

# Ptarmigan Hillwalking & Mountaineering Club



Website: [www.ptarmiganmc.org.uk](http://www.ptarmiganmc.org.uk)

## Monthly Newsletter

**December 2024**

**The Meet on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December is to the Campsie Fells**

### DETAILS OF THE MEET

The bus will leave Waterloo Place at 07.30, going via Shandwick Place, Haymarket, Roseburn, PC World, M9, M80 and A803 to Kilsyth. From there we go via Lennoxton, Strathblane and Killlearn to Fintry where the bus will park for the day. The return route will be from Fintry via the A882 to Lennoxton and then the A891/A803 to Milton of Campsie and Kilsyth, thus keeping open a range of low-level options.

**The bus will leave Fintry at 16:00**

**Bus convener: Douglas Tullis 07847 254 204 (Be sure to have that number with you on the hill).**

**Bookings and cancellations:** Email [bookings@ptarmiganmc.org.uk](mailto:bookings@ptarmiganmc.org.uk)

**Main map required:** OS 1:50 000 maps 64 (Glasgow) and 57 (Stirling & The Trossachs)

**The fare will be £25** and, while cash can be taken in the bus, it would be preferred if you could pay by bank transfer IN ADVANCE of the outing. The day before is fine. Please pay to:

PTARMIGAN MOUNTAINEERING CLUB (note name is not yet changed); 80-17-68; 00248765

### **Bus departure times - a reminder**

We always aim for our buses to leave Waterloo Place promptly at 07:30 am on the day of an outing. It is difficult to predict the times at which the bus will arrive at other pick up points which will depend on traffic, any roadworks etc but the roads are usually very quiet at that time of day. We have a note of who is due to be joining the bus at Waterloo Place and the other pick up points. If anyone is missing, the bus will usually wait for two minutes at any pick up point but will not normally wait for any longer than that."

### **Route Options**

The Campsie Fells are a range of volcanic hills where Scottish skiing was born in 1892 when W.W. Naismith became the first Scotsman to slide over snow on two planks. Although lowly in height they are rough in character and need to be treated with respect in poor weather. PMC members have made navigational errors here in the past!

The finest expedition is to get off at Blanehead, follow the road past Cantyweery and take in the outlying 'sore 2 thumb' top of Dumgoyne (422m; NS 541828) first for the views. Then go via the highest point, Earl's Seat (578m; 569838), and the north-facing craggy escarpment to Fintry. DO NOT underestimate the time it takes for this walk or you will be coming down in the dark! However on a clear wintry day, with stunning views northwards to the Highland line, it is a highly recommended traverse.

"An alternative is to approach Dumgoyne from the Glengoyne distillery on the A81 which makes for a shorter day and gives a bit more time in the Fintry Inn"

Another route to Earl's Seat starts at Ballagan Farm (5815792) and follows the track up towards Dumbreck (508m; 574815). It is also possible to start further east at Clachan of Campsie and go up Fin Glen before angling towards Dumbreck.

Another possible traverse from Clachan of Campsie goes via Cort-ma Law (531m; 652799) to Milton of Campsie or (much further) to Kilsyth.

From Kilsyth it is possible to walk north towards Carron Valley Forest and back again.

From Fintry itself the even wilder Fintry Hills could be explored, with possible objectives of Stronend (511m; 629895) and the Spout of Ballochcleam (waterfall) although this would probably have to be an out-and-back.

There is a delightful wee hostelry in Fintry where post-walk libations can be partaken.

### **Lower Level**

The Strathkelvin Railway Path from Clachan of Campsie to Milton of Campsie, with or without an initial exploration of Campsie Glen, should give easy walking.

On the other side of the A891, Clachan of Campsie to Milton of Campsie via Lennoxton looks possible along paths and quiet roads.

Kilsyth looks a possibility for woodland, loch- and canal-side walks.

***The Club's Code of Good Practice*** notes that parties should comprise two, preferably three, people and those members must have a map of the area and compass and know how to use them. A first aid kit, survival bag, whistle and torch should also be carried. The group should stick together and be alert for signs of anyone feeling unwell or getting into difficulties. For those members who have one it does no harm to carry a mobile phone, though it is important to understand that there is no guarantee of signal availability and this should never be relied upon.

