



Cioch Mountaineering Club (Dunfermline)

Established 1988 – 25th Anniversary year

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Meet Report: Morvich Outdoor Centre, Kintail, 14th / 15th June

Contributions from Neil Anderson, Brian Mitchell and Richard Christie

The complete list of attendees at Morvich was; Michelle & Jim Donald, Brian M & Jim Davidson, Steve & Mags, Richard, Iain Hay, Cath & Kenny, Lorna, Sam, Sharon, Martin & Neil, Olly & John R, David Currie. Richard gratefully accepted the offer of a lift with Steve and Mags allowing him a rest from driving after his trip down to North Wales for cycling and walking the previous weekend. Unfortunately the forecast weather for Kintail was nowhere near as good as it had been in Wales and as a precursor the trio just missed a heavy cloud burst as they left Gowkhall. They were then greeted by a similar shower as they drew up at the Outdoor Centre after an otherwise dry and quick drive up. Michelle and Jim Donald had been the first to arrive after a quick walk up the Corbett Am Bathach opposite the Cluanie Inn. The Centre was all locked up when they arrived so they waited a while.... eventually they gave up and found that there was an open window round the back. The Ranger turned up around an hour later and seemed un-phased when they explained their 'forced' entry. The Centre is well equipped with plenty of showers, good bunk beds, an ample seating area and spacious kitchen and dining area.

Brian M starts off the story of Saturday: "Don't believe the forecast!"

The plan was laid in advance; Jim Davison and I would have a walk along the South Glen Shiel ridge. It would be quite a long day and we would have to get back to Dunfermline early on the Sunday because of the Charity abseil off the Forth Bridge I was signed up for.



However the weather forecast was really, really bad for the weekend and especially the Saturday. It was meant to be torrential rain the whole day, so the plan was commuted to Beinn Fhada, with a late start. Sam and Martin liked the suggestion so we were a party of 4. Ken and Cath also liked the idea, but would set off early with Ken perhaps going for the 2. The dawn broke, it was cloudy, but no rain - it must be on its way. At the last minute Dave Currie decided it was an attractive idea, so we were now a party of 5 and then 6 when Lorna also joined in. We set off at 10.00am and the weather was ok. There were a few showers in the first hour, but the day got better and better, and sunnier and sunnier. Not being in any hurry the chat and banter was hilarious, and by

2.00pm we had met up with Cath and Ken on the summit and we were all basking in brilliant sunshine. There was then a parting of the ways with Cath opting to head back to Morvich via the stalkers path. Ken, Jim and Lorna decided to go for A' Glias-bheinn. The weather being so good and dry, Dave got to work on Sam and persuaded her to come with us and we would return via the ridge. We managed to get past the "bad step" just before the heavens opened and we got a real soaking, then it all cleared up again and we got back to Morvich in brilliant sunshine having had a great day with superb company and a lot of laughs - that's what life's about.

Morvich has got to be one of the best meet venues. The centre is well equipped, and ticks all the boxes not to



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mention the 24 munros in the immediate area. We also know that the fire alarm works..... Just as a matter of interest the Abseil went really well and was a real carnival affair, especially with big Jim Leishman in our team. I want to thank the Club members who supported the causes. I was able to raise £312 between the Office and the Club.

Neil takes up the story as follows

On Saturday, Neil dropped his Mondeo off near the old 1719 battlefield in Glen Shiel and he and Sharon hitched a lift to the Cluanie Inn with Iain Hay. Sharon and Neil set off quickly around 10am on the Cluanie Lodge track heading south for Creag a'Mhaim aiming to complete all 7 Munros between Cluanie and the battlefield with Iain deciding on a more gentle pace aiming to bag the Creag a'Mhaim and Druim Shionnach before returning to Cluanie. Despite the odd drip, the morning showers came to nothing, there wasn't much of a breeze and a pleasant traverse west over the best part of the ridge was experienced. The one or two minor scrambly bits on this ridge are relatively straight forward in good conditions and posed no resistance to steady progress. Unfortunately as the afternoon wore on weather conditions deteriorated, with initially hail stones around 4:30 then heavy rain. By this time Neil and Sharon had bagged number 6 (Sgurr an Lochain), and the decision was taken to leave number 7 (Creag nan Damh) for better conditions on another day. After by-passing Sgurr Beag, the drop off into the upper region of Am Froach-choire posed a bit of a challenge initially, being without distinct path and having lots of crags (not easily seen from above) to be avoided. Lower in the coire, below 450m, great views of the high waterfall were experienced and a distinct path appeared. After a horrid muddy steep final descent through the trees, the welcome site of a waiting Mondeo was appreciated in the layby no more than 150m from the exit from the trees. Iain successfully completed his 2 Munros and was back at Morvich long before Sharon and Neil (and probably before the worst of the rain).



