



Strathearn Rambler

Summer 2014

Issue No. 67

Editor: Irwin Keith



Chairman's Report

You might be forgiven for thinking we didn't have much of a Spring with the overcast skies and what seemed like continuous rain, but how easy it is to forget the heavy falls of snow we had in late Spring of 2013 with the farmers in Arran and the borders having to dig the lambs out of the snow drifts.

Our new committee are in place and a warm welcome was given to Robert Harrison, Stephanie Blaauw and David McKeggie who have already added some new ideas, and with our first meeting after the AGM we have already devised a programme of interesting walks to take us into late Summer.

The committee are also in the process of organising some more poignant events. After some considerable thought it has been decided to place a plaque on the Millennium cairn above Comrie in memory of George Carson. The wording on the memorial Plaque could be arranged by the committee, but I thought it would be nicer to contact both George and Keith Carson for their approval.

As many of you might know, Heinrich Steinmeyer passed away just a few days after George's funeral in Bremen. His last wishes were for his ashes to be scattered on the black hills above Comrie. The undertaker in Bremen, Thomas Cortes has posted Heinrich's ashes to me, and I have received them. As many of you are aware, Heinrich deposited £350 in the Strathearn Ramblers account to be used after scattering his ashes to celebrate his life. The Committee will decide a time and place and will inform you of both these events.

It was suggested that our weekend away was getting further and further away from Strathearn, so this year it was decided to bring the weekend away closer to home at the family-run hotel of The Atholl Arms Hotel in Blair Atholl. The hotel is well known to many ramblers who have enjoyed some light refreshments after our walks in the area, it has tremendous atmosphere with super log fires and cosy snug areas together with plenty of room for any events. It also has a good range of real ales.

The accommodation is tastefully decorated and food is well recommended on "Trip Advisor". A small group from the Committee have visited the hotel and are satisfied with the impression they received. A fair price for the weekend was decided and I think you will agree for the standard of Hotel it is a good price. A walks steering group has already been formed and recess will be in place shortly.

To conclude, may I take this opportunity to thank those Committee members standing down and especially our former Treasurer, Robert Burns for his efforts in keeping our books correct and also Anne Kay for sharing her knowledge of walks in the area. A very big thank you from all of us.

Ken Heiser

Strathearn Ramblers Committee

Chairman	Ken Heiser	670545
Vice-chair	Felicity Martin	670987
Treasurer	Susan Sinclair	670654
Secretary	Andrew Quinn	679887
Committee	Margaret Birks	07977865434
	Stephanie Blaauw	679071
	Robert Harrison	670736
	Irwin Keith	652541
	David McKeggie	652289
	Margaret McVicar	670989
	Charlie Panton	655337
	Myra Robertson	670166

September Weekend Away

The September weekend away this year will be on Friday to Monday 12th to 15th September at The Atholl Arms Hotel, Blair Atholl.

The cost will be £200 per person, two people sharing and £230 for a single room on a half board basis. This cost includes recces and other supplements.

To book please complete the booking form at the back of newsletter including a £25 deposit made payable to "Strathearn Ramblers". Send the cheque and booking form to the Treasurer, Susan Sinclair, 5 Strathview Place, Comrie, PH6 2HG by **30th April**.

The final cost to be paid by **5th August 2014**.

Membership renewals

Membership fees for 2014/15 are due by 30 April 2014. The fee remains the same as last year at £10 and we very much hope you will rejoin. Thank you if you paid at the AGM.

As we have been having difficulty in ensuring we have up-to-date details of all members, particularly email addresses, we are asking everyone to fill in a form this year, which will be sent out by our new Treasurer, Susan Sinclair (670654 or sue@spitfireuk.net). Please tell her if you know of anyone, either new or former member, who might like to join the Strathearn Ramblers.

CORRECTION

11th May Stroll Lochearnhead to St Fillans

In the Spring newsletter the times on the booking form and the future walks information did not coincide. Please note that the bus will depart at **09.45** from Crieff Coop car park and **10.00** from Comrie School car park.

