



“Mountain Thyme”

Autumn 2024



Mountain Thyme is published by

Blairgowrie and District Hillwalking Club.

The editor welcomes comments and contributions from all members.

CONTENTS- AUTUMN 2024 ISSUE

President’s Introduction.....	2
Kelso Weekend	4
Cycling from Blairgowrie to The Butt of Lewis August 2024.....	6
Travels with a donkey in the Cévennes, June 2024.....	12
Heading for Everest Update.....	13
Paddlers on the Tay.....	14
Club Prize Raffle Beaver Safari	16
Social Events:.....	17
Snippets.....	19
Closing remarks	23

www.bdhc.org.uk



@blairgowriedistricthillwalkingclub



@BDHC_Hillwalker

PRESIDENT'S INTRODUCTION

Kerry Lindsay

As we embrace the crispness of autumn, I am delighted to share an update on our club's recent adventures and a reminder of our calendar of upcoming, exciting events. From the picturesque, or some may call it 'misty', hills of Kelso to an exhilarating kayaking trip, it's been a memorable time for all our members. And with a full walking and sociable calendar ahead, there's something for everyone in the months to come!

Our recent weekend hillwalking trip to Kelso was a tremendous success and was a rare treat that everyone was housed so close together. We had some known birthdays to celebrate and a sneaky wee fox who kept a big birthday secret until producing a surprise and very welcome fizz reception before dinner. He certainly knows the way to the president's heart!



In this bumper edition of Mountain Thyme, you can read more about our weekend in Kelso and our social outing on the water.

In addition to hillwalking, our club continues to embrace the spirit of adventure with other outdoor activities. In September we organised a fantastic club kayaking day out on the river Tay. For many of us, this was a chance to swap hiking boots for paddles, and it didn't disappoint! Thanks to the amazing Piotr from Outdoor Explore for providing such an enjoyable experience. And unlike the Lake District there were no paddles at dawn!

As our club continues to grow and our membership increases (we're nearly at 60), our social activities become just as important as the walks themselves to ensure that there's an opportunity for everyone to get to know each other on and off the hills. Over the next few months we have another curry n climbing night, plans to go bowling again, our annual quiz night in the new year and much more. If you have any ideas of what you would like to see in our social calendar drop us a message.

Of course, we are all united in our love of the hills and we still have a full calendar of walks over the winter including some old favourites of the Sidlaws and Pentlands. As we emerge from winter months, I'm very excited about our Spring weekend in Rum.

There have been some great walks already in this walk calendar year, although I'm sorry to say with some competing priorities and various ailments I've missed more than I would have liked. Some memorable walks though have been the fantastic day out walking Jock's Road when it was great to have some members of local Ramblers clubs join us for the walk. We also enjoyed a somewhat amended, but none the less enjoyable day, when we walked from Victoria Bridge to Glencoe and followed it up with a much-appreciated meal in Tyndrum. I also had a thoroughly enjoyable day thanks to the company and splitting sunshine when we took in the old trusted Munros of Glenshee.

We've welcomed many visitors this year on walks with several going on to become members and it has been an absolute pleasure to meet and welcome all visitors and new members on our walks. The club is going from strength to strength while keeping at the forefront what makes the club so great – you, our members.

I must take this opportunity to as always thank the committee for giving their time so freely to making sure the walks, activities and the club run smoothly, and a special thanks to Jane for all her work in pulling together Mountain Thyme.

Join Us! As always, our club thrives on the participation and enthusiasm of its members. Whether you're a seasoned hillwalker or a newcomer looking to explore the great outdoors, there's a place for you in our upcoming events. Our walks cater to all abilities, and we encourage everyone to join, learn, and share the adventure.

For more information on upcoming trips, to sign up, or to ask any questions, please contact any of the committee members or visit our club's website. www.bdhc.org.uk

KELSO WEEKEND

Jane Clark

Twenty members enjoyed varied walks around Kelso 20-23 September. Although views were limited by autumn mists, between them they covered: a hike into England to the summit of The Cheviot, the highest top in Northumberland; a Corbet, Broad Law; all three of the Eildon Hills; and a section of the Borders Abbeys Way from Melrose to Kelso.

