



# Forfar & District Hill Walking Club

Newsletter 40

December 2012

[www.fdhwc.org.uk](http://www.fdhwc.org.uk)

## **President's Column**

Hello all. I'm writing this on a really dreich December day. Still, the sun is on its way back, despite the lack of naked women at the solstice! 2013 can only be better than 2012!

October 2013 will be the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of the club. The committee will be busy arranging special events to celebrate the occasion. For our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2003, we organised a talk by Mick Tighe in aid of Boots Across Scotland charity, went to Madeira for a meet, where we had some really, really hairy escapades. We also organised a dance, as well as repeating the walk which was done on the first club meet in October 1963. Organising the anniversary will begin shortly, so if you have any special requests please let the committee know.

Congratulations to our latest Munroist, Ray. We all had a grand (if rather breezy) day out on Ben Wyvis and a good night afterwards. Well done Ray. See later for more articles on the subject.



What was the best meet of the year? As you know, this is very personal - everyone thinks

differently. For me, it would be day 1 of the weekend meet on Arran (only because (1) I love Arran and (2) the company was good), followed closely by the Linn o' Dee cycle meet in May, to Geldie Lodge - fantastic air clarity and views (late snow on the Cairngorms) - it's only a pity I'd dropped my camera in the car park that day - I blame Hearts!

Best wishes to all. Hope to see you at one of the festive meets. If not, then at our big social event of the year - January meet, the high tea.

Colin,  
President

## **Festive Meets**

The traditional festive period walks will be held on Thursday 27 December and Wednesday 2 January. Note that 2<sup>nd</sup> is a change of date (from 3<sup>rd</sup>) of that published on cards.

Plan for 27<sup>th</sup> December : Bachnagairn, returning by the less familiar route of Sandy Hillock and Capel Mounth. Meet 08:30 at Myre or 09:30 at Glen Doll car park.

Plan for 2<sup>nd</sup> January : Drop some cars at Spittal of Glenshee, then start at the Devil's Elbow, climbing up to Creag Leacach before turning south-west and following a descending ridge over Carn Ait and Carn an Daimh to a point opposite the Spittal of Glenshee. Meet 08:30 at Myre car park.

Keep checking the web site for latest updates. As you know, the weather is uncertain.

## **High Tea Meet**

### **Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> January**

This meet will be a crossing of the Bennachie range in Aberdeenshire. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> visit on high tea meet in recent years (1999 by car on a snowy north to south traverse, 2006 by bus on a west to south-east traverse on a rather breezy day). The meet is by bus, leaving from Sauchieburn Hotel, Luthermuir at 08:00. High tea will be taken at the Sauchieburn Hotel at 17:00. Please contact the meet secretary if you require a bus seat and/or are coming for high tea. If coming for high tea, please state your choice of main course by Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January. This will be published on the web site shortly.

## **Meetings Venue to Change**

The tenant of the Queen Street Tavern is giving up the tenancy at the end of January. It's as yet uncertain whether there will be a new tenant, and if he/she would allow us to hold meetings. The committee is currently searching for a new replacement venue for the remaining scheduled indoor meets on the calendar (February, March). January's meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> will go ahead at the Queen Street Tavern.

## **15 September 2012**

### **Ben Wyvis – Epilogue**

by Munroist 5129

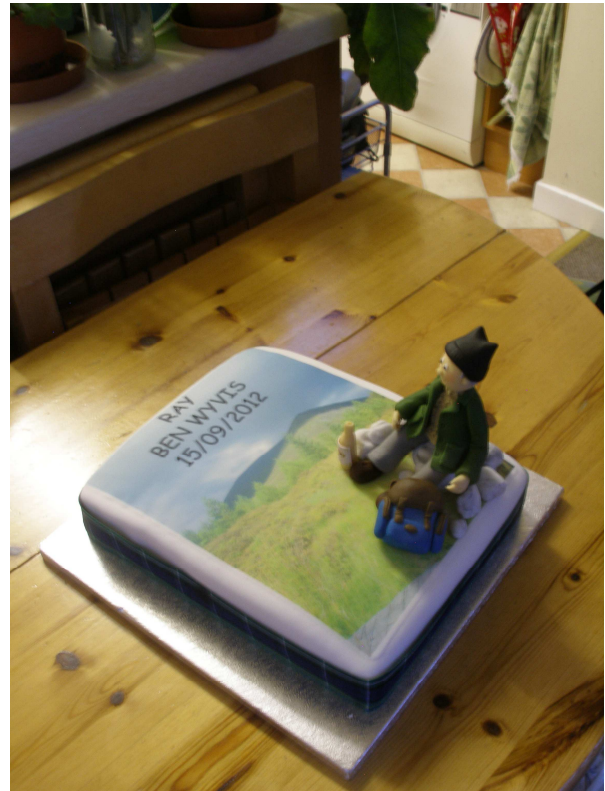
Well, that was the completion of the mountains over three thousand feet. Never again will I be stopped in the street with the question "How many to go?"

