

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



In mid-July seven Ramblers boarded a bus in Cupar (your correspondent eventually finding her bus pass) for the short trip to Dairsie and the start of a 6.5-mile favourite summer walk via Fingask Farm, Cairnie Fruit Farm and back to Cupar. Heading out of Dairsie we took the long uphill stretch at a gentle pace, stopping more than once to admire the views over the surrounding countryside. Just beyond Fingask we had a quick refreshment stop and then continued to Denbrae. A short section on a minor

road led us to the long straight track to Myrecairnie, where we caught a momentary glimpse of a deer crossing the track ahead of us. Shortly after joining the next minor road we diverted onto the much safer field edge running alongside and made for Cairnie and our lunch destination. After a welcome break at the outdoor seating area we started on the homeward stretch, taking the short woodland path to Foodieash and onto the track leading to Hawklaw, from where it was all downhill into Cupar. Once again, despite the less than promising weather forecast, we had managed to avoid the summer downpours – another successful outing!



The following Sunday eight intrepid walkers undertook the ascent of the 2,126 feet high King's Seat at Dollar, a challenging 9-mile circular walk. We set out from Dollar on an unexpectedly warm and sunny morning, climbing steadily up through the shady Dollar Glen. At the top of the glen we enjoyed a rest and drinks overlooking the imposing Castle Campbell. Originally known as Castle Gloom, this was the lowland seat of the earls and dukes of Argyll, chiefs of Clan Campbell, from the 15th to the 19th century. Stage one completed, we emerged from the trees and carried on, and on,



up the open hillside, stopping regularly to catch our breath and to enjoy the expansive views over Dollar and to the Firth of Forth in the distance. Towards the summit we encountered the memorial to two pilots who lost their lives, and one who survived, when their Spitfires operating from RAF Grangemouth crashed on the hill in January 1943. Onwards and upwards we continued, and finally we reached the top where a very welcome resting place and lunch stop awaited us in a sheltered circle of stones.



On our way again, we covered a stretch of level ground, passing a picturesque hilltop bog before beginning our long and steep descent towards Tillicoultry, which for your correspondent proved even more testing than going uphill. The beautiful, bracken-covered glen leading down into the town helped to distract from dodgy knee joints as we gradually made our way down to level ground and the final stage of the walk – another

three miles on the Devon Way, a pleasant cycle/footpath taking us back to Dollar. While we were glad to be back on flat terrain again, after our earlier exertions this final stretch seemed never-ending. A light drizzle began at this point, which we managed to ignore at first, but even when it became heavier some of us were too weary to fish out our waterproof gear and plodded on regardless to Dollar. Here we made for a lovely little restaurant, a great choice pre-booked by our leaders, where the



friendly staff provided water along with teas, coffees and cakes to revive us. This did the trick, and we headed back to Fife tired but very pleased with our big day out.

Our next walk is tomorrow (Saturday) 27<sup>th</sup> July, a 6-mile leisurely walk from Camperdown Park, Dundee through parkland and woodland, taking in Birkhill and Templeton Woods and Clatto Reservoir. 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](http://www.standrewsnefiferamblers.com)