



# SCOTTISH ARCTIC CLUB

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



## NEWSLETTER September 2023

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*Note: Editable Word versions of the Gathering booking form and the SAEF donations form also accompany this newsletter*

### **ANNUAL GATHERING & SUPPER**

**Saturday 18th November 2023  
Ben Nevis Hotel, Fort William**

**DETAILS & BOOKING FORM INSIDE**

President: Noel Williams Vice President: Anthony Walker  
Secretary: Jinty Smart Treasurer: Mandy Peden

Membership Secretary: Jane Craxton Gathering Secretary: Bethany Carol

Other Committee Members: Mike Bauermeister, Louise Hollinrake, Fraser Melville, Jennifer Newall

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 website for an application form.

#### **Contacts:**

Club Secretary: [jintysmart@btopenworld.com](mailto:jintysmart@btopenworld.com)

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

Newsletter editor: We are always on the lookout for articles: please send them to [james@fenton.scot](mailto:james@fenton.scot)



**THE 2023 ANNUAL GATHERING AND SUPPER  
BEN NEVIS HOTEL, FORT WILLIAM  
SATURDAY 18 NOVEMBER**

*A message from Jinty Smart, SAC Secretary:*

As you know this year the Gathering is taking place at the Ben Nevis Hotel in Fort William on the 18th November. It appears that another club, The Ladies Scottish Climbing Club, has also booked the hotel for the same weekend for their AGM as well. We have been assured that we will still have the ballroom for our exclusive use but we will be sharing the dining room for the evening meal so I imagine things will be a bit busy. However, I am sure they will be an interesting group to be sharing the space with.

However, I would encourage members to make their booking with the hotel as soon as possible. Although we have a certain number of rooms reserved for us if there are more club members wishing to come the sooner we all book the better!

We have a special deal with the hotel for both the Friday and Saturday night of £50pp for dinner, bed and breakfast. There is an £18 supplement for single occupancy. Do make sure you get this special price as there has been a bit of discrepancy with the hotel over earlier bookings.

Looking forward to seeing you all in November.

Best wishes  
Jinty

**Ben Nevis Hotel & Leisure Club**  
**North Road, Fort William PH33 6TG**  
**Tel: 01397 702 331**  
**Enquiries and Reservations:**  
[salesbennevis@strathmorehotels.com](mailto:salesbennevis@strathmorehotels.com)



*Please complete the Booking Form  
at the end of this newsletter*

**PROGRAMME**

**Friday 17 November**

7.30pm Informal get together & dinner

**Saturday 18 November**

2pm Expedition presentations  
Tea break c.3.15-3.45

5.30pm SAC AGM

7pm Supper

**Sunday 19 November**

Informal walks arranged by members

**SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER**

Subscription to the Scottish Arctic Club fall due on 1st September. See details on last page of this newsletter.



**DONATIONS TO THE  
SCOTTISH ARCTIC EXPEDITION FUND (SAEF)**

The fund is set-up to help with the costs of Arctic expeditions undertaken by young people. SAC members have contributed generously to this in the past, and a donations form is given at the end of this newsletter.



**SCOTTISH ARCTIC EXPEDITION FUND NEWS 2023**

Eve MacCallum, Ollie Smaje and Harry Newmark, the first recipients of the Myrtle and Hugh Simpson award, had a very successful climbing expedition to East Greenland, putting up some new routes.

Louise Mercer undertook environmental fieldwork in the NorthWest Territories as part of her PhD studies.

Tuppence (Claire) Mellish helped to deliver the ocean rowing boat, *Hermione*, from Eyemouth to Pond Inlet; she was then part of the crew of eight rowing from Pond Inlet through the North West Passage. The boat is now being overwintered in Cambridge Bay and it is hoped to complete the last leg of the passage next season.

Mark Agnew, one of the four 'Arctic Cowboys' kayaking the North West Passage, is still paddling, reaching the open Beaufort Sea (as of 24 September).

