



SCOTTISH ARCTIC CLUB

To Encourage Adventurous Endeavour and Interest in the Science, Culture and Protection of the Arctic

Newsletter - August 2022

President: Stella Spratley

Vice Presidents: Susie Ranford, Noel Williams

Secretary: Iain Allison, Treasurer: Chris Calver,

Committee members: David Broadhead, Chris Gilmore, Fraser Melville, Jennifer Newall, David Stone

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.

From the President

Stella Spratley

WE DID IT! On 23rd July, 26 club members finally made it to Tasiilaq in East Greenland, having started planning the trip in 2019! After a couple of days getting organised, we divided into five separate groups and set off on our various adventures. We didn't all stick exactly to our original plans, but when we all met again at the airport ready to fly home, everyone had had an amazing time, and a lot of stories were swapped. The Club 50th Anniversary has been well and truly celebrated. To hear the stories and find out what we all did, come to the Gathering on November 5th.

And other news . . . Iain has been secretary forever and has been invaluable in the organisation of our trip. Now that the trip is over he is finally retiring. Please get in touch if you might be prepared to take on this role, or part of it. (Hint: Now is a good time. Things probably won't get really busy again until our 60th anniversary.)

Look forward to seeing many of you in November,





From the Editor Chris Gilmore

This newsletter is late – very late. You have to blame the good weather (among other things). I usually edit the newsletter when it's raining and I can't be outside, but the summer in the Borders has been one of continual sunshine with hardly any rain.

However, it is raining now and here I am at the keyboard.

This newsletter is much shorter than the ones that you have received in the past year or two, and I hope it signals a return to normality as far as Arctic travel is concerned. The club trip to Tasiilaq finally went ahead in July and I am hoping for a long report in the next newsletter.

With that in mind, I am always looking for contributions, so please send them to me at chris.gilmore@glasgow.ac.uk.

Gathering & Supper 2022 Iain Allison

Date: Saturday 5th November 2022

Venue: Carrbridge Hotel, Main Street, Carrbridge PH23 3AB

contact details: web - <https://www.carrbridgehotel.com>

telephone - 01479 841202

email - enquiries@carrbridgehotel.com

Costs: Bed & breakfast - £44.50 per person per night sharing a double/twin room
£49.50 per person per night single occupancy

Dinner - £25.50

i.e. for couples; dinner, bed & breakfast will be £70 per person.

As usual, a number of members will gather for dinner on the Friday evening. We anticipate the event to proceed as for the past few years with the Gathering at 2.00 pm followed by the brief AGM at about 5.30 and the Supper at 7.30. The 26 members of the Club's 50th Anniversary expedition to Ammassalik Island returned to the UK, and Norway, on Sunday 7th August after a very successful 2 weeks. We anticipate that some of the participants will be recounting their adventures at the Gathering. For now, please book your accommodation with the hotel.

We anticipate returning to the Ben Nevis Hotel for November 2023.

Deaths of Members

In May we lost two members who had served the Club on the Committee. Elspeth Hamilton died on the 5th May and a celebration of her life was held in Glasgow in August. On 9th May, Averil Stewart passed away and sadly her husband Gavin also passed away in August. As 'Gaveril' they were secretary and treasurer for 10 years from 1998 and played a key role in the smooth running of the Club's administration which continues to this day.

Climate Change & Environmental News

Susie Ranford

UN countries agree to end plastic pollution

In March, UN countries resolved to forge a legally binding agreement by 2024 to end plastic pollution. Plastic pollution is a huge problem, particularly in the marine environment and in the Arctic, where SAC member Dave King organises clean-up kayaking expeditions and raises awareness. <https://www.arcticplasticproject.org/>
<https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/historic-day-campaign-beat-plastic-pollution-nations-commit-develop>

Progress update on COP26 pledges

Six months on from COP26 in Glasgow, nations met in Bonn at the start of June to check on progress ahead of COP27 later this year. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-61494531>

NHS carry out first 'net zero' operation

University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust made a host of big and small changes to their procedures in order to carry out what they believe is the world's first net zero surgery. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-61567187>

Met Office say 50:50 chance of exceeding 1.5C above pre-industrial levels in the next 5 years

