

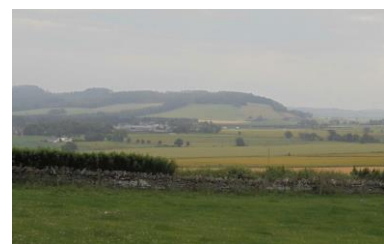
The Ramblers - St Andrews & N.E. Fife Group

There was a good turnout of 14 for St Andrews & North East Fife Ramblers' 7.5-mile linear walk last week, from Ladybank to Cupar. Assembling all the walkers proved somewhat challenging, as those taking the bus from St Andrews suffered a 25-minute delay, while the majority waiting at Cupar opted for another bus to beat the lengthy queue that was forming. Eventually our walk leader got us on our way and we headed out along the edge of the golf course towards Ladybank Woods. There we had an early coffee break, then looped around the edge of the wood to cross the railway line. On joining the minor road heading away from Pitlessie and shortly afterwards turned right into Rankeilour Estate. The winding track led to a Burn which offered a very comfortable venue for lunch. As we continued along the track through the estate we heard the loud rumble of a vehicle nearby, which assured everyone was 'only a train'; the jury is out on whether she or the driver of the large truck looming around a sharp bend towards us had the greater surprise. At the far end of the track we crossed the road and followed the path to Stratheden, walking through the grounds and then carefully negotiating some large puddles on the track towards Elmwood College Farm. From there we made directly for Cupar where a few of us gave into temptation, completing our day with a visit to a café celebrated for a certain type of doughnut.



A few days later a doughty group of 4 travelled to Angus for a 6.5-mile walk at Forfar Loch and Balmashanner Hill, hoping to defy the thundery showers forecast for the early afternoon. We set off in bright sunshine at a good pace around the loch and then made our way through the business park and across Glamis Road towards a farm track at Littlemill. There we had a short coffee break before continuing along field tracks

to a narrow, nettle-lined path through the trees. This brought us to the bypass and following a short spell of walking parallel to this, we were glad to turn away towards Halkerton and the start of the track leading to Balmashanner Hill. After an uphill stretch we followed paths across open grassland to catch our first views of the towering war memorial. We decided to have lunch at the benches below the memorial but as soon as we had settled in to enjoy the views heavy rain came on, just



as forecast, forcing a hasty retreat to the nearby shelter. Lunch over, the rain obligingly eased and we began the descent in light drizzle to Reid Park and the town centre. Our arrival back at the car park was timed perfectly to escape another sudden downpour. And so we headed for tea, at a pleasant café on the road to Dundee, thankful that the rain gods had smiled on us after all.

Our next walk is on Sunday 23rd July, a low level 6-mile walk at Atholl Woods, Dunkeld. All of our walks are open to guests who would like to try out The Ramblers, and full details can be found on our website www.standrewsnefiferamblers.com