

Gold (or diamonds!) in them thar hills?

There are legends of gold in some Scottish hills, but near Schiehallion in Perthshire, it is Barytes (Barium Sulphate) which is mined. After processing, it is used as a lubricant in the offshore drilling industry.

However it was not for the Barytes but to start their Diamond Celebrations that a group of 21 members and family from across Scotland met up on 13th September to scale Schiehallion.

Schiehallion standing at a mere 1083m (3553ft) is No. 59 in the re-classified list of Scottish 'Munros' (basically mountain tops over 3000ft , now 914m). It was chosen as the location for the meet as geographically it is almost central on the mainland of Scotland, and No.1 Region of the IPA.

Members from Ayrshire, Glasgow Lomond and Clyde, Central Scotland, Fife and Tayside were joined by a member from Nottingham who all completed the walk to the top.

Among the 'Diamond geezers', was 'senior' member, Jim Nisbet, No.1 Region Treasurer, for whom it was his first Munro.

The group started off heading for the mist which was at around 2000 feet in the morning but lifted as the day went on. Reaching the summit was celebrated with champagne and a photograph with the IPA's diamond Jubilee flag. There was also a couple of very real looking but very large fake diamonds Max Fordyce had 'borrowed' from a jeweller in Dundee. Well he told the rest of us they were fake but was very keen to get them back. It was the

balaclava that raised the suspicions of members but Max assured us this was normal clothing for the hills in summer!

Back down in the car park everyone was refreshed by coffee, tea and home baking supplied by the diamond geezer Max. He seemed too prosperous for my liking but maybe it's the ex detective in me. Everyone was accounted for and very keen to attend another hillwalk in January 2010.

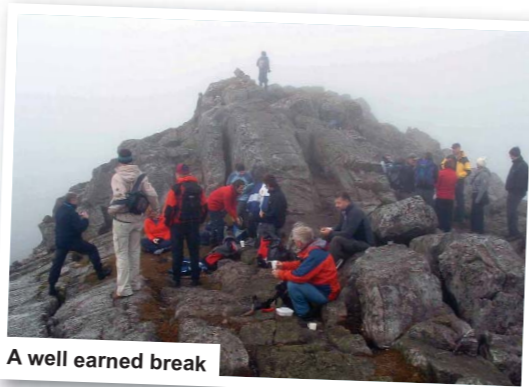
Diamond Jubilee Four Peak Hillwalk in 2010

To build on this event, the Diamond Jubilee Planning Group has approved a proposal to have a co-ordinated Diamond Jubilee four peak celebration hillwalk in 2010.

The proposal is that on Sunday 12th September 2010 IPA members and guests will take part in a co-ordinated hillwalk on each of the highest Peaks in the four nations that comprises Section UK.



Group with Regional Secretary Andy Wright (dark Blue top) being pursued by Regional Treasurer Jim Nisbet on his first 'Munro'



A well earned break



Looking from the car park at Braes fo Foss towards Schiehallion

The peaks that are to be climbed at the same time on the same day are Ben Nevis in Scotland, Scafell in England, Snowdon in Wales and Slieve Donard in Northern Ireland. Please note that this is not a four peak challenge just a hillwalking day with all four peaks being climbed by IPA members and guests who can select which mountain they wish to climb.

We are also looking for IPA members, who may not live in Scotland but may wish to climb Ben Nevis, to take the opportunity to represent their region on the Ben Nevis climb (sorry hillwalk!) and climb the highest mountain in the United Kingdom. The same applies to the England, Wales and Northern Ireland hillwalks. The vision is to have a cross representation of members from across the UK on each hillwalk. Planning is at an early stage but we will be looking for co-ordinators in each hillwalk area plus experienced hillwalkers to assist.

Members and guests may also wish to use the occasion to seek sponsorship and raise funds for charity.

Accommodation for members wishing to stay one or two nights or longer in the areas will be circulated early next year with options for hotels, B&Bs, Hostels and campsites.

So choose which mountain you fancy climbing, get the boots on and get fit for the 12th September 2010.

By Max Fordyce and Alan Maich



A view towards Pitlochry across Loch Tummel and the Queens View