***Disclaimer:*** The routes outlined above are merely descriptions of walks in the area; they do not represent invitations or recommendations by the Club or any of its Officers to members to go on these routes. It is the individual and sole responsibility of each club member to choose a route that is within their capability taking due account of the timings given and the weather conditions prevailing.

***'Everyone should be aware that the Scottish hills can provide more challenging days than the height and distance alone may indicate. Preferably robust boots should be worn and clothing worn or carried suitable to deal with wet, windy and cold weather at any season. A change of clothing in the bus is also advisable too. See additional advice for winter conditions.'***

### **WhatsApp Group**

You are reminded that we have now set up a WhatsApp group to enable members to exchange plans for the day in advance which may take some pressure off the bus convener. If you have not already joined and would like to do so, please email [secretary@ptarmiganmc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ptarmiganmc.org.uk)

## Highways Hillwalking Club

For many years we have had an informal association with the Highways Hillwalking Club in terms of which our members are welcome as guests on their outings and vice versa without restriction of the number of such outings that can be attended. The HHC operates a programme very similar to ours, also using MacLeod Coaches, but usually on the second Sunday of the month. The combined programme for both clubs can be found in the Meets section of our website and full details of the HHC including how to sign up for their outings are available at their website: <https://sites.google.com/site/highways3102/home> "

## AGM - A date for your diaries

Our AGM will take place at 7:30 on Tuesday 26 November at the Royal Navy & Royal Marines Club, 1 Broughton Road, Canonmills, Edinburgh EH7 4EW. Please come if you can - we have much to discuss and we need a quorum of at least 10 members.

## "Our proposed programme for 2025 is:

Feb 2 - Ochil Hills - Bus to Menstrie travelling via Glendevon, Dollar, Tillicoultry & Alva  
Mar 2 - Cairndow via Butterbridge  
Apr 6 - Glen Creran  
May 4 - Ben Lawers parking at Lawers Hotel if possible, or lay by at east end of Lawers Village  
June 1 - Auchlean, Glen Feshie  
June 29 - Bunkhouse weekend, Inchnadamph  
July 6 - Glen Nevis  
Aug 3 - Loch Muick  
Sep 7 - Glencoe, parking at Ballachulish  
Oct 5 - Braithwaite, Lake District  
Nov 2 - Blair Atholl (High Tea at Atholl Arms)  
Dec 7 - Moffat

## What we did last month

A range of 3 Hills were climbed in November, Ben Venue, Ben A'an & Ben Ledi and with an Inversion forecasted, it looked as though only one group got lucky with blue sky & sunshine.



**The Ben Venue Group: Pictures by Wendy Farmer & Diahann Whitefield.**



**Top of Ben A'an: Picture By Alex Williamson**



**Ben Ledi above a sea of cloud: Picture by Norman Phipps.**

### **Christine Thompson (1947 – 2024)**

We are very sad to announce the death of Christine, who had been a member and Secretary of the Ptarmigan Club for many years. She was both a friendly and highly efficient servant of the club, particularly during some difficult years before and after covid. It was only recently that the effects of her illness prevented her from continuing her role as membership secretary and archivist.

Christine was born and brought up in Bridgnorth, a Shropshire market town, and her semi-rural childhood was full of exploration and adventure. This was where she first developed her love of nature and the outdoors. She was a role model to her friends and became Head Girl at Bridgnorth Grammar School, excelling academically and at hockey and tennis, before spending a year as an exchange student at the University of Perugia. She then attended Reading University to study geology. There she met, and married in 1971, a fellow geology student Roy.

When they moved to Edinburgh in 1973, Christine became Educational Officer in Science and Technology at the Royal Scottish Museum. Later she became the Director's Research Assistant. While in Scotland Christine took on several voluntary roles for other clubs. She was membership secretary of the Scottish Industrial Heritage Society and Edinburgh Geological Society, becoming the latter's first female president from 2014 to 2016 as well as a distinguished fellow.

Christine had a great love of gardening and, after her retirement, established a Rhododendron monitoring project at the Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh, which, following publication of her photographic guide to the Rhododendron Phenology Project, will be a model for other botanical gardens around the world.

To those who knew her, she was always full of fun, knowledge and good humour. A walk with her was never wasted, as she could usually help identify plants and rocks for more ignorant companions. Her humour was never unkind and I personally will treasure her thoughtfulness, ability to listen and advice. We will miss her very much.

Richard Love