Bus Booking

The linear stroll on 11th May from Lochearnhead to St Fillans uses a bus for walkers, the bus booking form was included in the Spring Newsletter as well as this newsletter. There are two new walks included in this newsletter which require the use of bus transport.

If you intend going on any of the walks which require a bus please complete the form and return it by the date stated on the form. A verbal request to any member of the committee does not constitute a booking and could lead to embarrassment to both parties on the day.

Spring Away Weekend: 25-27 April

Glenmore Lodge, at the foot of the Cairngorms near Aviemore has been booked for a small band of Strathearn Ramblers. Felicity Martin will be contacting the participants to arrange travel, food and walks, which will include strolls and hill walks.

Crieff to Comrie path survey (see Stroll on 5 August)

A survey to find out people's thoughts about the Crieff to Comrie path and who might use it if it were improved was launched recently. It has had coverage in the local press and Andrew Thompson spoke about it at the AGM, encouraging members to complete it online at

www.surveymonkey.com/s/CorePathSurvey

or on a paper form (available from Costcutter, Comrie and Crieff Community Library). If you know anyone who would be interested in sharing their views, please tell them about the survey.

Lairig Ghru

There is a possibility of a group of us going up and walking the Lairig Ghru this summer. Felicity was in contact with Andy Bateman who runs special package deals to enable this. They include 2 nights B&B in a bunk house, a 2 course dinner on the night of arrival and that of the walk, a packed lunch, tea and cake on return from the walk and transport to and from the start of the walk. This would cost £151 per person (+ the cost of the shared car travel up and back.)

Weekends still available are mainly in July and at the end of August, although for those able to go mid-week there is more flexibility. It would make most sense to go nearer midsummer to get the longest days so a w/e in July, or midweek in June or Aug. Depending on the amount of interest, it may be possible to have two different groups going, one at a w/e and one midweek, so please phone/e-mail Stephanie (679071, s.blaauw@yahoo.co.uk) as soon as possible, and stating your preference. It would also be helpful to know who would be happy to take their car.

The sooner we book, the more likely we'll get what we want.

BBQ at Myra Robertson's garden

Friday, 15 August 2014

Myra has generously opened her garden at Catonia Cottage, Nurses Lane, Comrie for the Ramblers' Annual BBQ on 15 August 2014. The charcoal should be at a perfect temperature at 6.00pm. Bring your own food, refreshments and seating. Come and join us for a great friendly evening.

Core Path Lochearnhead to St Fillans

Geoff Hardman-Carter send the following information to me in relation to the core path between Lochearnhead and St Fillans.

The communities of Lochearnhead and St Fillans are in the process of trying to develop the disused railway path that links the two villages, and then on to Dalchonzie. The route runs the length of Loch Earn, on the slopes just north of the main road (A85), then crosses the road (and the River Earn) at Tynreoch and on to the old Dalchonzie Halt. (From here, the 'Back Road' is a very pleasant access route through to Comrie.) The views from the elevated section along Loch Earn are truly beautiful. Among the many benefits for using the old railway lines are that they are traffic free and relatively level; thus making them ideal for children and the disabled. Opening up this link will also have enormous benefits for consolidating access to the slopes and countryside, either side of the route. It will offer the opportunity to connect with the National Cycle Network and create a viable East/West long distance route, potentially part of a Scotland – Coast to Coast (SC2C Oban to Dundee) and a Pilgrim Way (Three Saints Way - Iona to St Andrews). It will also make possible, a local 'Circle' around Loch Earn.

The first phase was to rebuild the bridge over the Glentarken Burn (which was the only major obstacle that prevented walking from Lochearnhead to St Fillans). During 2013, the Paths Group managed to secure funding from LEADER - Rural Tayside Programme, Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park and Sustrans, to whom they are very grateful. Following a tender process, McGowan Outdoor Access was appointed as the contractor for the installation of the new bridge together with the upgrading of the approaches to it, from both the east and west. The work was completed in November 2013. The bridge is of a 'Bailey' design and was supplied by Mabey Bridge Ltd. It took three days to construct the actual bridge, which was pushed out on rollers over the gorge. The final bridge span is over 100 feet, with a drop to the burn below of 130 feet.