How do I feel? Happy? Or sad that an all-consuming passion is over now that the goal has finally been achieved? Memories of excellent days on the hill with FDHWC keep flooding back – an exhausting traverse of the snow-covered Grey Corries with the two ace Munro-baggers of the time, a first experience of crampons on Ben Alligin, a benightment in Glen Clova, a warm March day on a snow-covered Ben Starav, a first scramble on the short Leachas of Ben Alder, an attempt on Creag Mhor in ferocious conditions which was aborted ten metres from the summit, and two unforgettable weekends on Skye.

Some people have asked what I will do now that I have compleated. There are many hills I would like to climb again because they were so good, then there are others where the weather was so horrific that I must go back and get a view (most notably Bla Bheinn). I still haven't counted up how many Corbetts I have climbed. So many hills, so little time.....

## **A Canny Loon (a reply)**

The big day came to climb Ben Wyvis  
A score of friends kindly came with us  
I reached the top, I'd finally done it  
But what's this? Folks are slugging my bunnet!  
They bought me a branded Peruvian Beanie  
(I hope they don't think I'm a meanie!)  
The pigtails suited me to a "T"  
And the ears, like mine, were not very wee  
At night I wore my kilt and new hat  
June thought I looked a bit of a twit  
But winter's here without a doubt  
I'll have to get my noddy hat out  
"Oh no!" and groans are all I hear  
But one day soon I'll get new gear  
Off to the outdoor shops I will go  
And shock you all with my Paramo!



## **Weekend Meets** **Spring/Summer 2013**

<b>February</b>	Glen More, Cairngorms
<b>March</b>	Aultguish
<b>May</b>	Skye
<b>June</b>	Auchnasheen

The booking form will be available soon on the web site.

## **Significant Big Birthdays – 2012**

Congratulations to the following members, in alphabetical order, who achieved big birthdays in 2012 – ages withheld!

Brian, Colin S, Kate, Lawrie, Linda, Willie

## **Photographic Competition**

The club's annual photographic competition will be held after the open meeting on Monday February 4<sup>th</sup> 2013. For the 5<sup>th</sup> year running, the judge is Graham Wilkinson from Carnoustie Camera Club. Entries are to be handed to a committee member no later than Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> January. Although entries should be made on paper (i.e. a print), Graham would also like to receive a digital image or negative, in order to help with his summary and to suggest any improvements to the photographs. Any size of print is adequate.

### **Extract from constitution**

#### *LIST OF RULES FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION*

- 1. The photos entered must have some connection with hill walking (the club preferred) and be taken not earlier than 1 year prior to the competition.*
- 2. There will be one class of entries. An entry can be one of the following: - a slide, a print from a film negative or a print from a digital image. Any size of print can be submitted.*
- 3. All entries to be handed to a committee member by the published closing date.*
- 4. A member can submit no more than 5 entries.*
- 5. The competition to be judged by an independent judge, appointed by the committee.*

### **Ch-Ch-Changes... by an anonymous member**

On the recent club weekend at the Glencoe ski club hut I was lucky enough to be offered both a beer and a nip by a committee member. As I enjoyed them, basking in the beautiful blue light from the moon as it poured through the windows, my mind was diverted away from the club game of "how many guidebooks can you fit on the one table" and to one of the picture boards on the wall.

It contained the sort of pictures that are familiar to all of us, people having a good time in our hills; you can almost tell the decades by the clothing and hairstyles. 70/80'S= red socks and britches, early 90's= Day-Glo purple fleece (not that it isn't a great look El Presidente). It made me wonder not about how we will look in 20 years, but how much has people's experience of our hills really changed?

