



Craigencaht Trust Walking Festival Enjoys Second Successful Year

In September, the Trust ran its second local Walking Festival and it was another big success. The number of folk registering for walks came to 105 and the overall footfall of 225 was a big increase on last year. The event just gathered momentum as people registered for more walks after enjoying the first ones. It is a good way of bringing communities together and for former strangers to share a common enjoyment. Walk leaders from Kinghorn, Burntisland, Aberdour and Auchtertool have come together to offer a wide and varied programme. There were heritage and environmental walks, energetic Nordic Walking, as well as longer more challenging hikes.

The event was again fortunate to have excellent weather with only one day out of nine with rain. There were sixteen walks to choose from offering both coastal and inland countryside, stretching from Kirkcaldy to Dalgety Bay and Auchtertool. The scenery in this part of Fife is spectacular and varied and often commented on by visitors; it was good to see so many people out enjoying it. The Walking Festival generates such a good atmosphere amongst its participants and gives a chance for like minded folk to meet up.



Walk 10: Relaxing in the sun in the Aberdour countryside



Walk 16: Building up an appetite on The Binn before lunch at "The Sands"

A favourite moment was walking with young families and children along to the troll bridge on the Rodanbraes Path. After some story telling at the Rotary bench, the children acted out the Billy Goats Gruff fairytale with gusto before returning back to the lochside car park.



Walk 12: Youngsters enjoying the tale of the Three Billy Goats Gruff

This year, at the end of the last walk, a whole host of folk gathered for lunch at The Sands Hotel in Burntisland to celebrate the end of a totally enjoyable week and somehow I don't think it will be the last. Our thanks go to all who helped with the organisation.

Marilyn Edwards

Bumble Bee Walk and Talk

In June, the Trust tried something new and held an outdoor "Walk & Talk" session at Craigencaft Farm, looking for evidence of our bumble bee population. Derek Abbott from Fife Coast and Countryside Trust gave a talk on how to identify different bees and then, armed with nets, folk went in search of them. In no time at all, all seven common bumble bees were found in the farm's garden together with flies pretending to be bees and a Cuckoo Bee, before venturing out to examine the hedgerows. The afternoon was not only very successful but good fun. It is reassuring to know that a wide variety of bees are here. Other, similar, practical events will be considered in the future.



Searching for bumblebees

It has been difficult to venture out without an umbrella this summer, but the Trust BBQ was blessed with a warm, sunny evening so that folk could relax and bletcher outside until dusk. The event always generates a good atmosphere and it is good to just get together and also to meet up with new acquaintances and the food is good too. This year the event was fund raising towards a defibrillator to be sited near the loch and raised £267.



Walking Programme 2015

The Walking Group continues to meet on the first Wednesday of each month throughout the winter.

Wednesday 7th October

Wednesday 4th November

2016 Wednesday 2nd December

Wednesday 6th January

Wednesday 3rd February

Wednesday 2nd March

Walks last one to two hours maximum, based around the beautiful countryside of Kinghorn Loch. Lots of interesting birds, animals and plants to see on the way.

Good walking boots/shoes recommended as well as waterproofs

Participants must inform Walk Leader if they wish to attend any of the walks by phone/text or email prior to the date. If inclement weather, please phone before 9am on day of walk to establish if it will take place.

Meeting Place :

From B923 at crossroads turn up road Earthship. Take first turning on the left once past the former tannery site. Do NOT go down to the Ecology Centre. There is hard standing to take quite a few cars. **Meet here at 10 am**

For further details phone Kathleen on 01592 643318 or 07757 282455 or Pat on 01592 890449 or 07971 521943

kathleen363@yahoo.co.uk

**Walking is good for YOU
please join us and try a walk**

Exciting New Lochside Project

We now have all the funding in place for our next big project. The Lochside project is aimed at improving facilities on the loch and at the lochside, while protecting its natural beauty, plants and wildlife. This project will finally join the lochside car park right through to Rodanbraes Cottage with a disabled and family friendly path.

The Rodanbraes path, reaching the cottage at 350 feet above sea level, gives wonderful views over the Firth of Forth to Edinburgh and plenty of exercise for a 2 mile return journey.

