterets (902m) in France. This village allows easy access to the incredibly beautiful and mountainous Marcadau, Vignemale and Lutour valleys in central Midi-Pyrénées.

The format of this year's trip differs from last year's 100-plus-mile refuge-to-refuge trek around the alpine Vanoise National Park, in that we are based in one place for day walks. Those who prefer days off walking can relax, do their own thing and return to our walking program.

I already have names of some interested in this adventure. It is not too early to consider this excursion, as it takes time to plan such a trip, so have a serious think, and if interested contact me sooner rather than later. Travel arrangements will be confirmed by end April 2005. Graham Sangster
Phone 582986 sangstergi@bopenworld.com

Current Program of Walks

By the time this Newsletter appears, the 2005 program of outings will be well under way. Let us hope the weather on our walks improves.

On 22 May while some are on the Week's Hike in Wester Ross, our local outing is a circular walk on some hills south of Corgarff in Upper Donside.

On 5 June, we have our first 7am start of the program for the 21-mile walk from Linn of Dee through Glen Tilt to Blair Atholl.

On 19 June, we head north to Grantown-on-Spey to cross the moors to the north to Lochindorb with its island castle, finishing at Dava Moor.

We head south again to Blair Atholl on 3 July on another 7am departure for circular walks in the hills and glens between Tilt and Bruar.

We are back to home territory on 17 July for circular walks and climbs in the Glen Muick area.

On 31 July, another 7am start takes us to Glen Feshie for walks to Loch an Eilein in Rothiemurchus with the possibility of climbing Braeriach.

Perthshire is our objective on 14 August for crossings from Glen Brerachan beyond Kirkmichael to Glen Girnaig by Ben Vuirich or Ben Vrackie, finishing near Killiecrankie.

Linn of Dee is the venue on 28 August for various walks in the Glen Derry and Glen Dee area.

On 11 September, we head for Spittal of Glenshee, where there are several walk options.

Invermark in Glen Esk is the venue on 25 September where we have a choice of climbing Mount Keen and Braid Cairn, or Muckle Cairn in Glen Lee, or a circular walk via Loch Lee and Falls of Unich.

On 9 October, we head for Bithnie on Donside beyond Alford to climb Coiliochbhar and Pressendye, finishing at Tarland.

We are back in Deeside on 23 October to walk from Pass of Ballater over Peter's Hill to Milton of Tullich.

Bill

Fiona's Alpine Trek Diary - July 2004

1/7/04 Aberdeen - Paris

A minibus took Alan, Arlene, Graham, Linda, Willie and me to the airport. Flights to Luton and Paris were on time, and we took the Metro to Gare de Lyon to buy our TGV rail tickets for the next day. We made our way to Hôtel Lux, showered, changed and proceeded to a pub for a pint. That evening, we ate pizza (I had Escalope Milanese) at an Italian restaurant, before splitting up, the boys to watch Euro 2004 football, the girls to take a short walk to another pub for hot chocolate, chocolate cake (Arlene), and brandy (Fiona). We picked up the lads and returned to our hotel for bed.

2/7/04 Paris - Refuge de l'Orgère

A 5.30am start from the hotel and a scenic rail journey got us to Modane at 12.04pm. The sun blazed down. We bought necessities at the supermarket, changed travellers' cheques and had a *croque-monsieur* (cheese and ham toastie) lunch before a steep climb out of the village. It took three hours to reach the refuge at 7000ft, where we got bunks for the night. 7.00pm dinner was soup & bread, chops & potato gratin, green salad with cheese, crème caramel, and three litres of wine. We were still drinking at 9.50pm - no hedgehog spotting that night!

3/7/04 Refuge de l'Orgère - Refuge de Plan Sec

After 7.30am breakfast, we left at 9.00am with not a cloud in the sky. Soon, a full alpine panorama of spectacular scenery appeared, with marmots at Plan d'Aval and Plan d'Armont. At 3.20pm, we reached Refuge de Plan Sec at 7644ft, and were given a sleeping platform - one large bed, an interesting night to come! We relaxed in the sun with a drink, sheltering from a cool wind. The "hot" showers were timed with pre-paid tokens, and my, you had to be quick. 6.30pm dinner was soup, chicken, ratatouille & couscous, salad, lemon meringue and wine. Some of us went for a short walk before sampling a local 51%-proof juniper-berry spirit at the bar, and were last in bed. I slept till the toilet beckoned at 5.00am. The moon shone in a starry sky, lighting up the mountains - beautiful!