To celebrate this achievement, the Community Councils of Lochearnhead and St Fillans would like to invite you to the Formal Opening of the Glentarken Bridge.

When: Friday, 9th May 2014 at 12 noon.

Where: The disused railway path at the Glentarken Burn. Access to the bridge is via the Glen Tarken Track which leaves the A85, opposite the Loch Earn Sailing Club. *(Please note, parking is limited and is only available at designated lay-bys on the A85 nearby.)*

If you wish to attend this event please contact me in the first instance in order that we minimise the numbers of cars being used.

Ken Heiser Tel. No. 650545

Walk Reports

Stroll - 9th February 2014 The Knock & Callums Hill

BBC presenter Julia Bradbury has travelled round the world and has named the Knock as one of her favourite top-five hills places in the world. I can't disagree especially the view from the top towards Comrie and beyond.

Many places within the Strathearn are worth visiting innumerable times as the landscape is ever changing but they continue to provide a sense of wellbeing.

This stroll was not flat and had some challenges especially with one or two steep sections and a particularly muddy section from the Highlandman Loan along the Spoke Road, or Coffin Road as it sometimes known. As with all strolls along with the gentle exercise and an appreciation of the views chatting was very much in evidence especially at lunch amongst the trees and sheep at the top of Callum's Hill where reminiscences and gentle ribbing took pride of place.

On our return we stopped at Jesus Well noting that the water should no longer be consumed which created a quandary for many of us who had subjected our family to these waters in the past and what should we tell them now.

I think everybody enjoyed it, and appreciated the friendship and humour on the day.

Irwin Keith

Stroll - 9th March 2014 Dunning Historical Circuit

After a circuitous route due to diversions and road closures 10 Ramblers arrived at Rollo Park in the historic village of Dunning.

Here we were met by Felicity's former neighbour who had kindly opened the 12/13th century St. Serf's Church which houses the carved Pictish stone Dupplin Cross which dates from around 800AD. Next stop was the Thorn Tree, the original having been planted just after the village was burned at the time of the 1715 Jacobite Rebellion. We continued along the bank of the Dunning Burn, saw Felicity's old home and crossed a field which was home to some friendly Highland Cattle.

A climb up Dun Knock, a former Iron Age Fort, gave us wonderful views over the village and beyond.

Leaving the village behind we negotiated ploughed fields, skirted the Sewage Works and fruit farm to reach the community owned Kincladie Wood, the site of a 1st century Roman Camp. Here lunch was enjoyed at a picnic table.

The circuit was completed by passing a standing stone and crossing a ford before traversing the Golf Course and retiring to the clubhouse for coffee and a chat.

Thanks to leaders Felicity and Susan for a most enjoyable and educational stroll in lovely dry weather.

Margery Burns

Walk 23rd March 2014 Scone 500+ Circuit

On a lovely sunny but windy day fifteen happy ramblers met at the car park beside Scone old church. This circular walk was created in 2005 to celebrate the bi-centenary of the moving of Scone from its original position near Scone Palace.

After walking through the woods of the Den of Scone we climbed Coronation road to the Deuchny woods eventually reaching McDuff's monument built as a folly before 1783. The beautiful views of Perth, Scone and beyond were enjoyed by all.

We continued to the Lyndoch Obelisk on Murrayshall Hill. This was built in 1853 in memory of Lord Lyndoch. The all round views were stunning of the Tay estuary, Falkland Hills and Grampians where many excellent photos were taken.

We walked down towards the golf course past Nick's seat and well appointed Murrayshall Hotel. After some road walking we made our way through New Scone back to the car park. Thanks go to our leaders Andrew and Margaret for a most interesting and enjoyable walk.

Myra Robertson

Stroll 13th April 2014 Pitmeddon Forest Circular

After doing the recce with Ken and Margaret Shankland it was a walk I was really looking forward to doing again. When I arrived at the meeting point, the Co-op for 10.15. I was beginning to wonder if anyone was turning up then five Ramblers turned up. Shortly after Ken arrived with his car we set off in two cars, the weather looking promising.

