

The Ramblers - St Andrews & N.E. Fife Group



This month's mid-week leisurely walk saw seven St Andrews and North East Fife Ramblers setting out on a 6.5-mile linear walk from Dairsie to Cupar via Fingask and Cairney Fruit Farm. On boarding our bus in Cupar in a light drizzle we anticipated a somewhat damp outing, given the poor weather forecast. Our bus driver, clearly intrigued, enquired as to the big event taking place in Dairsie – hopefully he was not too disappointed by the response 'it's a Ramblers walk'. We headed

northwest and uphill along the track to Fingask, where we stopped for a quick coffee break, and then turned left onto the minor road and farm tracks towards Myrecairnie. The rain had eased by this stage and after a little more road walking – and some short uphill stretches – we reached our very welcome lunch venue at the fruit farm just as the rain reappeared, though thankfully only briefly. Suitably refreshed, we made our way via the woodland track to Foodieash and on to Kingask and Hawklaw. As we headed downhill along a field edge to Cupar we were grateful that we had managed to avoid the worst of the elements on a very pleasant walk.

The following Sunday we had a turnout of eleven for a circular, 7-mile walk from Crail to Fife Ness. We set off along Marketgate and into the shady den leading us out of the village, onto a track past the dilapidated air service buildings and down to the shore at Balcomie Links. Here we enjoyed our refreshment break while watching several large ducks which your correspondent had hoped, but ultimately failed, to identify later from the grainy photographs taken with her phone. We turned



right to follow the coastal path, stopping to read a sign just before Lochaber Rock which tells the story of Mary of Guise, second wife of James V and mother of Mary, Queen of Scots, who landed there in 1538. Her fleet captain had mistaken Balcomie Castle for that of St Andrews. The next day she was met by James and they proceeded to St Andrews where they had a solemn confirmation and nuptial blessing in the cathedral of their earlier proxy marriage. Shortly afterwards we stopped at Fife Ness Harbour where we lunched beside the remains of a levelled area of rock used in the early



19th century to cut stones for a sea beacon.

Accompanied by the roaring of engines from the raceway on the old airfield above us we continued along the coastal path, passing Kilminning Coast Wildlife Reserve, important for its range of coastal habitats including grassland, salt marsh and scrub.

On arriving back in Crail we made for a nearby hotel where, as a rare change from scones, we enjoyed freshly-made pancakes with our cup of tea. Another interesting day out in Fife!

Details of our walks – which are open to guests as well as members of Ramblers – can be found on our website www.standrewsnefiferamblers.com