



SCOTTISH ARCTIC CLUB

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



NEWSLETTER February 2025

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Advance Notices for 2025

15th SPRING MEET

19-26 April

Attadale

Contact Kathleen Cartwright if interested

SUMMER SOLSTICE MEET

21 June

Farleiter, Kinraig

Invite from Myrtle Simpson

ANNUAL GATHERING & SUPPER

31 October – 2 November 2024

Ben Nevis Hotel, Fort William

NEXT NEWSLETTER

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

Deadline 30 April

15th SPRING MEET



This year's spring meet at Attadale in Wester Ross is **the week 19-26 April 2025**. Contact Kathleen Cartwright for further information and booking:

Tel. **01389 830485**

Email: arcturus@btinternet.com

SUMMER SOLSTICE MEET



The 2024 barbecue

Myrtle Simpson has again kindly agreed to host the Summer Solstice meet on **21 June 2025** at her house and garden, Farleiter, near Kincaig. 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

ANNUAL GATHERING & SUPPER

This year's Supper will take place at the Ben Nevis Hotel, Fort William on the **weekend of 31st October-2nd November 2025**.

The Hotel has offered us the following rates: £50 per person per night for B&B, with an additional £20 per room for single occupancy. They will provide a bar meal in the restaurant for our party on the Friday night. The Dinner on the Saturday evening will be £27.95. Please contact the hotel to make a booking.

Enquiries and Reservations: **01397 702331**

salesbennevis@strathmorehotels.com

Mention 'Scottish Arctic Club' to get the special rates above

If there are problems try the Events Manager:

bennevisevents@strathmorehotels.com

THE 2024 ANNUAL GATHERING AND SUPPER SATURDAY 2 NOVEMBER NETHY BRIDGE HOTEL

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2024

At last year's Gathering we were treated to a range of interesting presentations, including four from award recipients. The first of these was by three climbers – Eve MacCallum, Harry Newmark and Ollie Smaje – who were the first recipients of the Myrtle & Hugh Simpson award. The trio hoped to traverse the long ridge on Ammassalik Island attempted by three of our members on the 50th anniversary expedition. In the end they did not tackle the ridge in earnest though they did manage to climb a very impressive central tower, which they called the Sphinx, by its steep north-western end.

Landscape artist Ellis O'Connor showed some of the work she did as a result of her trip to Svalbard in autumn 2022 and Tuppence Mellish told us how she took part in rowing the North West Passage from Pond Islet to Cambridge Bay. Then Louise Mercer described her time carrying out environmental research in Tuktoyaktuk in Arctic Canada.

Our member James Barton described a trip to Svalbard led by Robin Buzza in 1998. He was followed by Bryan Alexander who contrasted the lifestyles over 50 years among Inuit hunters and reindeer herders in four different Arctic regions. His talk included superb photos



from his recently published limited edition book <https://www.arcticpublishing.com/tan/index.htm>.

Our guest speaker was Fiona Gould who came all the way from Orkney to tell us about the life of John Rae and the ambition of the John Rae Society to renovate his childhood home, Hall of Clestrain.

At the AGM the momentous decision was taken to increase the membership subscription to £10 per head.

Jinty Smart and Mandy Peden have now bedded in as Secretary and Treasurer respectively while Bethany Carol (Gathering Secretary), Jane Craxton (Membership Secretary) and James Fenton (Newsletter Editor) have also continued to fill their roles.

Kathleen Cartwright organised another successful Spring Meet (the 14th) at Attadale in Wester Ross and Myrtle Simpson again hosted a Summer Solstice Meet and barbecue at her home Farletter near Kinncraig.

Susie Ranford managed to both refresh the Club website and also find a new (and cheaper) host, dotScot Domains. Well done Susie.

James Fenton again pulled together three excellent newsletters. Thank you James. A wealth of information about the Club can be found in previous newsletters (since 2009) which can be found on the Club website https://arcticclub.scot/?page_id=43.

Congratulations to Steven Andrews on being awarded the Polar Medal, the fifth SAC member to receive this accolade. We are very grateful to Sheila McCulloch for kindly donating her collection of Inuit figures and souvenirs to the Club. The proceeds from the raffle of these items – mostly soapstone – will go to the Expedition Fund.

We look forward to hearing about the experiences of three SAEF-funded expeditions at this year's Gathering.



DRAFT MINUTES OF 2024 MEETING

Matters arising

There were no matters arising not already on this year's agenda.