A new study led by the UK Met Office has revealed a very strong likelihood that one of the next five years will be the warmest on record globally, beating the current record year of 2016. The Arctic temperature anomaly (compared to the 1991-2020 average) is predicted to be more than three times as large as the global mean anomaly when averaged over the next five northern hemisphere winters. <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/press-office/news/weather-and-climate/2022/decadal-forecast-2022>

The Long Haul – Skiing across Northern Norway

Liam Tracy

To be blunt about it, I've never been an "indoors" person. I guess a lot of people in the Scottish Arctic Club may relate to that. For me, after what felt like an eternity sat in an office in Trondheim, it had reached boiling point. Eighteen months looking out the window, surrounded by people who preferred watching mountains on a television to seeing them in real life. I was itching to get out and make up for what felt like lost time.



Skiing past the Tana Mountains, Finnmark

So I slowly formed a plan. I was keen to try my hand at something new: "expedition" style skiing seemed to fit the bill – a mix of *fjellski* (Nordic skis), pulk and tent. My imagination started running wild with images of Greenland, Svalbard, Antarctica. But after jumping straight into the deep-end perhaps once too often, I'd learned my lesson: sometimes dialling down the ambition a notch isn't a bad thing. So being in Norway, I wanted to find somewhere that could give a similar experience, but closer to home. And all arrows pointed North: Finnmark. The vast Arctic plateaus seemed the ideal place to get started.

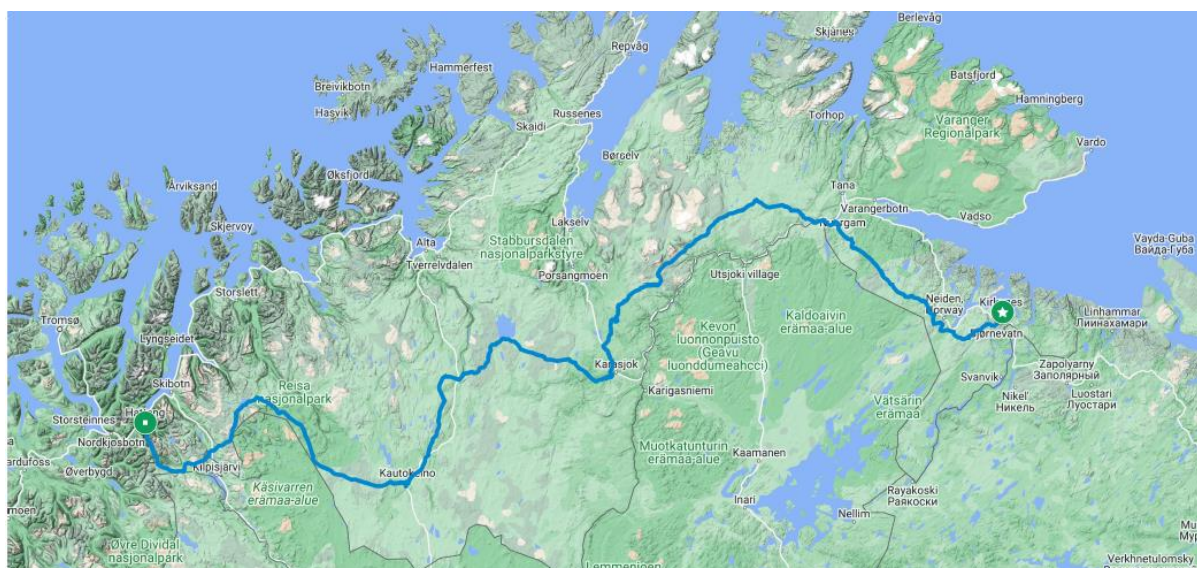
The exact details of the trip I pieced together over a few months. I was a beginner when it came to most of it: I'd done a bit of winter camping but, other than determination, this was probably my most valuable asset. In terms of cross-country skiing, I'd taught myself the hard way the previous year (a lot of falling over): in total I had only around a week of experience to my name. Finally, pulk hauling was an entirely new concept. But I had faith I could learn enough beforehand to keep myself moving, and injury free, for the duration of my trip. The rest could fall into place as I went along. Overall, the trip would give a good opportunity to master new skills, see more of Norway, and open the door for bigger trips in future.

