

rest achieved what they had set out to do. A superb meal was prepared for all in the evening – many, many thanks to Walter, for after all his planning and preparation, he cooked for us as well!

While returning from Carn a'Choire Ghairbh (we had come west into Gleann na Ciche and then north) my eye had caught, in between the unbroken snow cover on the high peaks of Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan and Mam Sodhail, a lower Munro; and memories of mist on the summit of An Socach, and the thought that I should be able to do it without having to carry crampons, had persuaded me (not being as fit as I should be), that little An Socach was just what I wanted to do next day (and I would have ten miles less of a walk than the last time I did it). Patrick came with me, and Alf, who had completed both Corbetts the day before, with some pain to his knees, left the cottage after us, took the same route, and returned an hour before us. But we had cameras and we took photographs – it is a marvellous viewpoint to so many big Munros all around. I could list them, but Munroist readers don't need me to do that. It was such a pity that illness had caused Irvine Butterfield to pull out of the trip; I'm sure he would have revelled in the photographic conditions. We all send him good wishes and hope he'll be well for the next time.



Ben Attow from An Socach. Photo: S Sharpe

And for the rest, Colin, once more did a big round, up Mullach Fraoch-Choire, on to

A'Chralaig and its top, A'Chioch, on to Carn Ghluasaid, Sgurr nan Conbhairean and Sail Chaorainn – if there are tops on the way, I'm sure he didn't leave them out! Eleanore and Walter went off to do a Graham, Charles was on tops of Mam Sodhail, Alan went to Carn a'Choire Ghairbh and Alec to Sgurr Gaorsaic. Gill had a commitment and had had to go home, finding out on the way about a Duathlon taking place by Loch Beinn a'Mheadhoin.

And so to another meal organised and largely prepared by Walter, and a second convivial evening. Monday saw us packing up, cleaning and tidying, and returning to the car park as we had come in. Farewell Glen Affric, I'm sure most of us will be back. And thanks to everyone who came, to Walter in particular for such excellent planning, and to the Munro Society in general for a splendid weekend.

Those attending: Alf Barnard, Alan Hawarth, Patrick Hetherington, Eleanore Hunter, Walter McArthur, Charles Murray, Gill Nunn, Iain Robertson, Susan Sharpe, Alec Thomson and Colin Walter.

Susan Sharpe - with thanks to Patrick Hetherington for his note taking and corrections.



Fare well to Glen Affric. Photo: S Sharpe

Future Revisits

❑ **5th to 8th September – Patterdale, Lake District.** The Society has booked the George Starkey Hut in Patterdale for the three nights (5th, 6th and 7th September). If you are

interested please complete the attached form and send it with a cheque for £25 made payable to "*The Munro Society*" to Findlay Swinton, the sum being a deposit for the three nights. Patterdale is an excellent centre for the Lake District with all the Lakeland 3000ers (and other, more interesting mountains) within reasonable reach. Please respond promptly as accommodation is limited.

The Lindertis Diary

▣ **Island bagging** – Those who came to the AGM in March will have enjoyed the evening talk from Andy Strangeway (Island-Man), despite, or maybe because of, his somewhat provocative assertion to the assembled bunch of old compleaters that doing the "Strangeways" is a feat more challenging than a round of the Munros. For the uninitiated, to do the "Strangeways" (and Andy Strangeway claims to be the only one who has done them so far) one has to not only visit all 162 Scottish islands over 40 hectares, but also sleep on them (there is no requirement to visit the highest point but one naturally assumes that a Munroist aspiring to this accomplishment would find it hard to resist so doing). As to how this compares in terms of endurance, effort and sheer dedication, with a round of the 3000ers, it all depends on how you look upon these things. It has been said by some (and even those in our midst) that to be a "Real Munroist" it is necessary to climb the In Pinn unaided by rock climbing companions, mountain guides, block and tackle or any other such paraphernalia. Then again, others might go further and venture to suggest that free climbing totally unsupported is the only sporting way up the thing. Perhaps in years to come the real "Real Munroist" will, in addition, be required to pitch his tent or bivvy bag (and spend the night in it) on all 284 summits in order to justify the claim of completion. Now there's a challenge – any takers?

