

BUCKIE

Buckie is the largest town in Banffshire and is now an amalgamation of several smaller communities, each of which – Yardie, Buckpool, Ianstown, Portessie and Gordonsburgh. Cluny Harbour is now the principal harbour for the town having been built in 1880, and soon became one of the most important herring fishing ports in Scotland. Today the harbour is an important location for the repair and maintenance of lifeboats, continuing Buckie's long links with R.N.L.I. Buckpool Harbour was in filled in the 1980's and now provides a parkland setting.

A wide range of wildlife is located in the Moray Firth off Buckie, the resident school of bottlenose dolphins perhaps being the most famous, but varieties of whales and sharks can also be seen, in addition to seals, birds and fish.

DRYBRIDGE

In 1772 a house designed by Robert Adam was built on the Letterfourie estate.

The estate was catered for by the village of Drybridge. The smiddy built in 1777 together with a joiner/wheelwright shop, a tailor and a bakers shop (which then became the post office) The fishwives path from Buckie to Keith passed through the village crossing the ford at the bakers and under the gatehouse bridge, known as The Drybridge. In the 1880's the Highland Railway was built from Buckie to Keith, with a girder bridge crossing the burn, and an impressive bridge which crossed the road, now acting as a gateway to the village.

NEWMILL

William Duff, Lord Braco (later 1st Earl of Fife) founded the village of Newmill around 1755. James Gordon Bennett was born in 1792 in Enzie. Soon afterwards his parents moved to Newmill where he was reared and educated. In 1819 he emigrated to America where he eventually entered the newspaper business and in 1835 he published the first copy of the 'New York Herald'. It was an instant success and made him a millionaire. He died in New York in 1872.

Newmill Square was the scene of many events in the past. One of the fair weather attractions was the playing of draughts. The Newmill Market was held annually in October for the sale of cattle, sheep and horses. In 1978 the Kowan Fair was launched. The highlights were the visiting theatre and music groups.

The Newmill Literary Society with the assistance of a very large donation from Andrew Carnegie set up the Newmill Library within the Newmill Institute. This proved to be an inspiration to many. One Newmill man in particular James Mackintosh was to become a librarian in Port Elizabeth South Africa.

KEITH

Keith is a town far from the world of superstores and retail parks, a town of family shops, richly varied architecture and friendly folks. Keith has been described as a Scotland in miniature; self contained with its own history, characters and culture.

Established as a settlement around 700AD with the arrival in the area of the monks of St Machutha, Keith was granted Royal Charter as a Burgh of Barony by William the Lion in 1195.

The town was noteworthy for the great fair of Simeoneve, one of the largest in Scotland, which brought folks from all airts and is now The Keith Show. Modern Keith with its "grid iron" street layout was one of Scotland's first "planned" towns created in 1750 by the Earl of Findlater while Fife-Keith, a relatively new settlement was established in 1817 by Duke of Fife and encompassed with Keith in 1889.

The rich mix of shops and cafes offer visitors a slice of real life in rural Scotland today; fascinating, often quirky and occasionally puzzling. But never dull.

Follow the footsteps of the Fishwives

The Fishwives Path starts at the Buckie & District Fishing Heritage Centre where you will discover the unique fishing history of this lovely part of the Moray Firth.

Men from this coast have always fished the sea; however the introduction of herring fishing in the 19th Century brought major changes. Harbours were developed, boats became bigger, and in addition to exporting catches by sea, the railways distributed large quantities of fish to the home market. Fishing had become an industry.

Distribution to the people in the immediate hinterland was done on foot by fishwives with wicker baskets on their backs, each carrying about 40lbs of fish. Their trade was mostly by barter, exchanging fish for farm produce. All along the coast scores of fishwives would follow individual routes and have their own customers.

"The Fishwives Path to Keith" celebrates their walk of twelve miles from Buckie to Keith, visiting farms and crofts on the way. The first six miles of the fishwife's route took her south over the skyline, to look out over the valley of the River Isla, before continuing for another six miles through Newmill to Keith.

The Fishwives Path

BUCKIE TO KEITH



BUCKIE · DRYBRIDGE · NEWMILL · KEITH



ACCESS

You now have a 'right of access' to most of Scotland's outdoors including the Fishwives Path. You are required to act responsibly in accordance with the new Scottish Outdoor Access Code (SOAC). **Know the Code before you go!** Find out more by visiting www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

To acknowledge landowners and farmers co-operation with the Fishwives Path, leave the area as you find it, respect property and take care to stay away from farming and timber operations. Please keep dogs on a lead near livestock.

