

A G E n d a

Grampian 50+ Network News for

Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire & Moray



Issue 86
March 2022



**A beautifully calm winter's day - perfect for a walk by the Garioch
50+ (Wednesday) Ramblers**

NETWORK news

Afternoon Teas - see photos on pages 8 & 9

After such a break from normal activities, but with signs that things were improving, the committee felt it was important to begin to bring members together again. We planned six Afternoon Teas in different venues across the Region – in Fochabers, Mintlaw, Oldmeldrum, Tarland, Aberdeen and Stonehaven. We were very surprised to receive over 300 applications and, as there were still restrictions on numbers in venues, we had to add another two dates at Mintlaw and Oldmeldrum.



270 members attended. Naturally, mixing was limited but there was plenty of the usual chat. To add interest to the afternoons, and to encourage groups out walking again, we were very fortunate to have Country-side Rangers from Aberdeenshire and RSPB to deliver very interesting presentations. They included, “Winter Walks”, “Corbets” and “Dolphins and Whales”, as well as a film, available on YouTube, called “Wild North East – Scotland’s Natural Gem” – well worth a look.

We discovered from groups that whilst numbers had reduced in some groups, other groups had some new members.

The next year will, I’m sure, bring about many changes.

Marjory D’Arcy

Chairperson

We were unable to walk in groups for such a long time due to Covid restrictions so a wee reminder about:



**WALK LEADERS -
Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Be sufficiently familiar with the route to lead it safely
- Obtain a weather forecast prior to setting out
- Know the group and its capabilities, set a pace to suit the fitness of the group
- Be prepared to make judgments to modify plans or even cancel altogether if circumstances warrant
- Brief participants on what to expect (distance, terrain etc.)
- Establish and agree a set of ground rules
- Satisfy that what you are doing is environmentally sound and responsible
- Maintain appropriate control of the group and be able to account for the whereabouts of all members at all times
- Appoint a Back-Marker whose function is to ensure that no member falls behind and to close gates
- Highlight points of interest on the walk
- Encourage mutual responsibility (buddy systems etc.)
- Wear a hi-viz jacket or gilet and encourage the back-marker to do so too

Funding

At the end of 2021, the Scottish Government made funding available for 2022 to groups to assist in COVID Recovery. This funding is being managed by the Third Sector Interface or TSI Scotland Network. In Grampian that is Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO), Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action (AVA) and TSI Moray. The Network made applications to all three to assist with our 2022 Programme of Spring Fling, Ramblers’ Rendezvous and the AGenda Newsletter. We are delighted to inform you that we were successful in our bids from ACVO and AVA. We received £8,800 for 2022.



COTSWOLD
outdoor

**12.5%
discount**

for members of the
Grampian 50+ Network

How to claim:

Please present this flyer in-store, or use code
AF-GRAMNET-M2 online.

Full T&Cs apply. Code to be used in conjunction with any other offer or discount. Excludes items
not available for home delivery. Excludes items not available for online purchase. Offer valid for members
only. Excludes items not available for online purchase. Excludes items not available for online purchase. Offer
valid until 31/03/2022.

You can also use your discount with:

**SNOW
ROCK**

funnersneed
The running specialists



Due to the pandemic, with resultant low footfall, along with supply chain problems and inflation, with great regret Cotswold has to reduce member discount to 12.5% from 1st March 2022.

The Ramblers' Rendezvous will be held at Gordon Schools, Huntly, on 26th and 27th July. We are a bit short of helpers this year, so if any group or individual would be willing to help, please get in touch with **Sue Wright**, our Secretary. Thank you.

'Sharing is Caring'

Many of us in lockdown explored our local area, got to know it so much better and found new walks.

Please could you share those walks with us so that groups can also find these new walks. It may be on your back doorstep but we don't all know each other's areas.

Please give a brief description of the route, which map you use and note appropriate parking, nearest toilets, cafés and start points. A Grid Reference or What3Words is useful but not essential.

Many towns and villages now have their own Community Path Groups and have leaflets on their walks. These may be on the internet or you can pick them up locally e.g. Aboyne, Tarland, Lumphanan and more.

Why not ask other groups to show you walks that they enjoy. There is a wealth of experience amongst our members, lets tap into it.

Please ask me for a template for walks descriptions and send info to middleton-jdy@gmail.com (Note jdy as a Judy Middleton in Canada with middletonjudy.... Got a lot of autumn walks enquiries!)

Many thanks. **Judy Middleton**

100 Club CLOSURE

Dear Membership

Regretfully the 100 Club Lottery is now closed. In the process of attempting to align the 100 Club account with the main Network Account, it became apparent that there was a significant decrease in the number of membership renewals.

As a direct result of this, the difficult decision to close the 100 Club Lottery was taken by the Network Committee.

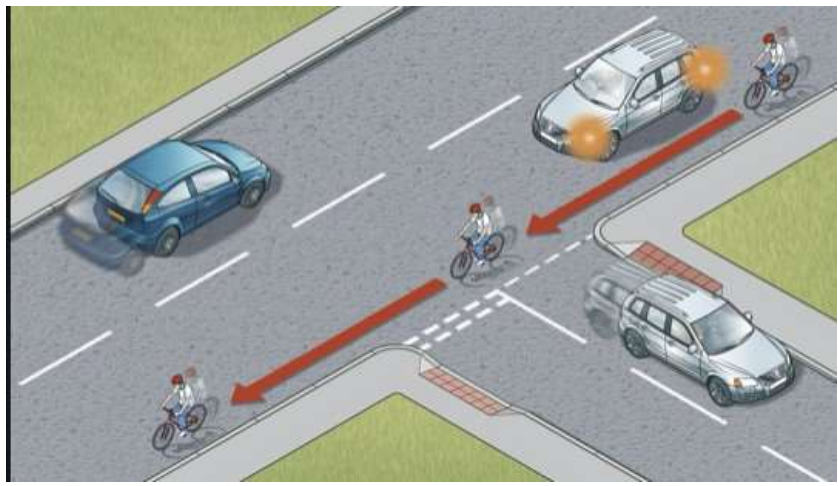
The committee would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who has supported the 100 Club Lottery in the past.