▣ **An island, or not an island?** – Irvine Butterfield's excellent article on his first visit to Ben More appeared in the Scottish Island Explorer magazine (May / June). The "taster" on the front cover (and two other references elsewhere) however boldly proclaimed "Ben More – a visit to the only Munro on the Scottish islands". This, it transpires, represents strict adherence to the Haswell-Smith definition of an island, stated thus – "an island is a piece of land or group of pieces of land which is entirely surrounded by seawater at Lowest Astronomical Tide, and to which there is no permanent means of dry access" (either natural or manmade, it would appear), thereby excluding Skye since the building of the bridge. This definition is usefully printed a few pages further on, in an article by the aforementioned Haswell-Smith, and may therefore give some credibility to the proclamation, but would not explain why recent editions of the same publication have been known to carry the odd article on *Eilean a'Cheo*. Haswell-Smith in his celebrated work "The Scottish Islands – a Comprehensive Guide to Every Scottish Island" notably omits Skye. *Sgitheanachs* we have spoken to are somewhat bemused by all this, one or two suggesting that haulage companies ought to be told, so that they can remove the "island" supplement from their delivery charges. Perhaps the definition of its island status is as misty as the island itself, but the concept of the Cuillin being ranked among the mainland peaks somehow takes away the magic of these unique hills.

▣ **The Fisherfield six?** – On a recent fact finding foray into Fisherfield and the Fannaichs, (on an MQI gathering mission) our correspondent, never one to miss out on an opportunity, took a reading from a hand-held GPS at the summit of Beinn a'Claidheimh. This hill, as some may recall, was given a height on the 1974 Second Series OS 1:50,000 map of 914m, and in the 1974 version of the Tables, its height was also variously quoted as c3000 feet (1 inch

map) and c2800 feet (6 inch map). The reading on the GPS on this occasion settled down at 3005 feet (yes, feet, as our man finds changing the settings just too challenging to fathom out), and as its height is currently given as 916m, that would seem about right. But before getting too complacent it would be wise to note that hand held GPS instruments are notoriously inaccurate for height measurements, and it would be even wiser to note that this same instrument gave a reading on Foinaven of 3016 feet, when the official height was measured at 2989 feet. So if the same level of inaccuracy can be assumed, and there seems no reason why it cannot, that would leave Beinn a'Claidheimh a yard or two short of a furlong in terms of its Munro status. This is of course totally inconclusive, but food for thought, and, to end on another somewhat alliterative note, it might just be the Fisherfield Five.

Mountain Quality Indicators (MQIs)

□ The Munros which have still to be assessed at least once (now only 9, with 2 reports pending) are as follows –

Section 10

Sgurr na Ciche
Garbh Chioch Mhor
Sgurr nan Coireachan
Sgurr Mor
Gairich
Meall Bhuidhe
Ladhar Bheinn

Section 11

An Socach *
Beinn Fhionnlaidh *

(* denotes reports pending.)

John Burdin/Derek Sime

In Brief

□ **Alistair Milner's letter** re Bidean a' Choire Sheasgaich and Lurg Mhor stated that there isn't a guide book

which gives an ascent by way of Coire Sheasgaich – however this route is in fact described in "High Mountains". This is one for an overnight at either Bearnais bothy or Ben Dronaig Lodge (which has become available more recently). There is an awkward slab just below the summit of Lurg Mhor itself (I remember this as there was a patch of snow on the summit at the time of my visit). Incidentally I actually got my car to Ben Dronaig Lodge - a Hillman Minx (they don't make them like that anymore) – Irvine Butterfield.

□ **Free membership** – The Executive Committee has decided to discontinue the offer of free membership for new members up to the following AGM, as this has created administrative difficulties. Instead, new members joining after 31 December in any year will be given membership up to the AGM in the year following their joining the *Society*, on payment of the normal annual subscription. Those joining up to 31 December will receive membership only up to the following AGM.

□ **Rock art on Canisp** – our Diary piece in the last Newsletter provoked some reaction, and it was suggested that the creation illustrated may be the work of Durness based sculptor, Lotte Glob. Any other suggestions welcome.

