

A G E n d a

Grampian 50+ Network News for

Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire & Moray



Registered Scottish Charity SCO31721

Issue 87
July 2022



Photo by Zelda Middleton, Garioch Ramblers, on a tranquil walk around Drum Castle recently.

NETWORK news

From the Editors

Hello Everybody,

Isn't it wonderful to see Network events happening again, with the Spring Fling in Fraserburgh and the Spring Walks in Tarland having already taken place, and, we hope, enjoyed by all who attended! Now we can look forward to the Rendezvous in Huntly with an excellent choice of walks, activities and visits (which will already have taken place by the time you read this), and the prospect of a holiday in 2023.

Diane Millar and Lorna Rae retired from the Network Committee at the AGM and I am sure we would all like to thank them for their hard work – Diane, especially for her work on the walks sub group and Lorna for running the 100 Club. The vacant places on the Committee have been filled by 4 new members, bringing the committee up to full capacity for the coming year.

From your articles, it is clear that all the groups are enjoying the benefits, both physical and mental, of walking together again and returning to a more normal situation. Please keep your excellent walk reports and lovely pictures coming!

Thus, everything seems to be going in a very positive direction and we still have the summer ahead of us!

Enjoy!

Chris & Joan

Help us map your local paths.

Sadly, Scottish maps don't show many of our local paths; this stops people getting out and about. The Ramblers have created an online map of Scotland's paths to help people get walking. Check out our website to see the map by following the link:

[MappingScotland'sPaths](#)

- We want to make sure our map is correct so people can walk with confidence in their areas.
- Supporting us volunteers can care for your local paths through carrying out simple path surveys.
- By walking local paths, you can record their condition, and if they are part of a larger network.
- We also ask you to capture hidden paths and add them to the path network.
- Carrying out a review is simple using our online map on your phone or at home on a computer.
- We will support you by one-to-one advice and training using our online audit path map
- To talk about you or a group getting involved drop an email to
2 Heath.Brown@ramblers.org.uk



Community Chaplaincy Listening Service

The Community Chaplaincy Listening Service (CCL) is a listening service provided by NHS Grampian's Healthcare Chaplaincy Department, endorsed by NHS Education for Scotland.

All CCL volunteer listeners are experienced and trained in active listening skills, allowing clients to access a 50 minute appointment in which they can share their stories in their own words, in their own time, within a safe, non-judgemental environment.

Jane Walls and Ingrid Penny are the recently appointed volunteer coordinators for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire respectively. They are keen to promote the service to NHS colleagues so that they can make patients aware and refer them to the service. They are also keen to attract new volunteers for both city and shire and can be contacted on

gram.listening@nhsscot



We would love to remind you of the Grampian 50+ Network of the discount available in store and online at Craigdon. We can offer 15% in our Aberdeen and Inverurie shops and online on our website - www.themountainedge.com Use discount code CLUB15 when prompted at the online checkout.

Offer valid in Aberdeen and Inverurie shops and online <https://www.themountainedge.com/> using the code at the online checkout. Offer not applicable to sale items already discounted by more than 15%.

Please note that the 15% is not applicable to gift vouchers or sale items discounted by more than 15%.

Hope your members will enjoy shopping with us and just let me know if you need any other information.

Kind regards

***Katie Ross
Manager
Craigdon Aberdeen***

First Aid Training

New First Aid training sessions are currently being arranged by the Network, who need to know how many members are interested in training, either for the first time, or to renew certificates that have run out.



If you are interested, please email the network Secretary, Sue Wright, at

grampian50plus@hotmail.com

Path Leaflets

Many towns and villages have downloadable path leaflets on their websites, e.g. Huntly, Tarland, Torphins, Lumphanan and Westhill. Leaflets are available from Forest and Land Scotland, SOAT (Scottish Outdoor Access Trust) for Craigleek, Braemar and other areas.

It is always worth searching for information before you visit an area.