A special "Thank You" to the late Derek Ewen who founded the 100 Club Lottery, and to our past Treasurer, Alison Emslie, for all of their hard work and dedication to the 100 Club Lottery, over the years.

Lorna Rae
100 Club Promoter

Highway Code Changes 2022

The 'hierarchy of road users' is a concept that places those road users most at risk in the event of a collision at the top of the hierarchy. The hierarchy does not remove the need for everyone to behave responsibly. The road users most likely to be injured in the event of a collision are pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and motorcyclists, with children, older adults and disabled people being more at risk. The following H rules clarify this concept.



Rule H1

It is important that ALL road users are aware of The Highway Code, are considerate to other road users and understand their responsibility for the safety of others.

Everyone suffers when road collisions occur, whether they are physically injured or not., but those in charge of vehicles that can cause the greatest harm in the event of a collision bear the greatest responsibility to take care and reduce the danger they pose to others. This principle applies most strongly to drivers of large goods and passenger vehicles, vans/minibuses, cars/taxis and motorcycles.

Cyclists, horse riders and drivers of horse drawn vehicles likewise have a responsibility to reduce danger to pedestrians.

None of this detracts from the responsibility of ALL road users, including pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, to have regard for their own and other road users' safety.

Always remember that the people you encounter may have impaired sight, hearing or mobility and that this may not be obvious.

Rule H2 - Rule for drivers, motorcyclists, horse drawn vehicles, horse riders and cyclists

At a junction you should give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross a road into which or from which you are turning.

You **MUST** give way to pedestrians on a zebra crossing, and to pedestrians and cyclists on a parallel crossing (**see Rule 195**).

Pedestrians have priority when on a zebra crossing, on a parallel crossing or at light controlled crossings when they have a green signal.

You should give way to pedestrians waiting to cross a zebra crossing, and to pedestrians and cyclists waiting to cross a parallel crossing.

Horse riders should also give way to pedestrians on a zebra crossing, and to pedestrians and cyclists on a parallel crossing.

Cyclists should give way to pedestrians on shared use cycle tracks and to horse riders on bridleways.

Only pedestrians may use the pavement. Pedestrians include wheelchair and mobility scooter users.

Pedestrians may use any part of the road and use cycle tracks as well as the pavement, unless there are signs prohibiting pedestrians.

Rule H3 - Rule for drivers and motorcyclists

You should not cut across cyclists, horse riders or horse drawn vehicles going ahead when you are turning into or out of a junction or changing direction or lane, just as you would not turn across the path of another motor vehicle. This applies whether they are using a cycle lane, a cycle track, or riding ahead on the road and you should give way to them.

Do not turn at a junction if to do so would cause the cyclist, horse rider or horse drawn vehicle going straight ahead to stop or swerve.

You should stop and wait for a safe gap in the flow of cyclists if necessary. This includes when cyclists are:

- approaching, passing or moving off from a junction
- moving past or waiting alongside stationary or slow-moving traffic
- travelling around a roundabout

If you know any other 50+ walking groups, why don't you ask them to join the Network?

To Groups: If you need some help picking yourselves up after Covid, please get in touch.

New Committee members are always welcome. Please contact Sue, our Secretary.

Website Volunteer
As we were unable to find a member to volunteer to look after our website, we advertised in Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO). We are delighted to welcome **Kyle Graham** from **HSBC** to work with the committee and use his expertise to update our website.



Mountain Warehouse is offering a 15% reduction to members, valid until 31st July, 2022.

To claim the discount, either use code **G50WG** or this bar code -



There is an outlet in Inverurie Retail Park, the same business park as Lidl.

Russ Jacobs
Garioch Men's Walking Group

CONGRATULATIONS BILLY!

Billy's Story: I became a blood donor when my mother was ill and a doctor asked me if I had ever considered becoming a donor - and I am so glad I did.



After donating my first 100 pints, I received a letter from the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service telling me that my donations had been used to help 300 people; each pint can be used for up to 3 patients.

In over 50 years as a donor, I not only donated blood but was asked to donate platelets, which are often used in infant medicine.

I retired from donating on my 70th birthday, but recently have been contacted by the service to restart as the NHS has been struggling with supplies during the pandemic, so I will be rolling

up my sleeve again!
Billy McCook, Elgin 50+ Group

Annual Report - January to December 2021

Another year to remember with lots of uncertainties throughout the year. The Network Committee continued to meet and plan ahead, always hoping that we would be returning to the 'new normal.' As we could not organise the usual events, we concentrated on catching up with some of our admin and publicity.

AGenda- we produced Winter, Spring & Autumn Newsletters. Thank you to everyone who contributed and of course to Chris & Joan, our Editors. We trialled the AGenda in A5 size and with a positive report, we plan to do that again. We continue to offer it online or in paper copy to those who wish it. Your requests can change – just notify Sue, our Secretary.

In March we updated our Publicity Leaflet, produced a poster to invite new members and circulated to all groups.

In May we produced "Guidelines for Walkers" including coping with restrictions. Our slogan for Hi Viz waistcoats was agreed "RING, BELL or YELL". We supplied all groups with two waistcoats with the slogan.

As restrictions were lifted gradually, we held our Autumn Walks – at Ben-nachie, Chapelton, Forres, Edzell, Stonehaven – led by members of Stonehaven, Garioch and Moray groups. Thank you.

In November we held eight "Getting Together Again Afternoon Teas" in Fochabers, Mintlaw, Oldmedrum, Aberdeen, Tarland and Stonehaven – attended by 270 members.

Our Facebook page, for members only, managed by Judy, is becoming more popular and full of useful information and walks – why don't you join? If you don't know how, ask a child!

Many thanks to all the Committee Members for their continued support and to all our members for supporting the Network. Let's hope 2022 is a more active and happy year.