So I finalised a route, deciding to start as close to Tromsø as possible. COVID restrictions were still causing uncertainty, so I opted to stay within Norway for the whole trip: no shortcuts through Sweden or Finland.

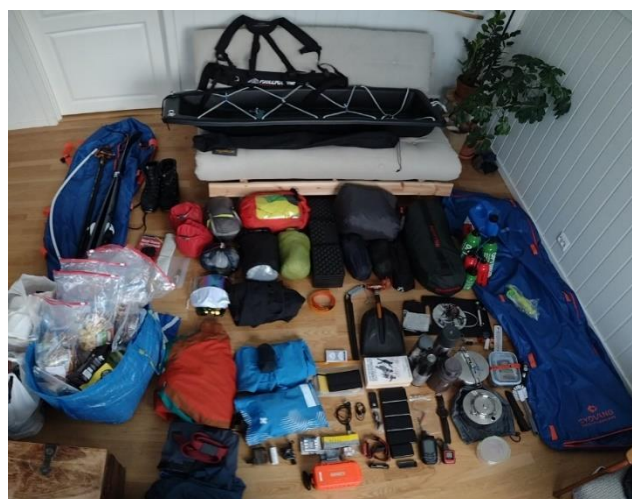
The finish point was Kirkenes, a few kilometres from the Russian border, so about as far as I could realistically go. All in, it was around 400 miles from start to finish: crossing Finnmarksvidda, Reisedalen, and a handful of other intriguing areas in this Northern territory.

With the route planned, I turned my attention to a lot of equipment research, learning the skills to survive in the Arctic, and a handful of trial-runs around Trondheim. A lot of mistakes and frustration, but that would mean fewer mistakes on the real thing.

The last piece of the puzzle was the group. In the end, I opted to make this a solo venture. There were a handful of reasons: I wanted to experience a long period of isolation (apparently lockdowns weren't enough); I wanted the challenge, and peacefulness, that can go with solo travel in remote areas; and the bottom line was I didn't know anyone daft, foolhardy, or with few enough life-commitments to join me on this particular venture.



Final Route Plan: 650km of Nordic skiing



Final Gear Checks and Packing

So in early March I sweated my way across Tromsø city centre, alone. I was wheeling a pulk alongside me on the tarmac: it weighed more than I did. Wanting to use this trip as a trial for future expeditions, I had decided to try take everything I'd need from the start. 30 days of food, fuel and supplies, leading to a lot of back-ache by the time I reached the bus station.

The bus driver helped me drag the endless bags of kit out onto the roadside when we arrived at my destination: Signaldalen. I joked to him, "*neste stoppe, Kirkenes.*" He shook his head and chuckled, telling me I'd have an easier life if I just took a bus. This was true, but sometimes doing things the hard way has its own benefits.

Overall, I felt ready: I was as prepared as I'd ever be, and the uncertainty had shifted into a desire to just get moving. Loading the pulk, then starting to struggle up the icy road, each step felt heavy and clumsy: it seemed it'd be a long, hard month. A pedestrian walked past, asking if I needed any help. I explained what I was doing, and he too laughed as he quipped back: "yes, I think you do need help".



Day 3 - looking back towards Signal dalen



Breakfast with a view

As I got into the swing of the adventure, the challenges came thick and fast: rain seeping into all my kit and freezing, heavy winds and storms, and some brutal climbs. And all of this within the first few days. But I was in it for the long haul, taking it one day at a time: I became more efficient at skiing, and the pulk slowly became less of a burden and more like an appendage as I learned how to handle it. Christening the pulk Wilson (a reference to the movie *Castaway*), I also managed to have some entertaining (but one-sided) conversations.

The weather was also, on the whole, better than I'd imagined. I'd been bracing for temperatures below -20°C. And although this did happen, for March the weather was generally warm, very warm. But this was not necessarily a blessing: it led to slushy snow, sunburn, more rain, and the worry of food spoiling. And other heat related problems cropped up too. One particular problem had four legs, and normally slept until May or June, but had awoken early due to the unseasonal heat.