4/7/04 Refuge de Plan Sec - Refuge l'Arpont

We slept well, breakfasted at 7.30am, and left at 8.50am under blue skies. We traversed the valley amid lovely scenery below the spectacularly pointed Dent Parrachée. We saw chamois on the snowfields. The path ahead was narrow across a

steep snowfield, and we lunched at a viewpoint before descending across a fast flowing stream to some ruined crofts in blistering heat. Our path crossed under several cascades before a last steep climb to reach Refuge l'Arpont at 3.10pm. We had a drink in the sun, watching marmots play nearby. Nobody took up the offer of the hole-in-the-floor toilets and freezing cold showers. 7.00pm dinner was pea & ham soup, duck legs, macaroni, local cheese, and peaches and cream. The visitors' book had a great sketch of someone wearing gaiters in the toilet - now I knew why we brought them!

5/7/04 Refuge l'Arpont - Refuge Plan du Lac

Willie's alarm went off at 6.30am, waking everyone but Willie. After 7.30am breakfast, we left at 8.55am and soon it was raining heavily. However, the sun re-appeared and we saw beautiful long-horned ibex (*Bouquetins*) standing on the skyline below the glacier. Our route descended several tricky steep snowfields before lunch below the massive Vanoise Glacier. We continued through pastures of alpine flowers, but had to shelter from a hailstorm in a disused tin-roofed barn. In ten minutes, the hailstorm ceased, the sun re-emerged in full strength, and we reached Refuge Plan du Lac at 3.00pm. This was a lovely refurbished refuge with hot showers and a bunk-bed dorm with ceiling lights. During a violent thunderstorm, we watched Linda and Willie's washing blow off the drying line and they got wet retrieving their smalls. After aperitifs, 7.00pm dinner consisted of pea & ham soup, chicken legs, sausages, couscous, vegetables in tomato sauce, and chocolate crêpes. We polished off a few litres of wine, going to bed at midnight. Willie fell down when he tried to stand up - a great night!

6/7/04 Refuge Plan du Lac - Refuge Vallonbrun

8.00am breakfast was heartily devoured before 9.10am departure across Plan du Lac, another lovely day. We descended steeply towards the Maurienne Valley, a 1000ft zigzag drop through a beautiful natural alpine rock garden, the colours magnificent and the species almost uncountable. We passed Refuge du Cuchet perched on the edge of a cliff at 7087ft overlooking the valley floor before another hard slog contouring the hillside high above the adjacent Doron Valley. We had afternoon tea at a narrow corner in the path, spotted a fox, and Arlene almost stepped on a marmot. We descended from this exposed path through meadows of coloured flowers with the idyllic sound of cowbells, and reached Refuge du

Vallonbrun at 3.20pm as heavy rain started. We had individual bunks, but only ten seconds of hot water in the showers. 7.00pm dinner was soup, bread, chicken & mushrooms, vegetable rice, salad, cheese and cake, plus wine.

7/7/04 Refuge Vallonbrun - Bonneval-Sur-Arc

After 8.20am breakfast, we departed in light rain. This was an easy day preceding a tough one. We walked all day along valley pastures full of flowers. Linda was tired from not sleeping well. We arrived at Bonneval-sur-Arc at 2.45pm, but could not access our accommodation, Auberge d'Oul, till 4.00pm. While Linda rested at the market square with our rucksacks, we explored the quaint medieval village, then relaxed for an hour with refreshments in a café-bar till our gîte opened. We were all housed in the same dorm. 7.30pm dinner was salad, Parma ham, cheese, pizza or quiche, ravioli, potatoes, ham, cheese, and a dessert of apricot tart and fruit. The meal was huge, but lovely! A walk after dinner ended in a pub (where else!) for wine, hot chocolate, brandy and genepi, the local liqueur, before bed.

8/7/04 Bonneval-sur-Arc - Val d'Isère

An early breakfast of hot chocolate or coffee, with almond bread and honey and jam saw us leave at 9.00am under overcast skies, climbing steeply out of Bonneval. We sheltered under a bridge as it rained heavily for 30 minutes. Our steep route through the Lentra Valley climbed alongside a triple cascading waterfall high above the valley floor, sheltering from rain again after crossing a steeply inclined snow bridge. Our final climb to Col de l'Iseran, the highest road pass in Europe, was steep and hard. Linda's legs were shot as we reached the top for lunch at a refuge. The trail descended steeply to Val d'Isère through a series of high permanent snowfields and ski runs. We arrived amid blue skies as the sun re-appeared. We had a refreshing drink at a bar before finding our accommodation. We bathed or showered, and hit the town, meeting for dinner in a local restaurant, and staggered home after a great night out.