Judy Middleton

SPRING walks

The Spring Walks were held in the Tarland area on 9th & 11th May 2022.

The Easy walk was through Alastrean Woods and on to the Sun seat and the Tomnaverie Stone Circle very ably led by Marjory and Peter Craig and Sheila Carter, all of whom were very willing to share their knowledge about the area. Since the walks, I know at least one group have asked Marjory and Peter to lead their group some-time. This walk attracted 32 members over the two days.



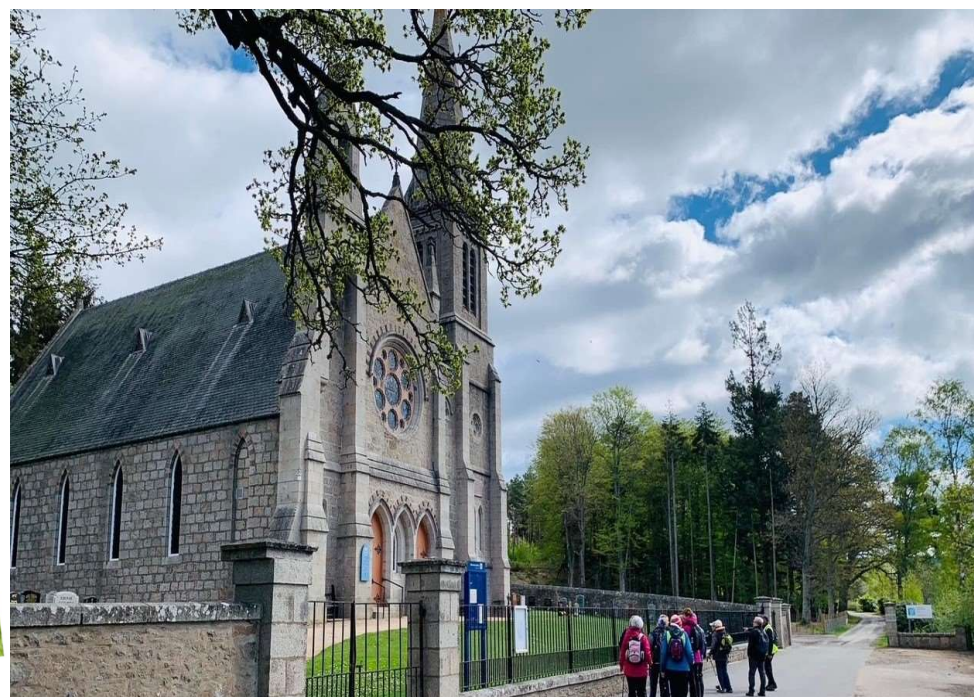
The Medium walk was to the Tomnaverie Stone Circle, Knockgerety Fort and Corrachree and was very ably led by Alford Group members. It attracted 20 members.

The Hard walk was up Pittenderich and though numbers were small, 13 in total, it was much enjoyed by all and was led by Aboyne members. Having the MacRobert Hall open for use of the toilets before the walks was much appreciated and many of us enjoyed a cuppa and scone or fine piece at the Tarland Tea Room.



A huge thank you to all the Leaders and Back Markers for organising these walks.

Tarland is a lovely area and has an extremely good path network. Maps can be found online or picked up in Tarland at their notice board by the Square.





These boots were made for walking! OK - how many of you are singing along??

Spring Fling 2022

Fraserburgh Academy

The long-awaited Spring Fling, which was held in sunny Fraserburgh, was a great day. These events incur a lot of behind the scenes work by willing volunteers and the Fraserburgh and Sandhaven groups volunteers worked hard to make this day such a success. I look forward to next year's Spring Fling, wherever it is held, and will be a willing volunteer but will leave the stress to someone else!

Thanks to all who participated.