Another Arctic Sunset (near Karasjok)

A bear, of the brown variety, was apparently less than 100m behind me, when the snowmobile stopped and the rider started to shout. He advised me to get out of the area, post-haste. Worryingly, I had planned to camp almost at this exact spot, in the midst of the green pine forest. I was also a bit wary that if it wasn't for this passer-by I'd soon have been busy cooking in my tent. While bears in Norway aren't known to be as aggressive as their North American counterparts, nor as scary as the bears nearer to the Pole, I didn't want to find out if the sweet smell of chicken gravy would be too tempting for a large land mammal that is partial to eating meat, especially after fasting for 5 months.

So instead, another long evening of skiing to close the gap to Karasjok: certainly a lesser evil than being mauled by a bear. And not wanting to tempt fate any further, I took a few precautions for the remainder of the trip, mainly keeping food out of the tent overnight, and setting the pulk further away. I'd been close enough to becoming a Darwin Award winner for one year.



Northern Lights above camp

In the end, while physically demanding, one of the defining features of the trip was the mental challenge. I'm used to difficult situations, where you need to dig deep mentally. But this was a different form of difficult.

I've tried my hand at running races and ultramarathons in the past: they are a very intense, but relatively short-lived, struggle. But my trip across Northern Norway was neither overly exerting, nor particularly uncomfortable. However, there was something about doing the same thing, day-in, day-out, that slowly

became difficult. Maybe it was the lack of conversation, or that being well prepared led to relatively few disasters (or excitement). Or perhaps I watched too much snow melt into water, or too many snowmobiles whizzed by for me to enjoy the peace of the area. But basically, it was hard. However, I'd always fall back on the knowledge that each step forward, was one closer to the finish. Each camp, was one closer to the end. And every bite of food made the pulk that bit lighter. One day at a time. And I liked the challenge, it was new, it was fresh, it was what I wanted.

And as the days turned to weeks, and the end drew closer, the irony was that the one thing I came to dread the most was finishing. The Arctic really is a serene place: some of the most incredible sunsets; Northern lights; the humbling feeling of being in such a vast environment. I had a strong desire to just keep on skiing. But reaching Kirkenes, 32 days after the start, the allure of a shower and a bed to sleep in overcame all else. And, with the Russian border being too insurmountable an obstacle, I had reached the end of the road for this trip.



The home stretch! On the outskirts of Kirkenes

With a lot of time alone to think, I also had a lot of time to consider if I'd do something similar again. The answer is definitely, albeit with a few tweaks and probably a different destination: maybe somewhere more remote. And who knows, after recently stumbling across a club of Arctic aficionados, maybe next time it'll not just be me, myself, and Wilson.

*A huge thanks to the SAC and SAEF for the purchase of my Hilleberg Nammatj tent for this trip!
And for anyone interested, I have a more in-depth trip report (and other articles) about to go live on my blog: <https://haphazard.scot/2022/05/01/long-haul/>*

Sprengisandur Chris Bartle

It was interesting to see last year to see my father's crossing of Sprengisandur in Iceland in 1958 being talked about again. Rapha, a well known cycling company, commissioned the making of a short film about the Sprengisandur route which proved to be very popular.

Within a week of the film's release it had received 70k+ views on YouTube and the same on Instagram. My father, Ron Bartle, now 87, wasn't expecting to become a star on social media at this stage in life.

The film was entered into the Kendal Mountain Film Festival 2021 and made it through to the final event. Ron Bartle, and Bernard Heath at the time were the only surviving members of the expedition which was undertaken under the auspices of The Rough Stuff Fellowship, the world's first off road cycling club. It is timely to note that Bernard sadly passed away not many weeks ago on 31 March 2022, he was well known as a driving force behind the Mountain Bothies Association being one of the founder members. The other members of the expedition were Ray Bottomley, and Dick Phillips. Dick went on to know the remote parts of Iceland arguably better than anyone else running walking tours there for over 50 years. These were tours with 'no frills', consistent with his adversity to commercialism.

There are many websites making references to the film, this is one of the better ones as it includes more background to the making of the film, and a link to view the film,

<https://bikepacking.com/plog/the-further-away-the-better-video/>

Searching the internet for 'further away the better' and 'rapha' will find other links to the short film.