9/7/04 Val d'Isère - Refuge de la Leisse

After 7.00am breakfast, Arlene got painkillers and anti-inflammatory gel from the local pharmacy for a sore knee. We left at 10.15am in rain and climbed over Col de Tovière towards Tignes du Lac at 7200ft. Blue skies and sunshine soon re-appeared and we were in high spirits as we lunched at Tignes Val Claret. We continued to Col de la

Fresse and climbed through tough-going permanent snowfields to the impressive 9,000ft Col de la Leisse. Here, we were in a magical world of towering peaks, glaciers and snowfields. From the col, we had glorious views north to snowy Mont Blanc. The sun was very intense, and Linda plastered herself in factor-sixty sun block to become the white faced *Yeti Henderson*. We traversed the valley below the towering peaks and glaciers of the 12,000ft Grand Motte, through several snowfields and lakes to reach Refuge de la Leisse at 5.45pm. We had a lovely dinner of vegetable soup, bread, spaghetti, veal stew and olives, cheese, then baked apple and wine. The toilets were mega-basic hole-in-the-ground jobs, with the wind blowing where you do not want the wind to blow. It was freezing as we dived into bed at 10.00pm.

10/07/04 Refuge de la Leisse - Pralognan

At 6.00am, the wind was gusting over a dusting of snow. We ate a hearty breakfast of coffee, hot chocolate, tea, superb homemade apricot jam and baguettes. We kitted up and descended to the valley from our refuge perched on the col. We crossed torrents and snowfields to the Croie-Vie bridge and climbed steeply to a memorial to two soldiers who perished here in the mountains. Arlene spotted ibex soon after traversing a steep ice wall, before our route took us over stepping-stones and moraines to lunch at Lac Rond, where a friendly marmot approached Willie. We visited the Col de la Vanoise refuge, then descended many snowfields near Lac Long with the towering spire of Aiguille de la Vanoise on our left and superb views behind of the glaciers of the Grande Casse Massif, highest in Savoy. The views improved hourly as we descended moraine to cross Lac de Vaches on a boulevard of huge stepping-stones. A steep descent took us to Refuge de Barmettes for afternoon refreshment. We continued through forest and tumbling cascades to Pralognan-la-Vanoise, capital of Vanoise *département*, a beautiful town overlooked by towering mountains on all sides. The tourist information office directed us to the delightful Gîte le Roc Blanc owned by Cathy and Philippe Lauron, who were delighted to meet Scots. After exploring the village, we returned for a drink. Dinner was egg Mornay, garlic sausages, pasta bake, and cheesecake, a feed you would not believe.

11/07/04 Pralognan - Refuge Peclet-Polset

As it was 4.5 hrs to the next refuge, we breakfasted late at 8.00am on French bread,

coffee and orange juice. The weather was fine as we left Pralognan at 10.30am on a slow ascent up the valley towards our next refuge. We lunched by the river at Les Prioux and steadily climbed a good path to reach the luxurious Refuge de Peclet-Poset at 8115ft, at 3.45pm. Arlene, Graham, Alan & I took a short walk up to Lac Blanc, but it started to snow and we returned for drinks watching snow fall outside the bar window. 7.00pm dinner was lentil soup, pork chop with grainy mustard sauce, macaroni, cheese, fromage frais with wild berries, apple tart, wine and genepi. Willie had a third genepi; I think he likes the stuff!

12/07/04 Refuge Peclet-Poset - Modane

It snowed overnight. We breakfasted at 7.00am, departing at 7.50am into a white landscape more like winter than mid-summer. We climbed to Col de Chavière, at 9173ft the highest of the entire trek. The steep, narrow path to the col covered in slippery snow and ice was very hard going. Linda and I were quite scared and got stuck at one point, but Alan came to help us. Arlene and Graham waited for us in the cloud at a very exposed arête-type col, which you virtually stepped over to gain the downward side. Freezing fog hurried us to descend to easier ground. Cloud cleared revealing the nasty jagged skyline we had just crossed. I had not liked that bit at all, but next was a moderate descent on a snow-free path. *En route*, we photographed ibex unafraid of human presence. At ten, the sun re-appeared and we took early elevenses. We said *au revoir* to some French walkers we met in the refuge last night, who had crossed the high col before us. We made a long descent from snowfields to the safety of the valley floor, returning to Modane, our trek's start point, at 1.15pm. We stopped at a roadside pub for two drinks to celebrate completing the Tour de la Vanoise - do we need an excuse? Then we went to Refuge la Sapinière on the outskirts of Modane and polished off four bottles of wine. Arlene and I went to bed, while the others went to a pizza restaurant in Modane and returned at 9.00pm, waking us. The two of us walked to a Modane restaurant, returning at 10.30pm to find the others asleep. We all slept soundly.