□ **Munroist ties, brooches and badges.** Members can obtain the above articles at a cost of £11 each including postage from Gordon M McAndrew, Bishops House, 4 Lansdowne Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 5EQ. Cheques should be made payable to GM McAndrew. Don't forget to include your name and address!

□ **Weather.** No sooner had we published the times of the "Outdoor Conditions" forecast on BBC Radio Scotland (92-95 FM, 810 MW and Digital Radio), than they changed the schedules! Times are now published as follows -

- Mondays to Fridays at 19:04 hrs
- Saturdays at 06:58, 07:30 and 22:04 hrs

- Sundays at 07:03 hrs.

A word of warning though – sometimes, if they are running late on the schedules, the weather forecast is the first casualty, and just occasionally, the “forecast” for the day just passed has been unwittingly read out. Not always the most reliable source of mountain weather conditions therefore. They have also dropped the 21:58 general weather bulletin for reasons best known only to BBC Scotland – all part of the marginalisation of the weather in the ratings war perhaps.

▣ **Publications.** An excellent article about Ben More (Mull) by Irvine Butterfield, has been published in the “Scottish Islands Explorer” magazine (May / June 2008). Also, an article by Derek Sime on the *The Munro Society* / CMCR heightings last year of Beinn Dearg and Foinaven has been published in the Scots Magazine, May 2008.

▣ **Inverbroom.** For those who don’t know, the Inverbroom Estate has been doing some work on footpaths in the Loch Bhraoin area. Work has been going on for some time, and the two Rights of Way from the A 832 leading to Kinlochewe and Lochluichart have now, with the apparent approval of the Highland Council, and assistance from SNH, been diverted. The estate is rebuilding the lodge, and the boat house, and has erected a large fenced enclosure round the lodge to encourage regeneration of natural woodland, and wishes to restrict access to the south west end of the loch to boat only. The diverted paths in the vicinity of the boathouse are of high quality, and include an impressive new bridge over Abhainn Cuileig. We have not yet been able to look at the path along Loch Bhraoin, away from the boat house, which over the last couple of years had become a rather horrible boggy churned up peat track, so if anyone can update us on the present state of that path, please get in touch.



New footbridge over Abhainn Cuileig Photo: D Sime

▣ **Another Ptarmigan survey.** Walkers on Goat Fell, Ben Lomond and Ben Lawers are being asked to report ptarmigan sightings to the National Trust for Scotland (NTS), with a view to assessing climate change on their numbers. The study will also allow comparisons to be made with populations in the Cairngorms (on the Trust’s property there – Mar Lodge estate). As temperatures rise, there is a fear that the ptarmigan might disappear from areas such as Goat Fell. However the causal relationships are not fully understood; for instance, if the climate becomes windier, the increasing wind chill may act in favour of the ptarmigan. Also grazing patterns may have an impact. These surveys are likely to be on an annual basis. Visitors to Goat Fell, Ben Lomond and Ben Lawers can report sightings to local ranger staff, or by email to Lindsay Mackinlay (lmackinlay@nts.org.uk).

The Annual Dinner, 2008

▣ The *Munro Society* Annual Dinner this year will again be held in the Ben Wyvis Hotel in Strathpeffer on Saturday 25th October 2008. Members and their guests are cordially invited to attend. Those wishing to do so are asked to complete the tear off portion at the end of this Newsletter and send it with payment to the Editor. The cost of the evening, which includes the President’s Reception will be £28 per person. Wine will be on the table.

The President’s Reception will commence at 6.30 pm, with the Dinner starting at 7.30 pm. Dress is informal.

The Earl of Cromartie, John Mackenzie will be the speaker at the Dinner.

Accommodation, including breakfast is available at the hotel, reduced from £55 to £35 per person per night.

Members wishing to book accommodation should contact the hotel direct, mentioning that they are attending *The Munro Society* Dinner. The address of the hotel is:-

Ben Wyvis Hotel

Strathpeffer

Ross-shire. IV14 9DN

☎ 0870 950 6264

✉ admin.benwyvis@crerarhotels.com

There is also plenty of alternative accommodation in the area, details of which may be obtained from <http://www.strathpefferpavilion.org/A-Place-to-Stay-g.asp> or by contacting Visit Scotland (see form at end of Newsletter).

