

## CALLANDER TO OBAN, 10th - 16th APRIL 2011

From 10th to 16th April, 11 members of Surrey County Walkers went up to The Trossachs to walk the former railway line from Callander to Killin, staying 4 nights in Killin. This is one of the railway walks featured in Julia Bradbury's recent television series. After the walk, we went on to Oban for 2 nights.

We stayed in the Killin Hotel, which provided comfortable accommodation at economical prices.



Outside the hotel, there is a monument to a former minister of Killin who translated the New Testament into Gaelic. The monument is inscribed in both English and Gaelic.



Beside the hotel runs the River Lochay which runs into Loch Tay on the edge of Killin.



Killin is a village, surrounded by high hills. During one night, overnight rain fell as snow on the hills, which gained a white covering at the highest levels.



The first day's walk started at the site of the old railway station in Callander. On leaving Callander, an old railway signal is passed, indicating that the route is a former railway line.



The narrow path shows that the railway was

single track.



A long straight stretch shows the route of the old railway.



The path passes beside Loch Lubnaig.



A field with highland cattle was seen,



with one young calf in a pen.



The end of Loch Lubnaig makes a spectacular view.

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The first morning's walk ended at the Munro Inn in Strathyre.

The more active members of the group did a brisk afternoon walk along the Rob Roy Way through Strathyre Forest



with views across to the opposite hills



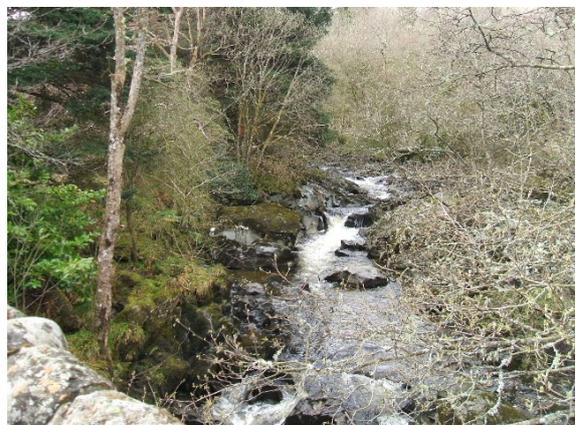
and the walk ended at The Kingshouse Hotel.



The second day's walk started back at The Munro Inn in Strathyre and left the old railway line to follow country roads to Balquhiddier, passing through woodland



and beside streams



until we reached Loch Voil, on the edge of Balquhiddier.

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Balquhidder is famous for Rob Roy's grave.



There is also a house in typical Scottish baronial style.



After lunch at the Kingshouse Hotel, we resumed the old railway line



on to Lochearnhead.



The third day's walk started from Lochearnhead in much cooler and damper weather than the previous afternoon. This gave some more spectacular pictures as the path climbed up from Lochearnhead to rejoin the old railway line.



Further walking on the old railway line



This is close to the Clan McNab's burial ground.



brought us to the most significant remaining railway feature, the old viaduct in Glen Ogle.



After lunch in Killin, we walked about another mile on to Loch Tay where the old railway terminated and passengers could join pleasure steamers on the loch. Only stumps of the old pier are now visible in Loch Tay.



The final morning's walk ended back at Killin, by the Falls of Dochart.



After 4 nights in Killin, we moved on to Oban, staying in Ayres Guest House

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which provided comfortable lodging, with good views from the front windows. It has an impressive staircase.



From the higher parts of Oban, good views over to the Isle of Mull are obtained.



Above the town is McCaig's folly.



Oban has a mild, wet climate so that lush gardens can be found in the back streets.



On our last full day on holiday, we travelled to Iona by ferry to Craignure on Mull, by bus across Mull and then on another ferry to Iona. The ferry from Oban gives good views back towards Oban.



and the ferry provides a backdrop to views across the sound of Iona back to Mull.

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Travelling towards Iona, the abbey can be seen in the distance.



The others made their own way home.



A closer view is shown next.



Seven members of the group returned from Oban on the West Highland line to Glasgow, which provides many views of the Highlands, particularly Loch Lomond, Loch Long and the Gareloch.