



# SCOTTISH ARCTIC CLUB

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



## NEWSLETTER April 2024

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### Advance Notices

#### 14<sup>th</sup> SPRING MEET

20-27 April  
Attadale

#### SUMMER SOLSTICE MEET

22-23 June  
Farleiter, Kincaig  
Hosted by Myrtle Simpson

#### ANNUAL GATHERING & SUPPER

Saturday 2 November  
Nethy Bridge Hotel

#### NEXT NEWSLETTER

Articles sought: members' expedition reports old & new, items of Arctic interest, etc.

Deadline 15 September 2024

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, Hannah Mortlock, Tuppence Mellish (co-opted)

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@bopenworld.com](mailto:jintysmart@bopenworld.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)



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS IN 2024

### Spring meet 20-27 April

The spring meet at Attadale in Wester Ross is nearly upon us. Kathleen Cartwright tells us there might still be space for late bookings. Check availability with her:

Tel. [01389 830485](tel:01389830485)

Email: [arcturus@btinternet.com](mailto:arcturus@btinternet.com)



### Summer Solstice Meet 22-23 June

Myrtle Simpson has again kindly agreed to host the Summer Solstice meet at her house, Farleiter, near Kinraig. Always a good opportunity to meet other club members and reminisce and chat about the Arctic.

There will be a barbecue in the evening and you are welcome to camp/campervan overnight in the garden.

If planning to come along, please let Stella Spratley know:

Email: [Spratley42@hotmail.com](mailto:Spratley42@hotmail.com)



### Annual Gathering & Supper, Saturday 2 November

The Annual Gathering & Supper will this year be held at the **Nethy Bridge Hotel**, between Grantown-on-Spey and Aviemore on the south side of the River Spey. It is adjacent to Abernethy Forest and a great location for exploring the old Scots pine forests.

Full details and a booking form will be included in the next newsletter in September/early October.

Meanwhile, rooms can be booked by contacting the hotel. We have a block booking, so mention Scottish Arctic Club when booking: tel. [01479 821203](tel:01479821203)

*Beerenburg, Jan Mayen. Photo J Fenton*



### Inuit carved figures

Gordon Menzies has contacted the club about the following:

I am getting in touch with you as regards the disposal of some Inuit carved stone figures and other bits and pieces my Aunt Sheila McCulloch (possibly one of your members) owns but now has no room for, having moved to a Care Home here in Edinburgh at the grand age of 98. She worked as a nurse in her youth at Fort MacPherson in Canada.

I live in Murrayfield Edinburgh and would be happy to let you or anyone from your society take a look at them with a view to moving them on in a responsible manner.

Our president, Noel Williams, is of the view that we should take up this offer. Meanwhile, Jane Craxton has agreed to take a look at the carved figures, before the committee decides how to respond to Gordon Menzies and what to do with the carvings if the offer is accepted.



### Greenland climbing expedition

Jinty Smart reports that Jim Gregson has sent the following email as he thought some members would be interested in watching the film described below. I have thoroughly enjoyed watching it, makes me wish I had the freedom of a yacht to travel at will!

My colleague Ed Luke went on a Sail to Climb expedition to Greenland in Summer 2023 and made a very good film about that trip which can be viewed at the link to YouTube as given below.

Ed together with his girlfriend/climbing partner, plus his Dad sailed from the UK to Iceland and then on to Greenland in the boat Medusa, owned and skippered by his Dad.

While Dad stayed with the boat to ensure no mishaps, Ed and his girlfriend went ashore in various places to do some quite demanding rock climbing, initially in the Tasermiut Fjord near to Nanortalik, and later on moved north along the East coast of Greenland as far as the Tasiilaq district and then to Kuummiut, then up into the Fox Jaw Cirque where there are a number of very steep rock towers.