We look forward to seeing their presentations, and that of Ellis O'Connor (Svalbard autumn 2022) at the Gathering.

Please do let your young friends and contacts (under 30) know about the funding available through the SAC. The closing date for applications is 30 January; forms and details are on the SAC website and at the end of this newsletter

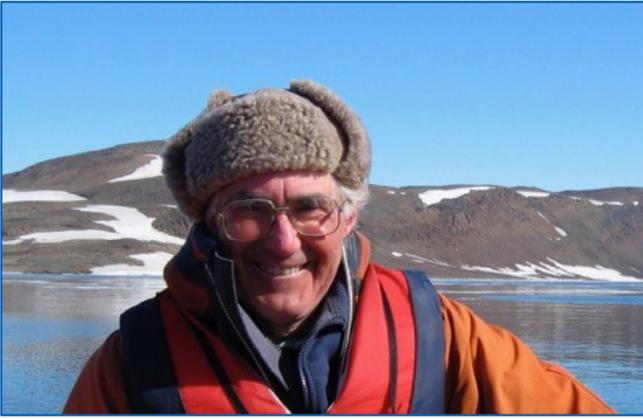
*Sue Fenton*

*Secretary/ Treasurer Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund*



The NW Passage expedition setting out from Pond Inlet

## AN APPRECIATION



**Professor Michael Lea  
1943-2023**

**President of the Scottish Arctic Club 2010-2012**

Michael's memorial service was held at Eden Valley Crematorium on 11 May 2023. It was attended by former university colleagues and friends including members of SAC and the Arctic Club. Rob David, a veteran of many joint Greenland expeditions with Mike and his wife Kate, read a tribute summarizing his life.

Born in Kendal, Michael went to The Queen's College, University of Oxford, and in 1964 became one of the first Physics postgraduates at the then 'new' University of Lancaster. His academic career was largely spent in London, at what was to become Royal Holloway University of London. He was both a superlative teacher and researcher and his research work won accolades internationally. He published over 150 papers with the last one in 2017. His colleagues describe him as 'a brilliant physicist' 'remarkable' and 'a wonderful individual' and say that 'his work on electrons in helium has truly paved the way for the current resurgence as a pathway to quantum computing'.

Both Michael and Kate developed a passion for the Arctic and they spent many summers out in the wilds of Greenland, Svalbard and Baffin Island making sound recordings of birds and narwhal. They visited Inuit settlements in North-West Greenland and used inflatable boats to explore the fjords of North East Greenland. They had many adrenalin filled moments – trapped in sea ice north of Qaanaaq where they had to step onto the ice to free the boat; trapped by a glacial river in Liverpool Land; avoiding a collapsing iceberg in Kaiser Franz Joseph fjord; forced out from the shore while navigating leads through the pack ice round Clavering Island; coming within touching distance of a female wolf in Hold-with-Hope; watching a polar bear bouncing on one of the inflatable boats in Kirschdalen; and watching another bear walking through the camp at Vega Sund. Altogether they made 19 expeditions to NE Greenland, 3 expeditions to NW Greenland, 5 to East and West Greenland, one to Svalbard and one to Baffin.

Michael became President of both the Arctic Club and the Scottish Arctic Club, served on the Gino Watkins

Committee awarding grants to arctic expeditions, and set up the Arctic Club website.

Retiring back to Westmorland, Mike tackled many new projects; editing a newsletter for the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society; taking 33 members on a 'pilgrimage' round the Saga sites of Iceland; publishing a new edition of W G Collingwood's *Letters from Iceland*; saving and raising the profile of old cast-iron fingerposts in Cumbria; transcribing the whaling journals of Walter Livingstone-Learmonth; and raising money to restore a local tithe barn.

After the service guests were invited back to Little Musgrave to remember Mike's many achievements.