Marjory D'Arcy
Chairperson



AFTERNOON tea anyone?



YES PLEASE!

Left and below Kings, Bridge of Don

Network Committee comments
'It lifted my spirits to see everyone enjoying themselves together after a long period of separation. The food was a bonus!'

'The atmosphere at all events was just amazing.'



'There was a buzz as everyone enjoyed a Network event, which we had all missed.'

'Inspiring talks by knowledgeable and enthusiastic speakers'



Lochter



Lochter



Both shots from the second of the Lochter sessions



Below Stonehaven Golf Club



Above and below - Saplinbrae

'Members all as keen as ever.'



This year we celebrated our 30th birthday with a cake, cut by founder member Nancy Jamieson, assisted by original members Edith Murray, Theresa Simmers, Mary Grant, Peggy Sievwright and Rachael Davidson.

Keith 50+
Walking Group

During these 30 years, members have climbed mountains, created magnificent embroidery, learned German, taken archery lessons, to name but a few of the numerous activities they have been involved in. Nancy Jamieson has also received bronze, silver and gold Discovery Awards for older people.

At present, we have a total of forty-three members. A small group of about twelve are walkers and they set off on alternate Mondays with the Social Group. Our 50+ Group has gone from strength to strength over the years and continues to prosper, welcoming new members every year.



Above - some members examining items bought from Charity shops to find the best bargain, which turned out to be a very attractive mother of pearl pendant !



Loveina Clarke
Keith 50+

Discovery Group

At the time of writing, the North east Discovery Group is to meet on 5th March in Girlguiding HQ in Aberdeen. This is a chance for Discoverers from different parts of the area to meet, have discussions and show others how their projects are going. There will be two speakers, one of whom will give a talk on how we can get involved in our local food banks.

THE DISCOVERY AWARD
An achievement award for people over 50



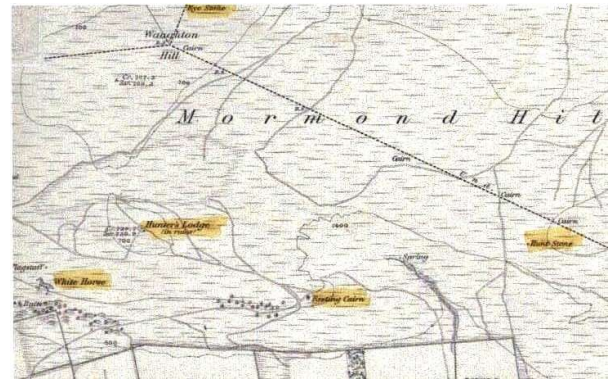
The meeting will end with a presentation of awards to those who have been working hard over a number of years on their different projects. Gold awards will go to Helen Fowlie and Audrey McAngus, both from Deveron Quines, and a Silver award to Ellen Smith from Cults 050 Group.

Congratulations to the three of them.

Alan Stewart

The Corpse Road

Prior to the building of a church in Strichen in 1620, and the subsequent creation of a Strichen Parish in 1633, the greater part of what is now Strichen Parish was in Rathen Parish, and the rest in Fraserburgh. It followed, then, that those people living on the west side of Mormond Hill would, on their death, be interred in the consecrated ground at St Eddran's Church, (The Mother Church) over Mormond Hill in the village of Rathen, the only burial ground then existing in the parish.



For hundreds of years, and even after a church and burial ground was established in Strichen, the dead were carried over Mormond Hill for internment at Rathen. This led to the creation of what is known as the Corpse Road or Coffin Road over the hill to Rathen some 9 miles distant. The route of the Corpse Road can still be followed on the hill today, although agriculture on both sides of the hill would make it impossible to follow the entire route. The part on the hill itself, however, could be transformed into an excellent scenic rambling or walking route of some 3 – 4 miles long.

Mintlaw Ramblers at the White Horse



There are many landmarks on the hill which would be of great interest to visitors, the best known being the White Horse on the Strichen side of the hill, thought to be created by Lord Fraser to commemorate a fallen Sergeant James Hutcheon of New Deer who fell at the Battle of Gilzen (Netherlands) in 1794.

The Hunters Lodge on the very top of Waughton Hill is believed to have been built by the same Lord Fraser and has the inscription **'In this Hunters Lodge Rob Gibb Commands MDCCLXXIX (1779)**. Rob Gibb was a jester at the court of Charles II.

On the Rathen side of the hill is the Great White Stag, also laid in white quartz and a very impressive figure indeed, commissioned by Mr W F Cordiner of Cortes estate as a wedding gift to his bride in 1870 and built by the tenants of the estate.

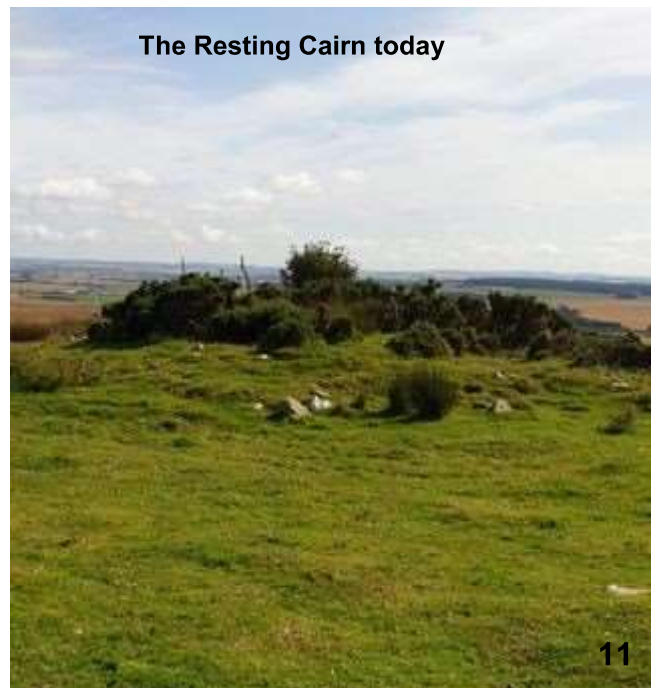
There are numerous **'lych stanes'** (rest stones where a coffin could be placed) along the Corpse Road, the **Resting Cairn**, still in existence, probably being the best known of these. The **Fount Stone** is possibly a place where baptisms took place, and possibly a pagan ritual site, while **The Hunt Stone** is thought to have been a meeting place before the hunts began.

