

DAY TRIP to the ABERFELDY AREA

on Saturday 6 November 1999

Map required is OS Outdoor Leisure Sheet 52 Pitlochry to Crieff.

In a change to the advertised walk in the Campsie Hills we will instead be heading for darkest Perthshire. The bus will depart CATHCART at **08.00hrs** and head for the ABERFELDY area via the A80, A9 and the A827 and will probably include a coffee stop at Ballinluig. We aim to leave ABERFELDY by 17.00hrs at the latest to arrive back at CATHCART by 19.00hrs.

Proposed Routes

Route 1 Schiehallion (the Fairy Hill of the Caledonians)

Start at the car park at the Braes of Foss (GR 753557) and follow the obvious path to the east-west ridge of Schiehallion. Continue up the ridge to the summit at 1083m. The path starts in soft, peaty ground then becomes stony and near the summit is boulder strewn. Return by the same route.

Distance: 9 km
Ascent: 760m
Time/Grade: 5 hours/Moderate

Route 2 Meall Tairneachan and Farragon Hill

Start from the B846 at GR 780562 where a track heads SE to within 50m of the summit of Meall Tairneachan (787m) at GR 807544. After visiting the summit rejoin the track and go east to the end at GR 827550 then cross a boggy corrie to the SW ridge of Farragon Hill. Head for a gap in the crags on the SW side to attain the summit at GR 841553 (783m). Descend through the same gap in the crags and aim for the path which starts at GR 845540 and follow the path and forrest tracks to the minor road at Weem (GR854499) then go west to the car park at GR839496.

Distance: 19 km
Ascent: 670m
Time/Grade: 6hrs/Moderate

Route 3 A Ramble past Creag Chean

Start from the B846 at GR 772535 where a track winds uphill to a high point of 580m at GR 792531 close to Creag Chean (654m). Continue on the track in a general SE direction below crags at GR 803519 to the junction at GR 813508. Turn right to head downhill to eventually meet the B846 at GR 820491. Head east past Castle Menzies to the car park at GR839496.

Distance: 15 km

Ascent: 240m
Time/Grade: 5 hours/Moderate

Route 4 The Birks of Aberfeldy

From the main street follow the blue sign to the Birks, first passing under the war memorial arch and eventually reaching the car park at the start of the walk. Walk through the car park to continue the walk and where the path divides go left, following the sign to the Moness Falls. Moness means 'the foot of the falls.' The path leads in time to Burns' Seat. Stone steps lead up beside a waterslide and then back to cross the burn higher up. Cross a long wooden bridge and take the short path down to a viewing platform for the main Moness Falls. Return to the main path and continue upward on more steps to the bridge over the falls. Return to the car park by the path on the west side of the gorge. At the car park, follow the Tree Trail which includes unusual species such as Antarctic beech, the Angelica or devil's walking stick and a Chinese scarlet rowan. Follow the road down to the town centre and continue straight across to walk over Wade's bridge with the Black Watch Memorial beside it. Follow the B846 to the car park near Castle Menzies.

Distance: 9 km
Ascent: 170m
Time/Grade: 4 hours/Easy

The Birks

The Birks of Aberfeldy is a nature walk on the outskirts of Aberfeldy. It acquired the name of "The Birks" from the predominance of birch trees within it. The valley that the Birks lies in was shaped during the ice ages, and through the centre of the valley runs the river Tay. The Birks itself contains one of the tributaries of the Tay - the Moness Burn. The Moness Falls lie at the top of the Birks.

The popularity of the Birks is at least in part thanks to a song by Robert Burns who is said to have written the song after resting in a small naturally formed seat in the rock at the side of the birks. The location of this seat is known, and a plaque allows those passing by to identify it. He visited the Birks, then known as the Den of Moness, on the 30th August 1787, so the Falls of Moness have been a scenic walk for over 2 centuries!

Castle Menzies presents an excellent impression of a typical fortified 16th century house and was the seat of the chiefs of Clan Menzies for over 300 years.

The Black Watch Regiment, known in Gaelic as 'An Freicadean Dubh' was formed in Aberfeldy, and now enjoys the freedom of the town.

See you on the day.

Willie Robison, Aberfeldy Organiser