I first started hillwalking while in the BB in the late 70's. My Dad also used to take me out the odd time to the Cairngorms. At that time it was a common thing to find somewhere to camp in Linn of Quoich so to avail yourself of the bar in Marr Lodge. If you were serious, an early start could be had by sleeping in the bottom floor of Derry Lodge which was still open as a bothy.

That is all distant memory, the bar is long gone and Derry lodge stands neglected. Nobody doing their hills now will have a post mountain pint or lay out a sleeping mat in those locations. Yet how many nights were spent telling tales in

the bar, or how welcome was the shelter afforded by the lodge?

Access to the hills and getting to them now is also much less of an undertaking than it was. Mass car ownership is still a fairly new phenomena, my Dad tells of a trip to the East coast being a major undertaking of up to eight hours travel from Kilmarnock, and that is before you encountered a hill. Likewise modern stalking tracks and mountain bikes make reaching the foot of them much easier. Once there you can follow the well-worn path to the summit and not worry about missing the top as it has a cairn to show you that you have arrived at "X".

And yet..... Why is the experience lessened any because of what can best be described as the impact of the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Is the Brocken spectre witnessed by the climber from 30 years ago any more magnificent than the ones I have seen? I doubt it.

Hills are hills, they are busier and show the marks of passage and use more than previously. But everybody who climbs and walks among them has a similar, yet at the same time, unique experience. That feeling of miserable exhilaration is my base point for hillwalking, yet the weather, light and company is never the same on two consecutive occasions. To me that makes each of our outings precious and valuable. Nobody's time on the hills is better than ours, it is just different.

Someday it will be us on the noticeboard in fading pictures. May there still be people going to the high places to laugh at our attire.....

### **Bourach work party**

Colin and Debbie were the work party who walked up to Davie's bourach on 27<sup>th</sup> October, on a wintry day. Some small repairs were done to the roof - patching holes at the north side. Some litter was gathered and bagged. A group of walkers was encountered on the descent, including the best looking Mather brother, apparently!



*Debbie at the bourach*

## **'Far I wi noo' plaque**

Remember to note any worthy events for the "incident of the year". Previous winners are 2008 - "Sinclair's Leap" (2008) Ray's "I may be gone some time" (2009); Alec's "Dangle on the Inn Pinn" (2010); Scott's "Am I supposed to be tied onto this?" (2011). Please forward news of any worthy incident to a committee member. The Steall bridge river wading, by a certain lady, has been noted. It is hoped to present this trophy at the AGM on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March.

## **Boules Championship**

The 3rd annual running of this event took place at the Glen Clova social meet on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October. The organiser (un-named) decided to change the event from doubles to singles. As usual, it started far too late, ending up in pouring rain and needing the assistance of headlamps of the cars. Competitors played in two pools with the winners of each pool playing in a final. Carolyn won the final against Stuart Fergusson, and therefore is the champion for 2012. Well done to Carolyn, and to all competitors who braved the elements.

## **Open Meetings Reports**

**August 2012** – A dark dreich night round Forfar Loch for GPS geo-caching. Enjoyed by all 4 teams. Went to the pub afterwards. Just what were Scott and El Presidente doing in the woods until after dark?

**September 2012** Fettercairn Distillery visit. Only 5 turned up on a very informative evening.

**October 2012** – Isabelle Forteath presented Weather Systems. Very informative, presented by someone who has the skills to communicate.

**November 2012**– The president was quiz master as teams fought for the annual chocolate orange prize. The team consisting of Graham, John D, and outsider Kenny Wright won. They did share out the chocolate.

**December 2012** – The speaker cancelled on the night. but Steve stepped in with a very successful "20 Questions" quiz.

## **Forthcoming Open meetings**

- January 14<sup>th</sup> – Willie Mather, "Yellowstone National Park", USA
- February 4<sup>th</sup> – Graham Wilkinson. Annual photographic competition.
- March 4<sup>th</sup> – AGM followed by "The Unknown!"

## **Curling**

A curling night has been arranged for Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March at Forfar Ice Rink. 4 rinks have been booked (32 players), Like last year's event, we'll share the rinks with Carnoustie Panbride Badminton Club, and mix everyone up, along with some experienced curlers.

## **A year with the club** **by Neil Sangster**

I was recently at the club meet at Bridge of Orchy and chatting to Colin (Sinclair). He asked if I wanted a can of beer which I happily accepted and then seconds later Colin said he was looking for articles for the December newsletter. The suggestion was that an article entitled "A year with the club" giving the experiences of a new member to the club might be interesting. At this point Colin had 2 cans of beer remaining, so I readily agreed.