The start of the walk was on a nice wide path but we needed to take a turn on the left through a forest and you could still smell the pine. Coming out of the forest it all started to open up and all the views were in sight and it came to me what Ann Kay said years ago "If you can see the Paps of Fife you are not lost" and today was a day you got an excellent view of them. Further into the walk we saw a lot of the River Tay and where the River Earn runs into it. We were looking at this at our lunch stop and we were sheltered out of the wind.

Time to set off again, we even managed to see Schiehallion which is the hill climb for May. Back to today's walk, the wind was bitter at times, a decision had to be made which way we were going to go and we decided to take the harder route, under fences and a hill to climb, all with no problems (well done everyone). Then we were back into the wood and once out of it the Paps of Fife were there to meet us again, then I knew we were not too far away from the car. Hope Ken enjoyed, survived, his day out with eight women.

Thanks to the leaders and everyone else that was on this walk for making it a great day out.

Val Callan

Future Walks

27th April Walk Auch Farm and Glen Coralan 8 miles

This walk commences on the A82, 2 miles north of Tyndrum at a lay-by on the right at the top of the hill. The first 3 kilometres are along part of the West Highland Way towards Auch farm before turning northeast and under the railway viaduct. We will then head up Glen Coralan to a waterfall and possibly a bit further to the start of a hidden valley. The return will be along the same route. As there is limited car parking at the lay-by please maximise car sharing.

Depart Crieff Coop car park 08.45. Comrie School car park 09.00. Cars required pay driver £5.

Leaders: Robert Burns (670408), Myra Robertson, Duncan McDonald

11th May Stroll Lochearnhead to St Fillans 7 miles

This is a very pleasant stroll, made possible by the hard work of the people of St Fillans raising money to erect a bridge over the Glentarken Burn. The bridge alone is well worth seeing. The walk starts at Lochearnhead car park and ends at the Four Seasons Hotel. Come and see the magnificent views but be prepared for the mucky parts of the track. Bus cost is £2.50. Please return booking form at the back of the newsletter.

Bus departs Crieff Coop car park 09.45 and Comrie School car park 10.00.

Leaders: Anne Kay(670898), Myra Robertson, Susan Sinclair, Ken Heiser

18th May Hill Walk Schiehallion 3547ft/1081m ?? Miles

Schiehallion is one of Scotland's best known landmarks. At 3547 feet it is almost conical shaped and locals refer to it affectionately as the "Matterhorn of Perthshire". The mountain holds a unique place in history as it was chosen as the site of the first measurement of the mass of the earth by Astronomer Royal Neville Maskelyne in 1774. The calculation was based on the way that the mountain's own mass caused a pendulum to pull away from the vertical. There is a well marked path to the top and the only difficult section is boulder field near the top.

Depart Comrie School car park 09.00. Crieff Coop car park 09.15. Cars required pay driver £4.

Leaders: Ken Heiser (670545), Charlie Panton, Val Callan

25th May Walk Loch Ordie & Deuchary Hill 12 miles

This is a very pleasant circular walk which takes you through woods and open moorland with various points of interest along the way. A steep walk takes you up Deuchary Hill to a trig point and views over Loch Ordie and Beinn a Ghlo. There is a gentle track to Loch Ordie avoiding Deuchary Hill which can be used. The pleasant walk back takes you past three lochans.

Take the A923 north of Dunkeld right towards Blairgowrie. Take the second on the left up a track bending left into Cally car park (NO0234437) before a gateway.

Depart Comrie School car park 08.45. Crieff Coop car park 09.00. Cars required pay driver £4.

Leaders: Ken Heiser (670545), Charlie Panton, Val Callan

20th July Hill Walk Tarmachan Ridge, Perthshire 375ft/1044m 7.5 Miles

Meall nan Tarmachan is one of the easier Munros to reach in good weather thanks to the start point which opens out to one of the finest ridge walks on the Southern Uplands the Tarmachan Ridge. Do not park at the at the Lawers car park but head past it for about half a mile and turn left to the car park below the dam.

