

As I look back over what has happened within the FMC membership over the past year I am finding it difficult to get into the mood normally associated with writing a Christmas Newsletter. The main item of news in the previous Newsletter was the sudden passing of Tom Lloyd Evans two days before he was planning to come on the Club's Summer week to Scourie but at the time of writing that newsletter it was already apparent that another longstanding stalwart of the Club, our treasurer Roy Robertson was very seriously ill. He had been unable to attend Tom's funeral because at the same time he had a hospital appointment and it was as a result of that appointment that he was given a terminal diagnosis. Sadly he only lived another 3 months and he died at home on 1st November. The huge turnout at his funeral both of past and present Club members, as well as many local people representing the many facets of St Andrews life in which Roy had been active, was a measure of the high regard in which Roy was held by everyone. He had been the Club treasurer for many years and was meticulous in the detail with which he kept the Club books drawing on his long experience of running a local business. He also remained very fit and active on the hills up until about the time of his 80th birthday about 18 months ago. It was only about 3 years ago that he climbed Beinn Eighe and Beinn Alligin, the latter in inclement weather during a Club week at Kinlochewe. It is a measure of his unassuming nature that although I have been on a number of hills in Roy's company I have been unable to find any photograph of Roy on a hill other than ones where he appears in the background within a larger group. In the one shown below he is at least in the front of the group! I am sure that some of you have some much better ones.



On the summit of Cranstackie (NW Sutherland)

Many of you who were at Roy's funeral will have already discovered that the position of treasurer has now been taken over by Peter Robinson. After Roy informed us of his situation, the full committee (including Roy) met in early September and at this meeting Peter was nominated and agreed to take on this role. Since then there has been a prolonged saga with the Bank of Scotland before they finally recognised Peter as a signatory of the account. However the Club has benefited financially from the Bank's incompetence as they have agreed to make a compensation payment for all the inconvenience caused!

So far I have made no mention of any hills having been climbed recently and there have been several weekends this Autumn when the very wet forecasts failed to tempt anyone out. However the venue of the mid November meet to Glen Doll was changed to the Aberfeldy area instead as the forecast was far better further west and the group who attended had a pleasant day climbing Farragon Hill. Two weeks later was better still and those that climbed Ben Vrackie had a spectacularly good day with wall to wall sunshine. Back in late September when we were still experiencing unusually warm summer rather than Autumn temperatures those that went to Beinn Chabhair also had a good day. It was the Meets planned for October that failed to happen.



On Farragon Hill in mid November



Ben Vrackie summit on 30th November

Since then there has been renewed enthusiasm as 9 members turned up to plan the Day Meet list for 2015. It will be distributed with this Newsletter. Some of those at that meeting were clearly hoping to manage out more in 2015 than they had managed in 2014. An effort was made to strike a balance on that list between long challenging days in midsummer and slightly shorter ones that suit those who still have to be up early for work on a Monday morning. Douglas, however, was not present at this meeting as he has decided that the time has come to withdraw from the Club's activities. Although he was out of action for a prolonged spell this Autumn due to a combination of holidays and a sprained ankle he did make it to the recent outing to Farragon Hill and he supplied the above photo. Although he has been away elsewhere for prolonged periods his contribution has been considerable as he was solely responsible for setting up the Club website and he has been coordinator of many

Day Meets over the years and has followed up the outings he has attended with the Walk Reports that appear on the website. We hope to see him now and again in the future. Initially in the New Year Margaret Chapman will be coordinating the Meets and updating the website. The Meet coordinator is likely to vary as Margaret won't always be available but the plan is to update those who sometimes go out on Meets by e-mail as to who is coordinating the next Meet.

Hopefully the weather will be reasonable for the New Year Meet to Barry Buddon on 2nd January when we walk out to the part of the beach just below the lighthouse, then light a fire using driftwood on the beach on which we cook our lunch. I will coordinate that meet so can those hoping to attend contact me around 29th / 30th December. I will watch the forecasts closely and then keep in touch with you in the event of having to move to the more sheltered Tentsmuir. Usually there has been one car coming from Fife and another from Perth and Dundee with the meeting point being 9.45 am at Moniefieth.

Finally it is hoped there will be a good turnout for the **AGM** which will be held at **7.00 pm** on **Wednesday 21st January 2015** in **St Andrews Town Hall**. It will take the usual form with the formal business being followed by refreshments and a Quiz.

Jean