Sheila Erridge

This was our first big event of the year and the first Spring Fling since 2019. Some 27 Groups were represented on the day and they travelled from all over Grampian and Moray. We were delighted and encouraged with the response. So much so, we laid on buses from Aberdeen, Kingswells and Elgin to ensure everyone who needed it, had transport to Fraserburgh and back.

The day dawned a little dull, then turned bright and dry and just what we needed for the numerous walks and variety of visits, planned throughout the day. The indoor activities proved to be very successful and judging by the comments, much enjoyed by those who took part. Our thanks to all the tutors involved.

Our AGM resulted in three new Committee members (Liz Major, Elaine Smith and Paul Stenton) and one co-opted Committee member (Anne Agnew) joining our team, again very encouraging and much appreciated. Our thanks to departing Committee Members, Diane Miller and Lorna Rae for all previous help and support.

Finally, thanks and a special mention need to go to the helpers from local Groups, Fraserburgh 50+ and Haven Strollers, who worked their socks off to ensure everyone was taken care of throughout the day. Also Sheila Erridge, who at the last minute, had to stand in for Majory D'Arcy, our Chair, because she came down with Covid just prior to the event. You did well, Sheila, thank you for keeping everyone on track throughout the day and ensuring a good time was had by all.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Gordon Schools, Huntly, on Tuesday, 26th July, 2022, for our next main event, the Ramblers' Rendezvous.

Sue Wright
pp Grampian 50+ Network Committee



Spring Fling 2022





Ramblers' rambles

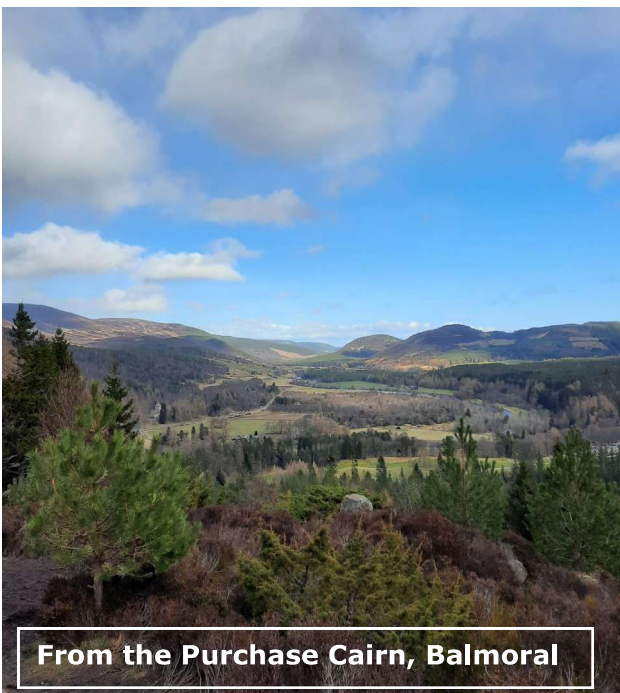
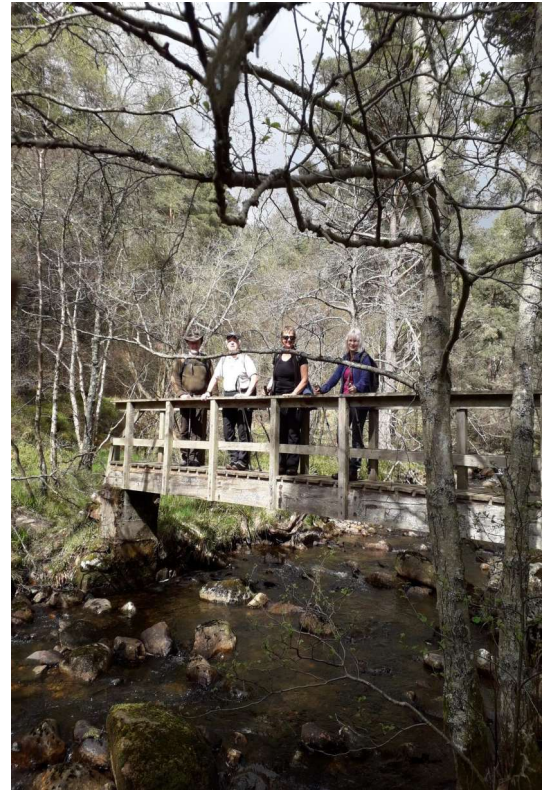
It is great to be back walking 'almost' normally again!

