



Cioch Mountaineering Club (Dunfermline)

Established 1988 – 25th Anniversary year

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Meet Report #1 – Lagangarbh, Glencoe, 1st / 2nd March 2013

The meet happened – indications are that there was a bit of a mass assault on Sgor na h-Ulaidh but no one actually made it to the top.

Meet Report #2 - Clan Cioch Gathering, Blair Atholl, 15th / 17th March 2013 by Richard Christie

This was the second main event of the Cioch 25 celebrations to be organized by the sub-committee with most of the plaudits for a great weekend going to Jim Donald. Jim came up with the initial idea of going to the Atholl Arms Hotel and did the liaising with the hotel staff. The plans for the weekend went through a number of iterations which were narrowed down to: accommodation on the Friday and Saturday nights, a scone 'high tea' on the Saturday afternoon, evening meal on the Saturday night, rounded off with dancing to a ceilidh band. Thanks to support from the main committee the cost of the Saturday meal and the ceilidh band were covered out of club funds leaving attendees to pay £65 for the two nights B & B.



Forty one club members, partners and friends attended the celebrations with thirty eight staying both nights and Olly, John Robertson and Iain Hay joining for the meal and staying the Saturday night. Some, such as Wattie and Maureen, were able to travel up during the day on Friday and spend some time exploring Blair Atholl. However since it was still 'pre-season' not much was open, fortunately afternoon tea and scones were available at the hotel. With Blair Atholl not being too far from home, most people were able to arrive in plenty of time to have a bar meal in the Bothy Bar. The locals were soon outnumbered by groups of Cioch members happily being fed and watered. Everyone Richard checked with thought the bar food was very good – he can recommend the Chicken Fajitas although one more wrap would have been good to match the sizable quantity of chicken. It was good to see some not so familiar faces in attendance with Graham and Lorna Pascall and Reg Turk

and his partner Teresa joining in the free flowing conversations. Graham is a partner in Condie & Co and has been kindly auditing the annual club accounts for some sixteen years. Reg is an old club member who Richard remembers from around the time he joined the club in the early nineties – in fact they can both remember sharing one of the chalets on the first Christmas Meet Richard attended and climbing Beinn Sgulaird in deep snow along with another previous club member Colin Semple.

Most surfaced reasonably early on Saturday morning and enjoyed a filling breakfast (although the plates were hot, the food itself could have been slightly hotter). Steve and Mags were slightly later down to breakfast – possibly as a result of Steve having been 'on the wagon' since New Year and there had been a slight derailment on the Friday evening. The next big decision was what to do for the day. The most popular option was Ben Vrackie with Graham and Lorna being first to leave with that target in their sights, they had ventured up the hill a couple of weeks before but had been forced to turn back by steep icy snow slopes near the top. Brian, Jane and Val, Neil and Sharron, Sam and Martin all also headed in that direction. Their footsteps were followed a bit later by Alison and Bruce who waited for Steve and Mags. Steve quickly realized that a snooze in the Freelandr had greater attraction than climbing Ben Vrackie so Alison, Bruce and Mags completed the climb and also went on to visit Killiecrankie singing the well-known 'Braes off' song as they went. Jim D headed off towards Ben Dearg with the intension of bagging



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some additional tops and the Corbett Beinn Bhreac. Once up high however he encountered near white out conditions as snow started to fall from around midday and he was happy to settle for just Beinn Dearg. Jim loaned out his bike to another weekend attendee so that Dave Thomas had a companion for his attempt on Carn a' Chamain. The cycling part went ok but the duo also fell foul of the white out and turned for home from near the top. Dave was the last to come back and almost missed the afternoon tea and scones – they may actually have missed the scone part because some people had seconds.....



