

Far from the Madding Crowd ? - but not too far!
A trip to Braefordie

On a recent long-distance pony trip, I was fortunate to have the opportunity for an overnight stop at Braefordie on the lovely Fordie Estate..... and what a place it turned out to be.

Following a “road less travelled”, an old highway from Glen Turret for many miles, I was soon within reach of my destination.

First the slated rooftop became visible, then the strong stone building itself with its bold blue paintwork.

I was impressed to see how comfortable the bothy was, nestled below Beinn Liath and in the lee of the hills behind, with an open aspect to the views of the South, East and West.

Leaving the main track, I entered an area of “Conservation Grazing” , an indication of what this estate was about, before passing areas of young native woodlands with such a variety of tree shapes, and ponds teeming with busy insects. Bird life feasting on nature's bounty.



A whole landscape lay before me to be devoured by the eye.



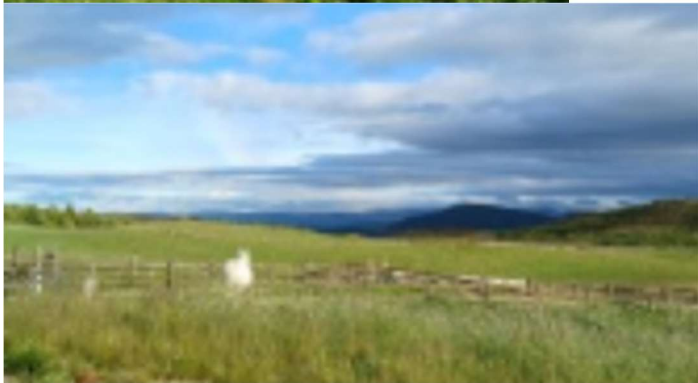
Ahead, I turned onto the sandy track leading to the bothy to be greeted by fern frond fiddleheads, and gracefully unfurling ferns like ladies in frocks dancing in unison in celebration of our arrival.

Our companion now was a carpet of meadow, flowers not quite in bloom but showing promise of the colour spectacle that would evolve to pepper the greenery.

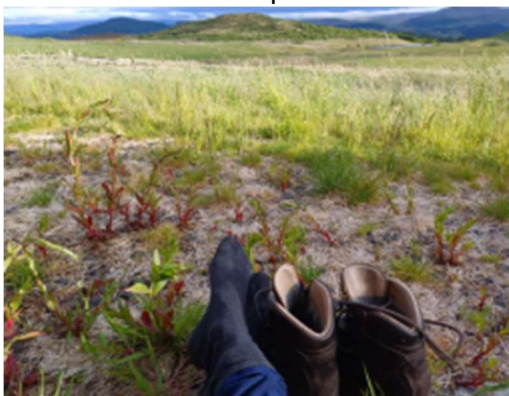
It was late May, but Nature was in no rush to leave its winter slumber !

And now before us was the welcoming door of Braefordie.
We were home.

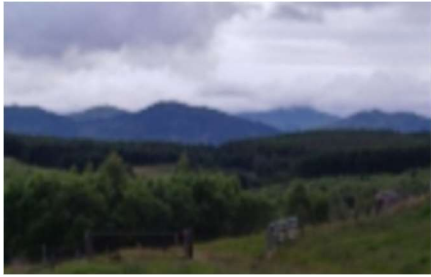
With pony released from the saddle and packs she had carried all day, and let loose in the sheep pens, her muzzle was soon deep in the sweet hill grass. The sound of contented munching had begun, surprisingly interspersed with moments savouring the view!



It had been a long day and I was glad to release my feet from my boots,
chill out and brew up some tea



I sat on the decking drinking the refreshing hot liquid, while drinking in the stunning views
To the West the distant top of Ben Halton .



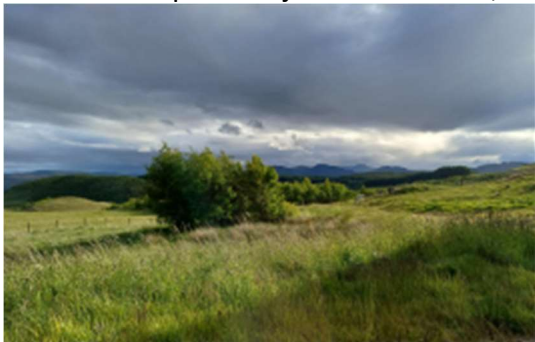
To the South the shadow of the Ochils

To the East - my amazement of how far we had travelled that day.

Although Braefordie sits on the extremity of the estate boundary, the Shaky Toun of Comrie is only a few miles away. No earthquake rumbles this evening though!

The peace and tranquility were soothing to the soul.

This was the place to just sit and “be”, and to let Nature embrace YOU.



For a while I sat watching the ever-changing clouds as they gathered grey, teasing of rain, before succumbing to the sun. The light was constantly changing as nightfall prepared to engulf all; it was time for bed.

In the morning, standing at the bothy door I breathed in deeply the cool fresh air.

There had been an overnight shower which had freshened the air and produced incredible scents of earthy musk, wet grass, tree blossom.

My overnight companions -the resident barn owls - had left some remains from their evening meal outside the door; a reminder to me of who lives here.! And how close to nature I had been.



With a heavy heart it was time for us to leave this sanctuary, not too Far from the Madding Crowd after all, and continue our journey.

Here you will experience Sights, Sounds, Smell and Shape.

A landscape to leave you in awe, a place to wind down and be at one with the environment. We left feeling so refreshed and invigorated and can't wait to revisit sometime soon.

A huge thank you to Fordie for sharing with me your vision for the future of this valuable place, and for helping and enlightening me to understand how man and nature can integrate and live in harmony.