The Cheviot (815m)

Starting near the remote farm at Cocklawfoot, 14 members headed southeast on a grassy track, winding its way up White Knowe to reach a signposted path, crossing into England on part of the Pennine Way. Walkers were saved dancing across peat hags in an arduous bog by huge blocks of stone forming a pavement of slabs for several kilometres to the summit of The Cheviot.

Individuals formed an orderly line as they traversed the bog in single file- rather unusual for this club. After lunch huddled in a stone shelter, they had a freer descent on the ridge above a chasm quaintly named “hen hole”. The route then passed Auchope Rig where they signed the book in the mountain shelter hut.



By the afternoon, the thick cloud had lifted and returning to Cocklawfoot there were clear views of the rolling hills climbed earlier in the day.

Broad Law (840m)

Broad Law is the highest hill in the Borders, between Peebles and Moffat and is round and grassy. Two pairs of walkers climbed Broad Law on consecutive days, with both parties walking in thick mist and, given such poor visibility, they needed to navigate to the summit. There they could be forgiven thinking they had stumbled across an extraterrestrial scene

with a huge air traffic beacon and nearby radio tower. One pair met a radio “ham” speaking to fellow enthusiasts in Japan and Ardnamurchan.

The Three Eildon Hills. (422m)

Following in the footsteps of the C party’s walk the previous day, 10 members set off for from Melrose to climb the Eildon Hills via the town centre and onto St Cuthbert’s Way. The route then passed Auchope Rig where they signed the book in the mountain shelter hut.



On the Eildon hills

An immediate climb up the hill and left into the wood to reveal the first challenge, a huge flight of timber stairs, so long there were two rest areas on the way up. Thereafter they climbed all the Eildons finding Mid Hill a slog due to steepness of the climb, but on unstable scree/shale surface. Although only 422m high the climb thought by some to be harder than many of Munro climbs!!

After lunch, they had a short, easy climb, to North Hill, a Roman Signal station and then eastward down a steep decline to join the Borders Abbey Way.

They stopped to view Rhymer’s Stone and the stone plaque which marked the spot where the Eildon Tree stood under which Thomas Rhymer, the 13th century prophet with supernatural powers, met and was beguiled by the Faerie Queen. The route back to the car park followed the Borders Abbeys Way and was a gentle, very pleasant end to a very good, and most enjoyable walk.

Borders Abbeys Way

After their hill climbs on previous days, eight members decided to do a gentler walk along the banks of the Tweed, from Melrose to Abbotsford. This is part of the long-distance route linking the major abbeys of the Borders. The leisurely pace allowed the walkers to enjoy autumn tints

and flowers with a solitary salmon splashing in the river. Plenty historical interest along the way including Melrose Abbey and the home of Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford.

A very successful weekend for the club with Kelso a good choice offering varied and interesting walks. It was also very sociable as three members celebrated their birthdays and the Cross Keys hotel an excellent venue to raise a glass (or two).

CYCLING FROM BLAIRGOWRIE TO THE BUTT OF LEWIS AUGUST 2024

Norman Smith

In recent years our club has branched out a bit to occasionally embrace activities other than walking - kayaking, canoeing, rowing, boat trips and even ten pin bowling. Cycling is one outdoor activity we haven't done as a group activity, but many members are active cyclists as well as walkers. When Jinty and I cycled to the Butt of Lewis in August I posted daily updates which created a bit of interest. Several people expressed disappointment that I didn't have a presentation about the tour on the club slide night so when Jane asked if I would write something for Mountain Thyme, I thought it might make up for it.