Reg joined Richard and Wattie in an attempt on the Corbett Farragon Hill climbing south from Loch Tummel. The first challenge they faced was finding the correct place to park. After three attempts driving up and down the lock side road they eventually found the right spot – they were looking for a track heading up the hillside from beside a house as indicated on the map. They eventually established that the house was now just foundations but they must have found the right spot since a previous walker had left a nice new walking pole lying beside where they eventually parked. The conditions did not quite warranted it but Richard was keen to try out his recent ebay purchase of a pair of Koflach plastic boots. If the fit was ok he intended to use them for his forthcoming trip to Tibet. After the delay in finding the starting point the trio quickly headed off up the now obvious

track. All was going well until the track disappeared – this caused a bit of consternation since the track was supposed to lead most of the way to the Corbett – the map and Reg's Satnav were consulted and then they looked over to their right. A good few hundred meters to the west there was a landrover track which looked exactly like the one shown on the map. After a bit of a cross country tramp they were eventually where they should have been all the time. Richard and Wattie were left somewhat shamefaced at this basic mistake, heaven known what Reg thought of it all. No sooner were they making good progress up the track then the forecast snow materialised a couple of hours early. They pressed on but by the time they arrived at a rise in the track the snow was falling thickly and the wind was getting up. They could just make out the still distant top of the Corbett and decided that the best idea was to cut their losses and head for home – after all someone may end up having seconds of scones and there may not be any left. On the way back down the track the fresh snow obscured the patches of ice which seemed to have a magnetic attraction for Reg as he came a cropper on them a couple of times. The last part of the track dropped steeply down through a nice piece of woodland and then turned a final bend to reveal the waiting car. They worked out that they must have missed the right track at the start of the day because it was hidden behind the house.....



They got back to Blair Atholl just as Maureen and Hazel finished an enjoyable walk up and down Glen Tilt – just before the rain started to settle in. Karen and Gillian (who had traveled up from her new home in North East Englandshire) had enjoyed a successful day on one for the Drumochter Munro's but Karen's navigational skills had to be called upon as they too were enveloped in poor visibility. Finally Vicky and Steve Gadd had opted from a long run rather than venturing up any hills.



There was plenty of time for a shower and freshen up before the afternoon tea was served at four o'clock. In fact there was even time for a small libation and to watch the second half of the Ireland / Italy rugby match on the flat screen tv before the scones arrived and every one tucked in – some did have seconds. Jim then revealed the cake which his sister had kindly baked and he had constructed into a very accurate model of the Cioch. People were then challenged to guess the weight of the cake for £1 donation in aid of Comic Relief. Quite a few then stayed on for the England / Wales six nations championship decider – it was a good match and most watching were quite pleased with the result. It was then time for a quick change into the glad rags before the evening meal.

Everyone was seated promptly at 19:30 and there were a good selection of choices for each course, the service was swift and well organized. Mags suggested that she and Richard could go 'halfers' on the sweet course and share Spotted Dick and cheese board. Having happily agreed, Richard then had a memory lapse and wolfed down all the spotted, Mags still let him have

some cheese however. Dave P then did his chairman's duty and said a few words – unusually few as it turned out – and introduced the second Comic Relief fund raising opportunity - the raffling of a special framed copy of the Cioch 25 logo. This, combined with the guess the cake weight, raised a very creditable £147 for Comic Relief – thanks to Jim, Dave and Brian M for the arm twisting.



Tables were well arranged round the main hall to allow for a quick transposition to the ceilidh as soon as the meal was over. The duo providing the music and dance calling did an excellent job conducting people through a good range of dances both familiar and new to the Cioch – will people manage to remember all the new steps by the time the Christmas meet comes around?



Everyone enjoyed the dancing and the floor was well occupied throughout the night – Olly and John Robertson sought sanctuary in the Bothy Bar. All too soon midnight arrived and it was time for Auld Lang Syne. Not quite ready for bed most then vacated to the lounge area for a night cap – or two.



People were a bit slower to materialize for breakfast on Sunday morning – can't think why – and then it was time for people to drift off to do their own thing at the end of a great weekend and a worthy way of marking the Cioch's 25th year. Roll on the BBQ in August.

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Cioch 25 Update

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 submitted 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 submitted 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

May	3 rd / 4 th / 5 th	Llanberis, North Wales
June	14 th / 15 th	Morvich Outdoor Centre, Kintail
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	24 th	BBQ, Dunfermline
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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