Other Paths in Moray

Visit www.morayways.org.uk for your complete guide to outdoor access in Moray.

PHYSICAL FEATURES:

Signage: The route is fully signed.

Look out for the fishwives logo

Distance: Approx 13 miles from Buckie to Keith.

Estimated walking time: 5 to 6 hours.

Height climbed and degree of slope: The route climbs from the sea at Buckie to around 270 metres (900ft) above sea level. From both the Keith and Buckie ends the path rises gradually to the highest point at Addie Hill.

Barriers: There are no barriers to access and all gates across the route can be used by horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians.

Terrain: Nearly two thirds of the route is along tarmac roads and paths which are easy to negotiate. The rest is on farm/forestry tracks and grassy paths; the surface in places is rough and uneven and can be muddy in wet weather.

Users: Suitable for more able and energetic walkers. The off road sections would be of interest to horse riders and mountain bikers.

Safety: Considerable sections of the route are along quiet, narrow country roads where traffic flows are low. Nevertheless please take care as there are no pavements. Please also take care when crossing the busy A98 at Inchgowrie Distillery near Buckie. Users need to decide for themselves whether they feel comfortable following the more busy on road section along the B9116 between Newmill and Keith where they will be exposed to fast moving traffic. Stout footwear and waterproof clothing are essential as parts of the route are exposed and can be rough and wet.

As a working forest, it is not unusual to find the Forestry Commission working there through the summer. The public may come across a diversion on the route; we do ask that you follow any signs as these are for your own safety.

Getting there: Both Buckie and Keith can be easily reached by car and public transport. Contact Traveline 0871 200 2233 www.traveline.info for bus and train times.

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This Fishwives Path was regenerated by the Buckie Area Forum in partnership with, Keith and Strathisla Regeneration Partnership, The Forestry Commission and The Moray Council.

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FISHWIVES FACTS

- kept fish fresh by gutting them and rubbing salt into them to preserve them
- travelled as far as Huntly and Banff from Buckie
- fish baskets were very heavy, quite often the women carried one on their back and one under their arms
- traded the fish for things such as milk, eggs and flour
- left Buckie between 5am and 6am and were gone all day, working very long hours
- worked from the age of 13 all the way to the age of 72
- also made all the nets for the fishermen and prepared all the hooks etc for the men.
- knitted and made all the clothes for the fishermen, very hard working



The Fishwives Path



1 On the road to Inchgower Distillery - Almost five miles away on the skyline is the little gap in the trees through which we must pass. The Bin Hill of Cullen is a prominent landmark in the East.



3 The Smiddy at Drybridge - In the past, horses were the community's main source of working power; they were plentiful and highly valued. Blacksmiths' shops were numerous and were found in most communities. Farmers allowed their horsemen half a 'yokin' (half a working day) to take their charges to the smiddy, have them shod and be back to work.



5 Inkerman, Balaklava and Sebastopol were three Crimean Crofts given to returning ex-servicemen in the 1860s. These and five other crofts, grouped fairly close to each other on marginal land high on the hill, made up a tightly knit community. The other crofts were Hillhead of Letterfourie, Greenmoor, Castle Grant, Whitlums and, highest of all, Flagstaff. Paths led from croft to croft and in some cases two families shared the same well.



7 Moor of Aultmore - In the days of the fishwives, which ended some time after the First World War, there were no trees on the Moor of Aultmore. The hilltop ridge and the land around was a vast expanse of heather and scrub stretching for miles. To the east was an area called 'The Ghoul', and further to the west the moor was known as 'Broken Moan'. Plenty of food for thought here.



9 In the latter part of the year the Aultmore and Garra Burn provide spawning beds for salmon which have returned from the sea via the Rivers Deveron and Isla.



11 The War memorial in the form of a clock tower, dominates Newmill Square. It was unveiled on the 22nd July 1923 by Captain D Mackenzie.



2 The Caravan Roadie - So called because some farm servants, having moved out of their living accommodation at the end of their working lives, acquired a roadman's caravan (like a shed on a flat bed cart) and lived out their days in the woodland beside the Laird's Way.



4 Craigmint Bridge.



6 From the Crimean Crofts, on a clear day the Hills of Sutherland can be seen across the Moray Firth. Morven is easily identified by its height and peaked shape. The fishermen called the group to its left the Summer Hills.