Useful web addresses

☐ The North East Mountain Trust is collecting up to date information on the current state of upland vehicle hill tracks in the Cairngorms National Park. More details at

<http://www.nemt.org.uk/>

☐ A report on the debate of the future of the national parks can be found at <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialReports/meetingsParliament/or-08/sor0313-02.htm#Col6973>.

☐ <http://outdoorsmagic.com> is a great site to find out what other users think of the equipment they've bought under real life conditions before you buy it yourself.

Members' corner

* GLENCOE. Two 4* STB self-catering cottages in the heart of Glencoe's mountains. Cottages are very comfortable and fully equipped, each sleeping up to 6 people. Open all year, pets by arrangement. David and Christine Baker 01855 811598, www.glencoemountaintcottages.co.uk.

* Peter Willimott is organizing a trip to Morocco in 2009 for *Society* members. Further details available from PeterWillimott@valleyfield.fsbusiness.co.uk. An article describing Peter's Moroccan trips will appear in the next Newsletter.

If any members would like to place a small advert in future newsletters, please e-mail the Secretary (details in Contacts sections).

Notes from the 2008 Annual General Meeting

☐ 29 members and a few friends attended the sixth AGM which was held in the Birnam Institute. Membership now stands at 232 and numbers grow slowly but steadily. Publications: This year saw the publication of our first Journal which was very well received. A copy of this Journal is now lodged in the National Library of Scotland. Website: This has registered 3100 hits since 1st August 2007.

PARC: Irvine Butterfield is the *Society's* representative on PARC. His report indicates that a Parliamentary Bill will be put forward at the time of the Quinquennial Review, later this year. This Bill will include a clause seeking to enlarge the National Park area by extension of the boundary to the south. It is hoped that the vote will go in favour of the motion to extend the Park.

Heighting was the principal activity of much of the year with planning and re-drafting an ongoing activity. We acknowledge the generous assistance and technical expertise of CMCR. However CMCR is no longer willing to provide its services free of charge. TMS, therefore, has applied for funding to The Scottish Mountaineering Trust We await a decision.

Newsletter: Derek Sime has relinquished the editorship of the Newsletter and the new editor is Anne Marie Foot.

Office Bearers: Iain Robertson having been involved with TMS since its inception relinquishes his post as President. Iain is

also stepping down from the committee and we are sorry to lose his wisdom and expertise. Derek Sime becomes President. We welcome back Glen Breaden, this time as Vice President and also Roderick Manson on to the Committee. Bill Taylor is stepping down from the committee and we thank him for his contribution over the last two years.

Archives: John Moore in his Report argues that MQIs will provide a very valuable record of mountains for future generations. He suggests that we, members, should consider donating material, especially written accounts or diaries of walking trips, and expeditions, together with photos of Munros, Munroists and any early maps showing the Munros. For more information you can get in touch with John at j.n.moore@libgla.ac.uk.

Finances: In the absence of the Hon Treasurer, Walter McArthur presented the accounts. No questions were forthcoming and the accounts were adopted on the proposal of Irvine Butterfield and seconded by Peter Willimott. As the accounts are in a healthy position it was decided that the Annual Subscription should remain at £15.

AOCB: There was a wide-ranging discussion principally about Heighting, with many different points of view being expressed.

Jim Closs is in process of making a new video/DVD on behalf of the *Society* and this time Irvine Butterfield is the subject.

TMS will be represented at the Keswick Mountaineering Festival as three of our members have taken it upon themselves to man a stand on behalf of the *Society*.

Annual Lecture: Andy Strangeway otherwise known as "Island Man" delivered a most interesting account of his time spent reaching, and staying on, Scottish Islands, sometimes in the most difficult conditions.