St Eddren's Hermitage (now destroyed) is marked by a clearing where it is believed the original Hermitage stood. St Eddren was a 7th century monk and missionary and Rathen's old St Eddren's Church is dedicated to him. There are many more points of interest on the hill and possibly many more to find. It is, therefore, such a shame that back in 2016 Aberdeenshire Council described it as being not a "special landscape" and did not include it in their list of **'Special Landscape Areas.'** To the people of Buchan it is indeed a very special place, even down to forecasting the weather with the old rhyme

***Faan Mormond Hill pits on her hat
Ye Buchan lads beware o' that***

I would love to see the old Corpse Road re-opened as a walking route and believe Mormond Hill, with its special landmarks, could be a tourist attraction in its own right. Perhaps one day Aberdeenshire Council will realise what they are missing and take the initiative to do something about it.

Doug Simpson, Mintlaw Ramblers



The Resting Cairn today

Another wee bit of fun!

Waterways of Scotland – rivers, lochs, firths, etc.

Answers at the bottom of page18

1. North east secret service
2. Sounds like three came before this one
3. A Scots do
4. Spanish title
5. A Bonnie mate
6. Sounds forsaken
7. Scottish exclamation around me
8. Learner hotel male
9. Hebridean cloth
10. Scottish man-made water way
11. Sounds like it's almost a continent
12. Female sheep
13. Part of the leg
14. Witch's mode of transport
15. The sound of wet snow
16. Always within a nearby river
17. A Wifie will tell your fortune
18. Discover a ram's head-dress
19. Could be an eel but sounds like a mint!
20. Lake with an unknown quantity



River Eden, Fife



Waters of Leith, Edinburgh

Ramblers' ramblings



The Garioch Wednesday Ramblers kept going even when weather conditions and Covid restrictions made walking difficult.

**Garioch
Ramblers**

The photographs are courtesy of fellow walker, Zelda. They were taken on a cold

and frosty Wednesday morning in January, when we walked from Port Elphinstone to Roquharold Wood. We could only walk halfway into the wood due to the amount of fallen trees all around but the scenery more than made up for it.



Right - one of the fallen trees - a sight all too common right now.

Sue Wright - Garioch 50+ Ramblers

Fetternear Estate, Kemnay

A very good turnout of 16 Ramblers set off on a cold and frosty morning. Warm clothing was definitely a necessity. The walk by the River Don was lovely, but it wasn't long until we started to see the aftermath of destruction Storm Arwen had left in its wake. Huge, tall trees had been toppled over, leaving their shallow roots open to the elements – very sad to see.

Bishop's Palace was a beautiful, old, pink granite ruin. It is such a pity that trees have been left to grow out of the windows. Back down on to the same road, then up a narrow, steep path, fallen trees made a good seat for a lunch stop, giving us beautiful, open views over the countryside with Bennachie away in the distance. There are lots of different trails for walking at Fetternear.

This was a very good walk and we hope to see a good number of Ramblers for another eventful walk on 1st. February at Leith Hall.

Schivas House, Ythanbank

A very pleasant walk for us. Cars were parked easily at the Mission hall, Ythanbank and 15 members set off for our country walk of 5.8 miles. The Schivas road was a long, gradual climb until we reached the top. Looking back,

**Ellon
Ramblers**

you could see Bennachie had a wee covering of snow at the top. It just reminded us it was still snowy season, although the weather we had was windy and the sun was warm on our backs - a good day for rambling. We crossed over at the crossroads and into Schivas Estate. On the left you could see the wee brown hut of Ythanbank's telephone exchange – a very important little hut in this day and age.

Schivas House (a wedding venue) is a beautiful house, clad in ivy, with lovely, neat grounds at the front. A small lake with a bridge, a walled garden and a stone, tiered fountain can all be seen at the back of the house. A converted barn now houses a swimming pool where youngsters can learn to swim in the heated water. You can continue down the tree-lined avenue or, like we did, go back on to the farm road. Many trees which had been blown down during recent gales could still be seen as we continued over the hill and down to Tanglandford bridge, where we turned left and followed the River Ythan back to Ythanbank.

Many thanks go to one of our members for suggesting and leading this walk – a lovely walk right on our doorsteps that the majority of our group never knew was there.

Aileen Taylor, Ellon Ramblers

We have had a good summer rambling, still not car sharing, but trying to social distance.

**Meldrum
Ramblers**

Fyvie Castle was another of our walks, not overly long but enjoyable nevertheless.

This year we have a strong core of around 14 ramblers, as opposed to our previous 30 or so pre Covid. However, we managed a summer bus run to Invercauld/Balmoral and dined at the Honka Hut, there being no famous personages there, then moved on to admire the rapids from Queen Victoria's bridge where my wife lost one of the lenses of her sun glasses!



Fyvie Castle Lake

In August, we did Fetternear, always a popular walk and this time there was no rain, always a bonus.

Forvie Bird Sanctuary is a favourite of ours. This time we were diverted because a body was found on one of the paths. A sad Christmas for someone



Fetternear



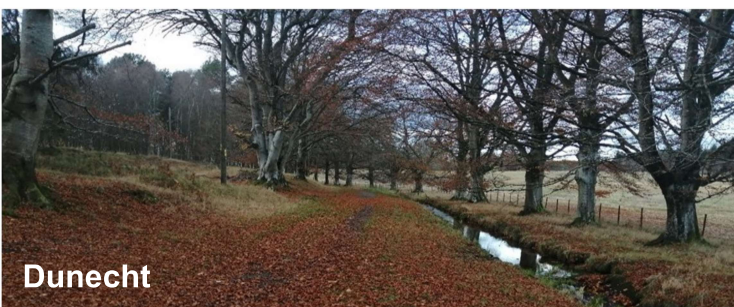
Hackley Bay, Forvie

Another of our popular walks is Monymusk Estate, where one of our ramblers lost his phone, but thankfully found it again. The trees at Monymusk are beautiful at any time, but especially so in spring and autumn.

