



The Munro Society NEWSLETTER

No. 59, December 2023



Lochan a' Choire, Creag Meagaidh - see article on page 33 (Alan Rowan)

President's Welcome from Alf Barnard

Alf continues his quest to complete the Grahams plus a few Donalds thrown in for good measure



A very warm welcome to Munro Society members and their families. I hope that you all have had a good summer and autumn and managed to get into the hills. Firstly a plea to all members: please make sure that the Munro Society secretary has your *correct* email address. This is extremely important as all AGM correspondence will henceforth be sent *only* by email. The best way to ensure this, is for every member to send their email address to - secretary@themunrosociety.com to enable this to be confirmed. (The very few members without

computers or email addresses will continue to get theirs in the post as before.)

The AGM will be on Saturday 6th April 2024 at Birnam Arts (formerly the Birnam Institute) in Birnam near Dunkeld. This is an old favourite for our AGMs as it is fairly compact with buffet and lecture hall close together. Access is easy as Birnam is on the main railway line to Inverness from Perth, and for those travelling by car it is just off the A9.

This summer my hillwalking has been mostly confined to the Grahams in the Highlands with a few 'Border raids' taking in quite a few Donalds as well. I have fortuitously, or some might say foolishly(!), left

Grahams strewn about the Highlands and Islands, including Harris, Skye and An Stac.

In late August I had a wonderful few days camping in Cowal, of which I had heard horror stories, due to it being one of the wettest places in Scotland. The number of Grahams there has almost doubled, as there are three 'new' ones. However, all these are well worth doing and can be combined with the existing ones. I left with very pleasant memories of a most attractive area.

The most memorable Borders trip was staying in the Ettrick Valley in early September, where I visited Over Phawhope bothy and did the extended version of the classic Ettrick Hills horseshoe. It was in thick mist for the first part - but fortunately it cleared for the latter, and most scenic, hills especially the views from Croft Hill. The other Ettrick hills were done the next day, where heat was the biggest problem. I had a long chat with the shepherd (and owner) who was extremely friendly, particularly when I complimented him on the expert gathering of his sheep! He said that there is a big problem with neds from Hawick using the bothy as a drugs and drinking den - deterring walkers who may be doing the Southern Upland Way from staying.

We visited Hawick and found it to be most depressing; very run down with half the shops in the High Street closed and the other half charity ones. The 'Hawick Flood Protection Scheme' is huge. In total the flood defences to be installed will be 5,600m long and on both sides of the River Teviot. With all the associated stone embankments, landscaping, access and new bridges it will be a huge improvement. Significant floods have been recorded as far back as 1767, but inevitably most of the major damaging ones have occurred in the last 25 years.

The Strontian 'Late Summer Meet' at the end of July was a huge success which was thoroughly enjoyed by all - but not as much as we were enjoyed by the midges. However, lots of good hills were climbed from the well situated Ariundle bunkhouse. This was another area which I had only visited previously on Corbett duty, and thus it opened my eyes to new hills. Sunart and Ardgour are much neglected by Munro baggers.

Unfortunately, although I booked last year to attend the Glen Coe Autumn Meet, uncharitably, my only unmarried niece decided to get married on the same weekend. A great pity, as I understand that the weather (in Glen Coe) was excellent.

A memorable event occurred on 16th September

when a considerable throng of about 35 assembled near the Inveroran Hotel for an ascent of Meall Tairbh. This was Anne Butler's last Graham on her completion of not only her second Graham round, but also her second SMC Full House (Munros, Munro Tops, Corbetts, Grahams, Donalds, Donald Tops and Furths). She was not only the fourth ever person to have done this considerable feat, but also the first woman. Very well done Anne.

Your Executive Committee has not been sleeping during the summer whilst not climbing hills, but also working on behalf of the membership. We have not only been examining in depth the findings from the Members Questionnaire, but also having a dedicated team putting together a draft of the new Constitution. This will be included in the AGM papers, which are sent out to all members several weeks before the AGM, thus underlining how essential it is for the secretary to have your *current* email address. Please ensure that this is done.