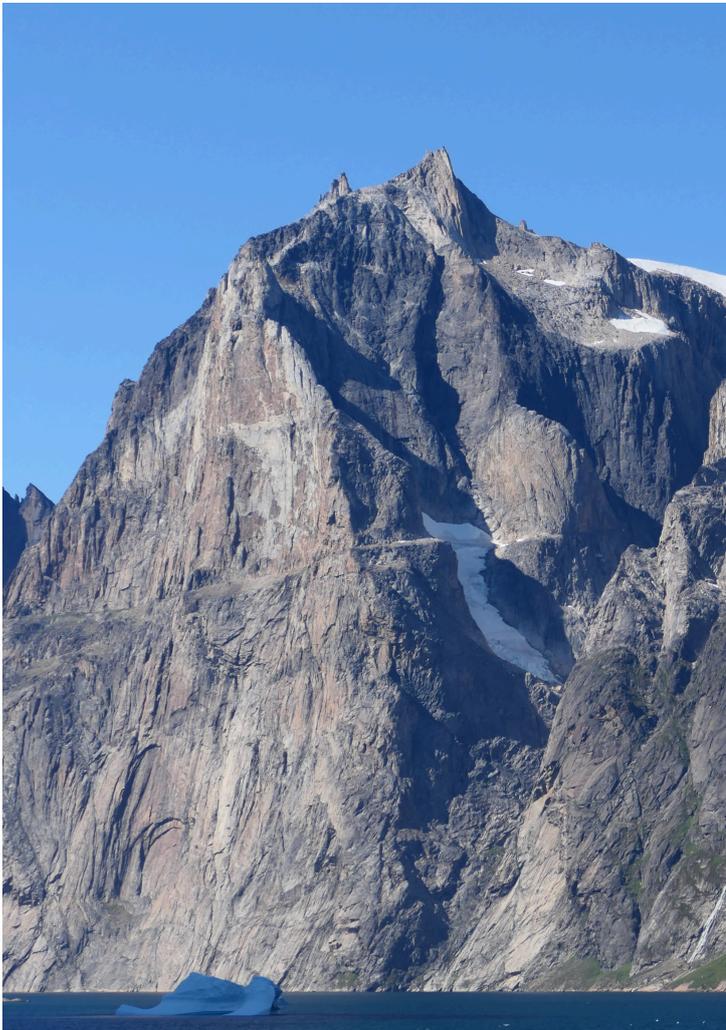
Some climbing was done there before they then sailed back home to the UK.

The film features some impressive drone-shot footage and some good climbing sequences, but also

gives good views of the fjord scenery plus some rather rough weather sailing conditions. It runs for approx. 25-30 minutes and is worth a viewing.

Watch it via this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkLf-1Fqu5A>



*Prins Christian Sound, Greenland. Photo. J Fenton*

## SCOTTISH ARCTIC EXPEDITION FUND (SAEF) UPDATE

### 2024 Awards

The Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund (SAEF) trustees have made awards to three groups this year:

- \* The Thumbnail Climbing Expedition, Torssukatak Fjord, Southern Greenland
- \* Geology dissertation fieldwork (St Andrews University) also in Southern Greenland
- \* An individual trip to East Greenland to run workshops and undertake fieldwork, with logistics provided by the Polar Academy.

Congratulations to all ten recipients!

All recipients are invited to the Gathering to give a brief presentation about their trips, and are asked for a short report by 31 October.

### New trustees

SAEF welcomes Mark Evans, Dougal Ranford and Mandy Peden as trustees of the Fund. The other trustees are Bryan Alexander (chair), Pat Duchart, Andrea Anderson, Louise Hoillinrake, Mairi Webster, Stella Spratley & Jinty Smart (ex-officio), Sue Fenton (treasurer/secretary).

Several trustees come to the end of their five-year term at the next AGM in November; new trustees are sought from the SAC membership. Please do contact Sue on [scottisharcticexpeditionfund@gmail.com](mailto:scottisharcticexpeditionfund@gmail.com) if you would like further information.

### SAEF AGM

The trustees met in person at the Gathering in Fort William for its AGM, and again virtually in February to determine the allocation of grants for this year; the closing date for applications was 31 January. There were fewer applications, which was disappointing, and the Hugh & Myrtle Simpson Award was not made this year.

Following discussions at the SAEF AGM, it was thought advisable to add the following paragraph to an offer of funds:

"The award of a grant from the SAEF is made possible by the generosity of individual members of the Scottish Arctic Club keen to encourage and support young people in arctic research, exploration or artistic endeavour. The Fund is a mechanism by which applications for, and the awarding of grants, is managed. In deciding to whom grants are made, the trustees do not evaluate the risk management of the venture or any third-party provider to the group or individual. Participating in arctic travel is entirely at your own risk."

The SAEF advertising poster is being redesigned and will be available as a hard copy or in digital form. Please do ask for posters to display in local climbing shops, university common rooms *etc.* and tell all your young (under 30) friends and relations about the Fund. I can post, or bring along to The Gathering.