Our first walk of 2022 was Keith-Hall, our regular opener of the year. A good turnout as always.

In October we did Lyne of Skene/Dunecht. The autumn foliage was spectacular, breathtakingly beautiful.

We hope 2022 will be a safer year for us and that we will get back to car sharing and an increase in our numbers again, fingers crossed.



Dunecht

**Sandy McIntosh.
Meldum Ramblers**

This Christmas, 2021, Meldrum and Bourtie Parish Church invited groups, schools, businesses, charities, individuals etc to take part in a Community Christmas Tree Project.



Oldmeldrum Ramblers entered a tree with a view to raising awareness of our group. In all 14 lovely and very different trees went on display in the church. At an open day the public were invited to vote for the trees in various categories. We were delighted that our tree won the category that **"Best represents an organisation."** Photos of all the trees can still be seen on the church's FB page. **Marilyn Torr**



Chapel of Pitfour

Hi Folks. A remarkable opportunity arose for Mintlaw Ramblers on our **September 21** walk when we were invited by Ian and Laura to visit their lovely home at the converted Chapel of Pitfour. The beautifully converted chapel is really something dreams are made of with fabulous views over the Buchan countryside. Ian further treated us to views from the top of the chapel tower, followed by teas and coffees for all. Thank you so much Ian and Laura for your kindness and generosity of spirit.

For our next three walks in September/October, we used public transport and broke with the local walks theme for a spell. **On 29th Sept** we visited the town of Ellon and did the Ellon Circular Walk, including a visit to the ancient Caroline's Well and Ellon War Memorial. **On 13th Oct** we went in the opposite direction and visited Fraserburgh, a town presently being transformed by extensive improvements by Fraserburgh Heritage Trust. We were fortunate to secure a visit to the South Church in the town and to see the ancient Moses Stone located inside the church. This beautifully carved stone originally stood above the doorway of Fraserburgh University and dates back to 1595.



The Moses Stone

On 27th October we travelled to Aberdeen and walked along the Beach Boulevard to Footdee, (Fittie). We also visited Theatre Lane, Aberdeen's oldest "close" that originally ran under the Theatre Royal from the stage to the auditorium.

At a committee meeting on **28th October**, it was decided we would hire the private coach for the next three walks to gauge whether members were willing to return to our normal mode of transport, with the assent we would not travel further than 30minutes in the coach. This was fairly well received and a good number of members (though not all) were confident enough to come along. **On 10th November** we travelled to Turriff and had a very enjoyable walk through Forglen Estate. **On 24th Nov.** we walked over the Witch Hill near Fraserburgh and visited the ghostly Witches' Stone on top of the hill, where (it is said) the witches were hanged and burned back in the 16th and 17th Century. On the **8th December** we visited the town of Peterhead and had an enjoyable walk following the Heritage Trail for much of the way. This was to be our final walk of 2021.

Our first walk of 2022 had to be cancelled due to stormy weather ,but a committee meeting went ahead on 6th January. It was decided that, due to the appearance of the Omicron variation, we would return to the local area for the next two walks. We did, however, manage to draw up a full programme of walks through until June 22, and we are hopeful that the epidemic will recede far enough to let us fulfil this exciting bill of fare

Doug Simpson
Mintlaw Ramblers



The Witches Stone

Where do we start on this Winter of walking
When it's the weather that's really got us all talking?
But before and after the storm we've still enjoyed a wander,
Only limited in choice now as our paths were torn asunder.

Storm Arwen came and was shocking to say the least,
Even worse than that storm in the past they called the beast from the east.
The power of nature was seen with devastation everywhere,
Trees snapped and felled and their roots laid bare.

From August to November we did Kemnay Leschangie wood,
Also Rothiemay, both of which were very good.
Craig Leek was amazing with stunning Deeside views,
And Craievar and Leith hall were beautiful in all their autumnal hues.

Glen Gairn was a showery, multiple rainbow kind of day,
With excitement at the sight
Of adder, dipper and eagle along the way.
Johnshaven to Inverbervie was wet and Knockagerty sunny and dry,
Corrennie moor, Dess and Bucksburn were next, all with a clear blue sky.

After Arwen we had to carefully pick safe routes,
Haughton and Murray parks at Alford where we saw too many trees' bare roots.
Lumphanan, Monymusk, Fetternear and Persley den were all quite safe to do,
Also Breda estate and river Don and Barra hill with it's wonderful view.

So, as the clearance continues and we get our walks back,
We at least can hope that we're on the right track.
We can see the results of such a terrible storm,
And appreciate our countryside hoping this is not the new norm.





Insch Group

The Insch group on a visit to Houghton Park in the snow.

Huntly Group

The Huntly club's visit to Duff House to view the snow-drops.

**Ann Agnew
Both Clubs**

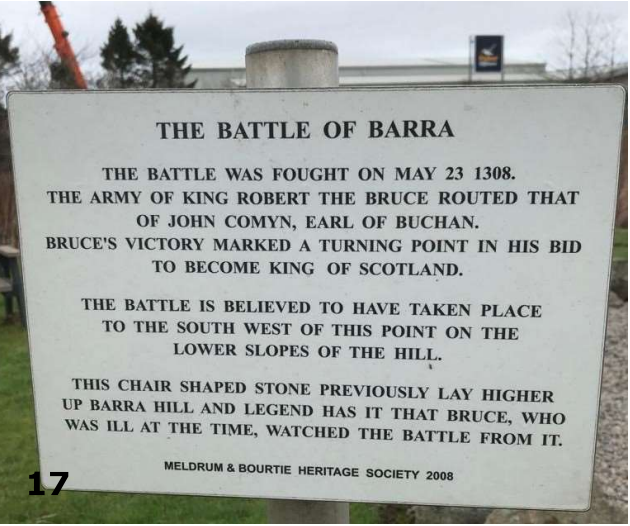


Peterhead Wayfarers

Walkers are back to normal with coaches to Pitfour Lake, Inverurie and Aberdeen beach among others. Our trip to Crathes Castle was a lovely day as the photos show. The detail on the carvings is amazing!