We will replace the aging barley straw rafts, which have been so successful in eliminating algal blooms on the loch and install two nesting islands for the swans and other waterfowl. There will also be improved signage and interpretation boards to show off the history and ecology of our exceptionally interesting loch and landscape.

All this will take a lot of work. We are very fortunate to have the assistance of Alcan and funding from Awards for All and Fife Environment Trust, but if you have some time available please come and help.

RioTintoAlcan



Want to volunteer to help with projects ?

Please contact Ron info@CraigencaltTrust.org.uk or 01592 891330



CRCT Annual Friends Photo Competition

Get your cameras at the ready.....the judging of the annual photo competition will take place at the Annual Meeting for Friends on 16th November at the Sands Hotel Burntisland, at 7.30 pm. Finger buffet. The subject can be anything that is connected to the CRCT area, views, wildlife, flowers, trees, loch, birds, people, natural features.

CRCT Autumn Presentation

Report on the presentation on the "History of Kinghorn Loch".

Dr Ron Edwards

In September, Ron Edwards gave a presentation on "The History of Kinghorn Loch". It is rare that we can tell when physical features were created, but we know that Kinghorn Loch was born at the very end of the last Ice Age, between 13 and 11,000 years ago. A large chunk of ice broke away from the receding glacier and was covered in debris. When it melted it left a hole – a "kettle hole" – which is Kinghorn Loch. The resultant round, flooded hole is now about 50 feet deep and home to carp, pike, midge larvae, ducks, swans and canoeists. The glacial melt water left deep gorges, and one, now buried by boulder clay and man's enterprise, probably gave rise to the name "Craigencalt" – "gorge of the wild cat". Even with ice remaining, the area was probably home to hunter gatherers and then farmers.



Historical photo of Kinghorn Loch

In medieval times, the Lochlands were part of Kinghorn Common Good, and by the fifteenth century the Boswell family had a flour mill here. The Banchory Burn was diverted to the loch before 1583 which was no mean feat; to serve the mill and possibly to provide water to the burgh. However detailed records show that the mill (probably the “Hermitage” building at that time) was in a dire state of repair by 1688. There is a detailed map of 1757 showing the same mill but before 1800 it was replaced by the existing mill building. It was an agricultural steading by 1820 because, with industrialisation, mills moved to the coast, driven by steam and served by ships. Craigenfalt Farm moved to the lochside from Grange around 1873.

The creation of the oil shale industry in Scotland from the 1870s may have saved the whale from extinction by providing the oil products we needed before the advent of oil wells, but the Candle Works, sited on its shores from 1887 to 1894, led to pollution, fish kills and litigation brought by the town council. The town’s water supply remained precarious until 1916 when the Glassmount Water Works was built.

The loch was again at risk by the 1950s when British Aluminium started landfilling Red Mud at Whinnyhall from its factory in Burntisland. By 1960 the loch was badly polluted and by 1983 plants and fish had died out and only tolerant midge larvae thrived (together with canoeists). Alcan worked with the regulator to remove the leachate by 1983 and the loch recovered rapidly. Ron undertook a PhD study on the loch from 1980 to 1985. This has now been followed up by a further study by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (Justyna Olszewska and Bryan Spears) at Edinburgh to determine the residual situation. Evidence of the pollution remains but the loch is now very healthy indeed.

Unfortunately, blue-green algal blooms returned to menace the loch in the 1990s. The community council co-ordinated the Kinghorn Loch Users Group (KLUG) to treat the algae from 1995 and this has been incredibly successful.



Open water swimmers now regularly train on the loch



Replenishing barley straw rafts



Kinghorn Loch now

Plant growth and fish life has returned and blue-green algal blooms are a thing of the past. Treatment with the barley straw rafts continues each year.

KLUG is now part of the Trust and the future of the loch looks bright and assured.

Editor: Elinor Chalmers

If you wish to support the aims of Craigenfalt Rural Community Trust (CRCT) and become involved, either as a volunteer helper or as a supporter, become a Friend of the Trust by asking for an application form or emailing info@CraigenfaltTrust.org.uk

Craigenfalt Rural Community Trust. Scottish Charity Number: SCO42702
Company limited by Guarantee not having a share capital. Company Number SC39844
Registered office: 71 Kirkbank Road, Burntisland, KY3 9JA