

## Ring of Stones Sundial at Milehouse

On the recent Milehouse Maintenance Meet Sarah Mackay told me the history of the ring of stones that form a Sundial between the car park and the shed. So, I made a point of digging it out, and later she sent me the details of its history.

Back in 1983 the club was celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 1983 40 people assembled at the Lix boulder to celebrate the anniversary at the spot where the club was founded. This was followed by a party at Killin with 2 birthday cakes, a showing of a film made at the boulder in 1958, and a ceilidh including a new dance made up for the occasion. The celebrations continued on 25<sup>th</sup> June 1983 with the members attempting a challenge to collective climb 75 Munros in one day.

Kate Whitley started at Cairngorm car park at midnight and Sheila Cormack from Glen Nevis at 12. 30 a.m. June Ross did the 6 Munros in the Ben Lawers range accompanied by the grandson of one of the founders - Charles Jeffrey. Katrina Dawson went up Ben Vorlich with a newspaper reporter, producing a first-hand report for the Scotsman. Meryl Marshall, after completing 11 Munros in Lochaber, met someone who couldn't quite believe she was "one of those ladies doing all these Munros" and "did she know one was doing 11...."! They reported their success back to base (once they reached a phone box), and the result was that 119 Munros were climbed: 2 parties climbing 11 Munros!

Members were asked to bring back a stone brought from each summit achieved on that date. At the AGM in January 1984, a vote was taken on what should be done with the stones – build a cairn, bird bath or sun-dial? The sun dial was the preferred option and Pam Cain said she had a top for it.

The celebrations were recorded by articles in the Scotsman (Alison Higham has the newspaper article) and on the radio, resulting in 23 enquiries about joining the club. The event was recounted in the 76<sup>th</sup> annual record, giving a flavour of the enthusiasm of that day:



*'After all the planning and preparation for the grand Munro bagging day we were dependent on the weather which fortunately dawned bright and clear. Two of our members were already at it – Kate set off from Cairngorm car park at 12:00 and Sheila from Glen Nevis at 12:30. The first summit, Cairngorm was climbed at 02:10. By mid- morning the summits were falling thick and fast. The 75<sup>th</sup> Munro was reached at 1:21pm by Avril Walkinshaw and her daughter Sally only seven years old. Our final hill*

*– number 119 was Ben Starav ascended at 6pm by Lindsay – by this time great excitement was being felt at Ann Winning's house in Aberfeldy – the reports both by phone and in person were arriving throughout the evening. The telephone wires were humming with the news and celebrations were in order.'*

Back to the present – the ring of stones sundial is uncovered but the gnomon, or upright piece that casts the shadow, is now missing. A replacement is being sought. Perhaps we can plan a similar celebration for a special LSCC occasion or anniversary in the future. Thanks to Sarah for an oral history moment and sending on the detail.



*Linda Corlett Nov 2021*