

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



Thirteen walkers met on a sunny but cool Sunday morning at the end of September for a 7-mile walk at Pitcairngreen, near Almondbank in Perthshire. We set out on a track next to the Gelly Burn and then followed a path towards the outskirts of Almondbank, threading our way through a small housing estate before crossing the River Almond at Black Bridge. This replaced the old bridge which was destroyed by floods in 1993. The flood protection wall on the other side of the river provided

convenient seating for our drinks stop, and then we continued for a couple of miles along the pleasant, tree-lined walking and cycle path beside the river. For our walks co-ordinator, the highlight on this path was undoubtedly the rather quirky display of garden ornaments featuring his favourite characters Laurel and Hardy. At Almond Bridge we crossed the river again, heading towards the large and still expanding housing development of Bertha Park. On the far side of the estate we had a short uphill stretch to reach our lunch destination at Bertha Loch, a scenic and tranquil hidden gem previously unknown to most of us. The final section of the walk led us around the northern edge of the loch and along narrow, gently undulating paths through Bertha Wood to rejoin the Gelly Burn and retrace our footsteps back to Pitcairngreen. There we adjourned for refreshments to the friendly local pub where we enjoyed tea, coffee and, for some, a very generously-sized chocolate brownie which managed to defeat even your correspondent. This was a new walk for our group and one to which we will no doubt return in a future programme.



The following Saturday ten of us returned to Perthshire for another 7-miler, this time at



Kinnoull Hill and Deuchny Woods, and once again we were fortunate to have dry, pleasantly mild weather. Our route formed a figure of eight, the first loop taking us up Kinnoull Hill, with stunning views over the silvery Tay as we made our way to our drinks stop at the Tower. This prominent landmark perched on the cliff edge is a folly built in the 18th century by the Earl of Kinnoull to resemble castles along the Rhine. We carried on to the summit and then wound our way back down through the woodland to the car park and lunch beneath the trees. The second loop led us into the less

familiar Deuchny Woods. For a while we followed part of the ancient Coronation Road between Fife and the crowning place at Scone before tackling a steep, but thankfully not lengthy track. From there it was a gently undulating return to our starting point, with more lovely views over the Tay and the autumn landscape. For our post-walk refreshments we headed to the Black Watch Museum café in Perth, where much hilarity ensued when one of our number misheard the intentions of another who, referring to the cakes on offer at the counter, actually declared that she was going for a look. A memorable end to a great day out.



Our next walk is on Wednesday 16th October at Sheriffmuir, Dunblane, a 5.5-mile walk on surfaced tracks, woodland paths and pavements. 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