



## SCOTTISH ARCTIC CLUB

### Newsletter - July 2016

*President: John Peden,  
Vice Presidents: Douglas Anderson and John Thorogood  
Secretary: Iain Allison, Treasurer: Chris Calver,  
Committee members: Matthew Burke, Chris Gilmore, Cameron Mackay,  
Jenny Newall, Susie Ranford*

[www.scottisharcticclub.org.uk](http://www.scottisharcticclub.org.uk)

*New members are welcome: the Club is for people of all ages and nationalities who have an interest in the Arctic, particularly if they have already been, or are planning to travel there. See the web site for an application form.*

### **48<sup>th</sup> Annual Gathering and Supper**

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

**The Ben Nevis Hotel, Fort William**

**Phone number 01397 702331.**

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### **Grants 2016**

In 2015 18 people applied for grants from the SAC. This year we had 3 applications!! One group had no Scottish connections and were ruled out; one later withdrew her application having failed to obtain the volunteer position she was seeking (but we have offered her free membership of the Club for this session), and so only one grant was awarded to a student from the Scottish Association for Marine Science at Dunstaffnage, Oban, for her exchange at UNIS, Longyearbyen in Svalbard with its Arctic fieldwork and opportunity for short independent expeditions.

### **Attadale 7-14 May 2016**

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May and anticipation of a whole week at Attadale . Wonderful.

The SAC week at Attadale was enjoyed in whole or part by 15 members. It was unusual in that there was not a drop of rain all week but it did have its share of sunshine, wind and grey skies. Activities were as ever many and varied. The 5 kayakers/canoists enjoyed an interesting paddle on Loch Maree, a brief paddle off Portchuillin, when wind and tide thwarted other plans but beach and sunshine were much enjoyed, a round trip from Portchuillin to Plockton and a very windy paddle on Loch Sgamhain. There was a steep learning curve on the assembly and use of Frank's new origami kayak. Loch Coruisk remains a challenge for the future.

The walkers preferred distance to height with walks which included the Elgol area, the shores of L Torridon, a very rewarding circumnavigation of Maol Chean-dearg and an investigation of the valley North East of the Strathcarron Hotel for flora fauna and a previous canoe route. The cyclists had two good days in the saddle.

The estate lambs provided much entertainment as they enjoyed life. There were many visits to the gardens, which were looking particularly good, especially the rhododendrons. The home baking was also much appreciated.

We had a communal meal on Sunday with plenty of salmon, quiche and good stew and again on Thursday with the main course amply provided by the Danish lady at the home farm. Every night had its share of good food, good drink, good conversation and most importantly good company.

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May. The week has gone so quickly – and still so many things to do in the area.



Kayak origami: from ...



to ...



and ready to go ...  
with Edda and Frank Loetsch and Pat Duchart



The Fairy Pools on the Allt Coir' a' Mhadaidh in Glen Brittle, Isle of Skye



Ann Stone on the summit of the Corbett, Fuar Tholl, looking west to Maol Chean-dearg.

Text collated by Pat Duchart and photographs by Lewis Stevens and David Stone



## The Solstice Walk

At the last AGM it was suggested that the annual Solstice walk should be re-started and Stella Sprately kindly 'volunteered' to organise something in June. So on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June, 17 members gathered at Farleitter near Insh, the home of Myrtle and Hugh Simpson for a barbecue. Some had arrived on the Friday evening while others came for the barbecue and a walk or a swim on Sunday. Myrtle and Stella swam across the River Spey on Saturday and Stella swam again across a different part of the river the following day adding another swim to her goal of 50 wild-water swims in her 50<sup>th</sup> year.



Sitting round the bonfire waiting for the barbecue to warm up.







Stella with Susie and Dougal Ranford for moral support.

We are very grateful to Myrtle and Hugh Simpson for hosting this event at their home and providing the wherewithal for camping, barbecue and bonfire.

The secretary has been looking through the archives and as we have revived the Solstice meeting this year, he has compiled a list of previous spring/summer outings.

