



# Cioch Mountaineering Club (Dunfermline)

Established 1988 – 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year

## Newsletter #52

### November 2013



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## Meet Report: Muir of Inverey, Braemar, 4<sup>th</sup> / 5<sup>th</sup> October

Dave Paton, Cath Guest and Richard Christie

After a last minute hiatus Olly fortunately managed to extract the code for the key safe from the hut custodian and distribute it by email before people headed off to Braemar. As usual Richard left work later than planned and arrived to pick Wattie up even later than the late Wattie had come to anticipate. After hustling the Freelander over the twists and turns of the A93 they just managed to get to Braemar in time to drop Richard's skis off at Braemar Mountain Sports to get some new cross country bindings fitted. Kenny, Cath and Jim were already cooking their evening meals by the time they arrived at Muir.

Having been off as usual on Friday, Jim had climbed two Corbetts on the way up: Ben Gulabin at Spittal of Glenshee and then drove round to Glen Quoich to climb Carn na Drochaide. Most of the usual suspects were in attendance on the meet with Alison and Bruce making a 'guest' appearance from the Black Isle. They thought about settling in in the 'member's room' but read the sign and decided against it just in case – this left the way open for Olly, Dave and John R to take up residence when they arrived. Dave takes up the tale of the Saturday:

The Muir of Inverey is always a popular meet with good reason, there are plenty of good hills, the place is great and it's not too far to drive on a Friday evening. The only drawback for me was the fact that there are no really short days. As I'm still trying to get a bit fitter I wasn't looking for a huge day.

With this in mind I thought about Cairn Bannoch and Broad Cairn from Loch Muick. It seemed short day in theory, but I suppose if, I had looked at the map more carefully, I would have realised that is it was a reasonably long walk. Anyway it seemed a fairly straight forward one and we decided that we could afford a reasonably late(ish) start.



Parking at Loch Muick and paying (grudgingly) our £3 parking fee, I set off with Olly, John R, Vicky and Steve G. The walk along Loch Muick was pleasant, in fine weather and along a good track and path. At the end of Loch Muick we started to climb at last to The Dubh Loch, which nestles in a lovely high corrie, the water blue in the sunlight, not black as in its name.



From here we climbed through a break in the crags on the left to the coll between Cairn Bannoch and Broad Cairn before turning North West to the summit of Cairn Bannoch. In truth these tops are hardly inspiring but the good weather made the day. On top we surprisingly came across Bruce and Alison, who were doing the 'Lochnagar Circuit', this being their fourth top. Unfortunately I had forgotten my camera, so I have no pics of any of this. However, I have included a drawing of us reaching the top of Cairn Bannoch. From there it was just a short hop to Broad Cairn.

I'm still finding it difficult descending, so I was falling a bit behind the others until Olly took one of his 'short cuts'. I stuck to the path and, with Steve and Vicky, caught up with Olly (even after stopping for food and drink).

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The walk back to the car was pleasant and uneventful. Although, we did meet Brian, who had just done Lochnagar and the Corbett 'Caisteal na Caillich'.

After that it was back to Braemar for a couple of pints in the Fife Arms before going back to the Muir for food and conversation (Yes. I know it was really just the recycling of old stories told a dozen times before, but it's what old farts do!) I was also celebrating, so I put out a bottle of Malt for people to help themselves to later in the evening. A pity if you don't like the stuff, but it disappeared soon enough anyway.



As Dave says the walks from Muir can involve some long days but these can be aided by the use of a bicycle. Cath and Kenny were joined by John W for the cycle in to Derry Lodge. The trio then walked up to the Derry flats and climbed Beinn Bhreac and Beinn a' Chaorainn, photo on previous page. John won the cycle race back to the Muir by a few minutes. Iain Hay had also come equipped with a mountain bike and used it to good effect cycling into White Bridge and climbing Beinn Bhrotain. Reg Turk was heading for Beinn Bhrotain as well but since he was bike-less had a long walk in to and out from White Bridge, he did however make the most of this effort by climbing Monadh Mor as well. The other cyclist on the meet used his steed to take him in to Ban Avon and Beinn a' Bhuid for an enjoyable circuit.

Another way of theoretically avoiding long walks is to forsake Munros and go for Corbetts instead – well that's the theory anyway. Richard had suggested going for the two Corbetts either side of the Lecht Ski Centre which looked reasonably straight forward, Wattie agreed but proposed adding Morven as well which would allow Richard to score off Section 8 in the Corbetts book. Since the expanded plan involved a drive so that Morven could be tackled via the shortest route an early start was called for so they were away from Muir before 8am.

After parking in the empty Lecht ski area car park it was a case of straight up below the chair lift to Beinn a' Chruinnich and then a squelchy traverse round to the first Corbett of the day, Carn Ealasaid which was reached in 45 minutes. After retracing their steps to the car park Richard and Wattie then crossed the road and climbed straight up the other side following an all-terrain vehicle track. From the top of the initial climb it was obvious it would take a bit longer than 45 minutes to cross the expanse of undulating moor and peat hag to reach Carn Mor. Although it zigged and zagged a bit it was often easier to follow the vehicle track which continued on and wound its way in the general direction they wished to follow until firmer ground was eventually reached at the intervening top Monadh an t-Sluichd.



