

Mountain Writing Competition

1st Prize, Poetry

Daffodils at Inverchorachan

By Allan Bolton

Allan Bolton is enjoying walking the Great and National Trails after completing his Munro adventure - activities which have inspired him to take up poetry writing.

*I trek the long puddled track along the Fyne glen, four miles
while it steepens and wilds this late April morning.
Then I see, before a watersmeet where the Fyne river is fed
by a burn which tumbles from Beinn Bhuidhe,
the lonely cottage Inverchorachan.*

*It's where easy walk becomes effortful climb.
I settle to the ascent, reach the summit,
not a classic, not a famous view.
Yet two images remain:
from Bhuidhe to Beinn Laoigh,
snow queen of southern highlands
predominant amongst her acolyte hills;
and, back in the glen, re-passing the deserted cottage,
now past their best, a clump of daffodils
that nod and blow by its doorstep,
a tiny human gesture which endures resurgent,
though dwarfed by vast emptiness.*

*This mere wood store, a shed for farm tackle,
was once a shepherd's family house.
What brave homemaker from which century
planted these flowers to soften the harsh loneliness,
to nurture hope before, defeated, she withdrew to the city
or a new continent?*