Back to Tasiilaq Doug Anderson

Andrea and I decided to travel to Tasiilaq a bit earlier than usual this spring because of possible covid testing issues in Iceland. These had been a real pain in September 21 when PCR tests were only accepted for Greenland if they were from a Nordic country and then only valid for 48hrs. Normally we aim to arrive in Tasiilaq around the 18th of March but this year we bought tickets early that with luck would get us into Tasiilaq on the 9th. In the event Iceland and Greenland abandoned all requirements for testing just before our departure. That was a great relief but the weather in Greenland proved non compliant and we only managed to cross to Kulusuk on the 13th in what proved to be a one day flying window. Reykjavik has its merits as a town but if you've been through more than 120 times, novelty is not one of them! We knew ahead of time that the helicopter required to complete our journey to Tasiilaq had been damaged by flying debris in a storm. It had been out of action for the previous two weeks and was awaiting parts to get it going again. So we were very nervous that we would be stuck in Kulusuk. I also knew the Hotel Kulusuk was jammed with folk waiting to fly. The Air Greenland ticket lady was not entirely optimistic that we could fly on that day and we knew the weather would turn bad again by early evening. It was with a certain air of resignation that we hung about the terminal, clock watching. Suddenly the helicopter was fixed and ready to fly and we had been bumped up to go on the first flight. Six were planned but only two made it before the weather closed in for 4 more days. Andrea and I felt blessed. The weather since Christmas had been exceptionally snowy with very few flying days. As a result there had been little or no room for freight. In the store only potatoes and onions. No fruit or fresh veg at all. Eggs had run out weeks before. Our plane brought eggs but they would not cross to Tasiilaq for many days. Andrea and I were very happy to have arrived. Covid had been entirely absent from Tasiilaq since the start of the pandemic when it went into lockdown in march of 2020. In mid late January 22 it arrived and swept through the town in about 3weeks. By the time we arrived it was all but done. Curiously and despite grave fears of a high death toll there had been none and indeed no hospitalisations! Later when my friend Oli arrived back from 4 months at sea fishing stormy waters north of Iceland he reported that he and his entire crew had been infected. Interestingly he and all the Caucasian crew members had been more or less badly affected and at times unable to stand watch. By contrast the Greenlander crew had suffered very few symptoms! Genetics perhaps!?

The snow was certainly deep about the town and was 20ft by our front deck. The house two doors up was all but buried.



Our deck



Two doors up

It took some digging to get access to our containers:



Andrea digs out ours

This one belongs to Oli:



I get this one to dig:



By the 15th Andrea had tested positive for covid presumably caught in a Reykjavik restaurant. By the 16th she had slipped and wrenched her sacroiliac joint and was in great pain. By the 17th the weather cleared and we went out into the wilds.

Mere covid and grim back pain was not going to stop Andrea getting out.





I met this lady in the heliport. She said “Hello Douglas”. I did not recognise her. She remembered my name and Andrea and the kids. She said “We fished together many years ago”. I still had no clue. After a bit of work pointing at the map in the heliport I suddenly remembered the event quite clearly, not least because I remembered she killed her fish by biting them on the head just behind the eyes. This had been 32years previously at a narrow point in a fjord where Arctic Char were running close to the shore. Ulricha has a good memory!



Greenland Training

Susie Ranford

We used to be mountaineers. I clearly remember piling climbing gear & camping kit into rucksacks, driving north for hours, and walking in to corrie camps. Then came the days (and nights) of hefting babies, then toddlers when we laughed and called it 'training' for future expeditions. Now that time has come, the children are finally self-propelled, and dear reader, that joking laughter now rings horribly hollow. In no way are Dougal and I prepared for the reality of carrying an expedition's worth of our children's kit on top of our own. But nothing ventured, nothing gained. How hard can it be?

Each postponement of the Club's anniversary expedition came with a huge sigh of relief. The children would be 1 year older, 1 year more capable, and crikey, do they progress quickly in the pre-school years! 8 and 6, instead of 6 and 4, makes a world of difference.

Little legs do not fast walkers make. So, once our babies became too heavy to carry, we resorted to canoes and bikes for our outdoor escapades. As a result, the children became quite accomplished on pedals, but their ability to walk long distances and up hills left a lot to be desired. As the prospect of the anniversary trip finally happening became more and more likely we realised we had a lot of training to do!

Our objective to do more walking has been aided and abetted by several friends who are aiming to complete their Munros. Months ago, one of them suggested a long weekend in the Glen Affric hills for the Jubilee weekend. 4 adults, 3 kids, 4 days walking, 3 nights camping, carrying all our kit – what could be better preparation for a fortnight on Ammassalik Island?