The forecast for the Saturday was fortunately accurate with mostly blue skies to the east of the main Cairngorms and excellent visibility. There were good views over Glen Livet from the top of Carn Mor as they stopped for a quick lunch before turning back towards the distant ski tows – two down, one to go.



It took just under 40 minutes to drive from the Lecht round to the east side of Morven and it was a bit of an effort to shoulder the rucksacks once more and get the legs going again as they set off up the hillside past the ruined farmhouse at Balhennie. The going underfoot was a lot drier than earlier in the day but the initial climb was equally steep before easing for a while until the final climb up to the summit with its shelter cairn complete with log book – now in a plastic box rather than the tin one mentioned in the Corbetts

book. The descent was relatively quick but it was certainly a relief to shed their rucksacks and boots for the final time when they arrived back at the car. As per the day before, Richard just managed to get to Braemar Mountain Sports before closing time so he could retrieve his skis. Against their expectations they were amongst the first to get back to Muir. Jim had also been out bagging Corbetts on Saturday, climbing Carn Laith and Culardoch by a figure of eight route from the car park at Keiloch on the Invercauld estate. His plan to join Wattie and Richard was scuppered by a lie in.

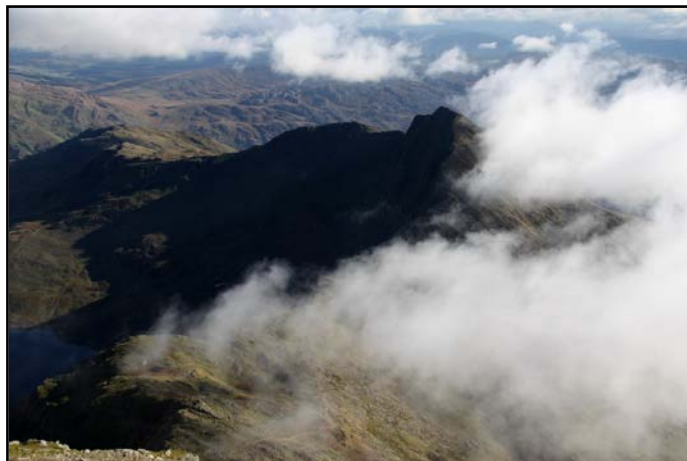


## Report on the Snowdon Horseshoe by David Paton

I climbed Snowdon a few years ago with Marion by the Pyg Track, a couple of days later we took the easy way to the top by train. However, what I really wanted to do was the whole horseshoe, taking in Crib Goch, Crib-y-ddysgl, Snowdon itself and Y-Lliwdd. I had done this over thirty years ago while at college. It was December and we didn't get much of a view, so I didn't have much of a mental image of it. All I remembered was snow on the tops, which eventually turned to rain, giving us a right soaking!

Wanting a good day this time, we waited for a day with a good forecast before setting off. On the drive up we passed through mixed weather but when we passed Capel Curig and got to within sight of Snowdon the weather was great and the mountain looked superb.

We expected to find the car park at Pen-y-Pass busy, which it was, but we did find a space. Only to find the car park fee was £10! Olly needless to say was reluctant to pay this. In the event we were left with no choice, we didn't pay! Not through some rebellious streak, more to do with the fact that we couldn't. There was no attendant, the machine gave no change and we only had a twenty pound note each. To be honest it was an easy decision, Olly being quite happy to take the chance and for me, well it was Olly's car after all.



So off we went. A hundred yards later Olly went back he forgot his camera! Off we went again along a pretty impressive path, virtually steps all the way. It was busy but not as busy as when I had done it in summer.

About a kilometre from the car the Pyg Track splits, the right hand path leads to Crib Goch. The scramble up is steep but not too difficult. Crib Goch itself is probably the best ridge outside Scotland and has been described as a mini Anoch Eagach. It's certainly a good scramble along the top, with steep drops, particularly on the North side. Fortunately there was no wind to speak of so we didn't have to cling on. At one point I caught up with a group, where one of the party was throwing a bit of a 'wobbly', on one of the scrambly sections. This held me up a bit. Fortunately it wasn't serious. The whole thing was a set up for someone doing an MLC course to see how they could cope with the situation.

From the end of the ridge it was a straight forward climb to the top of Crib-y-ddysgl, where unfortunately it clagged in. The decent to the next coll is short, followed by the ascent to the top of Snowdon.

We were passed by a train, which by the time we reached the top, had disgorged its cargo of teenagers and pensioners, making the top a very busy place. (I mean no disrespect to either teenagers or pensioners - I was once one myself and will soon be the other!). Fortunately the clouds cleared on top giving us superb views. Then after taking a few pictures we headed to the café for a coffee before continuing on - we actually managed to get a seat in the café.