We at Alford Ramblers are a bit down on numbers now but those who have returned have enjoyed a range of walks in what can only be described as mixed weather! It is, however, sad that some of our number are still unsure about returning to group activities.

A walk to an old slate quarry at Terpersie near Alford in lovely sunshine certainly made one forget "the world and its 'sad turmoils.'

Another of our walks was near Ballater up Sgor Buidhe and down to the Tullich Burn returning by the Deeside Way which was enjoyed in pleasant sunshine by a small but enthusiastic group of our members. (photo right)

Fiona Robertson - Alford Ramblers



From the Purchase Cairn, Balmoral



Brown was the predominant colour during our walks in early spring with snowdrops and daffodils adding the odd splash of colour. With no foliage on the trees we were afforded views which will not be visible later in the year.

The first tinges of green appeared on the trees, birds returned from their winter homes, armies of toads headed to the ponds. Walking through the forests we commented on the many shades of green we could see; the soft, spring growth on deciduous trees so refreshing.

Now, with warmer days, plants release their essential oils, the smell of coconut from vibrant gorse and the distinctive smell of bog myrtle evoke childhood memories.

The trees are in full leaf, birds are singing and grasslands are full of colourful flowers. There is still evidence of storm damage but uprooted trees and fallen branches are providing new habitats for flora and fauna.

Most of our walks during spring were local but as we head into summer we plan to venture further afield to enjoy the wonders of nature while walking with friends.

Susan Lawson - Ballater 50+

It was good to meet up again after two long years and we were so pleased to see so many familiar faces.

Our first walk in April was to Pitfour Lake. The sun was shining and we found a good seating area for our lunch among the many fallen trees scattered around the lake. (top right)

Our 2nd walk took us nearer to home the hill of Petty at Fyvie. The weather was good to us and we had lovely views of the rape fields just starting to turn yellow and the village of Fyvie in the distance.

Hopefully we will be travelling further afield now as we have secured a coach and a driver for our future walks.

Julie Dyer - Turriff & Upper Ythan Walking Group



This was written at a particularly difficult period in my relationship with my mower. She has served me well for sixteen years and as long as her heart keeps beating she will continue cutting our acre of grass. Bless her!

I'll go no Mower a' Mowing

I'll go no mower a' mowing on my tractor mower today,
she told me most sincerely that she wasn't fit to play.
'Twas not a sound mechanical, more a sigh of want to rest -
that forced my hand to switch her off, a decision for the best!
My friend and I went mowing to cut the grass one day -
through dandelion and daisy in a budding time in May.
At first I heard the clattering (not a sound I want to hear)
then the silence, not an utter from the friend I hold so dear.
In the quiet I made a dismount, was her condition touch and go -
give her life or put her down because she's old and slow?
The bills come in, the worrying, when will it ever end -
is it time for kindness, to say goodbye my dear old friend?
Then, came the man, a white van man, on the gravel did arrive.
He was the man, the only man, to help my friend survive!
At first a mutter then a stutter before I heard her roar -
he'd made her start, my foolish heart will always love my mower!

Morgan Fisher - Aboyne over 50's

The Dyce & Stoneywood group enjoy a bi-weekly walk which has to be doable on the bus. On Monday, 2nd May we took a Bluebird bus to Oldmeldrum, hoping to do a medium circular around the south of the village. The day was fine but it was a bit windy. We left the houses and started up the hill through a small tree-lined track, but at the top end of the track, a printed sign said "Lambing in progress, foot-path closed" - an incidental aspect that a recce would not have spotted!