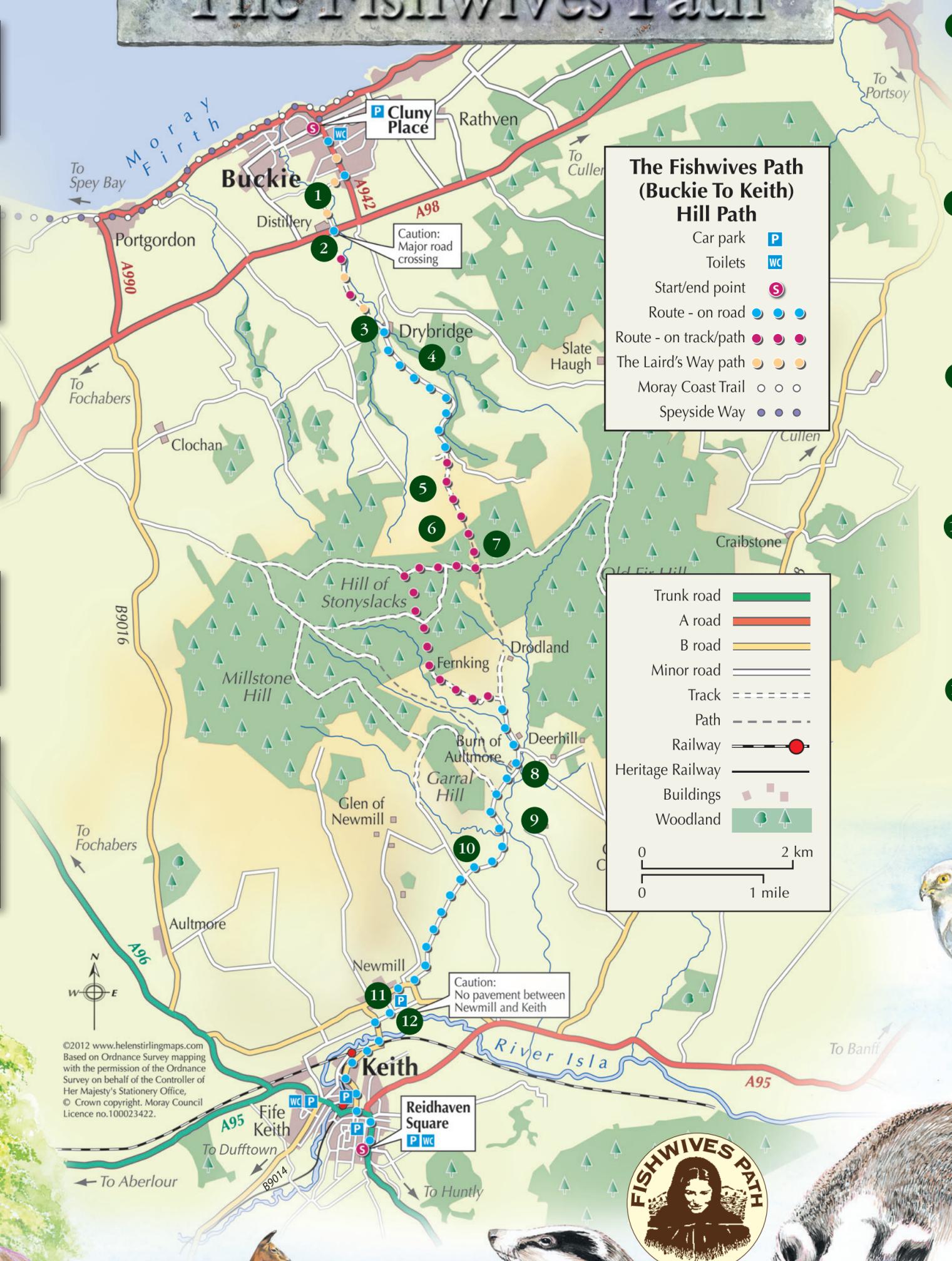
8 The road to the Glen of Newmill... All downhill now.



10 The Glen of Newmill school was a small 2 teacher school that closed in the early 60s.



12 The Old Mill by the waterside below Newmill.



The Fishwives Path (Buckie To Keith) Hill Path

- Car park **P**
- Toilets **WC**
- Start/end point **S**
- Route - on road ● ● ●
- Route - on track/path ● ● ●
- The Laird's Way path ● ● ●
- Moray Coast Trail ○ ○ ○
- Speyside Way ● ● ●

- Trunk road —
- A road —
- B road —
- Minor road —
- Track - - -
- Path - - -
- Railway —●—
- Heritage Railway —●—
- Buildings ■
- Woodland ▲

0 2 km
0 1 mile

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