The descent from Snowdon is quite steep and scrambly, so it took me a while to get down. I'm probably always going to be slow going down this sort of stuff. Once down there is a good path to Y Lliwdd, which itself is a great wee ridge with good views. From there was a fairly straightforward descent to the Miners' Track, which we followed back to the car.

Now I know what you're wondering - did we get a parking ticket? Guess what? No we didn't!

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One last thing of interest we did, and it's worth a visit if you're down there. Pop into the Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel, which is about 1.5km East of the car park. The hotel has a long association with British Everest expeditions. John Hunt's team, the first to reach the summit, used the area to test the equipment and used the hotel as a base. There is one room, the Everest Room, where you can see the signatures of the team members on the ceiling. It is well worth a look for its historical significance.



Dave's photos show: Y Lliwdd from Snowdon, Olly on Crib Goch and Sunset over Y Lliwdd and Snowdon

<b>2013 Meet Dates</b>	
Nov 1 <sup>st</sup> / 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mill Cottage, Feshiebridge
Dec 6 <sup>th</sup> / 7 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Meet, Onich
<b>2014 Meet Dates</b>	
Jan 10 <sup>th</sup> /11 <sup>th</sup>	Strathspey Hostel, Newtonmore
Feb 7 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup>	TBA
March 7 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup>	Ochils MC hut, Crianlarich
April 4 <sup>th</sup> /5 <sup>th</sup>	Ariundle Centre, Strontian
May 2 <sup>nd</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup>	Gwern Gof Isaf, Capel Curig, N Wales
June 6 <sup>th</sup> /7 <sup>th</sup>	Skywalker Bunkhouse, Portnalong
July 11 <sup>th</sup> /12 <sup>th</sup>	Ling Hut
July TBC	Lake District
August 8 <sup>th</sup> /9 <sup>th</sup>	Sail Mhor, Dundonnell
September 5 <sup>th</sup> /6 <sup>th</sup>	Invergarry Lodge
October TBC	Inver Croft TBC
November 7 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup>	Mill Cottage, Feshiebridge
December TBC	Christmas Meet Inchree, tbc

### **Winter Slide Show Programme 2013 - 2014**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Show</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Show</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Show</b>
24/10/13	Richard Christie Only a Munro away from the top of the world? Everest North Col	14/11/13	Chris Butcher Austria	21/11/13	Winter Safety Talk By Mick Tighe Pitbauchlie Hotel Starts at 19:30 [In conjunction with Mountain Aid]
23/01/14	Bill Gray World tour part 2	20/02/14	Wattie Ramage Last Twelve Months	20/03/14	Available



## Special Pull out Report: Brian Compleats on Stuc a' Chroin



Some 50 years after climbing his first Munro during a school trip, Brian Mitchell can now claim the joint title of being the oldest club member to compleat a Munro round and the person to take the longest to do so. Having decided it was about time to finish off his round, Brian has had a few busy days in 2013 mopping up some of the remoter hills he still had to climb: the Mullardochs, the Affric hills and Knoydart. All went more or less to plan meaning all was in order for the appointed day - Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October. Unfortunately the weather forecast was not ideal with heavy rain forecast for later in the day so an early start was called for.

An open invitation was extended for club members to join the walk with an 8.30 starting time set from the layby at Loch Lubnaig end of Glen Ample. Needless to say it was a bit after that by the time the layby was full of Cioch member's cars and the twenty participating club members set off on the narrow path leading up into the Glen. Being an organized person Brian had carried out an appropriate reconnoiter and proposed walking some 3.7km along vehicle track in the Glen before climbing up to the ridge running between Beinn Each and Stuc a' Chroin – a cairn had been built to mark the spot.

The majority followed this route whilst a small breakaway party decided to tag on the Corbett as well. In the end the additional

ascend involved in the climbing Beinn Each by a path may have been slightly better than the direct yomp up the steep heather clad hillside from the floor of the Glen. The time taken turned out to be about equal as the Beinn Each party arrived just after the Bill and Alan had emerged on to the ridge.

A quick break was called for as the stragglers made their way up through the heather and caught their breath. The views which had been available earlier were obscured by incoming cloud so waterproofs were put on assuming that the forecast rain was on its way. The cloud came and went as the multi coloured caterpillar wended its way around various knolls before climbing up and then along the final ridge to the summit.

Olly and Dave P had forged ahead and were left waiting for around half an hour (much to Olly's enjoyment – at least he did have a waterproof to put on over his tee shirt) at the summit along with four friends from Brian's rambling group who had climbed up from the Ben Vorlich path. Neil and Sharon had timed thing a bit better and arrived over from Ben Vorlich just as the main group arrived at the summit.



True gentleman that he is, Brian waited until the full party was assembled before he approached the summit through the now traditional tunnel of walking poles. Various corks were popped and photos taken as everyone toasted Brian's achievement in appropriate style.

The caterpillar then set off again down the hill taking care on the slippery rocks which saw more than one slip and slide. There was then a bit of a free for all when the heather slope was reached and various descent lines were selected back down to the vehicle track. Thankfully the rain held off until everyone was off the hill.

Stovies and further bubbly was on offer back in Dalgety Bay to help round of a great day.





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