The back story to this trip started many years ago because I have been a fairly keen cyclist since childhood. In 1976, I tackled my first long distance tour along with my first wife Connie. Neither of us had been to the Outer Hebrides so we decided to cycle from home in Edinburgh to Callanish on Lewis and back roughly 700 miles. At that time, the intention wasn't actually to get to the Butt of Lewis at the very northern tip but every time I looked at a map thereafter, there was a feeling of underachievement. When Jinty and I got together 20 years ago, I was delighted to find that she was also keen to go cycle touring as a great way to explore Scotland. Our annual two-week expeditions eventually progressed to touring in Europe.

In 2007 for our annual tour, we cycled from Barra to Stornoway as part of a trip round the northwest of Scotland, but our goal was Cape Wrath not the Butt of Lewis. The first time the Butt itself became the objective was in 2015. On that tour, we got just north of Carloway on Lewis' northwest coast before being driven back by ferocious head winds. Disappointing, but it gave us time to turn south and discover the wonderful Uig Bay.

2019 brought the next attempt but this time we only made it to Inverness before bad, and deteriorating weather, forced us to abort and get the train back to Birnam. given a diary of our adventure below.



This year I turned 72 and the itch was still there. I thought I'd better do something about it before it became too difficult. Jinty wasn't too keen, partly because she was concerned about my fitness. However, by showing that we could do it in manageable chunks, I persuaded her! I've given a diary of our adventure below.

Day 1. Blairgowrie to an informal campsite near Dalnacardoch, 41 miles.

We chose to take the Strathardle route to Pitlochry over Moulin Moor because it's a very enjoyable, picturesque road without too much traffic. The only issue was a powerful headwind on the moor which meant pedalling downhill at times instead of cruising at 40mph. From Pitlochry we took Cycle Route 7 on quiet roads through Blair Atholl and Calvine, then long sections of the old A9 which are no longer public. The pleasant campsite at the side of the River Garry which we had used before is easily accessible by pushing the bikes through a couple of field gates. A dry day but very windy.

Day 2. Dalnacardoch to near Loch Insh, 33 miles.

We followed National Cycle Route 7 on quiet roads and purpose-built cycle paths through Dalwhinnie, Newtonmore, Kingussie and Insh. Even the section beside the A9 was enjoyable. We stayed at a friend's house near Loch Insh. A pleasant, at times sunny, day.



Drumochter

Day 3. Loch Insh to Ardtower Campsite, Culloden, 43 miles.

Route 7. Quiet roads and purpose-built cycle paths through Aviemore, then through wonderful heather moor north of Aviemore to Boat of Garten, Carrbridge, Tomatin (excellent community-owned café here), Moy and passing the interesting Bronze Age Clava Cairns south of Culloden. The commercial campsite is excellent.



Slochd

Another decent day with sun and little or no rain. We were beginning to feel confident!

Day 4. Culloden to an informal campsite near Black Bridge/Strath Vaich 35 miles

Cycle Route 1 through Inverness over the bridge to North Kessock, then a lovely quiet minor road along the Beaully Firth before increasingly busy main roads through Muir of Ord to the A 835 at Contin. This was the most unpleasant part of the route, traffic wise, especially the bends uphill past Rogie Falls and the general speed of the vehicles. We camped amid

wildflowers by the Glascarnoch River. Typically, the wind that had bothered us all day dropped and the midgies arose forcing us to an early bed and no proper tea! A dry day.

Day 5. Black Bridge to Ullapool Campsite, 24 miles.

Continuing on the A835 above Loch Glascarnoch, down the Dirrie More, past Braemore Junction to Loch Broom and Ullapool.

The highlight, apart from some great downhill sections, was a stunning low-level rainbow at the west end of the loch with Beinn Dearg in silhouette. As those of you who have driven the road know, it's quite fast. Vehicle noise when passing at 60 plus mph is very intimidating. Positively, they give cyclists a lot more space than they did back in the 70s.