*Rob David and Kate Lea*



## AN APPRECIATION

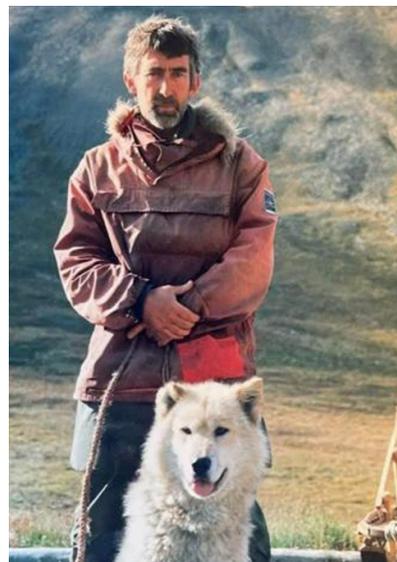
**Robin Buzza**

Robin, who passed away in July at his cabin in Lillehammer, was an extraordinary man. He rowed single handed from Shetland to the North Cape; overwintered on Svalbard in an attempt to become the first person to drive dogs across the ice from Svalbard to Greenland; ran Arctic Wilderness Experience on Svalbard for many years where he was always very supportive of incoming expeditions, including many of my own. Ranulph Fiennes presented Robin with his Transglobe Sled on reaching Svalbard in recognition of his support.

*Mark Evans*

*Note from James Fenton*

I first came across Robin in 1985 in Longyearbyen at the beginning of the Brathay Spitsbergen Expedition. Our equipment had been sent on in advance, but we had difficulty extracting it from the warehouse. Robin, who was working for Store Norske at the time, was invaluable in easing us through the bureaucracy.





**Trail Island 1991**

*King Oscar's Fjord, East Greenland*

*From left to right:*

- Dr Hugh Lang (pressing the button for the photo)
- Hugh Montgomery
- Bob Burton (Leader)
- Douglas Peacock
- John Arnott
- Ros Grant
- Rolf Dornbach (German ornithologist)
- Jean Balfour
- Name forgotten, but Primary School Teacher in North Yorkshire
- Ray Woolmore

*This photograph was sent in by Ray Woolmore in response to the death of Jean Balfour. He and Jinty Smart have managed to fill in all but one of the names.*



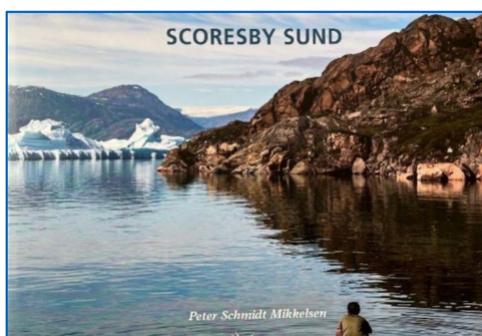
**From Chris Bartle, Glacier Books**

I have had a few requests from SAC members about Mikkelsen's new book on *Scoresby Sund*, the fourth in his 'Discovering North-East Greenland' series.

This will be an area close to the heart for many members so I thought it may be worthwhile letting others know about the book.

I will be at the Gathering so can bring copies along if pre-ordered, or they can be mailed. I now have a few copies in stock of this and also his 3rd book in the series *Gael Hamke Bugt – Young Sund*.

See the Glacier Books website for [the full list of Mikkelsen's books available](#).



**SAC Midsummer Barbecue at Myrtle Simpson's from Jinty Smart**





Skjoldungen, SE Greenland



Skjoldungen, SE Greenland



Skjoldungen, SE Greenland



SE Greenland coast



Prins Christian Sound



Norse church, Hvalsey, SW Greenland



Big bag silage, Brattahlid, SW Greenland

**Scottish Arctic Club**  
**2023 GATHERING BOOKING FORM**

Friday 17th November - Sunday 19th November

I would like to book for the following people at **£10 per person** (please indicate members and guests):

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Seating arrangements for the Supper are random, so please let us know if you want to sit with your partner and/or particular guests:

