

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

There was no sign of the January blues as 17 Ramblers assembled on a brisk Wednesday morning for our second walk of the year, at Falkland Estate. Once our leader had managed, Houdini-style, to disentangle her jacket and backpack without removing either, we set off into the Estate and soon turned onto the path for the picturesque Maspie Den. We climbed up through the den to this for artful photographs and refreshed we descended to completing a loop through the woodland and then turning back towards the village. Before returning to the car park we stopped off for tea and cakes in one of the (refurbished!) horse stalls at the old stables, thus completing an excellent walk.



The following Saturday we had another good turnout of 13 walkers for a 5.5-mile walk to the south of St Andrews, taking in Scooniehill, the Grange and Balmungo as well as a short section of the coastal path. We headed out of the town towards Pipeland hill, following the grass track to the top where we enjoyed the familiar, stunning views over St Andrews, at its best in the bright sunshine. We continued past Scooniehill farm and shortly afterwards found the track obstructed by a large fallen tree, one of the many victims of Storm Eowyn. Work to clear this had already started, with the main trunk sawn into convenient chunks strewn across the track and forming the perfect seating arrangement for our lunch stop. Just as we



were getting ready to move on a pickup arrived with three workmen, ready to start clearing the debris; as we departed they eyed us somewhat dubiously, presumably wondering why anyone would choose this particular location for a mid-winter picnic. We made our way across to the Grange and then Balmungo, and on towards Kinkell Braes. There, on the path beside the caravan park, we encountered our second fallen tree which, though much smaller than the first, was still completely blocking our route. By good fortune two strapping young men had arrived just before us and with a little assistance from some of our number they managed to lift the offending tree over the fence, allowing us to continue. We completed the walk without further obstacle, joining the coastal path to head down the Braes and back to the East Sands, from where several of us adjourned for welcome refreshments after a lovely winter walk.



Our next walk is on Sunday 9th February, a 7.5-mile circular walk from Limekilns to Charlestown on good paths, tracks and minor roads, with some short ascents. 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