Surprisingly, the weather improved enough later in the evening and after only one sounding of the Centre fire alarm, Sam eventually got her barbeque fired up outside the front door. Despite the unwelcome attention of a few persistent midges, Sam produced a BBQ feast for 4 people that eventually had to be finished off with the help of another 2



hovering club members (when you need help, Cioch members can be relied on to volunteer).

Having bagged the South Shiel Ridge on their last visit to Morvich, Steve and Mags headed for the north side of the valley parking at the East end of the Five Sisters, the target for the day however were the Brothers rather than the Sisters. They climbed steeply up to Bealach an Lapain and then turned right towards Saileag. Keeping a wary eye on the showers they could see on some of the surrounding hills they pressed on over Sgurr a' Bhealaich Dheirg to Aonach Meadhoin. Still dry and feeling ok they then headed north and out to Ciste Dhubh – all [?] that remained to do was walk down the valley to Cluanie Inn and the few miles down the road to the car. Luck was definitely on their side on Saturday – not only did they miss the rain which caught a few others later in the afternoon, they came across a familiar figure in the car park of the Inn. Iain Hay was just in the process of taking his boots off after his successful walk over the two Easterly munros of the South Shiel Ridge. Iain easily wins the helpful taxi award for the weekend.



Not everyone had munros on their mind for Saturday. Michelle, Jim Donald and Richard opted for a walk up the stalkers path to Bealach an Sgairne between A' Glias-bheinn and Beinn Fhada. If the cloud was down the plan was for a low level walk circumnavigating A' Glias-bheinn, if the

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weather was good they would climb the Corbett, Sgurr Gaorsaic. It looked like the low level option would prevail when it started to rain half an hour into the walk however no sooner had the waterproofs been dug out of the rucksacks and put on the rain stopped and the weather gradually improved to a lovely sunny day. They caught up with Cath and Ken as they took a rest just before the stalker's path split to lead into Coire an Sgaime. There were good views up Gleann Gniomhaidh as the trio dropped down from the bealach to skirt round the south end of Loch a' Bhealaich following the excellent stalker's path all the way. Shortly after passing the loch it was time to leave the path and they followed a line of fence posts up steepish grass slopes almost all the way to the top of Sgurr Gaorsaic. The rock outcrop at the summit provided some shelter from the cool breeze as they stopped for a quick bite of lunch and to admire the views all around. They then retraced their steps back to Morvich arriving back around 15:30 in plenty of time to shower, head for the pub or just chill – all thankful that they were back well before the heavens opened shortly after 16:00. Richard had just finished his coffee when the front door opened and Jim Davidson & Lorna entered doing excellent impressions of drowned rats and leaving a substantial puddle on the tile floor. They had decided to give A' Glias-bheinn a miss as the clouds started to darken when they got to the bealach but unfortunately they still got caught. Ken persevered and, although he also got soaked, he was chuffed to bag his second munro of the day.



Olly and John decided to climb the Forcan Ridge and enjoyed a good day – stopping along the way to chat to a fellow walker on the ridge. They were impressed to learn that he had travelled up from London on the sleeper and then caught the bus from Inverness to Glen Sheil with the intension of spending two days making his way over the South Sheil munros before catching the bus / sleeper back in time to go straight to work on Monday morning. He was very appreciative that John and Olly had stopped to check he was ok as the following email indicates:



Hi, thought you might like a couple of amateur photos of Ollie and John after the Forcan Ridge and before reaching the Saddle summit. Met up with them just before the point of no return on the ridge and I really appreciated them making time to ensure a solo walker was OK. Just to let them know, I didn't continue to the South Shiel ridge, having looked at the route from Sgurr na Sgine I decided that 3/4 miles over rough ground was not a sensible option given the way my legs (knees) had reacted to their 1st outing of the year and that the weather was deteriorating . I left via Faochag and camped at low level cursing midges!!

*My thanks to them both
Steve MacEwan*

It was really good of Steve to take the time to email and send photos.

Most chose to self-cater on the Saturday night but Steve, Mags and Richard opted to go out to the 'Jack-o-bite'. The restaurant has been redecorated since their last visit and has shrunk slightly to make way for two self-catering apartments which were being finished off on the end of the building. The food was very good and it was nice to get a bit of a different atmosphere.