Our club enjoys lots of social gatherings after the walks. We had a wonderful Christmas lunch at the Heath Hill in Memsie and a Burns lunch with a very interesting speaker in Peterhead. We are looking forward to a holiday in Dunoon, Oban and Bute.



February took us to Oldmeldrum and Barra Hill, to the site of the battle of 1308

Doug Driver



From March to July, 2021 we walked locally within Peterhead. Different routes were followed and interesting pieces of information were gleaned about the various areas.

On Wednesday, 29th July we had a walk to remember! We were allowed to travel by bus for the first time and we headed out to Longside. Just commenced our walk when the rain came on. Short walkers went to Symposium for a coffee while the rest of the group headed out of Longside and followed a route through the Inverquhomery Estate. It absolutely poured! As one member said we should have been singing, 'Singing in the Rain' while another suggested a tune by 'Wet! Wet! Wet! The sense of humour kept up spirits!

Two good walks in August, one was in the Dudwick/Ellon area and the other was from New Byth to Cuminstown.

On 8th September we travelled to Methlick area and had a walk which took us past Gight Castle and along the River Ythan. It was a lovely sunny day, an interesting walk but a bit tricky in parts due to over-grown areas.

On 22nd September we had a very good walk at Stirlinghill ending up in Boddam where picnic lunches were enjoyed overlooking the water in a quiet, peaceful spot. Great walk just on the outskirts of Peterhead!

Wednesday, 6th October and we went to Waters of Philorth where we walked on various routes over sand dunes then went along the old railway line finishing up in Cairnbulg.

Another step back to normality on 20th October when we had our Autumn Outing. We travelled into Aberdeen, walked at Hazlehead then went on to Johnston Gardens. Lovely Autumn colours were greatly enjoyed. After walking we headed to Buckie Farm for a fine relaxed meal.

On a dull, wet morning on 2nd November we travelled to Banff for our walk. We were dropped off near Duff House and had an enjoyable walk to Bridge of Alvah and back the same paths. Rain went off as we came off the bus, stayed dry for our walk then rained on our return journey!

Our last walk of the year was on 17th November when we walked from Udney Green to Tarves. A good walk and great weather for November.

On 1st December members met up at Ban-Car Hotel in Lonmay for a Christmas lunch. A leisurely three course lunch was enjoyed then it was time to return to The Bloo Toon. A most enjoyable finish up to our walking year.

Hazel Beaton

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Ness
2. Forth
3. Dee
4. Don
5. Clyde
6. Lorne
7. Oich
8. Linnhe
9. Tweed
10. Caledonian Canal

11. Affric
12. Ewe
13. Shin
14. Broom
15. Slea
16. Deveron
17. Spey
18. Findhorn
19. Moray
20. Lochy



The laundry at Morven Lodge

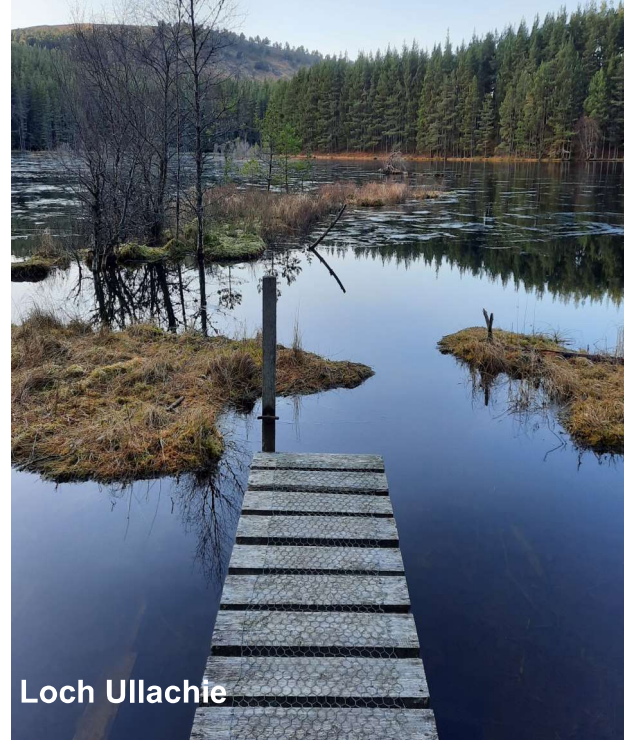
Our planned winter programme has been affected by the numerous storms. On most occasions an alternative walk, avoiding the worst of the damage, was available. We are so fortunate to have such a variety of walks so close to home.

**Ballater
50+**

Right - the Cairn, locally known as Alan's Prop overlooking Ballater



View of Lochnagar from Bovaglie, Glen Gironck



Loch Ullachie

Mearns 50+ Group

At Mearns 50+ Group, we wonder if we are unusual, in that we have a pair of members who are mother and daughter! Lily Barnett has been a very active member for many years - and is well-known for her cloutie dumplings! Now her daughter, Kathleen Lynch has returned to this area and has joined us also.

In November we walked around Fasque Estate near Fettercairn; another walk planned for there at the start of January had to be cancelled because of gale damage. Our second November walk was from Portlethen towards Newtonhill. Despite frost in the morning, it was a beautiful day. We had lunch overlooking the sea; the sky was blue, the sea was calm; it was hard to believe this was November!