Rainbow at Glascarnoch with Beinn Dearg

Weather was mixed with some sunshine and a few heavy downpours. We sheltered from a particularly bad one in the convenient bus shelter at Braemore Junction. Found the campsite fairly empty with lots of choice for tent pitching. We got a little shelter behind a couple of caravans because strong winds were forecast. Had a lovely curry in the Indian restaurant nearby. That night was wild. Earlier we had caught a small pop-up tent blowing up the street 2 metres off the ground. Some campers took their tents down and abandoned for B & B but we've had the Hilleberg out in worse. Nevertheless, it was a very wild and wet night.

There are worse places to spend a day than Ullapool. I can recommend the local museum which we'd not visited before. And, of course, there's good beer at the Ceilidh Place followed by another quality curry at the Essence of India. Strong winds easing but little rain.



Ullapool

Day 6. Ferry cancelled due to storm, 0 miles.

Day 7. Ferry to Stornoway then cycle to Bothag Bhuirgh campsite, Borve 18 miles.

A fairly rough crossing through the remains of yesterday's storm. In the central Minch the heavy swell made the big boat shudder occasionally. From Stornoway we had a very hard cycle over Barvas Moor to the west coast. There was a partial strong headwind from the SW which was also very gusty and showery. We had to get off the bikes occasionally in case we got blown onto the road. From Barvas a wonderful tail wind took us all the way to our croft campsite where they let us tuck the tent in behind a hedge.

Day 8. Cycle to the Butt of Lewis and return to campsite, 22 miles.

A tailwind in the morning got us to the end of the island. It was great to get there at last. The edge of Europe.

Although the sun came out and we could enjoy the views, a powerful squall had us sheltering behind the lighthouse wall for half an hour before we could leave. Jinty left her helmet unsecured on the bike while we explored. It was never seen again. Presumably blown into the Atlantic! There was a ghastly, full-on, headwind on the return journey. We had a well-deserved celebratory meal and pint at the Borge Inn. Pity it was only Tennants.



Butt of Lewis

Day 9. Took the bus back up to Ness for a walk-around. 0 miles.

We took a rest from cycling to explore the neighbourhood by service bus. Checked out the places mentioned in Peter May's *The Blackhouse*. Wet and windy again.

Day 10. Cycle back to Stornoway. Laxdale Holiday Park Campsite. 18 mls.

Back over Barvas Moor to set up camp at Laxdale campsite. There was little wind which meant the midgies were out. Jinty had noticed a tick bite with bright red roundel discolouration on her knee. Three hours in A&E jumping through NHS 24 hoops before we saw a doctor to give her the necessary antibiotics for Lyme disease. It was Sunday. Chip shops were shut but we got a takeaway pizza to eat on the harbour wall before a pint in the New Lewis Bar.

Day 11. Ferry to Ullapool and the campsite, 1 mile.

A straightforward sea voyage. More beer in the Ceilidh Place and fish supper on the pier. Reasonable weather.

Day 12. Bus to Inverness, train to Birnam, cycle home, 14 miles.

We didn't want to repeat the more stressful road sections and had prebooked the bus, but the train was a stroke of luck. Even though repeating the route back down Route 7 wouldn't have been unpleasant, battling with Scottish winds had dampened our enthusiasm. The bus takes two bikes in elastic socks for protection. Eleven hours to get home from Ullapool of which five were hanging around in Inverness. A sunny day.

A total cycling distance of 249 miles. Not huge, but respectable, for a pensioner and we were carrying all our kit which doesn't just add weight but also wind resistance. We won't be doing the trip again but are considering another European adventure. Cycling is a wonderful way to explore a country, and it has a very low environmental impact.

TRAVELS WITH A DONKEY IN THE CÉVENNES, JUNE 2024.

Roddy Cameron

We took 6 days for a 120 km southern section of the GR70 which was in the footsteps of Robert Louis Stevenson. We would recommend this walk. The hills and valleys still feel remote, with quiet stone villages, just as when Stevenson travelled in 1878.



Roddy, Bruce, Ken, and Richard along with our donkey mascot, Modestine, on the Sommet de Finiels, 1699m, the highest point in the Cévennes National Park.