13/07/04 Modane - Paris

After 7.00am breakfast, we made our way to the TGV station. The train was ten minutes late, arriving in Paris about 2.00pm. After returning to Hôtel Lux, we wandered round Paris, eventually meeting up at an Italian restaurant for dinner.

14/07/04 Paris - Aberdeen

After breakfast on our last day, we made our way across Paris to the airport. Graham did his calculations and we paid him for the hotel, restaurant, and such. He did a great job in organizing this trip. We had a sandwich and a glass of wine in the departure lounge as our flight was delayed till 3.45pm. Our flights to Aberdeen via Luton went without further hitch, and the minibus at Dyce took us to our respective homes. After a welcome bath, Alan & I relaxed with a whisky and ginger, reflecting on a very interesting holiday.
 Fiona Wallace

Should we Forget the Mither Tongue?

Many of our outings involve coastal walks around the North-East's Doric areas, but do we all understand the lingo if we meet locals in the chip-shop, pub, newsagent, or on the walk?

Below is a selected glossary of Doric terms that may interest Newsletter readers. Graham

ahint han behind hand, late, after the event
 aise ease
 babbies babies
 barra barrow
 bide stay, reside
 biggin cottage - a building
 birl twirl around
 boolie moo speaking posh
 bowff to cough
 chumley chimney
 clarty dirty, sticky, smeared
 cloggies blocks of wood for the fire
 cowl to pour out, knock over
 deave annoy with noise or talk
 dicht wipe
 dirl vibrate
 dowp buttocks
 driech dreary - bleak
 dub muddy puddle
 dwam daydream
 een eyes
 fash to trouble, bother
 feel, fuil a fool, daft
 fool foul, dirty
 foosty fusty, mouldy
 forfochen exhausted with effort
 fustle whistle
 foo drunk
 gar to cause (something to be done)
 girn whine, grumble
 graip iron-pronged fork in gardening
 guff strong smell

gyads sake .. for God's sake (expression of disgust)
 haar a raw sea mist
 hackit cracked skin due to cold or exposure
 hash/hasch rush about in a confused way
 haver, haiver to talk nonsense
 hinner hinder
 hing hang
 howk dig
 hunnel handle
 hunner hundred
 ill-tricket mischievous
 jimmies gym shoes
 keekin peeping
 kinlin kindling or finely chopped wood
 maik old halfpenny
 moo mouth
 nippit clothing too short or tight
 orra awful, rough, disreputable
 pech puff, pant, gasp for breath
 pint paint
 pleiter, plowter work messily
 poke, pyock, pyockie bag or pouch
 quine girl or woman
 raxed wrenched or overstrained
 redd to clear out
 roosty rusty
 sark shirt
 scanner to bore, disgust
 sheen shoes
 skirlin screaming
 steen stone
 stiter, stotter stumble, stagger
 stue dust
 swither to hesitate, dither
 tacketts hobnails for soles of boots
 wabbit exhausted, feeble
 wan one
 wheesht, whisht call for silence
 wame, wyme, wymie belly, womb
 yont beyond

Some Definitions

Abseil v. To use a second line of defence as a first means of retreat. n. A descent that begins slowly at first but suddenly accelerates at 32ft per sec per sec.

Avalanche Nature's flea powder.

Backpacker One who, like a snail, carries his home on his back, proceeding at a similar pace

Ben Nevis A mountain in Scotland which would, it has been pointed out, have a permanent ice cap if it were 1000ft higher. Other facts about Ben Nevis are that if it were 25000ft higher, it would be higher than Everest, if it were further north than Narvik it would be inside the Arctic Circle

and if it were made of gold it would be extremely valuable.

Biodegradable An adjective you apply to all the rubbish you do not fancy taking home with you.

Bivvy Bag A plastic bag in which every hill-walker believes he could pass a comfortable night on a windswept mountain but which no earthly inducement would persuade him to test in his back garden.