Astonishingly and fortunately, the Jubilee weekend forecast was for glorious weather. We broke our drive to Glen Affric by staying overnight at Juniper Bank cottage in Insh: as always feeling incredibly grateful to Gavin and Pat, and with Averil's loss still feeling very raw. By 11:30 on Thursday morning a clean and fresh-faced team set off from the Chisholm Bridge car park to walk up Gleann nam Fiadh. Our progress was mostly hindered by the large number of frogs, as the children were determined to capture every single one they spotted. Our group splintered on the final push up the hillside to the corrie camp we'd spotted on the map. The sweets came out to persuade the youngest members of the party to keep going. Two tent pitches were found and camping dinner practically inhaled by all. Dougal and I started feeling nervous that our rations were on the skimpy side. With perfect timing, the rain began after we were cosily snuggled in our sleeping bags.

We woke up to cloud, which was a little disappointing given the forecast. After a bit of lying in bed the sun finally broke through and we loitered a little longer in order to dry the tents out. A short steep pull from the campsite took us onto a fine ridge. Suddenly the kids were out front, running along and skipping through the rocky ground. The ridge to Carn Eige had some fun rocky pinnacles to clamber over (and through) which they loved. Munro number 1 ticked off!

By this time we had blue skies and sunshine, accompanied by a stiff breeze. While the children ate and played around the summit cairn, Ruth and I set off to bag her next Munro, Beinn Fhionnlaidh, which was an easy out and back from Carn Eige. On our return, a white bearded man purposefully accosted us. His name was Nick. He had started his Munro round at age 80 and was now 82. He was fund raising for Alzheimer's Scotland and the Osteoporosis Society. His eyes filled with tears as he mentioned his wife.

Ruth and I were quiet as we climbed back up to Carn Eige, thinking of our own affected family members and friends. The dads and children were gone, and we followed them over to Mam Sodhail, Munro number 3 for



Clambering over rocky pinnacles on the ridge to Carn Eige

Ruth and me, number 2 for the rest of the party. Atop Mam Sodhail is a sturdily built dry stone 'play pen' – perfect for children. Inside, out of the wind, they were busily grinding stones into powder and with reluctance were bribed with food to come out and continue our journey. Once out, they swiftly ran away down the grassy ridge, leaving us laden adults lumbering along behind.

The descent into our chosen corrie was steep. Not ideal for heavy rucksacks. Nor small people with a tendency to jump and slip. We made it down, slightly cursing the height lost as we would need to regain it all the following day. The corrie was sheltered and the sun was hot. Within no time the kids had stripped

off and were paddling in the shallow sun-warmed pools – not as clean and wholesome as it sounds since there was a good foot of silt at the bottom which was, as Eric said, ‘a bit smelly Mummy’.

Day 3 was a big one for Ruth and me. Lots of up and down over An Socach, Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnam and along a long ridge to Mullach na Dheiragain. On our return we re-encountered Nick and his team, again amazed by his fitness at 82. Aspirational! We took a shortcut on the way back across the lip of a hanging valley, but even so it was demoralising thinking of the reascent of An Socach and the even higher top we needed to go over to get back to our camp. As we climbed back up An Socach we met teams who said they’d seen the children. Maybe we’ll catch them? But it was not to be. As we started the descent we could see them far away, halfway back up the hill to camp. As we watched they sprinted off up the hill, much faster than we were managing on our tired feet! Eventually we reached the corrie rim and attracted their attention with much shouting and arm waving. Mainly so that they would put the kettle on and present us with tea the moment we got back to camp!

Our final night out and at dinner our companions drove home the inadequacy of the rations Dougal and I had packed. Endless goodies emerged from their rucksacks: cheese and biscuits, fresh runner beans with their pasta and pesto, rounded off with S’Mores - giant marshmallows toasted on the camping stove and sandwiched between chocolate digestives. Dougal and I reconsidered the wisdom of our past decisions: we could have had all these goodies instead of an extra child’s sleeping bag, thermarest & clothes! As the sun set behind the corrie rim and the shadow came over us the children wandered away from the tents, keeping pace with the sunshine until they were silhouetted on the horizon. The adults sat sipping cans of wine (more goodies from our companions’ rucksacks!) and basking in the satisfaction of the trip having worked out even better than we had imagined.