The Munro Legacy Story Exhibition was first exhibited in March 2019 at the A.K. Bell Library in Perth to considerable acclaim. From there it has travelled Scotland-wide to over 25 venues, ably skippered by Alan Watt. The nine 'pull-ups' have been recently seen at the Annual Dinner in Grantown-on-Spey and a selection at Dundee Mountain Film Festival. In the New Year it will be at Dunfermline Carnegie Library from 15th January to 11th March 2024, with the latest confirmed venue being Arbroath Public Library from 12th March to 12th April 2024. Ideas for possible new venues are always welcome - as are volunteers to assist in putting up and taking down! Please contact Alan Watt: wattclan@talktalk.net

The Annual Dinner on 28th October at the Grant Arms, Grantown-on-Spey attracted an excellent attendance of 69 - 49 of whom were members. It was good seeing so many old friends and renewing acquaintances in such a convivial place.

Next year, the Spring 2024 Meet from 17th May to 20th May will be at Drumnadrochit, staying at the Loch Ness Backpackers Lodge - a new venue. I am already looking forward to it!



The completion day on Meall Tairbh, Inveroran

D Sime
TMS

The Munro Society Newsletter No.59
December 2023



In This Issue

4	News Section <i>Of the Society and Elsewhere</i>
8	Meet Reports <i>Anne Butler</i>
11	A Historic Completion <i>Alan Rowan</i>
12	An Easy Day on Ulva <i>Ann White</i>
14	Early Winter Adventures in Torridon <i>Mike Weedon</i>
17	Schiehallion <i>An essay by Irvine Butterfield</i>
19	8 Ferries, 6 Days, 1,000 Miles, 1 Corbett <i>Roger Drye</i>
21	Passing on the Baton <i>Andrew Fraser</i>
23	Two Munros, One Crampon <i>John Marjoram</i>
24	Oban Bothy – Part 1 <i>Hamish Brown</i>
26	Summit Else – a Tale of 50 Completions <i>Anne Butler</i>
29	Wind Energy – a Reality Check <i>Norman McNab</i>
33	Less is Always More on Creag Meagaidh <i>Alan Rowan</i>
35	The Lindertis Diary <i>A Sideways Look at the Walking World</i>
36	Dates for your Diary <i>Some Dates for 2024</i>
38	Photo Competition <i>The winning entries</i>



Editorial

by Derek Sime

We have a 40-page issue this time so that we could include a special article by Norman McNab on wind energy. Norman spent many years working in the electricity sector and knows a thing or two about electricity supply. Regardless of your views on wind turbines, this article is a must-read.

Alan Rowan writes on the historic completion of the Tops by Alan Haworth, who sadly died just a few weeks later, and Alan also has his regular column – this time on Creag Meagaidh. Cast your mind back to the summer heatwave with Ann White, then read about Mike Weedon's Torridonian winter.

In the third in the series of essays by the late Irvine Butterfield, we hear of Irvine's first summit – Schiehallion, and that's followed by Roger Drye's late winter trip to Jura, and Andrew Fraser passing on the baton. John Marjoram loses a crampon in Glenfinnan, while Hamish Brown recalls early days at Oban Bothy, in Part 1 of a two-part series.

Following her second completion of the Full House (detailed in the News section), Anne Butler confesses to having attended no less than 50 completions over the years.

All that is followed by the Lindertis Diary, and dates for your diary in 2024 and we round off with the stunning winning entries in this year's Photo Competition.

Hopefully you will find all this to be an enjoyable, entertaining and informative read.

Please send material for the April issue by 29 February 2024 to simed44.ds@gmail.com (max. 1,500 words). As always, the earlier an item is received, the better the chance of it appearing in the next Newsletter. Photos should be sent as separate jpg files (max. 2MB per photo), and NOT as embedded files. Also, why not drop a line to the Postbag section – we like to hear from you!

TMS