So we doubled back and chose the roadside path following the main road around the industrial units. We saw the field path, uphill to our left, leaving the road, following the path to the viewpoint - along the "Whin Roadie" - part of the original old Post Road. At the viewpoint, taking in the lovely views, we read a condensed, illustrated history of the area, courtesy of the Meldrum & Bourtie Heritage Society. After a welcome seat and snack there, we carried on into the village and managed to meet the return bus to Aberdeen, newly arrived as if booked for us!

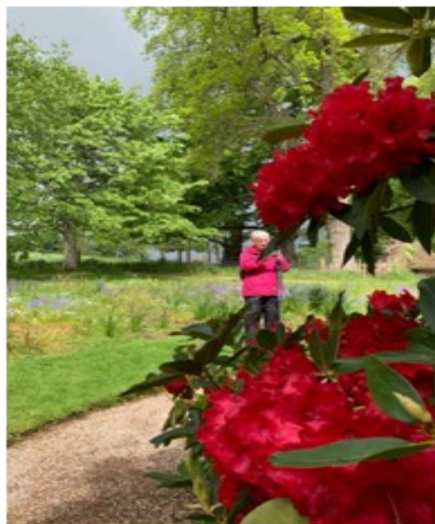
A very pleasant, if short, walk, with a few historical aspects along the way - the site of the battle of Barrain 1308, where the army of King Robert the Bruce routed that of the Earl of Buchan. Another small plaque remembered a local priest who walked the village boundary on his knees, beseeching his God to spare the people from a pestilence that was rife at the time. The plaque says his effort cost him his own life, 'and his pious soul left his body at this place, and his staff took root where he fell'. A succession of trees marks the spot, having been maintained over the years.

I think we might return when lambing's over...

***Brian Rhodes - not in the photie - behind the camera....
Dyce & Stoneywood Group***

These photos, below and right, were taken by Zelda Middleton on our walk in and around Drum Castle.

Despite several of the Woodland Trails being closed due to tree clearance, we managed an easy walk and lunched in the castle's courtyard afterwards.



***Sue Wright
Garioch
Ramblers***



A local walk on 2nd Feb saw us take in the destruction at Pitfour Estate in the wake of Storm Arwen. Sadly this brutal blast from the north has changed the aspect of the lake area for many decades to come.

On March 2nd we resumed our bus hire and journeyed to Maud. Leaving from the Old Mart Café, our walk took us up the village and along the Maud Turbine Walk, returning via the old Maud to Auchnagatt railway line. A fallen tree blocking our path caused a bit of consternation but was soon overcome in true rambling spirit.



On March 30th we visited Philorth Estate, Fraserburgh and were very fortunate to be given a guided tour by one of the estate owners. We learned a lot about the history and as a very rare treat were invited to visit the ruins of the ancient mansion house. A very fortunate occasion indeed!

On 13th April we had our annual Daffodil Walk at Haddo House. Regrettably it had rained heavily overnight so the daffies were not looking their best this year. However it stayed dry for our walk and didn't spoil the day overmuch. Again the storm damage to the woods was very evident here.

On 14th April, the Grampian 50+ Network held their '**Spring Fling**' at Fraserburgh Academy. Very pleased to say that six members of Mintlaw Ramblers attended this year. An excellent range of walks, visits and activities made for a very enjoyable and fulfilling day.

The 27th of April took us to Cruden Bay and a visit to Slains Castle. The sun shone for us on the day and made it a very pleasant walk. We continued on for a circular walk around the village and finally to Port Errol Harbour for a picnic lunch. On the way back we paid a visit to the fearsome Bullers of Buchan and were enthralled by the majesty of this amazing place, the thunder of the waves and the screams of hundreds of gulls creating a very atmospheric end to the day.