---

Total payable to the SAC:

---

**Method of Payment (select as appropriate):**

Cheque enclosed

Standing order

Paid by bank transfer

Will pay at Gathering

**Bank details**

Scottish Arctic Club

Sort Code 80-06-18 (Bank of Scotland)

Account 00835858

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*Circle as appropriate*

I/we have booked and paid for Supper, Bed and Breakfast for the above people directly with the Ben Nevis Hotel

I/We are not staying in the hotel but will pay the hotel directly for Supper

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Please indicate any Dietary Requirements:

---

**Presentations 2-5pm**

Would you like to give a presentation?

**Name:**

**Title:**

*No guarantee at this stage – depends on the number submitted*

---

**Friday evening informal get together:**

Would you like to be included in communal tables for dinner in the hotel at approximately 7.30 pm?

There will be \_\_\_\_\_ people

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*Please return form by post or email by **22nd October** to:*

Bethany Carol, Staff House 2, Glenmore Lodge, PH22 1QZ

Tel. 07864 577332, Email: [sacgatheringsec@gmail.com](mailto:sacgatheringsec@gmail.com)

Form may be completed and returned electronically if payment is made by bank transfer: to do this, an editable Word version is included with this newsletter

**SCOTTISH ARCTIC EXPEDITION FUND**  
**2023 Donation Form**

**NAME:** *(please PRINT)* \_\_\_\_\_

**Donation:** £ \_\_\_\_\_

The **Scottish Arctic Club** has an **Expedition Fund** which is a registered charity (SC046857) now entering its eighth year. The fund makes financial awards to encourage young people under 30 years of age to explore the Arctic. It is maintained through donations by Club members. The size and number of awards made in any year is determined by the relevance of the application and the funds currently held. In recent years awards have ranged from £250 to £3,000.

A list of recent awards may be seen on the club's website:

<http://www.scottisharcticclub.org.uk/wp/expedition-grants/past-grants/>

Those awarded grants are invited to make a presentation at the Annual Gathering about their adventures.

Thank you for your kind donation to the Expedition Fund. If you are eligible to claim Gift Aid, please complete the section below. If you Gift Aided in the past, and your circumstances have not changed, then there is no need to resubmit your details.

Donations are payable to **Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund (NOT Scottish Arctic Club)**

I enclose a cheque

I have set up a standing order

I have paid by bank transfer

I will pay at Gathering

*(Please circle as appropriate)*

The Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund's bank account details are:

**Clydesdale/Virgin Bank**

Sort code 82-67-04

Account number 20109358

IBAN GB15CLYD82670420109358

BIC CLYDGB21704

**GIFT AID**

Boost your donation by 25p for every £1 you donate

Yes, I want to Gift Aid this and any donations I make in the future. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax or Capital Gains tax, or both, than the amount of Gift Aid claimed in a tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

First line of address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return form by post or email to:**

Sue Fenton (Treasurer/Secretary SAEF),  
Polldoran, Clachan Seil, Oban PA34 4TJ Tel: 01852 300545

Email: [scottisharcticexpeditionfund@gmail.com](mailto:scottisharcticexpeditionfund@gmail.com)

Forms may be completed and returned electronically if payment is made by bank transfer; to do this, an editable Word version is included with this newsletter



**Scottish Arctic Club**

**SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL**

*Note from Jane Craxton, Membership Secretary*

Please remember that the annual subscription of £5 falls due on 1 September or shortly thereafter.

It remains a modest amount but please don't forget. Payment by standing order is preferred or via BACs transfer. Bank details are shown below. Alternatively, cheques can be collected at the Gathering or mailed to the Membership Secretary; Mrs Jane Craxton, 7 Otterburn Park, EH14 1JX. Many thanks to members who have already arranged payment.

*Bank details*

Scottish Arctic Club

Sort Code 80-06-18 (Bank of Scotland)

Account 00835858

