



APRIL 2022

HEATHERY HEIGHTS MONTHLY

Articles, walks and news



NEXT ISSUE
Beinn an Lochain

A'CHLEIT AND ACHAGLASS CIRCULAR

Stepping back in time on Kintyre...

With sandy beaches, an igneous dyke splitting red sandstone and the impressive waterfalls on Clachaig Water reflecting geological history, man's time here is reflected in a prehistoric dun, the old settlement of Achaglass and abandoned dwellings that span right through the centuries. Amongst these are the wonderful old ruins of St John's church at Killean, parts of which date back to the 12th Century.

Although you can no longer go inside it is still possible to walk around the graveyard and view the impressive carved tombstones from a distance. According to Canmore records the burial vault is that of the MacDonalds of Largie; it is believed they helped prevent further deterioration of the church in the mid-19th Century.



Sunstruck dunes and dark rain clouds vie for position



Retired tractor and ruins near High Clachaig



St John's churchyard

Safety in the Outdoors

Please continue to adhere to current guidelines as set out by the government, exercise responsibly and use appropriate clothing and equipment for your chosen outdoor activity. Consider informing a contact about your route/whereabouts and don't forget your phone, snacks, drink, any medication/first aid supplies you may need and to check weather conditions. Please keep your dog under close control, especially around livestock and wildlife, and be aware some open areas of moorland may have snares in use. Please follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, bylaws and laws that protect areas including National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

www.heatheryheights.co.uk

The walk

1. The start point is A'Chleit Church, which replaced St John's in the 18th Century. Leaving the car park head south via a short path to the beach.

2. Follow the beach south for the next 1.5km. En route a couple of small streams are crossed. It is sometimes easier to go above the beach, especially as you approach the large rocky outcrops near Muasdale. Look out for a path that takes you up to a stile just before you reach Clachaig Water (there is also a gate just before this).

3. Cross the stile and main road. Turn right to gain a view from the new bridge to the old bridge over Clachaig Water. The village store is 50m south of the bridge should you need refreshment. Return north from the bridge and take the first turning right (directly opposite the stile).

4. Follow the track up the hill for 300m until you reach a field on your right. Cross this diagonally towards the west corner of the forestry plantation. On reaching it turn right into the woods to look at the waterfalls at the bend, which, I gather, are called Peter's Hole (if anyone knows why, I would be grateful for the answer). The drop is sudden and vertical, take care!

5. From the falls head upriver, descending into the plantation, before reascending northeast above the river and trees. Follow the field edge; you will go over a small knoll and reach a fence line. Turn left up the side of South Crubasdale farm to rejoin the track you left earlier.

6. Turn right, then after 100m turn right again. The track will drop you down to a bridge over Clachaig Water before rising to a T-junction.

7. Turn left. After 200m look for a gate on your left. To visit the Dun (ancient fort) cross the field diagonally and return the same way. Please keep dogs on a lead.

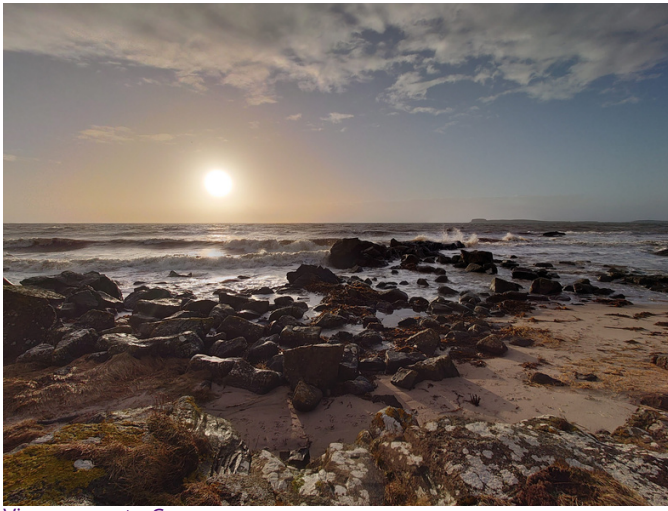
8. Continue northeast on the track for 400m to a Y junction. Bear left past the now empty Low Clachaig farm and bear left again at the next Y junction. Continue to High Clachaig. There is a ruined farm off to your right en route.

9. At High Clachaig it is best to go round the buildings and walls to the right before rejoining the little used track that heads northeast into the forestry. The track is grassy and boggy - especially near the stream crossing - but easy enough walking for the 1km to Achaglass.

10. Achaglass is an old settlement that appears to have been rented to a shepherd (Dugald Bell) and his family back in 1841. It has now partially disappeared amongst forestry, like so many old sites in Argyll.

11. Continuing northeast up the Clachaig Water from Achaglass there is a fine sheep fank, 200m beyond this there is a bridge.

12. Cross the bridge and take the forestry track northeast for the next 3.5km until you reach the Kintyre Way. Note there is a cattle grid with no side gate en route; if you have a dog you may need to lift them over the fence.



View across to Cara



Red sandstone and dyke

13. Turn left. You will now follow the Kintyre Way down to the coast for over 5km. You can take a slight short cut by taking a left at NR726448 and then bearing right at NR722446 down to the ruin of Braids, but it is muddier.
14. Near the bottom, after a small dam, a left turn will drop you down through the eerily empty houses of Killean to the main road. Opposite is St John's church. Cross over with care.
15. After visiting the church take the lane on the north side of Killean burn towards the sea – gate climbing may ensue if locked. On reaching large farm sheds take the small bridge over Killean burn and cut through the field to the shore.
16. Your route once more wends its way down the beach, over an igneous dyke and Permian red sandstone, all the way back to A'Chleit. Allow an hour for this section when checking tides. If you finish early enough there may even be time to pop down to Glenbarr stores for a well-deserved cuppa.

*The 449 bus service is only available on school days; you would need to start and finish at Muasdale. The Scottish Citylink bus times are not suitable.

**If you start and finish at Muasdale aim for an ebb/low tide for the whole coastal section from Killean to Muasdale. ([Tide Times](#))

The described route and accompanying information are there to be used as a guide and do not replace the use of map and compass and the skills required to use them. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the route is accurate at the time of going to print please be aware that track and path closures can happen at any time. All walks are undertaken at your own risk.

Walk Information

Route: A'Chleit and Achaglass circular

Distance: 19km (12 miles)

Ascent: 413m

Time: 6 - 7 hours

Terrain: Mixture of shoreline (tidal zone), fields and forestry tracks.

Map/s: OS Landranger 62 (1:50 000)

OS Explorer 356 (1:25 000)

Start/Finish/Parking: Carpark at A'Chleit

Grid reference: NR681417

Public Transport: Bus (449 to Muasdale, school days only) *

Toilets: No

Tides: Aim for mid to low tide for the section from Killean to A'Chleit **

[OS Map link](#)

