



BIGGAR

Walking in Clydesdale

www.biggarramblers.co.uk

NEWSLETTER Feb 2022

View from the Chair

Happy New Year everyone! Here we are at Candlemas and it's great to see the lengthening of days. It also means that shooting restrictions on the hills are over (pheasant and partridge: 1st February, grouse: 10th December)

Since our last newsletter, we've had a good period for walking and socialising. This was

highlighted by the Christmas Dinner on 10 th December where we had a good turnout at Cornhill Castle Hotel, just before the spread of Omicron really put a damper on pre-festive celebrations. Now that we are following Covid guidelines as part of everyday life, the safety net of our walks in the fresh air is an added bonus. On the Mince Pie walk we had individually wrapped pies, Lesley's Ecclefechan cakes and her timely rendition of 'The Night Before Xmas'.

Apart from sociable and seasonal walks, we have walks of special historical or wildlife

interest. We have what I would call 'Achievement Walks' where we have challenging goals (name your own!), and there's a night time walk coming up. And how about an 'Adventure Walk'? At the Area AGM we learned that Stuart King (Dumfries and District Group) likes to offer walks which explore, but he

wanted to know from John Nicholls, the speaker from Ramblers HQ, how he could still offer these and complete a satisfactory Risk Assessment? The answer is that the Risk is assessed prior to the walk based on local knowledge and map reading. Sounds good to me. We look forward to all sorts - especially with new walk leaders very successfully stepping into role. Thank you!

Our big event this year is the Clyde to Solway Area Gathering which Biggar is hosting on 30 th July, using The Elphinstone Hotel as a base. Biggar looks forward to hosting members of the other three groups (Dumfries and District, Clyde Valley, and South Lanarkshire Older Walkers (SLOW)) to share walks during the day and enjoy a buffet and a guest speaker from SARDA (Search and Rescue Dogs Assn) in the evening. Details will come out at the end of March.

At National level we have The Scottish Council meeting in March for which we are invited to register for all or part. You'll see there's an interesting talk on re-wilding on 4 th March. And we've to keep abreast of Ramblers re-branding, which means new badges/caps/ tee shirts!

As we get back into the rhythm of 4 month walk programmes we had before lockdown

disturbances, you'll be pleased to hear that the Committee is planning a Weekend Away in September. Watch out for news from the Social Secretary!

And finally, don't forget the Ramblers library has maps and books available to borrow. We look forward to seeing you on a walk soon.

Esther Daborn, Chair

MY FIRST MUNRO



I go back a long time to my first attempt of a Munro (a Scottish mountain over 3,000 feet) and it was when I was in year 3 at Dumbarton Academy and we had a day out at Rowardennan. The foolhardy amongst decided to attempt 'The Ben' as we knew it. I was in school uniform and with a plastic Mac and in pouring rain set out, didn't get far, the coat tore and I and many others returned to Rowardennan. Some 10 years later, better equipped, along with my friend (later my best man) and accompanied by girl-friends had a wonderful sunny day and reached the summit with

fantastic views all around. I do remember comments about the number of people reaching the top wearing the equivalent of flip-flops and shorts.

It was not until 2012 after a discussion on one of our rambles that I ventured back to Ben Lomond. I had made the decision I would lead the group one day but not having been there for over 40 years needed to do a recce. I walked with Paisley Ramblers who had included it on their programme and they showed me a better way to the top.

Before I could lead Biggar Ramblers our local U3A were having a weekend near Loch Lomond and asked if I would lead the serious walkers; I did. Then 3 months later I led our group.

The U3A group went up and down the so-called 'Tourist Route' but Biggar took the more scenic Ptarmigan route. Unfortunately the weather was not ideal even though it was dry. Ben Lomond is back on the programme and it will be a Grade B+. It will be a pleasure to lead some of you on this mountain and perhaps it will be a first for some of you as it was for me.

If it is of interest to you my 2nd and 3rd Munros were the two at the ends of the Aonach Eagach ridge above Glencoe !

Brian Henry

'Social' media?

There are always a range of on line events hosted by the Ramblers Association of Scotland, which any member can join.

I chose one hosted by Danny Carden, entitled Social Media Workshop on 25/11/21.

There were attendees from all over Scotland, and all had varying degrees of knowledge to impart, some using several sources of social media within their clubs, and some not using any. We mostly talked about the use of the 4 main platforms – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Youtube.

One suggestion from the host was that when using Facebook, as we do in Biggar Ramblers, we use a Facebook 'page' rather than a 'group' because a page is public, whereas a group is limited to only members. Not sure I was with him on that one, as surely we would only want our members to view the posts? his idea was that if it were public, we may attract more members.

It was also suggested that we use our platforms for 'human interest' giving information of local interest and advertising local events as well as notifying our members of any anniversaries, milestones, facts and stats within the group.

There was a discussion about using video within our social media, and it was interesting to hear some of the other groups use very low tech stuff, whereas others use editing tools such as 'Splice' to create a much more refined finished article.

Another suggestion was to ask walk leaders to post photos from their recce in order to encourage others to go on the upcoming walk (something I've done a few times).

We could also tag people on photos so that the image would show in their own news feed, and use web links within our posts to make it easier and quicker to find any additional information.

Emily Rorke

And Finally,

This Newsletter is for YOU.

It cannot continue unless members participate.

Anything, small or large, can be considered for inclusion, so come on!

Let me have that article on your favourite walk, or that one thing that interests you whilst walking – flora, fauna, animal droppings! If it floats your boat, it may be of interest to others too.

If you want to be a part of this publication, please contact me at emilyrorke24@gmail.com

Your ed

Emily

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