Depart Crieff Coop car park 8.45 and Comrie School car park 09.00.

Leaders: Robert Burns (670408), David McKeggie, Charlie Panton Pay drivers £3

27th July Walk Glen Tarken via Glen Beich 13 miles

An old favourite with the Ramblers. A good leg stretch over tracks and approximately two miles of rough walking. Throughout the walk there are good views over Loch Earn. Starting at the layby on the left just past the Four Seasons Hotel, St Fillans. Proceed up the track to Glen Tarken then left towards Glen Beich over some rough ground. Then return to the starting point down Glen Beich and back along the old railway line. Please utilise cars.

Depart Crieff Coop car park 08.45 and Comrie School car park 09.00. Layby just past Four Seasons Hotel 9.15 Pay drivers £1

Leaders: Irwin Keith (652541), Margaret McVicar, Myra Robertson

3rd August Walk Glen Tarken via Glen Beich 12 miles

The Strathearn Ramblers Chairman's Walk for The Comrie Fortnight

We are re-visiting this walk for the Comrie Fortnight although the chairman will make some subtle changes to it to keep the interest at a high level. Please note that this walk starts only at Comrie School car park.

Depart Comrie School car park 09.00. Layby just past Four Seasons Hotel 9.15

Leaders: Ken Heiser (670545)

5th August Stroll Crieff to Comrie 7 miles

The Strathearn Ramblers Vice-Chairman's Walk for The Comrie Fortnight

The disused railway line and other linking paths between Crieff and Comrie have been designated a core path. They promise to provide an important off-road route between the two settlements and to form part of a national long distance coast-to-coast route. The section between Trowan and Comrie needs improvement but is walkable (see news about a survey elsewhere in this newsletter). There is no climbing on this stroll and most of the going is easy.

N.B. This is the opposite direction to the walk cancelled because of flooding in February.

Depart Comrie School car park 10:00, meet at Taylor Park car park, Crieff 10:15

We expect to have the CoCo bus (no booking form), but also to need some cars as there are usually plenty of Comrie Fortnight participants. Please phone or email Felicity at mail@felicitymartin.co.uk to let her know if you are coming on the walk, and whether you will have a car available.

Leaders Felicity Martin (670987 or 07801 896439), Myra Robertson, Margaret McVicar

10th August Stroll Stirling Castle to Abbey Craig 6 miles

Leave M9 at junction 10 and follow signs for Stirling Castle. Meet at the Smith Institute on the left on Dumbarton road, the A811 coming into Stirling from Kippen. Street parking is available on a Sunday.

The walk will have a few climbs which will be taken very gently. It will also have a fair bit of road walking. It will take us to the top of the Abbey Craig but we do not plan to climb the Wallace Monument at this time as it would take too long, and not everyone would care to do so.

Toilet stops and cafe available.

Depart Crieff Coop car park 10.00. Comrie School car park 10.00. Meet Stirling 10.45 Pay drivers £3

Leaders: Ann Rankine (670964), Margaret McVicar, Myra Robertson

17th August Hill Walk Glen Lochay, Sgiath Chuil 3022ft/921m 9 Miles

Sgiath Chuil has a craggy summit ridge running N-S with three tops, Sgiath Chrom (853m) to the S, Meall a' Churain (917m) to the north and the summit midway between them. The Ridge continues north to Creag an t-Searraich overlooking Glen Lochay. The usual ascent route is from Auchessan in Glen Dochart on the SW slopes of Sgiath Chrom but we shall make the ascent via the track from the layby at Kenknock (NN469368) where there is limited parking.

Depart Crieff Coop car park 08.45. Comrie School car park 09.00. Pay drivers £3

Leaders: Charlie Panton(655337), Duncan McDonald, David McLeod

31st August Walk North Third Reservoir & Lewis Hill 10 miles

A fine way to celebrate the 700th anniversary of The Battle of Bannockburn. The walk starts at Bannockburn Heritage Centre, Glasgow Road, Stirling walking by the Bannock Burn then around the North Third Reservoir. The return is up and over Lewis Hill providing fantastic views along the Forth and towards the Ochils and northwards.

