Channel of Pittendreich 1861], which we will be following for much of the way up to the farm and Loch Leven’s Larder. The farm of Pittendreich lies to the north of the main road [Pettingreid 1544; Pettyndreich 1544, Gaelic pett ‘farm, estate’ + Gaelic an dreach ‘(of) the (good) aspect, gentle slope’].

We turn away from the loch just before Pow Burn [Pow Burn 1857; Scots pow, earlier poll ‘a slow-moving, sluggish, ditch-like stream flowing through carse-land’, with Scots burn added later, when pow no longer understood. It is also found in nearby Powmill (Polymln 1546)]. This burn also forms the parish boundary between Portmoak and Orwell.

This leaflet was compiled by the Scottish Toponymy in Transition project (STIT), with help from the Kinross (Marshall) Museum. STIT is based at the University of Glasgow and is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council for three years (2011–14). It aims to: research and publish a place-name volume each for Clackmannanshire, Kinross-shire and Menteith; commence place-name surveys of Ayrshire and Berwickshire, and develop a framework for completing the survey of Perthshire (of which Menteith is the first volume); exchange knowledge with local communities through a series of talks, walks, exhibitions and other events. For further information, see http://www.gla.ac.uk/stit/

Further reading:
David Munro, Loch Leven and the River Leven: A Landscape Transformed (Markinch 1994).

Place-Name Walk, Portmoak: Leaflet created for two walks led by D. Munro and S. Taylor, Tuesday 25th June and Saturday 29th June 2013.


Simon Taylor, with Gilbert Márkus, Place-Names of Fife Vol. 2 (Central Fife between Leven and Eden) (Shaun Tyas: Donington, 2008)


Perth & Kinross Archaeology Month
Place-Name Walk, Loch Leven Heritage Trail
Saturday 28th June 2014
Depart Vane Farm (RSPB Reserve) 10.00
Walk to Channel Farm (Loch Leven’s Larder)
led by David Munro and Simon Taylor: Duration c.3 hours
[with options of lift back to The Vane OR walk back or on round the loch]

A walk along the shores of Loch Leven from Vane Farm to Channel Farm, taking approximately 3 hours.

Balnethill Kinnesswood Kilmagad Wood Munduff Hill

The Bishop Hill

St Serf’s Island

Introduction
What is a place-name walk? It is a walk through past and present, through landscape and language. It is an attempt to see the modern environment through the eyes of the people who gave it the names which we still use today, taking the names themselves as our guides. These names are guides also to the languages of the past: for Kinross-shire these are chiefly Gaelic and Scots, with some Pictish and even one Norse name (Kirkness), together spanning around 1,500 years, with the last names coined in Gaelic around 1200.
For the whole walk we are in the parish of Portmoak (Portemooch c.1155, Portmohoc c.1180, Gaelic ‘harbour of St Móóc/Moag’), the old parish kirk at the farm of Portmoak, formerly on the shore of Loch Leven, and the harbour for the Cuilée (Céli Dé) abbey, later Augustinian priory, of Lochleven on St Serf’s Island. We know nothing about the saint who is apparently contained in the name of Portmoak, also found in Latinised form as Moanus. As the name of the island indicates, the major local saint was St Serf, also commemorated at Culross, Dunning and other places regionally, and it is possible Moanus is another form of his name. Bishop Hill [Bischophillis 1539, the bischoppis hill 1568; but called W. Lawmond on Ainslie’s map of 1775, while West Lomond is called Mid Lawmond; so called because all the land here belonged to the bishop of St Andrews]. Leven itself [(river) Leuine c.1050; (island of) Lochleuen c.1150] originally applied to the river, the name most likely deriving from Celtic *le:uo- ‘smooth’, in the sense of smooth- or slow-flowing (which it is).

The Route
This will follow the Loch Leven Heritage Trail (LHT), as depicted and described in the leaflet of that name. We start at Vane Farm [Wayne 1592; Waine of Finnetie 1625; Vain 1642, probably from Gaelic A’ Bheinn ‘the hill, the ben’, referring to Benarty]. We set off widdershins or anti-clockwise, with a good view of St Serf’s Island and the remains of the priory, heading towards Findatie [(Gamell of) Findathin c.1150; Findatin c.1153; (a mill in the land) Findachin); Findathin 1251; Fyndawchyot c.1400; Findauit 1576. The first element is Gaelic fionn ‘white’; the second element probably Gaelic dabhach ‘a davoch, a large land-unit’; OR possibly Gaelic àth ‘a ford’]. Two fields on the lands of Findatie beside the loch were called Green Cars and Cars Land (1760). Scots carse is ‘low land adjacent to a river or loch’, originally boggy, but when drained usually fertile. We will encounter more carse-names later in the walk.

Cross the River Leven (the new cut, made in 1832 when the loch was lowered) and pass the farm of Levenmouth, also a creation of the 1832 lowering scheme, first called Johnstown, (‘John’s town or farm’) after a member of the Graham Montgomery family, then proprietors of the lands, but known as Levenmouth by the 1850s. It is unusual to have the start of a river called a mouth. Historically Levinsmouth (1505), Levynnsmouth (1546) referred to the town of Leven 20 kms away to the east, where the river enters the Forth. Where the old river Leven issued from the loch near Levenmouth were the Gullets (Gulottes 1524; The Gullet causey 1642) Scots gallet, gullat, from Old French goullet ‘throat’, ‘a narrow channel made or used for catching fish’). The name survives in New and Old Gullet Bridge, carrying the modern road over the new and old courses of the Leven. Perhaps the Gullets inspired the name Levenmouth!

On our right as we walk through Levenmouth Plantation is Portmoak Airfield and Gliding Centre, which now contains the medieval harbour (Gaelic port) and church of Portmoak (see above). The path then skirts the lands of Grahamstone (Grahamston 1839, ‘Graham’s town or farm’), established on land drained when Loch Leven was lowered in 1832; named after Sir Graham, elder son of the Graham Montgomery family, elder brother of John of Johnstown (see above).

We continue along the shore of the loch, with good views of Bishop Hill, with features such as White Craigs (White Craig 1796) and Fairy Doors (Fairy Doors 1796); also the Rows such as Kinnesswood Row, from Scots row ‘roll’, hollows in the hillside down which limestone quarried high up on the Bishop Hill was rolled. At the foot of the hill, and above the low-lying boggy margins of the loch, cluster the old settlements such as Kinnesswood (see Place-Name Walk, Portmoak leaflet for details), Balnethill [Banathile 1544; Balnathill 1546; Bannettill 1583; Beneath hill 1753; Gaelic baile ‘farm’ + an unknown second element, but note how the 1753-form has re-interpreted the name!] and Easter and Wester Balgedie [Eister & Wester Balgeddie 1544; Meickle Bilgedy 1753 (= Wester Balgedie) Little Bilgedy 1753 (= Easter Balgedie); Gaelic baile ‘farm’ + Gaelic gead ‘a small piece or strip of arable land’].

The path continues along the edge of the loch, across more carse (see above), which has given rise to Carsehall [Carsehall 1828, with Scots hall ‘a hall, a high-status house’ probably being used ironically here: compare names like Boghall, Cabbagehall, etc]. The path passes between Carsehall settlement by the main road to our right and Carsehall Bog on our left. Look out for the channel or drainage ditch from which Channel Farm takes its name (Channel 1790;