On 25th May we travelled to Gardenstown (Gamrie) and walked the Sneuk Path to Crovie and back. Following on, we had a wander along the Seatown part of the village and climbed up some of the enchanting little closes to the narrow streets above. We learned a little of the history of the ancient Church of St John the Evangelist just to the west of the village and the terrifying Battle of the Bloody Pits that took place nearby in 1004.

Mintlaw Ramblers have a full programme of walks and events taking us up to the end of the year and new members will be made very welcome.



Lumphanan Circular Walk

Twenty-one members had a pleasant walk around Lumphanan. Up past the Church (right,) and a steady climb along a track (the old Military Road) for nearly two miles. We then walked along the road for a bit until we got onto a track which took us up to the top of another hill which gave great views over the area (above.) Crossed a field where clay pigeon shooting had previously taken place. Lunch stop along this track was a welcome break in warm sunshine. Really beautiful views over the surrounding countryside.

Our group finished the walk with a coffee break in the Café or an ice cream from the local shop. Both are very welcome at the end of our walk.

Aileen Taylor, Ellon Ramblers



PUSHIN' EIGHTY – MUCH AGAINST MA WILL!

Rambler's Memories by Frances Jaffrey - retired Ellon Rambler

I miss my ramblin', an' the chats wi' the frien's
 The legs winna dee it noo, nor will the knees
 Ah'm fine on the flat, bit on braes Ah'm gey wobbly
 Gyaun up's nae sae bad – bit doon – knees are knobblly.
 Ah've jist hid tae accept, that Ah'm getting auld
 Bit Ah'm nae gyaun tae ging about walkin' twafaul.
 I still hae my daily walk – bit noo on the flat
 I dinna dae hills noo – Ah'm deen wi' a' that.
 As lang's I can still get about without aid
 Ah'm happy tae dee that, bit that bein' said –
 I div miss ma ramblin' O' that there's nae doot
 Bit nivver mind – I can still get about.

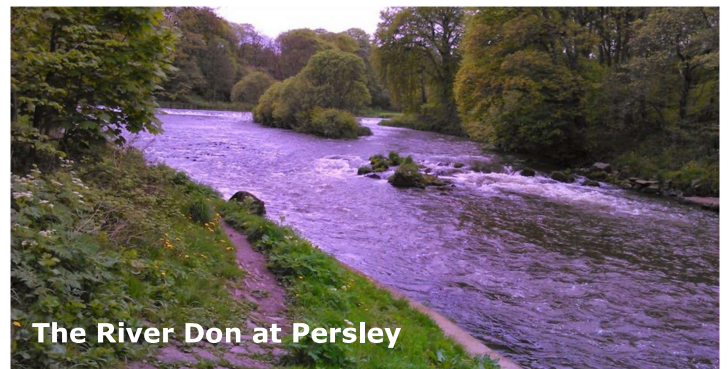
It's been a good year so far; only two of our members have had Covid, but have recovered and are back rambling. We had a good ramble at one of our favourites, Pitfour, famous of course for the Theseus Temple where George, the 5th laird, kept alligators. It's a pity it couldn't be restored. It must have been a beautiful estate in its heyday. The stables, above, are listed by Historic Scotland, are at risk - a pity.



Another favourite ramble is Monymusk estate where we walked in early June. The profusion of greens is incredible at this time of year. The lake has a host of wildlife including at least one pair of mute swans, water hens and mallard ducks.



Persley walk is open again after the devastation of storm Arwen. It's one of our annual rambles, with lunch at Seaton Park. On the way we passed Braehead House, the much-neglected home of Thomas Glover, the Scottish Samurai, much feted in Japan as one of the founders of the Mitsubishi Corporation and completely unknown in his homeland. We then crossed the Brig o' Balgownie, supposedly started by Bishop Cheyne in the early 13 hundreds but fled when Robert the Bruce appeared on the scene and completed the construction. A wee bit of local history.