After not walking for a good number of years I decided it was time to get my kids (10 & 13 at the time) into hillwalking in 2009. We started with some of the local hills and it soon became evident that hillwalking was not on my daughters (aged 10) list of things to do. I continued walking with my son and we were soon bagging Munro's. All was going well on this front until November 2009 when we had an unfortunate incident involving 2 mountain rescue teams and a Sea King helicopter.

After a brief ban, my walking then resumed in the spring of 2010. I was considering joining the club at that time but my son (Connor) was still keen to go walking but had other things to do on a Sunday (which ruled out the club), so I mainly walked on a Saturday.

In 2011, it became clear that while Connor still enjoyed walking it was not his number one hobby and I was starting to walk on my own. I saw that the club was going to the Lake District (which I love) and finally made a call to Ray to ask if Connor and myself could come along to the Ben Lui walk the following day. After giving a summary of our experience (I omitted the part about the helicopter) to Ray, we made arrangements to meet at the Myre car-park and my life with the club had begun.

The weather for the Ben Lui walk was dreich. In good spirits we climbed Ben Lui after walking up the valley past the gold mine and stopped for a spot of lunch. Colin was going exploring (or Corbett bagging as it is also known) and Ray went with him, allegedly to keep him company (because Ray's not a Corbett bagger).

The rest of the group then headed over to Ben Oss and Ben Dubhcraig. At this point I started to seriously struggle. With hindsight, a 15 mile walk was not the wisest way to start my walking career with the club but the rest of the group were very supportive and kept me going. I got there in the end.

A couple of weekends, later I headed down to the Lake District for the meet there. I arranged to go down with Elaine Leong (who I had never met) on the Friday and we climbed Skiddaw before heading to Ambleside to meet up with the others. Saturday was wet and miserable so our planned walk around the Fairfield horseshoe was replaced with a lower level walk (which still included a Wainwright) and we headed over to Grasmere. We headed back to Ambleside along the coffin trail (except for the two who were talking, missed the sign and caught the bus to the pub instead),

On Sunday, the sun shone and my head pounded (must have been a bad pint of whisky) and Bob Railton directed us up Blencathra via Sharp Edge and then down Halls Fell ridge, a Wainwright classic, and thoroughly enjoyable. A good day and good company.

Since then, I have been on all the weekends away giving me the opportunity to walk in completely new areas of the country and enjoy the social side of the club. I have also made most of the day, and some of the social meets. While I enjoy adding to my Munro count, I am not an "out and out" bagger. I have ignored new Munro's and "explored" a couple of adjacent hills instead.

My 2 favourite weekends were Arran, and Ray's last Munro. In Arran, the walking (and scrambling) was fantastic plus you get to go on a big boat. It should be written into the club rules that everyone must go to Arran at least once. It should also be included in the rules that you must go to a "last Munro" weekend, an excuse to eat, drink and be merry.

My least favourite bit was that it seemed to rain more or less constantly for the first 6 months after I joined the club (Blencathra aside).

Since joining the club I have climbed 39 new Munro's on club meets. My count of new Munro's this year is 52, so I have been a busy boy. Connor is also still a member of the club and will come on occasional day walks but doesn't like the weekends (no mobile signal so he can't send text). Looks like I made the right choice in joining the club.

#### My tips for any new members (based on club meets)

- Drinking beer or wine is good. Drinking whisky is bad (but one glass is ok).
- Caroline's tablet is fantastic (as is anything cooked by Caroline).
- If possible don't share a room with Ray or Elaine Leong (they snore).
- Go to Arran
- Drinking on top of hills while generally not acceptable is mandatory when someone is doing their last Munro.
- Walk with Colin B. It is always sunny when he goes walking (even if the forecast says it won't be).
- If stopping at the pub is not mentioned the bus drives into Dunkeld, wake Ray up as he has fallen asleep.

- Don't walk behind Graham or Mel (they fart)
- Frank is the official timekeeper (no arguments)
- Crossing the wire bridge at Steal Bridge is the best option. DON'T wade through the river.
- Try not to fall in all the burns you come to.
- Glen Coe and Glen Etive are in opposite directions when you come off Bidean nam Bian.