Eleanore Hunter (Hon Sec)

Annual Subscriptions 2008/09

Payment of the annual subscription is now due. The amount has once again been held at £15. Those members who joined during the year to April 2008 are reminded that payment is now due. Members are urged to pay by Standing Order (see form on the website, or from the Hon. Secretary). Otherwise, cheques should be made payable to *The Munro Society*. Payment should be sent, along with the completed form (to be found at the end of this Newsletter), and stamped addressed envelope, to:

Fred Ward, Hon. Treasurer
3 Willow Drive
Kendal
Cumbria LA9 6AY

Letters / Articles

Letters or articles intended for publication in the next Newsletter are welcome, and should be addressed to the Editor (email preferred if possible), and sent to the Hon. Secretary (the postal and email addresses are given in the contacts section below).



The Munro Society

Office Bearers and Contact Details

President: Derek G. Sime

Vice-President: Glen Breaden

Hon. Treasurer: Fred Ward

Hon. Secretary: Eleanore Hunter

Committee Members: Angus Campbell, Anne Marie Foot, Walter McArthur, Findlay Swinton, Peter Willimot, Roderick Manson

Honorary President : Robin N. Campbell

Ex Officio

Glen Breaden (Meet Secretary)

John Moore (Archivist)

The Munro Society contact details:

Eleanore Hunter

Hon. Secretary

12 Randolph Court

Stirling FK8 2AL

eleanoreh@tiscali.co.uk

✉ themunrosociety@usa.net

www.themunrosociety.com

The Munro Society Annual Dinner 2008

The Munro Society Annual Dinner will this year be held in the Ben Wyvis Hotel in Strathpeffer on Saturday 25th October 2008. Members and their guests are cordially invited to attend. Those wishing to do so are asked to complete the tear off portion and send it with payment to the Editor. The cost of the evening, which includes the President's Reception will be £28 per person. The President's Reception will commence at 6.30 pm, with the Dinner starting at 7.30 pm. Dress is informal.

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Ben Wyvis Hotel
Strathpeffer
Ross-shire IV14 9DN
Phone :- 0870 950 6264
Email :- admin.benwyvis@crerarhotels.com

For details of alternative accommodation in the area, contact

<http://www.strathpefferpavilion.org/A-Place-to-Stay-g.asp> or The Scottish Tourist Board, 0845 2255121, e-mail info@visitscotland.com.

I / we will be attending The Munro Society Dinner at the Ben Wyvis Hotel, Strathpeffer on Saturday 25th October 2008 at 6.30 pm for 7.30 pm

Member's name
E-mail
Telephone

Guest's name

Vegetarian meal required?

Any other dietary requirements?

Please find enclosed a remittance of £28 per person (cheques made payable to The Munro Society). Please send cheques to arrive not later than 30 September 2007 to:-

Anne Marie Foot, Braeriach, Ardival East, Strathpeffer, Ross-shire, IV14 9DY

The Munro Society

Revisit Weekend – 5th to 8th September 2008, at the George Starkey Hut in Patterdale

I confirm that I will attend the above revisit weekend, and require accommodation at the George Starkey Hut, Patterdale. I enclose a cheque for **£25**, made payable to *The Munro Society*.

Name

Address.....

.....

.....

E-mail

Telephone

Please send to Findlay Swinton, 24 Affleck Gardens, Monikie, Angus. DD5 3QQ.

The Munro Society

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION 2008-09

There are benefits to both members and the *Society* if the annual subscription is paid by Standing Order and members are encouraged to adopt this method of payment. Members have been issued with blank Standing Order forms, but if you do not have one for any reason, then a copy may be obtained on the website, or from the Hon. Secretary, 12 Randolph Court, Stirling, FK8 2AL or leanoreh@onet.co.uk

The Annual Subscription for 2008-09 is £15 **and is now due**. If you do not pay by Standing Order, please return this slip *with a sae* and your cheque to the Hon. Treasurer at the address given. Please make cheques payable to *The Munro Society*.

Please find enclosed my remittance of £15 for my annual subscription 2008-09

Name

Address

.....

.....

Please send this form with your cheque to -

Hon. Treasurer
Fred Ward,
3 Willow Drive,
Kendal,
Cumbria
LA9 6AY.