Another of our favourite walks is Bucksburn- Kingswells-Bucksburn circular. A lovely walk with great views. There's an interesting farm on the walk with vintage agricultural equipment, which should be a museum. We did the walk once in a blizzard. We were like walking snowpersons? Everyone enjoyed the experience. Alas, we had no snow this time, only brilliant sunshine.

Our next walk is Tarland, Tomnaverie and Sunseat Circular, with views of Mt Keen, Lochnagar and Morven - looking forward to that!

Sandy McIntosh.
Oldmeldrum Ramblers.

In April, the Spring Fling was held in Fraserburgh for the first time. We really enjoyed welcoming other groups to our patch and hope that they enjoyed the day as much as we did.

Our first walk after the Spring Fling was from Johnshaven to Inverbervie, a beautiful coastal walk, enhanced by the delicious crab and lobster sandwiches which many of us bought in Johnshaven for lunch. The somewhat foggy conditions did not diminish our enjoyment at all.

A fortnight later, we walked from the garden centre in Fochabers through the Gordon estate. Trees were in blossom, with all the promise of spring and, as you can see from the photo, we found a lovely tranquil situation for lunch by the lake.

The lower slopes of Bennachie provided a most enjoyable woodland walk, with great views through gaps in the tree cover. We lunched on what remained of the walls of an old shepherd's cottage, now covered in heather and lichen, with his blackcurrant bushes still flourishing in the small garden bounded by drystone dykes. Next, it was along the shore from Buckie to Portgordon and back along part of the old railway line, lunching beside the picturesque small harbour.

The venue for our 'Away Day' this year was Ballindalloch Castle, with coffee and scones on the way at the Cullen Bay Hotel. The sun shone, the castle and grounds were beautiful and we had a wonderful time exploring the beautiful gardens and walks. The day culminated with an excellent evening meal, near home, at Heath Hill, Memsie – a perfect end to a perfect day!

We are now looking forward eagerly to our next walk at Loch Muick, with the promise of fish & chips on the way home!

Chris Ritchie
Fraserburgh 50+

***Lunch by
the lake!***



Walks over the last few months have been very much local or travelling a short distance separately in cars. This has included walks starting in Mintlaw and going round the Pitfour Estate, Stuartfield and Fetterangus; a trip to Maud and an energetic climb up to the White Horse on Mormond Hill, with a descent through the woods; a walk round the perimeter of Peterhead and foreshore, again seeing parts that one never notices when driving past.

The first bus trip (20th April) was to Forvie Sands. The day was misty which marred some of the views, though the walk along the cliffs was dramatic and then along the single file paths we noted several points of historical interest, such as the salmon fishing station. We thought we saw a seal on the beach, but as the mist cleared it was obviously a rock.

Aberdeen (4th May) is normally a shopping or theatre destination, but our walk through Seaton Park and Old Aberdeen showed another side of the City, from the recently refurbished St Machar Cathedral to King's College and the hidden away Snow Kirk (now just a graveyard) which was a surprise revelation to many of us. Then it was down to the beach past Pittodrie to meet the bus and proceed for lunch to the King's Church Coffee Bar.

Tarlair Swimming Pool to Whitehills (18th May) was an intriguing seaside walk including MacDuff Harbour, the Art Deco Pool Building still looking good though a bit shabby. Stopping at one of the parks along the way for lunch we noted how many caravan sites there are along the way. A point of historic interest was the Red Well, which according to the information placard dates back to the time of the Roman occupation of the area.

Bucksburn (Wed 1st June) was the next trip to the outskirts of Aberdeen walking through the new buildings and over the Peripheral Route to climb the highest point in Aberdeen, Brimmond Hill. A pleasant day with great views across Aberdeen and its surrounding hinterland, and hills in the distance from Stirling Hill at Boddam to The Mither Tap.

Ian Sandison, Mintlaw Walkers

Tarlair



Our year got off to an enjoyable start when we met up at the Masonic Club for a Burns Day lunch. Before we ate, we held our AGM. Mary welcomed all to the meeting, and once business was concluded, it was time to tuck into a very tasty meal. A great buzz of conversation filled the hall. It was good to catch up with fellow walkers.