He wrote of his undertaking ‘I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel’s sake. The great affair is to move; to feel the needs and hitches of our life more clearly.’; Stevenson also wrote ‘We are all travellers in the wilderness of this world, and the best we can find in our travels is an honest friend’ and another quote ‘There are no foreign lands. It is the traveller only who is foreign’.

From another member after the slide night when Roddy spoke of their trip-

Une petite observation Megan Egging

I was very taken with Modestine. Small she may be, but to be described as a ‘perverse little devil’ as your erstwhile traveller in the Cévennes, RL Stevenson, described her, is hardly justified. After all, she had guided you away from an encounter with the feared beast of a wolf which was known to attack travellers and eat beautiful shepherdesses (whom you would, of course, have gallantly rescued had you come across any).

I am so glad you did not sell Modestine at the end of your travels (as RLS did) and so I advocate that, in view of her heroic guiding skills, she should accompany you on all your walks in the hills as BDHC’s honoured mascot.’

HEADING FOR EVEREST UPDATE

Evelyn Menzies

We have our visas - injections will be completed in the next week or two but, by the time you read this, we will probably be on our way to Nepal. We leave on 4 November – flying out to Dubai then onto Kathmandu.

We spend 2 nights there acclimatising then onto to Lukla. When we reach Lukla we begin our trek immediately. We will be trekking for 16 days – staying at tea houses along the way. As we are going with the Little Sherpa trekking company we will be meeting with local people and experiencing their culture.

Before we leave Kathmandu, we have been invited to the British Embassy to meet with the ambassador. What an honour!! We will also be giving interviews to various TV stations and reporters about our trek. This has been made possible through Ganesh our film maker who used to be an anchor news presenter for the equivalent of BBC. He now has his own film company ‘Shine Media’.

During the filming he will also be using drones, and we will have go-pros on our person – a new one for me! It is becoming unreal now. We still have quite a bit of fundraising to do as the documentary is expensive to make, but it will be worth it to let other people all over the world know that there is life and support after brain injury.

If you want, you can join us on our journey by following us on Facebook. There will be a daily report during our trek – HEADING to Everest.

Gofundme/littlesherpafoundation or
justgiving.com/campaign/headingtonoeverest.

We all wish the team every success and safe return when we will look forward to hearing about the trip - and, if we are lucky, an article in the next edition of Mountain Thyme – editor's note.

PADDLERS ON THE TAY

Ian Richards

Following the success of two previous 'water' events, on Arran and Derwentwater, the club decided to organise something closer to home and with a river trip in mind were soon in contact with Piotr at Outdoor Explore, based in Blairgowrie & Rattray.

Piotr reassured the club that a paddling trip could be tailored to suit a very mixed ability group, and a river trip was agreed for the 5th of September. There was an enthusiastic take up by the members and a total of fourteen met on the banks of the Tay close to the Birnam Oak to start their adventure.

Following a thorough safety briefing members were introduced to their craft. These varied from single kayaks to Canadian canoes, the latter lashed together in pairs to provide maximum stability. BDHC members taking part varied in experience from complete novices to very experienced canoeists.

On the day river conditions, and the weather were perfect for such a trip, blue skies and sunshine with the water level a wee bit higher than normal to ensure little chance of contact with the stoney river bottom.



The start was a little chaotic as folk familiarised themselves with the correct paddling technique, all under the professional eyes of Piotr and Jamie. For the most part physical work was minimal as the gentle current took the craft southward. There were three areas of ‘bumpy’ water and this required concentration to ensure that the paddlers maintained the correct heading.

Piotr proved to be a masterful guide and shared his considerable knowledge of the River Tay, local geology and history as well as describing the wildlife that the group might see along the way. In the event otters and osprey failed to appear but the group was treated to a good variety of water birds on shingle spits and including huge numbers of Canada geese that seemed totally un-phased by all the activity on the water.