A walk around Kirriemuir in December had to be changed because of storm damage there. Instead we walked – fairly quickly and with no lunch stop – from Bervie to Gourdon and beyond. The weather forecast was for very heavy rain at about 2pm. Our walk leaders timed it well and we were back to the cars before the rain started.

Walks since the middle of January have been around Arbroath, Montrose, Brechin and St Cyrus. These areas were less affected by storm damage than our home area. Much of Denlethen Wood near Laurencekirk, is cordoned off and the main paths seem impassable. Nearby woods at Inglismaldie, Capo and the Burn have been absolutely devastated. **Helen Ritchie**



Fallen trees near Luthermuir

<https://emuseum.aberdeencity.gov.uk/objects/110921/division-sited-in-hazlehead-park-azalea-garden-aberdeen>

**Garioch 50+
Men's
Walking
Group**

These were spied on a recent walk in and around Hazlehead and Maidencraig areas, where there were not too many trees to negotiate.

Now in our 7th year of walking as a group, we are walking most Tuesdays, averaging 15 walkers each week. Eight of us managed to stay at Muir Cottage in September although the weather was a bit damp and we had to utilise the drying room for the first time. We are hoping to return in May which is our normal time to go.

In December, about 24 of us enjoyed a pre-Xmas lunch at Kemnay Golf Club, which was an excellent venue with attentive staff and good food. We finished off with a prize-giving for the most enjoyable walk, the longest walk, the largest number on a walk, the sunniest walk and the wettest walk. Thanks, Henry, for organising these events and for providing and presenting the prizes.

Russ Jacobs

'Whatever the Weather'

**Stone-
haven 50+
Walking
Group**

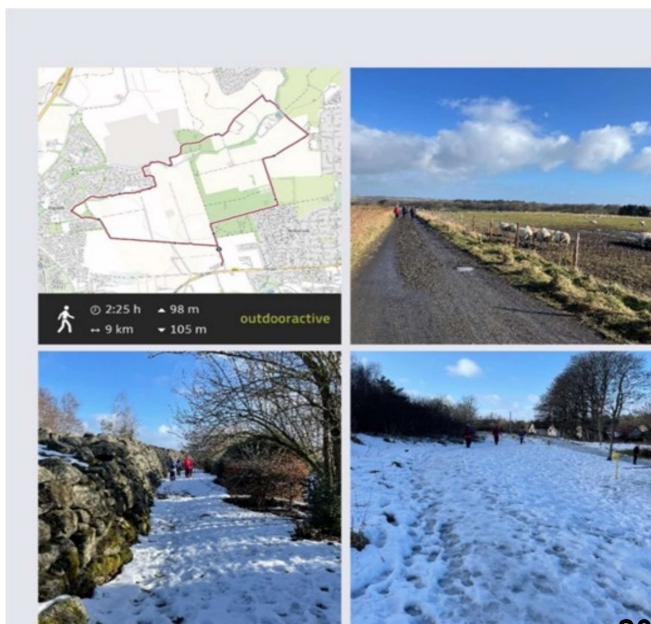
Hi Folks, well here we are, the first day of Spring, sun shining, little wind, snowdrops and crocuses on view - glorious. Perfect day for a walk. After the last few weeks of stormy weather, a rare treat. However looking over our recent walks surprisingly we have cancelled none, but made location adjustments to some due to fallen trees and closed roads. We have been very lucky, damp, windswept and a wee bit cold but otherwise have walked as planned, 'whatever the weather'.

Our most recent group walk however became a ramble with a difference!

Having set off on a nice sunny but breezy day from home we were met with Arctic conditions on our arrival at Dobbies, Aberdeen, for the Bucksburn Valley walk. This group of intrepid explorers then set off, a stiff wind behind them, along the first ice field into the trees where they encountered snow, slush, mud and fallen trees. After a welcome cuppa they then continued along the way, now becoming aquatic explorers having to navigate their way round very large deep pools of water. A brief respite along the wooden boardwalk, dry underfoot, sun out, wind dropped. Immediately off this path, more snowy conditions. Some of the explorers then set off along the side of the consumption dyke, unfortunately reaching a dead end. No turning back for these explorers who threshed their way through

The branches to make their way through the trees to meet the rest of the group. The explorers then encountered another ice field that led them into the forest where another welcome cuppa was enjoyed while listening to the wind howling through the upper branches. After navigating yet another ice field, they then made their way towards the end of the walk where the first ice field had now turned into a long stream. The strong wind pushing them along. The reward at the end of their adventure - a lovely snack in Dobbies. Glowing cheeks and mud-spattered trousers turning a few heads.

Betty Luurtsema, Linda Sturton & Aileen Philip Stonehaven 50+



POET'S corner

Aboyne
50+

During periods of isolation, there is time to reminisce and ponder things you miss - and don't miss. I have a long association with Arran from childhood to the present, and the one thing that, more than anything else, I **DON'T** miss is the Scottish midge!

The Midge

On the isle of Arran, there's a caravan
The occupants covered in lumps.
The midges are out
And their scout has found out
There's a campsite to plunder as well

On the island of Arran there are golfers who run
Voluntarily into the burn.
As each hacker comes out,
The midges turn out
To bite every player in turn.

There is nothing slight about an Arran midge bite!
Keep your face and your bum under cover.
I've seen grown men cry
And hope quickly they'd die
Before catching the boat home to mother!



Morgan Fisher. Aboyne 50+

Having had to cancel our last walk before Christmas due to the effects of Storm Arwen, and our usual local walk and festive lunch in January because of Covid restrictions, we are now back walking as a group. With restrictions partially lifted, we were able to have our AGM, where we had a good attendance and welcomed a number of new members.

Fraserburgh
50+ Group

Happy to be back together for our first walk of the year in Pitfour and Aden, we were made so aware of the devastation to trees caused by the storm and the ongoing clearing up operations. In early March we had a lovely walk, on a cold, but bright day, starting in Old Deer, climbing the hill at Aikey, from which we had wonderful views of the countryside, on through Stuartfield and back to Old Deer. Much of the walk was on paths, which is always pleasant. On both occasions, we fortified ourselves for the walks by having delicious scones and coffee at The Lodge in Strichen and The Mustard Seed in New Deer.