As Brian indicates above, he and his travelling companion Jim Davidson were the first to depart on the Sunday morning since Brian had a date with the Forth Rail Bridge and an abseil rope that afternoon. Everyone else headed off in due course – it is not known if the majority did anything on the Sunday. Steve, Mags and Richard decided to stop off at Loch Lochy on the way down the road so that Mags could have another go at bagging Sron a' Choire Ghairbh. Although she had successfully climbed its neighbour, Meall Coire Lochain some time ago, winter weather had forced retreat on three previous occasions. The cloud cover was thicker than on Saturday but it was just clear of the tops and there was no threat of rain as they walked along the forestry road – this was after Richard insisted they should park about half a mile further away than they really needed to! The



steep path up from the forest track proved a bit of a pain for Mags as her boots decided to play havoc with her heels - so a quick stop to apply some Compeed was required. The rest of the climb was uneventful until they reached the summit cairn when Richard had an 'it's a really small world moment'. There were two guys at the summit just finishing a bite to eat and as Richard approached he recognised one of them from his recent trip to Tibet. David Anderson had – to quote David – followed Richard's back side all the way up the climb to Everest North Col – not the prettiest of views to follow! They both thought it was really funny that they should meet again so soon on the top of a munro - a few thousand miles away from Delhi airport where they had last said good-by. The five chatted as they walked back down the stalker's zig zag path before parting when Stev, Mags and Richard stopped for their lunch.



It's a small world –

Left Tibet: 6600m at the base of the climb to Everest North Col

Right Scotland: 610m at the bealach between Meall Coire Lochain and Sron a' Choire Ghairbh



[Cioch 25: The Darwins](#)

Nominations are now being accepted for Cioch's 1st Darwin awards.

Entries are invited in the following categories:

- Most geographically challenged award
- Most politically incorrect
- Worse for wear
- Most fashionable faux pas
- Most disastrous meal

Both photographs and stories will be considered for each category and entries should be submit between now and 31st October 2013 to Sharon Rankin. Winners will be announced at the Christmas meet.

[Cioch 25: The Tales](#)

To mark the 25th anniversary we are keen to put together a selection of tales and anecdotes (factual and not so factual!) from down the years. If you have any such stories we'd love to hear them, be they in prose or poetry. Entries should be no longer than 1000 words. All stories submit will be published in a one-off special edition newsletter in Dec.

All entrants should be submitted, electronically if possible please, to Richard Christie between now and 31st October 2013, a small prize will be available for the best overall tale.

2013 Meet Dates

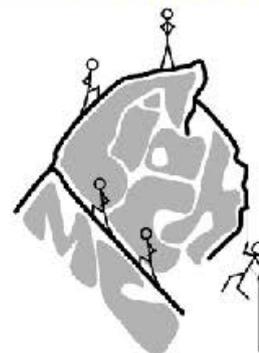
July	12 th / 13 th	Strawberry Cottage, Glen Affric
July	26 th / 27 th	Lake District (extra meet)
Aug	9 th / 10 th	Inver Croft, Achnasheen
Aug	24th	BBQ, Dunfermline – see flyer
Sept	6 th / 7 th	Glenbrittle Memorial Hut, Skye
Oct	4 th / 5 th	Muir of Inverey, Braemar
Nov	1 st / 2 nd	Mill Cottage, Feshiebridge
Dec	TBC	Christmas Meet, tbc

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Cioch Mountaineering Club

25th Anniversary Celebrations

Reunion BBQ



As part of the Cioch's 25th Anniversary celebrations we are holding a Reunion BBQ. The BBQ offers the perfect opportunity for past and present members to celebrate this event together.

WHEN Saturday afternoon 24 August 2013, from around 3 pm.

VENUE Beer garden at the Watering Hole Pub, New Row, Dunfermline

CATERING BBQ food and a glass of wine will be provided. All other drinks must be purchased at the bar.

There are good parking facilities and should it rain, the event will be hosted indoors.

We hope that as many members as possible from over the last 25 years will attend, especially those who have received Munro, or other completion awards.

Those attending on the day and who are recipients of Cioch honours will be included in a group photo and may find themselves in the Dunfermline Press.

The Cioch Committee would like to extend a very warm welcome to this event and we look forward to seeing as many folks as possible on the day.

For catering purposes please RSVP by the end of July 2013:

By email: maureen.ramage@fife.gov.uk
mags.gray@edinburghcollege.ac.uk

The Cioch Committee

www.cioch.co.uk