Waves were exchanged with fishermen who were seen at various points along the way, not normally seen were quite a number of very posh looking fisherman chalets close to the riverbank, one resplendent with a clipped privet hedge. Close to the start the group passed the house where Beatrix Potter spent many holidays in her younger years, where she found inspiration to write some of her best-known tales.

Paddlers enjoyed lunch above a small beach at the side of the Inchtuthil Roman camp close to Spittalfield.

The group was on the water for around three and a half hours, the last section was along the stretch of river north of its confluence with the River Isla. It was from this stretch that Georgina Ballantine caught her record breaking 64lb salmon in 1922.

The group had to paddle hard as they turned into the Isla to finish their adventure at the point where the A93 bridge crossed the river.

CLUB PRIZE RAFFLE BEAVER SAFARI

Kirsty Gilson

My dad won this year's club draw but unfortunately neither mum nor dad were available on the date of the safari, so I got the prize instead. On a very cold Wednesday evening in June, my friend Caroline and I headed to Blairgowrie. We met up with the others in the group and the rangers on Golf Course Road and then headed down towards the river Ericht. We parked up at the side of some berry fields and then listened to a short talk by the ranger. She gave us some background on the re-introduction of beavers to the area and discussed their habitat and life cycles. She showed us a beaver skull and some other beaver bones. She also explained about other animals we may see during the walk.

We walked down to the river, and, on the way, we were told about the beaver's diet and had the chance to forage for some of the plants that they eat. Once we reached the riverside, we were asked to talk quietly so we did not disturb the beavers. It did not take long before someone said they saw a beaver, others, including Caroline were able to see it but all I could see was water! We all scanned the river with our binoculars and cameras, but no sightings for some time, and I was beginning to think I had missed my chance but then a beaver popped up in the middle of the river and I was able to see this one.



Beaver

Then another couple of other beavers appeared. It went quiet again after that and the ranger suggested that we walk further upriver, but the beavers had obviously decided we were not going anywhere as they all decided to come out to play right in front of us. We were able to watch them swimming in the river, climbing the bank opposite and sliding back down again.

Some of us were also lucky enough to see an otter pop his head out of the water. The ranger said it was the most beavers they had seen on a safari at that point this year and we were very lucky to be able to watch them for so long. When it was time to leave some of the others in the group decided they would like to stay and watch them for longer, but it was ridiculously cold for June, so we decided to head back to the car for some warmth. When we arrived back at the parking area, we were all given a bookmark as a gift. It was a very enjoyable evening which I would not have even considered otherwise, so thanks to the club for the prize and my dad for passing it onto me.

SOCIAL EVENTS:

Jane Clark

Club BBQ

Once again, the Lindsay family opened their house and garden in Dunkeld to host the club BBQ on a cool but dry, Saturday in August.

Thanks too to Evelyn for researching the best way up Crieff Hill and showing the assembled walkers good views over the lochs at Butterstone, Craiglush and Loch of the Lowes.



As well as enjoying an excellent spread, with Kerry's dad Bob showing his BBQ skills, (burgers of varying degrees of brown/black) we had a fund-raising raffle.

Club night speaker

Following the success of the paddling trip on the Tay, the club invited Piotr Gudan of Outdoor Explore to address members and share his experience of outdoor activities in Scotland. Piotr gave a good turnout of members and guests an entertaining (and rapid) account of paddling on different types of vessels including a coracle that he brought along.

Very interesting to hear his first-hand experience of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. Well done Piotr for reminding us of the special qualities of the natural and built heritage on our doorstep and for introducing people of all abilities to Perthshire's wonders.



Piotr

Club night and calendar

At the “slide night” we had presentations from Roddy Cameron, Norman Smith and Jane Clark gave a review of club activities 2023-24 (now on the website in information hub section). Members also brought along photographs and once again, a selection of images featured in the club calendar –on sale now.

SNIPPETS

Jane Clark

Blueberry Picking.

The club was lucky to have two good days to pick blueberries and we raised almost £600 for club funds.