The route to the Heritage Centre is to take the M9 and leaving at junction 9, take the 1st exit onto the A872 at the roundabout.

Depart Crieff Coop car park 09.00. Comrie School car park 09.00. Meet Bannockburn Heritage Centre 10.00. Cars required pay driver £3

Leaders: Margaret Birks (07977865434), Susan Sinclair, Ken Heiser

Bus Booking Form

11th May Stroll Linear Walk Lochearnhead to St Fillans via old railway line

Please reserveseats on the bus for this walk. The bus will pick up Crieff walkers at 09.45 at the Crieff Coop car park and at 10.00 from Comrie School car park. At the end of the walk the bus will take walkers from St Fillans back to Comrie and Crieff.

Enclosed is the sum of £..... @ £2.50 per person.

Please pass this form and monies in an envelope clearly marked “Lochearnhead to St Fillans” to the Transport Secretary

Anne Kay
4 Strown Square
Comrie PH6 2ER

Closing date: Wednesday 7th May 2014.

Cheques to be made to “Strathearn Ramblers”.

Tick the box if you wish to be picked up at Crieff Coop car park at 09.45

Tick the box if you wish it be picked up at Comrie School car park at 10.00

Bus Booking Form

8th June Stroll Glen Ogle to Killin

Please reserveseats on the bus for this walk. The bus will pick up Crieff walkers at 09.45 at the Crieff Coop car park and at 10.00 from Comrie School car park. At the end of the walk the bus will take walkers from Killin back to Comrie and Crieff.

Enclosed is the sum of £..... @ £4 per person.

Please pass this form and monies in an envelope clearly marked “Glen Ogle to Killin” to the Transport Secretary

Anne Kay
4 Strown Square
Comrie PH6 2ER

Closing date: Wednesday 4th June 2014.

Cheques to be made to “Strathearn Ramblers”.

Tick the box if you wish to be picked up at Crieff Coop car park at 09.45

Tick the box if you wish it be picked up at Comrie School car park at 10.00

Bus Booking Form

29th June Walk & Stroll Arbroath & Carnoustie

Please reserveseats on the bus for this walk. The bus will pick up Comrie walkers at 09.00 at the Comrie School car park and at 09.20 from Crieff Coop car park.

Enclosed is the sum of £..... @ £13 per person.

Please pass this form and monies in an envelope clearly marked “Arbroath & Carnoustie” to the Transport Secretary

Anne Kay
4 Strown Square
Comrie PH6 2ER

Closing date: Wednesday 18th June 2014.

Cheques to be made to “Strathearn Ramblers”.

Tick the box if you wish it be picked up at Comrie School car park at 09.00

Tick the box if you wish to be picked up at Crieff Coop car park at 09.20

**BOOKING FORM FOR THE STRATHEARN RAMBLERS AWAY
WEEKEND AT ATHOLL ARMS HOTEL, BLAIR ATHOLL ON 12TH,
13th, 14th SEPTEMBER 2014**

Name(s)

Please reserve Double room
..... Twin room
..... Single room

At the Atholl Arms Hotel for the 12th, 13th, and 14th September 2014

I/We enclose a cheque for £ at £25 per head as a non-refundable deposit. The cheques to be made payable to "Strathearn Ramblers".

I am able to offer a lift to the hotel to other members.

I am unable to offer a lift.

I require a lift.

Special dietary requirements

Other needs

The form and monies to be passed to the Treasurer, Susan Sinclair, 5 Strathview Place, Comrie, PH6 2HG by **30th April 2014**

The Strathearn Rambler is the official newsletter of the Strathearn Ramblers which is a Comrie based organisation with no affiliation or connection to the Ramblers Association or any other walking organisation.

The editor would welcome comments from fellow members on suggestions and improvements to the Strathearn Rambler.

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