

Ptarmigan Hillwalking & Mountaineering Club



Website: www.ptarmiganmc.org.uk

Monthly Newsletter

April 2020

Dear members, given the current situation with Covid-19 we have, with regret, cancelled the regular bus for May and June. We plan to resume normal service as soon as is practicable, but we have no idea when that might be. For those of you booked on the Glen Sheil weekend, Colin and the committee are working on a suitable rearrangement.

In the meantime, if you haven't renewed your membership for 2019-2020 it would greatly help the club if you could pay your normal subscription as a gesture of good will. This might seem like a waste of money, but from the club's point of view it would enable us to maintain our membership list and insurance with Mountaineering Scotland, and any residual amounts will serve as a buffer for the club in the difficult months that are likely to follow. If you should choose not to renew, that is perfectly understandable.

Membership subscriptions are currently £25 for one person or £40 for two people at the same address. The club's banking details are:

Ptarmigan Mountaineering Club (The name on the account has not yet changed!)

Bank of Scotland

Account: 00248765

Sort Code: 80-17-68

We would appreciate an e-mail by way of confirmation to the treasurer, Adrian Casey, adrian@adriancasey.co.uk.

What we did last month

Richard Love gives his take on a low level trek through Loch Ard Forest.

Yet again there was no escaping the unremittingly wet conditions most of the country has been experiencing this winter. The forecast was bad enough to influence at least some of the eight call offs but, as usual, the actual conditions on the ground were somewhat short of the predictions. There was no snow at low and moderately high levels, so walkers and bus drivers could move about easily. As shown elsewhere, spectacular waterfalls were the order of the day and a shortened day it was for us all: back at Waterloo Place (appropriate name) by 7.00 pm.

Michael, Christine, Elsa, Colin and I decided to forego the delights of the WHW and explore the depths of Loch Ard Forest instead. Setting off from Milton we headed west to the little bay at Couligartan on Loch Ard, where we carefully avoided a couple of fishermen before finding a sheltered spot for a coffee break. Intending to delve deep into the innards of the woods, which are more open than some large plantations, we made a few minor errors (and bonus hill climbs) before finding the right track to bring us in a large loop for our return to Aberfoyle. We picked up the southerly route of a large aqueduct, which presumably links Loch Katrine to Glasgow, and followed the line of this, spectacular viaducts and all, through more open woodland to one of many junctions where decision time came: more forest tracks in the rain or early pub? No guesses for which won out.

After the briefest and wettest of lunch stops, we passed the grounds of Duchray Castle (no public access but lots of discarded wine bottles: mostly 'new world' if you're asking). An hour or so later we reached the very acceptable Faerie Tree Inn on the main street of Aberfoyle for tea, cakes and ale, until roused from our torpor by the rest of the party two hours later. Not a great day to remember but we made the best of it and some of us (OK me) were almost high on the joys of woodland walking. Actually I was just glad to be out again after nearly a fortnight of bugriddenness. Have I sold it to you stay-at-homes?



Pictures from the falls at Inversnaid & another fall to the south by Walter Kelly:

Meanwhile, Douglas Tullis writes:

'Another great day for aficionados of rivers in spate and waterfalls! The MWIS forecast for the West Highlands was far from good including heavy rain/snow, the risk of 70 mph winds, arduous or difficult walking conditions and areas of very poor or appalling visibility. Seven Ptarmigans (Lyn, Kathy, Dave, Tim, Adrian, Alex and Douglas) nevertheless did the medium level walk from Blairuskinmore just south of Loch Chon through Glenn Gaoithe to join the West Highland Way at Cailness and follow it to north to Inversnaid. Keeping (more or less) below the snowline it was a perfectly doable walk for the conditions. Dave, ever the optimist, had his ice-axe in his backpack in the hope that one or other of us could be persuaded to make a break for the summit of Ben Lomond if the weather cleared. It didn't. The pictures convey the flavour of the day. It's hard to believe that the photo of Adrian contemplating getting his feet wet crossing the stream was actually on the West Highland Way approaching Inversnaid. I've certainly never seen so much water in the Inversnaid falls before'



Pictures 1-4 Inversnaid Falls, Adrian, Dave & Ptarmigans enjoying a well deserved drink. (Douglas Tullis)