## **News from the SMC**

### **Demotion of Beinn a'Chlaidheimh (Fisherfield)**

And then there were 282... following confirmation that the Ordnance Survey has adopted the height information from last year's independent survey of **Beinn a'Chlaidheimh**, The Scottish Mountaineering Club can confirm that, at 914m, the mountain falls short of the 914.4m height required to be considered a Munro. As a result it has had its relatively short lived Munro status rescinded. Up until 1974, following a new OS height for the mountain, Beinn a'Chlaidheimh had appeared on John Rooke Corbett's table of Scottish hills between 2500 feet and 3000 feet.

- until 1974 - a Corbett
- 1974-2012 - a Munro
- 2012 a Corbett

The Scottish Mountaineering Club will therefore reinstate Beinn a'Chlaidheimh into Corbett's Tables; with the inclusion of this mountain and the other demoted Munro, Sgurr nan Ceannaichean, there are now 221 Corbetts. The Munro's Table and Corbett's Table on the website have been updated and future publications of these Tables together with The Munros and The Corbetts books will also reflect this change.

### **New Corbett: Beinn a'Chlaidheimh (Fisherfield) - September 2012**

The former Munro **Beinn a'Chlaidheimh** is now a Corbett.

### **Twin Corbetts Separated - November 2012**

The conjoined Corbetts, Buidhe Bheinn and Sgurr a' Bhac Chaolais, are both given 885m by the Ordnance Survey. With a drop of 120m between the summits, both could not be Corbetts but they had been listed as a single entry with twin status.

A surveying team of John Barnard, Graham Jackson and Myrddyn Phillips (G and J Surveys) asked the SMC Committee if they would support a survey to measure accurately which was higher. Support was given, with the only condition being that the Ordnance Survey had to

accept the result. Andy Nisbet and Dave McGimpsey accompanied the team in mid-September.

Both summits were surveyed simultaneously, using two GPS receivers, in order to give the most accurate result. Three hours of measurement from the highest rock (ignoring the cairn) were submitted to the OS for final correction, with the result that Buidhe Bheinn is 885.50m and Sgurr a' Bhac Chaolais is 885.21m, plus or minus 0.05m.

Although Buidhe Bheinn is now the Corbett, the recommended walk is still to climb both, as it offers an unusual day of views into both Glen Shiel and Loch Hourn, and may persuade the enthusiast to ignore the 29cm.

The online [Corbett's Table](#) has been updated to reflect the results of the survey.

## **Munro Bagging Statistics**

Ray – Munroist 5129

Latest registered – 5191 (18th December 2012)

## **Corbett Bagging Statistics**

520 Corbetteers listed at 17<sup>th</sup> November 2012

01 Jul 2006	Brian Coull
04 Oct 2009	Martin Horne & Nancy McCombie (ex-members)
27 Aug 2010	Bill & Sheila Simpson

## **Meet Reports**

### **July – December 2012**

#### **19 August 2012 - Loch Laggan**

Thirteen members turned out for this meet, and it was decided to stick to the original plan and take the bus. This allowed a through walk to be undertaken, with the larger of two groups leaving the bus at the eastern end of Loch Laggan and climbing up to the start of the main spine of hills which run along the north side of Loch Laggan. Once on the ridge the group headed west over Carn Liath and Stob Poite Coire Ardair before the steep descent and reascent at the Window. The second group, consisting of three walkers, started at the Aberarder car park and followed the footpath to Lochan a Choire before climbing to the Window and on to Creag Meagaidh. They were spotted on their return by the main group, who had just reached the plateau from the Window and still had a bit of distance to cover to reach the summit. Back at the bus it became clear that after a late start the midgie season was in full

swing with millions of the blighters enjoying a meal at the expense of FDHWC members.

#### **26 August 2012 - Auchtavan**

This was a social meet with a later start time. The walk coincided with an open day at Auchtavan, where the historic buildings of an old highland settlement were open to the public. It was a beautiful day for a leisurely walk around the area and provided an interesting history lesson as well as an enjoyable walk.

#### **7-9 September 2012 - Cannich Weekend**

This was another popular weekend with the number of places booked at the Bearnock Country Centre having to be increased from twelve to sixteen. The big walks into Loch Mullardoch, Loch Monar and Glen Affric were very popular on the Saturday with most walkers choosing easier hills in Strathglass on the Sunday or simply going home. One noticeable trend at recent weekends has been the inclination to eat at the hostel rather than go out. This has resulted in some very enjoyable social evenings with much cheese and wine being shared and this weekend was no exception.