On a lovely, sunny morning on 9th February, we walked from the Community centre to St. Fergus. It was another dry, sunny, though windy, morning for our walk from Ardallie to Hatton. We walked on minor tarred roads from beside Old Kirk at Ardallie to Hatton. Fortunately the wind was on our back for most of the way! We were able to enjoy great views of the open countryside. The rain came on only when we were on the bus and heading back to Peterhead!

Into March and on another sunny, windy morning we travelled to Auchnagatt/Maud area for our walk, mostly on the old railway line. Once again the wind was on our back. On the way we stopped to admire some Highland cattle and some lovely clumps of snowdrops were to be seen. Not very far from Maud there was a big tree which had been blown down and was lying across the line, but we were able to go under the branches, etc. and continue with the walk!



On 23rd. March we journeyed to the Hatton area for our walk. Having been dropped off beside the sub-station, we walked past Braco road end and continued on quiet tarred roads back to Hatton. Due to a haze, we didn't see the open countryside clearly but it was still a good walk.

Into April, we only travelled a short distance for our walk to Longside airfield, where we had a good walk around. Lots of interesting information was on view



and there were also men to give us information about the history of the site. This amazing place is only a short distance from Peterhead. Back outside, we saw a helicopter taking off. A walk with a difference

On 20th April we met up on a sunny morning for our Spring Outing. All set to go and it turned dull and misty! We walked from the Community Centre along the railway line and the sun came out again! Warm with no wind! On the way we saw three deer crossing the line. It was also interesting to

hear the names of the various farms, etc. as we went along. **Cont page 19** 18

We headed to Longside Football Club for a most excellent soup & sandwich lunch. An excellent outing!

On 6th May, we headed out to Mintlaw to begin our walk. Various paths were followed within Aden Park, where it was great to enjoy the beauty of nature. We then went on to follow a fairly new path which led us along the side of the river Ugie.

On another lovely, sunny day, the long walkers walked along the railway line from Lonmay to Strichen where we were able to enjoy the surrounding countryside, including Mormond Hill. We met up with the short walkers beside Strichen Lake, where packed lunches were eaten in a great setting.

From Monday 23rd until Friday 27th May, several members went, as part of a Simpson's bus trip, to Tinto Hotel, Symington, near Biggar. Excursions included a visit to Rosslyn Chapel and Dumfries House, and musical entertainment was provided on two nights, which added to the enjoyment of the week. The trip went very well and we arrived safely back in Peterhead on Friday.

Many thanks to all who organise and lead the walks.

Hazel Beaton
Bloo Toon Ramblers

PHOTO call

Aboyne 50+ having a breather to admire the breathtaking view above Lazy Well near Tarland



Grampian 50+ Contact Details:

Email: grampian50plus@hotmail.com

Website: www.grampian50plusnetwork.com

Grampian50+ Committee 2022/2023



Chair

Marjory D'Arcy



Membership Secy
Sue Wright



Minute Secretary

Catherine Mason



Treasurer
Graeme Rae



Paul Stenton



Sheila Erridge



Jo Jones



Judy
Middleton



Anne Agnew



Liz Major

Elaine Smith

Discovery Award

Did you know that, as you complete your walks and other activities, you can also be working towards your Discovery Award?

There are 4 sections in each of the Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. These are: Service to the community, Hobby or interest, Recreational pursuit and a Discovery Challenge or a Journey of Discovery. You have to keep a record of hours spent on each activity and make up a final record with photos and other evidence of work done, which the assessor will read.

I am sure most of you will be doing a lot of these activities already, and there is no physical or age barrier as everyone works to their own ability. These activities are suitable things for a few people working together, though you can also work on your own.

Please contact me if you would like more information, even if it is only out of curiosity:

kincorthloon@outlook.com or the old fashioned way of 01224 897904

Alan Stewart

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