Breakfast above the clouds

The morning climb out of the corrie was steep and tough. The youngest member of the party felt it badly, with legs not warmed up and my reluctance to motivate with sweets quite so early in the morning! Her

mood changed abruptly once onto the ridge and away she ran with the other two downhill and back up to the play pen on top of Mam Sodhail. The long ridge out to Sgurr na Lapaiddh was glorious. The kids ran ahead almost all the way. We were reluctant to leave, but super aware we had a long way to go. We stopped for lunch looking over Loch Affric. After about five minutes a ptarmigan and her brood broke cover. Just feet from us a multitude of heads popped out and started bobbing through the grass and heather where moments before there had been total stillness.



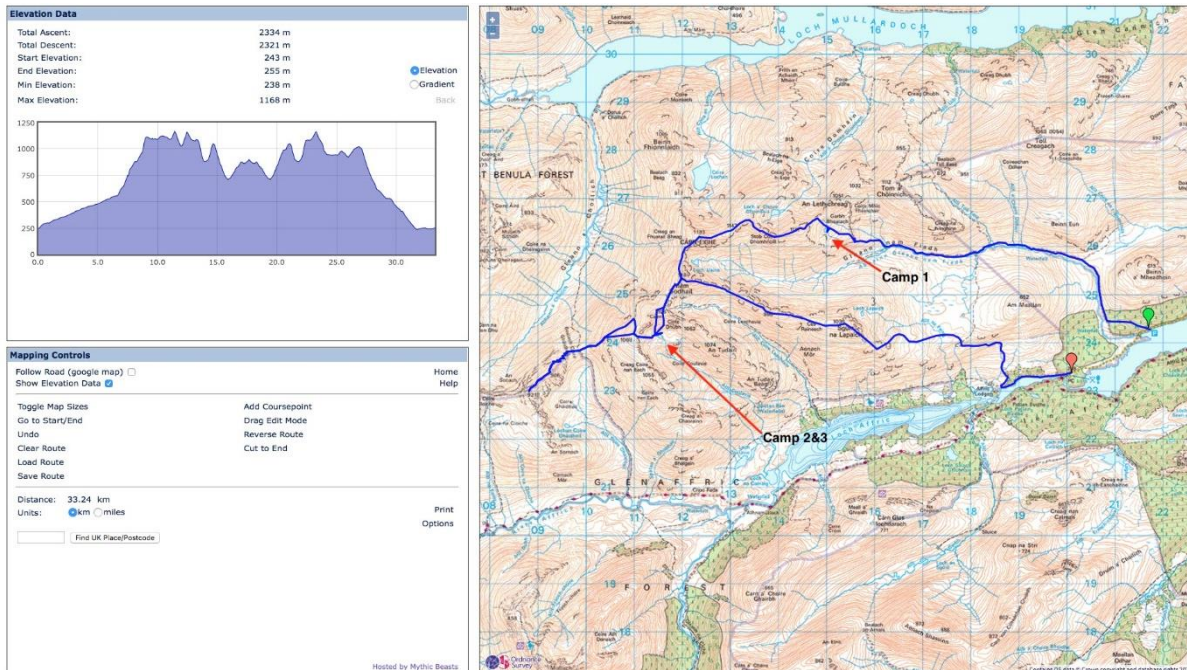
Running along the ridge towards Mam Sodhail on the walk out

In the boggy ground at the bottom of the ridge my boot sole finally detached – it had been threatening to do this since shortly after the start of the trip! Most of my hills are in fell shoes these days, so I was wearing my boots to make sure they would be ok for Greenland. I had my answer! The mid sole on both boots was completely perished and had disintegrated. My flappy sole was difficult to walk on so Nina gave it a final tug and it was off – now I had no grip at all! But at least we were on the home straight.

We despatched the fastest member of the party off up ahead to retrieve one of the cars from the Chisholm car park, which was a few km up the road from the end of the road car park (which is £ and no overnight stay). As soon as we reached the Scots pines near Affric Lodge the children sat down in the welcome shade. Nina had fallen on a steep gravelly section of the track and needed a few moments and some food. An unfortunate accident so close to the end! Spirits restored, we tramped on the final couple of km to the car park, reaching it just as Donald drove in. We piled into cars and drive to La Taverna, on the outskirts of Aviemore for much needed dinner.