Our cancelled festive lunch has been re-scheduled for later in March. We can be festive at any time of the year!

Chris Ritchie

PHOTO call

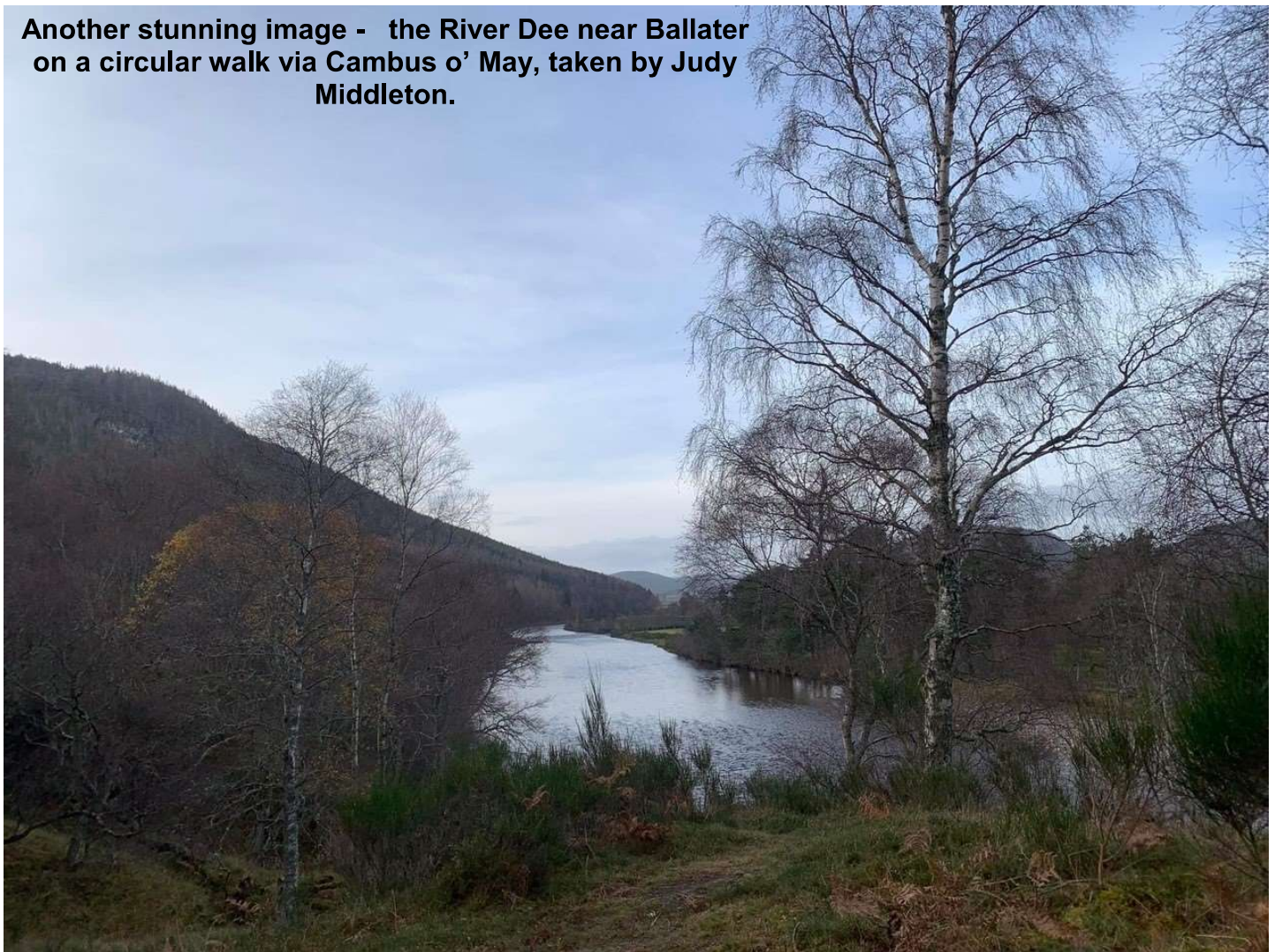
Three more amazing images from *Peterhead Wayfarer's* day at Crathes Castle



Johnstone Tower - Paul Stenton, Mearns
50+

Above - this stunning picture from Eva Legge, Bloo Toon Ramblers taken at Bridge of Alvah.

Another stunning image - the River Dee near Ballater on a circular walk via Cambus o' May, taken by Judy Middleton.



Farquharson's Needle nr Cambus o' May - Judy Middleton.



Mearns 50+ at Brechin Castle garden & Distillery - Paul Stenton

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Website: www.grampian50plusnetwork.com

Grampian50+ Committee 2019/2020



Chair

Marjory D'Arcy



**Secretary
Membership Secy
Sue Wright**



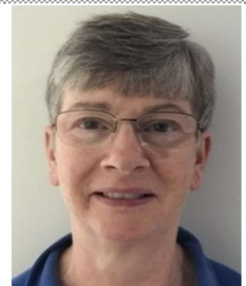
Minute Secretary

Catherine Mason



Treasurer

Graeme Rae



100 Club

Lorna Rae



**Sheila
Erridge**



**Jo
Jones**



**Judy
Middleton**



**Diana
Miller**



**Alan
Melrose
Age Scotland**



OCTOBER

No 20	N Keiller	£25
No 11	S McIntosh	£20
No 21	S Aitken	£15

NOVEMBER

No 85	P Gray	£25
No 139	S McIntosh	£20
No 146	I Rae	£15

DECEMBER

No 1	J Addison	£25
No 14	M Cormie	£20
No 127	S Wright	£15

SEPTEMBER

No 93	M Loggie	£25
No 136	M Gunn	£20
No 112	G Pirie	£15