#### **23 September 2012**

##### **Ben Vorlich & Stuc a Chroin**

Eleven walkers set out on a rather unusual and very long route to complete these hills. The route approached these hills from Glen Artney to the south-west and was 24 kilometres in length. With two Munros included in the walk it was a tall order. In the end 4 of the walkers called it a day after reaching Ben Vorlich, the assistant Meet Secretary phoning a friend on a nearby hill and arranging a lift back to the start.

#### **30 September 2012 - Ochil Hills**

A very busy September for the club ended with a Social Meet to the Ochil Hills. The weather forecast was not good, with the recent deluge of rain expected to continue into Sunday. Only five members and guests turned up and they sat in the Tormaukin Hotel drinking coffee and watching the rain for some time before venturing out. It turned out to be a good decision as the rain cleared, allowing the group to enjoy a dry, bracing day completing a high-level circuit between Glenquey and Glensherup Reservoirs near the eastern end of the Ochils. Although the hills were relatively low by FDHWC standards, underfoot conditions made for quite slow progress at times. The group was entertained by some merry fishermen who had just come ashore at Glensherup Reservoir, seemingly having caught very little other than copious amounts of whisky. The five walkers then made their way back to the Tormaukin Hotel where they enjoyed a lovely evening meal in what is a nice atmospheric old building.

### **21 October 2012 - Glen Lyon**

Eleven members turned out for this circuit of the four Glen Lyon Munros.

### **28 October 2012 - Carn Dearg Hut, Glen Clova**

The annual social meet was held in Glen Clova. In the morning a small party went up Jock's Road to inspect the condition of Davy's Bourach. Very little work was required. The main event took place in the evening, with the annual boules contest going into extra time and being completed in darkness, which seemed to be no impediment to the Assistant Meet Secretary as she romped home in the final. The members then enjoyed a fine meal prepared by Colin, Linda and Carolyn before watching a fireworks display in the rain. The usual Halloween shenanigans had to be cancelled due to the other events over-running.

### **11 November 2012 - Schiehallion**

A bus was taken on this meet despite numbers only amounting to ten. This enabled the planned through walk to take place. The new holiday chalets at the Glengoulandie Deer Park meant that it was difficult finding a way on to the hillside with a high fence and locked gate barring the way. However a helpful local led us downstream a few hundred metres and unlocked a gate to give us access to a track leading up the Allt Mor. This eventually took us to the foot of Schiehallion. We had this side of the hill to ourselves, but reaching the ridge and joining the main path was a bit like joining a motorway. The recent weather had been cold, and a thin layer of ice covered by a light dusting of snow made the boulder field leading to the summit very tricky. As always seems to be the case on Schiehallion, a fierce cold wind discouraged any lingering to enjoy the views. The walkers continued over the summit and went down the other side in a north-westerly direction, leaving the crowds behind with the exception of one large group who turned out to be from the Glenrothes Hillwalking Club and had been doing a similar through walk to ourselves. On reaching the road the members walked westwards in the expectation of finding the bus, a hint of anxiety starting to creep in after a kilometre or so, only for the bus to appear behind us from an easterly direction.

### **16-18 November 2012 - Bridge of Orchy**

The club had stayed at the Glen Coe Ski Club hut before for a weekend and ten members returned for this November weekend. On the Saturday three members ventured down Glen Etive to climb Beinn nan Aighenan while another group headed for Stob a Choire Odhair and Stob Ghabar, being driven back by blizzards after the first hill. An obscure hill named Beinn nan Imirean was explored by the president. Sunday's weather was no better and two groups

turned back on Creise and Beinn Dorain respectively. Meanwhile two explorers quietly went about bagging their hills while most of the others went home.

### **9 December 2012 - An Socach**

Dear, dear, dear! No members put their names down for this walk. I think this must be a first, and hopefully the last. A combination of other commitments, Christmas shopping and a poor weather forecast probably explain this one. Let's hope so!

### **Down Memory Lane - 1982**

This photograph was recently dug out of the archives, for Alan Ruxton, the nephew of Winnie and Davie Reid, the clubs 4 and 5<sup>th</sup> Munroists



The photograph shows Winnie and Davie being congratulated by the president, Rita Norrie, at the top of Beinn Sgulaire on a very snowy day in March 1982.