Bothy A hostel for destitute rats.

British Mountaineering Council A body which speaks for all English mountaineers including the many thousands who have no affiliation to it.

Camper One who showers while he sleeps.

Conservation Preserving the countryside for you to enjoy by discouraging your neighbour from visiting it.

Crevasse A mountain meat safe.

Cross-country Skier One who finds downhill skiing artificial and spends his time racing round and round a prepared groove in a field.

Deadman A belay device that has a habit of becoming plural.

Diabolic Lexicographer A harmless drudge who has mistaken cynicism for wit.

Downhill Skier An actor in a theatre of snow awaiting his queue.

Emergency Rations What you ate for lunch.

Ethics Complicated scruples about tying on, exhibited by those who have none about signing on.

Female Rock Climber Poppet on a string.

First-Aid Kit A packet of sticking plasters to be used for dealing with serious injury.

Hypothermia 1. A dangerous condition brought about by exposure to the elements and for which the only cure is gradual warming to be achieved by placing the victim in a sleeping bag. 2. A dangerous condition brought about by exposure to the elements and for which the only cure is rapid heating to be achieved by dunking the victim fully clothed in a hot bath. [NB Number two is WRONG! - Ed.]

Ice Axe A winter walking and climbing aid which is not transferred from rucksack to hand before the owner has had his first fall of the day.

Mountain Leader Certificate A means of providing outdoor instructors with work.

Munro A point in Scotland that has been a) declared to be above 3000 feet by the Ordnance Survey and b) declared a Munro by the editors of Munro's Tables.

Munroist A being with the body of a rambler and the soul of a philatelist.

Naismith's Rule A formula for calculating time to reach an objective which may be easily memorised

as: Allow 5 minutes and 11 seconds for every 1000 ells travelled and 10.8 seconds for every fathom of ascent.

Pennine Way A ditch stretching from Derbyshire to Scotland.

Red Rope A club for those who climb to five-year plans.

Rock Climber A nature-loving free spirit who, except for cleaning off crags, daubing cliffs with chalk and disturbing nesting birds, causes no damage to the environment in which he moves.

Scottish Ski Resort An excellent place for a winter holiday - unless there is an R in the month.

Scotland A country which, like Switzerland and Nepal is full of mountains, unlike England, which only has four (see *Munro*).

Ski-Lift A means of elevating a fool above his station.

Snowdon A railway station in Wales.

SNSC Scottish National Ski Council. The committee for developing Lurcher's Gully.

Weather Forecast Something that does not apply above 2000 feet.

West Highland Way A Scottish paper trail.

Yeti An ugly hairy monster who spends his life in the mountains because he has nothing better to do. (See *Mountaineer*.)

Youth Hostel A simple form of accommodation used by those who were young in the 1950s.

A POEM

Next time you're out on the hills with your tent and stove, peeling potatoes for the pot, consider these words of a local poet [which seem to fit the tune of *Fittie Folk*, *Kittie Folk* or some of Gilbert & Sullivan's songs - Ed.]

The Humble Tattie

Noo, some nicht fin yer idle, an' ye've nithin else t' dee,

Jist ponder on the tattie, and its versatility,
For its been a staple diet throu a history byeuk o' waars,

An its blessed wi mair equations than a chokit kist-o-draa'rs!

Tatties for yer braakfist, yer denner an yer tay,
Ther's nithin' wrang wi tatties at ony time o' day,
Ca them spud, or potato, or even pomme-de-terre,
A diet's nae a diet unless the humble tattie's there!

There's battered eens, buttered eens, biled an
barbecued,
Chippit eens, an chappet eens, tho I've never tried
them stewed!

There's stovies an ther's shepherd's pie tae gar
yer belly sag,

An even in a pyokie wi a wee blue bag!

Fried eens, frittered eens, and some that hae a
been,

Gey ill-pared eens wi half-a-dizzen een,

Bakit lads, cakit lads, and some wi jackets tee

An if yer wife's like me' ye'll hae tatties throu i'
bree.

There's pink eens, an yalla eens, an reed, fite an
blue,

An files ye'll get a mongrel o a questionable hue,

Fresh eens, frozen eens, an tatties big an' sma',

An some that, fin ye hole them, ye get nithin there
bit sha'!

Mealy lads, and soapy lads, and some that's in-a-
tween,

Late lads for liftin' fin the early eens are deen,

Aul wizzent sprookit eens t' gie the soo a feed,

An a' the little tottems that are kept back for
seed!