Many thanks to the Thomson family for opening their fields and to all members, friends and pickers who came along – giving us lots of lovely jam and home baking – and a first -blueberry gin!



Liz and Blueberries

Sad Losses

Sadly, the club lost three long standing members of the “original C group” – the ladies. Mary Connelly in June, Betty Muirson in September and Mary Dow died in October.

All were keen members of the club turning out regularly until their health failed. Early photographs (from the Tom Morrison collection) (possibly Cairngorm) show them summiting Munros and they continued to enjoy lower-level walks and holidays to Scottish islands and the Isles of Scilly.



Mary (centre) and Betty (in navy)

Mary Connelly reached 101 in Spring 2023. Mountain Thyme carried a tribute to Mary for her 100th birthday. Betty took a keen interest in club matters and liked reading about members in Mountain Thyme (I used to pass her a hard copy of Mountain Thyme in the Cateran Café), and she enjoyed reminiscing at the coffee morning in February.



Mary Dow with Irene Macgregor on the Ochils 2003

Mary Dow is remembered by several of our older and past members as being a very kind and pleasant companion on club walks and weekends. She is also remembered as one of the first to use 2 leki sticks.

ScotWays Scottish Hill Tracks

John Mackay/Jane Clark

The sixth edition of Scottish Hill Tracks has just been launched after five years of work. The Club surveyed four routes in July 2022 around Dowally, Dunkeld, Alyth and Kirkmichael.

This version follows the format of the fifth edition of 2011, but with some important updates on routes.



James surveying

This and the introductory text have been well revised. The number of routes has risen slightly, largely on account of the welcome addition in the Outer Hebrides of five new routes in Lewis. The maps that support the descriptive texts for the regional sections are also much improved, compared with version five, which will help in linking the text with the necessary Ordnance maps - but they are not at all suitable as an alternative to the OS when out walking.

The good design of the new guidebook pages and the choice of illustrations also add much to the attraction and utility of previous versions of this guide, and as a voluntary body we can appreciate the effort required in the compilation of data acquired from volunteers across much of Scotland. We and our members have a main interest in the outdoor recreation content, but we should also recognise that information on routes of passage have a wider cultural importance in helping record how people moved in the past around the country.

ScotWays donated a copy of the book to the Club, and it will be a prize at the Club Quiz to be held on 7 February 2025.

Long Distance Walks again - West Highland Way

Irene Rintoul

On 24th September 4 friends, 3 of them members of the BDHC, set off to walk the 96 miles of the West Highland Way. Over the eight days they had reasonably good weather, with spectacular views. Conic Hill, the Devils Staircase and coming out of Kinlochleven, on the last day, fairly got the lungs pumping. They encountered many different nationalities the walk, Americans, Germans, English, Welsh and more. All in all, an enjoyable experience.



Towards Pap of Glencoe



West Highland Way finishers

Long Distance Walks again - Fife Coastal Path

Jane Clark

When I showed some school friends photographs of the club's walk on the FCP in July 2023, they were most impressed. Of course I offered to take them on a short section, to see if they liked walking by the coast (I picked a very scenic part at Pittenweem to Anstuther) and also getting to the start/end point by public transport – both experiments were successful. After that, they wanted more.

Over the course of a year, we completed the walk using busses and trains to get to the start or from the finishing points. Great fun, I enjoyed planning the outings and yes, there were some challenges as some parts of the path were eroded by storms, but three of us completed the full walk and one has some more sections to complete as moving house got in the way!



Fife Coastal Path finishers

CLOSING REMARKS

Jane Clark editor

I hope you enjoy this edition of Mountain Thyme with a good spread of stories and photos. Two articles, (Kelso weekend and Tay paddlers) feature in the blog and I encourage readers to check the information hub section of the website regularly as we aim to add an account of each walk. Members have been out walking long distance routes at home in Scotland and abroad and I have included short notes about these walks – of course the participants can tell you more -just ask.