



www.biggarramblers.co.uk **NEWSLETTER** *October 2023*

Esther's Bit

What a mixed summer of weather we've had: a dry June, a wet July and a mixed August. At least we had our Indian summer at the start of September, though now it's sliding away into the time to look for gloves and bonnet. Hey Ho! Through all this, we've had a great mix of walks and opportunities for socializing - starting with our Gillespie Coffee Morning on 1st June and finishing with the Bring a Dish supper on 7th September.

The highlight of the coffee morning was being able to make good use of tea and coffee from Farrar's of Kendal, along with lots of delicious home baking. Folk had a relaxing natter with fellow Ramblers and seemed to enjoy looking through the Ramblers library collection. We'll definitely have a coffee morning like that again next year. Make sure to tell your friends that even if their membership is lapsed, they'll be more than welcome to catch up with old friends.

The highlight of the Bring a Dish walk up Bizzyberry was Graham fixing the brass plaque to the bench Ramblers has sponsored. Like most aspects of Ramblers life, this has a story behind it, starting with Lynn pointing out that the Social Fund needed spending. What to spend it on? The main criteria was that the benefit should be available to all. Treasurer Margaret hit upon the idea of a bench in a scenic spot for folk to enjoy. Should we buy one? Where from? Where should we put it? Challenges with permissions and insurance liabilities were solved last year with the opening of the improved path at Bizzyberry. There was a bench with no plaque. It's just taken a year for the wheels of consultation and permissions to grind through to this happy result. Take the short walk to have a look and enjoy the view!

The next chance for a coffee morning this year will be the **Daylight AGM** starting at 10.00am on 18th November at the Elphinstone Hotel. Tea and Coffee will be available from 9.30am. We hope that will beat turning out on a dark night. One item on the agenda will be the election of a new committee member without portfolio. As you know, Alastair has taken on the IT role, so there is a vacancy to fill. Please have a think about joining the Committee team and let it be known if you are willing to stand.

And our last event of the year is the Christmas meal, booked for 8th December, again at the Elph. Details for that will be sent out nearer the time. In the meantime, I hope you're all busy thinking about putting Oban in your diaries for May 2024.

I'll close with a couple of practical points. The first is that Ordnance Survey and Ramblers have agreed a deal whereby Ramblers get 25% off the annual subscription of £29.99 for the OS digital maps and Ramblers gets £5 for each new Ramblers subscription. Use code RAMOSM at the checkout. Don't forget the Cotswold Outdoor deal on clothing and kit as well!

The second is in case you fancy taking a walk over Biggar Common to Shieldhill. Bear in mind that the right of way no longer goes past Huntfield House, but comes out further along the road, nearer to the Shieldhill entrance. Here is the link with the revised map. https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/200166/getting_outdoors/1002/outdoor_access/4

Happy Rambling and enjoy the rest of our news

Esther Daborn, Chair

Some Important Dates For Your Diary

AGM

Date - Sat 18th November

Venue- Elphinstone Hotel, Biggar- upstairs function room from 9:30am to 12:30pm

For anyone who has difficulty with stairs, please be aware that easier access is possible. You can be dropped off around the back. Please send me an email (josannenewton@sky.com), and I can arrange for access as needed.

Cost - FREE

Festive meal

Date – Fri 8th December

Venue- Elphinstone Hotel, Biggar- upstairs function room from 7pm approx.

For anyone who has difficulty with stairs, please be aware that easier access is possible. You can be dropped off around the back. Please send me an email (josannenewton@sky.com), and I can arrange for access as needed.

Cost – TBC; roughly £25 for 2 courses and wine and £30 for 3 courses and wine. Menu will be similar in style to last year's i.e. turkey, beef, fish, vegetarian dishes

Weekend away

Date – 9th May to 12th May 24

Accommodation - The Great Western Hotel (<https://bespokehotels.com/great-western-hotel/>)

The away weekend this year will be 3 nights at the Great Western hotel on a dinner, bed and breakfast basis from Thursday 9th May, leaving on Sunday 12th May.

Cost - £142 per night for a double or twin room (total £426), single room rate is £91 per night (total £273). £20 deposit per person for the trip by 4th Dec.



SCHIEHALLION

We have discussed the idea of us having a few walks where we travel a bit further afield and follow the walk with an overnight hotel stay rather than driving home tired, (and possibly wet,) immediately after the walk. This format would allow us to tackle walks that would be difficult in a day trip and also allow us to have a friendly social evening afterwards.

We put this theory into practice on Wednesday 12th July, when eight of us tested ourselves by climbing the majestic Schiehallion, (Fairy Hill of the Caledonians), a "Munro" almost 1100 metres high. We started the walk from the Braes of Fosse car park about 10 miles north of Aberfeldy. There is a good path which started off on a gentle incline before becoming steeper as we moved up the hillside. The extra effort was rewarded with fantastic views over Loch Rannoch, Loch Tummel and up to the Cairngorms. We then had to walk along a ridge covered in boulders before reaching the rocky summit. At the top we had lunch in a rocky cleft sheltering from a swirling mist that created a very atmospheric setting. We then descended by the same path back to the car park and on to our accommodation.

We stayed in Aberfeldy at the, appropriately named, Schiehallion Hotel, which was a perfect choice with comfortable modern rooms, a lively atmosphere, excellent pub food, and good beer (including Schiehallion Lager an obvious favourite).

On the Thursday we also enjoyed a lovely walk, "The Birks of Aberfeldy", a waterside walk among birch woodlands with many beautiful bridges and waterfalls, before driving home, proud and satisfied.

The trip was enjoyed by all and we're looking forward to the next one. We will keep you posted.

Graham

BIZZYBERRY BENCH SPONSORSHIP



For a number of years our club has had some surplus funds in our social bank account. We have had a number of discussions at committee meetings on how best to spend it, and eventually agreed that providing a bench on a local walk path would be an appropriate, and public spirited use of our funds. We thought that Bizzyberry Hill, a popular walk with Rambler's members and with a recently improved footpath would be an ideal location. We approached Biggar an District Community Heritage (BDCH) who contacted the landowners for permission for an extra bench near the summit, but this was not granted. As an alternative we offered to give a donation to BCHT for their work on local heritage projects, in exchange for us sponsoring an existing bench on the hill. This was agreed, and the process was completed on Thursday 7th September, when fifteen of us at the "Bring-a-Dish" supper gathered at the bench and mounted a brass commemorative plaque. Now when you're climbing Bizzyberry and want to catch your breath, and take in the great views of Biggar and it's surrounding countryside, you'll be able to do at our Biggar Rambler's sponsored bench.

Graham

And Finally,

Many thanks to those who have contributed to this edition.

Keep your Newsletter alive, WE NEED YOUR INPUT.

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.