No longer clean or fresh – now we had skin tanned with sun & dirt, wild hair and sparkly eyes. We'd pushed the children more than I'd thought possible and they'd managed superbly. Dougal and I had carried all our kit relatively comfortably, although the thought of adding more food fills me with dread! But a happy family marches on its stomach and so we will need to find the space, and strength!

An incredible four days in the Scottish hills, thanks to the amazing Jubilee weekend weather and to a team that, despite ups and downs, made it all work and had loads of fun. The trip has given us so much more confidence that we'll be able to make the most of the anniversary expedition. The distances and height gain we intend to cover each day on Ammassalik island are (or can be!) less than we did over the Glen Affric Munros. Although we are expecting the island terrain to be more challenging in places. Luckily, that appears to be the type of ground that motivates our kids! How hard can it be? Well, we'll see. Bring it on!



Our route 2nd - 5th June 2022

Greenland Plans

We will fly to Kulusuk on 23rd July and be transported by boat to Tasiilaq. After celebrating the 50th anniversary with the other expedition members our party will be taken by boat to Pupik, in the north-west of Ammassalik island. We'll spend a couple of days there with other members of the expedition, including my dad – it will be very special to have three generations of our family in the Arctic. Our plan is to walk back to Tasiilaq over approximately 1 week. There are two route options 1) through the middle of the island, approx. 40km or 2) along the west coast, approx. 50km. We hope that we will have time to go up a couple of hills on the way to get views out over the glaciers and the fjord. We fly out of Kulusuk on 6th August, weather depending, with one week left of the school holidays.

Solstice Meet 2022

Susie Ranford

The 2022 Solstice Meet was hosted by Myrtle Simpson at Farletter, on the edge of the Insh Marshes. The customary blazing bonfire and bbq on Saturday was topped off by marshmallow toasting. After the two youngest members had departed for bed, the third youngest was tempted to stay up way past his bedtime by Myrtle promising sight of a badger. Sure enough, the badger trundled along at 10:30pm as predicted to devour the leftovers. He was completely unfazed by the lights in the kitchen and expedition members just a few feet away poring over maps and photos of Ammassalik island. Sunday morning dawned windy and showery, but that didn't deter the canoeing and swimming parties, nor the mountain bikers. Thanks to Myrtle for hosting, and for everyone who came along - Stella; Kirsty, Paul & their 'polar bear' dogs; Jinty & Norman; Pat; Jane; Alison & Abigail; Dermot; Nina, Eric, Dougal & Susie; Kathleen & Neville for dropping in on Sunday on their way home from Attadale. Same place, same time next year?!





Expedition Fund Sue Fenton

Two young people, awarded grants from the Expedition Fund, have already returned from expeditions to Finnmark (Liam Tracy) and Svalbard (Hamish Rodger); a busy, post- pandemic season lies ahead. An anonymous donor has very generously funded a supply of embroidered SAC patches (photo attached). They are 9cm long.

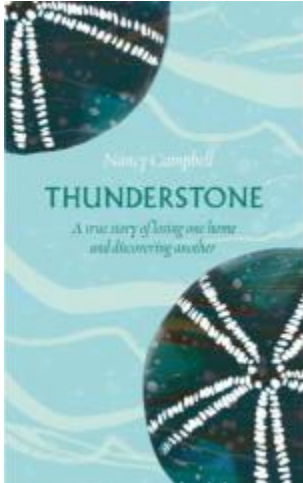
A badge has been sent to each of the young people who were awarded grants this year, and also those who were awarded grants in 2020/21 and had to postpone to this year.

SAC members might also like a patch (which can be ironed-on or sewn) for which a donation to the expedition fund of £5 is suggested. Some patches will be available at Attadale, the Summer Solstice BBQ and the Gathering. Stella will also have a supply available for purchase by participants on the 50th Anniversary Expedition.

A wee reminder of our fundraising at Amazon Smile (more profitable than bank interest on our account!); <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/SC046857>

Sue Fenton
Treasurer/secretary Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund
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