



Reviews 2007

Newsflash! "Snow lies on the ground in Perthshire" and Dodging a Hooley in the Crooked Glen of Stones

On Friday 19th of January the first GCH full weekend meet got underway. The journey down to Perthshire was preceded by P&J warnings of traffic jams due to a sudden download of snow. But for the whole way down to Loch Tay there was little sign of any heavy download and no signs of anything on the roads. Could it be that we have become so used to mild winters that any significant snow cover is now a major media sensation!

By Friday night the GCH crowd, including a welcome return from Mike Stanton and Maria Hardy, were assembling at Culdees Farm Lodge on the North side of Loch Tay. This spacious bunkhouse includes a large kitchen and "inner courtyard" living room with comfy chairs to sink into after the days walking.

On Saturday morning we all set off in three groups hopeful of new hill conquests. In reality the strength of the wind was to be a stern taskmaster making it virtually impossible to stand or move beyond a half way stage of ascent. This was the real news sensation, not the snow! The "invincible veterans", Brian and Ian, were the only ones to reach the top of a hill (corbett). Even for them it was just heads down against the howling gusts and then scarper from the summit as fast as possible.

My own walk consisted of an attempt on "Stuch An Lochan" near the Hydro-Electric Dam at the end of Glen Lyon. Accompanied by Mike, Maria, Joanne and Laura, we got so far up the hill before reaching the conclusion that the summit was just not going to be inhabitable on that day. We all just about managed to dodge the random spillage of spray from the dam on the way back to the car. Having retreated to Bridge of Balgie we come up with a plan B for the day. An extensive forest circuit with premium viewing down the whole of Glen Lyon. This two to three hour circuit is extremely varied with wood carvings and lochan crossings specially created to add to the mystique of the route. Laura and Joanne, our two expert people and landscape photographers, took a number of snaps as illustrated. Glen Lyon has a special "land that time forgot" atmosphere about it which is well worth sampling if you have never been there. It is nicknamed the "Crooked Glen of Stones" referring to all the mysterious stone mounds that were once Pictish forts and burial places visible from the single track road in. There is also the spooky looking Meggernie Castle which has had repeated ghost sightings all the way up to 1928. We left the glen prior to nightfall!

Back at the Culdees farm ranch that evening GCH held it's own Burns Supper with the haggis piped in by Ian Williamson. We finished off the evening with the annual highlight of an attempt at "Tam o Shanter" with each person braving their way through a verse.

Already looking forward to next years Burns Meet!