There's Golden Wonder, Craigneil, as weel as
Sharp's Express,

An poodert eens cae'd *Smash* that they ait in
ooter-space,

Thin skinned Cypress eens t' get ye throu the
spring

An muckle sappy English eens ye gey near need t'
wring!

Lang lads, roon lads, an kidney shaped as weel,

An ither lads turnin' green wi stickin' oot the dreel,

Canary eens, an hairy eens, an some thats black wi
blight,

An ivery een the better o a twa three load o
(dung!)

Ther's Kerr's Pink, British Queen, as weel as Duke
o' York

An ither brands fit for makin' piggies intae pork,

An noo there's Great British eens the market for
t' tak,

An ithers that are champion for soup t'mak ye
swaak!

So here's t' the tattie, an lang may they swaal,

Herren wi the new eens, an size wi the aul,

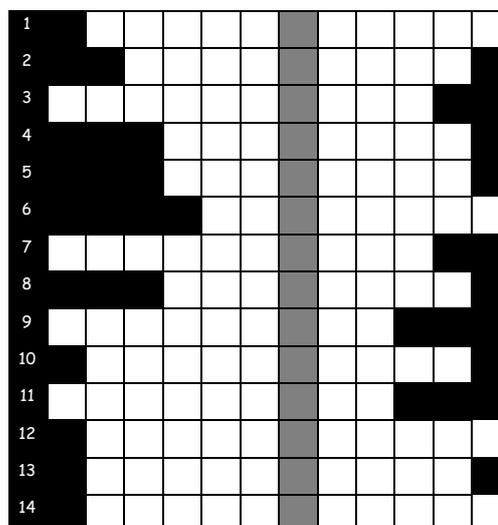
The workin' man's caviare, steamin' fae the pot'

There's nae a veg that's growin', bit the tattie
beats the lot!

Anon.

CROSSWORD

Answer the 14 clues below to reveal a local
landmark in the grey shaded area Graham



1. Once famous for its linen industry, but now better known for its chipper.
2. *The Blue Toon*.
3. Established in 1786, near Keith, it regards itself as the oldest Highland distillery.
4. This castle, near Turriff, was the home of the Hay family for 700 years.
5. Famous for the vitrified fort on its summit.
6. Rumoured to have been the deepest man-made hole in Europe.
7. *Steenhive*.
8. Western terminus of the Deeside Line.
9. Flows into the North Sea at Peterhead.
10. See the Bow Fiddle Rock here.
11. Buckie's local distillery.
12. Known in Grampian as *Gamrie*.
13. 7km south of Alford, this castle was completed in 1626.
14. Home of Scotland's Royal Naval Air Station.

AUTUMN CROSSWORD SOLUTION

We had to find the answers to the 12 clues below to reveal a local landmark in the shaded column

1. *Green Hill* between the Glen Shee and Glen Tilt areas.
2. This Cairngorm Munro translates as *Hill of the Rowan*
3. *Blue Hill of Derry*
4. *Hoof or Claw Hill* in Knoydart
5. Big area of Monroes southwest of Roybridge
6. *Hill of the Mastiff* (Cairngorms)
7. Named after Sheriff Alexander Nicolson who made the first recorded ascent in 1873 (Skye area).
8. *Hill of the Ptarmigans* (Perthshire hills)
9. *Hill of the Boar* (Cairngorms)
10. Gaelic translation means *Thorn Bush* or *Bramble* (Angus Glens)
11. Translates as *Brindled Greyish Upper Part* (Cairngorms)
12. Gaelic for *Awesome Hill* (Northwest Highlands)

1				G	L	A	S	T	U	L	A	I	C	H	E	A	N		
2	B	E	I	N	N	A	C	H	A	O	R	A	I	N	N				
3						D	E	R	R	Y	C	A	I	R	N	G	O	R	M
4				L	A	D	H	A	R	B	H	E	I	N	N				
5						G	R	E	Y	C	O	R	R	I	E	S			
6				B	E	I	N	N	B	H	R	O	T	A	I	N			
7				S	G	U	R	R	A	L	A	S	D	A	I	R			
8	M	E	A	L	L	N	A	N	T	A	R	M	A	C	H	A	N		
9				C	A	R	N	A	N	T	U	I	R	C					
10								D	R	I	E	S	H						
11						B	R	A	E	R	I	A	C	H					
12						B	E	N	W	Y	V	I	S						