1981 Glen Tilt to Glen Feshie	2001 Glen Feshie (only 3 participants)
1982 Glen Tilt to Glen Feshie	2002 Crianlarich
1983 Glen Tilt to Glen Feshie	2003 Dundonnell
1984 Spittal of Glenshee-Inverey	2004 Farleitter, Kinraig (Hugh & Myrtle Simpson's)
1985 Glen Doll-Spittal of Glenmuick	2005 Glen Artney, Comrie
1986 Loch Tulla-Glen Etive	2006 Dunkeld
1987 Ballater	2007 Glen Artney, Comrie
1988 Black Rock Cottage, Kingshouse	2008 Inchnadamph (weekend end April, not Solstice)
1989 Steall, Glen Nevis	2009 Inchnadamph (mid April)
1990 Blair Atholl-Inverey	2010 Inchnadamph (early April)
1991 Loch Tulla-Glen Etive	2011 Attadale (one week in mid May)
1992 Loch Ossian	2012 Attadale (one week in mid May)
1993 Glen Feshie-Whitewell	2013 Attadale (one week in mid May)
1994 Dundonnell	2014 Attadale (one week in mid May)
1995 Glen Feshie-Whitewell	2015 Attadale (one week in mid May)
1996 Glen Affric	2016 Attadale (one week in mid May)
1997 Glen Etive	2016 Farleitter (resurrected Solstice weekend hosted by the Simpsons and organised by Stella Sprately)
1998 Achlean, Glen Feshie-Whitewell	
1999 ?Crianlarich	
2000 Glen Etive	

## Expedition Fund

An application has been submitted to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator for the expedition fund to be a charity, a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, called the Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund. We hope to have a response in time for the next newsletter.

## Polar Medal – Kim Crosbie

We offer our congratulations to Club Member, Kim Crosbie, on her award of the Polar Medal which is awarded by the Queen “for outstanding achievement and service to the United Kingdom in the field of polar research.” The citation is:

Antarctic and Arctic to 2015

Dr Kim Crosbie, MA, Mphil, PhD (Cantab), FRGS

Antarctic Environmental Scientist and Conservationist. Specialising in wildlife/human interactions, visitor management, education and outreach.

*From The London Gazette, 8 January 2016*

Currently Kim is the Executive Director of the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO)

## Margaret Smart



Margaret passed away on 14 April this year. The Club has a record showing her attending the annual supper in 1975 so she must have joined as a member in her own right in the early 70's. She certainly wasn't one of the original "gatecrashers"; that wasn't her style. With Iain and their young family she went on three family trips to Greenland, in 1968, 1970 and 1974, all in the Mestersvig area. At that time there was an abundance of musk ox wool spread over the tundra and every where we walked she would gather up the wool and take it with her. This led her to learn to spin when she came back with the wool to Scotland. She became very accomplished in her spinning and knitting and won prestigious awards for her musk ox wool items at the Royal Highland Show.



Margaret and family at camp on Menanders Island, north of Mesters Vig, in 1968



Musk ox wool waistcoat spun and knitted by Margaret.

**George Downie** 23 July 1931 – 31 May 2016

George Downie, was a long-standing member of the Scottish Arctic Club having joined before 1980. He served on the Committee from 1992/93 to 1994/95 and 2002/03 to 2005/06.

As a much respected member of the Geology Department at Aberdeen University, he led frequent geological fieldwork expeditions in Scotland. His Arctic experience was gained with British Schools Exploring Society (BSES) and he became the second most frequent leader in BSES history having led on fifteen BSES expeditions over a period of 30 years.





George acted as Chief Leader, Deputy Chief Leader or Science leader on these BSES expeditions to destinations such as Iceland (twice), Greenland (six times) Arctic Norway/Sweden (twice), the Yukon (twice), Montana, and Alaska (twice)-anywhere where there were rocks to be studied!

George was born in Rosehearty on the north Aberdeenshire coast on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1931, educated at Fraserburgh High School, took his BSc in geology from Aberdeen University and returned there after serving as a commissioned officer in the Army (Royal Engineers) during National Service (mostly working on irrigation in Egypt), first as a professor's assistant, then as an assistant lecturer and finally as a full lecturer in Geology. Throughout his life he was active in adult education outside the confines of the university, particular in producing and monitoring geology courses for the Open University and running adult education courses in Aberdeen until well after formal retirement. George met Jean in Aberdeen as students in the same university year, wooed and married her, and was never the same man again when he lost her to cancer in 2013; their single tragedy in their many years of contented marriage was the lack of any children. George died in Aberdeen after a long period of debilitation and illness on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2016, aged 84.

This Club owes much to him and Jean throughout their long association with it.

*Condensed from an obituary in the British Exploring Society's newsletter of 29 June 2016 and reproduced with permission.*

### From the archives

Some members may recognise the original Club logo, below. It appears to have been in use from 1977. The current logo with the polar bear appeared in 1996.



THE SCOTTISH ARCTIC CLUB

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Please remember that the Club is active on both Facebook and Twitter