Donations to the Fund are very welcome at any time of the year, and are eligible for Gift Aid.

Sort Code: 82-67-04

Account: 20109358

Account name: Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund

*Sue Fenton*  
*Secretary/Treasurer SAEF*  
*Tel. 01852 300545*  
*Scottish Charity SC046857*

**JETTE BANG**  
**1914 – 1964**  
**A PIONEER OF FILM AND PHOTOGRAPHY IN GREENLAND**

By Jane Craxton



*Jette Bang self portrait 1936*

Imagine: it is September 1938, you are 24 years old, a young blonde Danish girl, you are travelling for the second time northwards on the west coast of Greenland looking for opportunities to film and photograph the native people, even as the weather starts to close in. You will over-winter in Greenland, and then return to Copenhagen with a huge cache of high-quality material which will result in films, publications, exhibitions, and which will eventually become part of a shared heritage between Denmark and Greenland. How did this happen?



*Boys watch a hunter preparing for a trip*

Jette Bang was a pioneer: she was the first professional photographer and film-maker to travel to Greenland. She was the first to focus on the Greenlanders (as they were usually called in the thirties) and to record their lives based on traditional methods of hunting and fishing. In particular, she captured the women and children, portraying them with sympathy and

understanding. She was a woman who deserves to be better known outside Denmark for her courage, tenacity and talent.



*Mother and child wearing traditional boots*

Jette Bang was born into a comfortable family in 1914 and grew up in Copenhagen within sight of the harbour and the shipping traffic to Greenland. After university, she travelled and then trained in film and photography at the firm of Jonals Co in Copenhagen. Determined to travel to what was then a Danish colony with very controlled entry, she got a permit but no financial backing from the Greenland Authority for her first sojourn there in 1936. It lasted eight months.

On her return, the exhibition of her photographs at Copenhagen's Kunstindustrimuseet combined with her adventurous story created a sensation. So much so that the Danish government commissioned her in 1938 to gather material for the International Polar Exhibition in Bergen, planned for 1940. (It was cancelled at the outbreak of war).



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*Mother with child*



While the government wanted to encourage development, Jette remained steadfastly concerned with the Greenlanders themselves and their traditional ways. Her respect and empathy with their culture was entirely novel to many Danes at this time. Her travels took her far up the west coast where she travelled across Melville Bay to Cape York in the district of Thule.

As well as black and white material, she was lucky enough to have some colour stock. The result, her colour film *Inuit*, made a tremendous impression when shown in Denmark. She also published *30,000 kilometer med Sneglefart (30,000 kilometres at a snail's pace)* which detailed her experiences and showcased her black and white photography. In it she wrote:

*This obviousness and simplicity in all matters is probably one of the things that make so many Greenland travellers, me included, so excited about life among Greenlanders. The problems are simplified and pushed aside as insignificant to make room for this one essential: to maintain life and carry on.*



*Women beside shark-meat stand look out to sea*

This was the peak of her career. Although she returned to Greenland five times after the Second World War and continued a prodigious output, she was saddened by the changes she observed and the encroachment of the modern world. She fell sick with lung cancer in the early sixties and died aged only fifty in 1964.

Today, over 11,000 photographs by Jette Bang have been deposited with the Arktisk Institut in Copenhagen. Through a careful programme of digitisation, they have been shared with the National Museum of Greenland in Nuuk and can be accessed on line. Her film *Inuit* is held by the Danske Filminstitut and can be seen in part on YouTube. In 2014 a full scale biography was published written in Greenlandic, Danish and English by Leise Johnsen. However, most Jette Bang's books are available only in Danish and her name remains not so well known outside Denmark.



*Greenlander showing the seal around the kayak coaming*

My own discovery of Jette Bang came about by chance as I researched my father, Donald Carmichael's part in the 1938 Cambridge Expedition to West Greenland. Two splendid large prints of her photographs were part of his collection, together with an annotated business card. It seems more than likely that they met either in Copenhagen or in Greenland in 1938. Donald was working on some early experiments to assess the psychology of the Greenlanders so he and Jette would have found common ground in their interest in the people. I was fascinated by Jette's story and impressed by her work, as I hope you will be too.

*Note: More of her photographs can be seen on the Danish Artisk Institut's website: <https://www.arktiskebilleder.dk/>, and type 'Jette Bang' in the Search box.*



**SCOTTISH ARCTIC EXPEDITION FUND**  
**2024 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