The President's Annual Report

See above

Membership Report

The Membership Secretary reported that club members had responded well to a series of reminders for

subscriptions due for 23-24, and payments at the increased rate of £10 for 24/25 were flowing in. She had reactivated the Club's Paypal account and publicised it to our overseas members. This made it straight forward for them to make payment without incurring expensive transaction fees. The new web site features a prominent block on its home page on 'How to join', with a downloadable form to attract new members.

Current membership is standing at 168, slightly down from last year. She mentioned the death of two, well respected and longtime club members Audrey Scott and Pat Duchart, who was a Trustee of the SAEF until her death.

She finished by telling us all about the Inuit carved figurine collection donated to the club by long term member Sheila McCulloch. In the twenties and thirties the Canadian Government found the lack of individual surnames among the Inuit made for administrative difficulties so people were instead allocated the letter E and number. There were two of these among the collection which meant Jane was actually able to trace the names of the carvers. The rest were thought to be 1950's tourist pieces. Sheila had donated the items with the hope of raising funds for the SAEF and Jane explained a silent auction would be held later in the evening.

The membership secretary's report and figurine information report are appended below.



Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that there had been a healthy increase in the amount raised by the annual subscription and the club finances were in a much better position than last year. Part of the increase was from increased membership fees, others were from the diligence of the membership secretary in reminding members to pay their dues and the rest from members not cancelling their old direct debits so paying twice. All those affected agreed to gift the money to the SAEF. Total income for the year was £5,444.97 with total expenditure £5,371.06. The bank balance sits at £3,649.19. The increase in annual subscriptions and the tightening of some expenditure should alleviate the year on year losses.

There was an animated discussion about how much the SAC should fund the SAEF. Currently they fund one award member from each recipient group for D,B&B

when they deliver their report at the Gathering. This year they had also paid for the new updated SAEF posters. The general feeling was that without the SAEF the future of the SAC might be in doubt. Three members spoke up to say that the SAC should pay D,B&B for all group members that attend the Gathering, with a general murmur of agreement in the background. The Treasurer said this would be an ideal scenario, however at the moment the SAC bank balance couldn't fund this. However, if the bank balance continues to grow this decision will be re-visited.

Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund (SAEF)

Sue Fenton reported that there had been four applications to the SAEF in 2024, three which were approved. These were The Thumbnail Climbing Expedition, Torssukatak Fjord, Southern Greenland, a Geology university dissertation fieldwork to be held in Southern Greenland and a young individual's trip to Tassilaq, East Greenland to run workshops and undertake fieldwork. A total of £2,000 was awarded. Sue then discussed the new, more eye catching promotional leaflet produced by Mairi Webster which it was hoped would promote more applications. Members were encouraged to take some of the posters to display in appropriate locations throughout the country. There was a vacancy for two trustees and both Eve Gilmore and Neil Gwyn volunteered for the roles.

See full SAEF accounts at the end of the newsletter



Election of new Committee members

There were still two vacancies on the committee and both Anne Bartle and Henry Lodge, one of this year's SAEF recipients, volunteered to take on the roles. Many thanks!

Spring Meet

The 14th Spring Meet at Attadale took place in April rather than May. Fifteen members took part and a very enjoyable, midge free, time was had by all. Activities were gentle – no kayakers this year but plenty of good walks. The weather was kind to them as well. The 2025 meet will also take place in April as it was so nice to midge free! Details will be found in the next newsletter.

Summer Solstice Meet

The Summer Solstice Meet occurred once again in late June and the President thanked Myrtle Simpson for

hosting the weekend. The weather was favourable, the bbq delicious and the excellent company chatted round the fire late into the night. The next day a significant number of club members embarked in canoes for a paddle down the river and into Loch Insh for refreshments at the end of the loch. Something similar will be planned for next year. Myrtle would like to see attendees recreate the meets of the past when members walked over the hills to finish at Farletter with a celebratory barbecue.

Annual Gathering and Supper 2025

The Ben Nevis Hotel has been booked for 2025. Everyone was so impressed with the Nethybridge Hotel that they agreed to return here in 2026

New Website

Time only allowed for a brief update on the new website, arcticclub.scot designed by Susie Ranford. Everyone agreed it was a great improvement and Susie invited members to send in their photos of club activities and expeditions to share on the website.

Any other business

Andrea Anderson asked if there was anybody able to store the large club noticeboards which they brought up to the Gathering every year but nobody used. A discussion ensued as to when they were last used. Noel volunteered to store them and will be given them tomorrow.

Final discussion was about how to increase club membership and what form of publicity to use. It was felt that paid advertising was not a route to follow but perhaps better use of social media might be an option. Currently the login in details for the Instagram account are unavailable but this will be investigated.

Meeting finished at 6.10pm

Jinty Smart 4th November 2024



MEMBERSHIP REPORT 2023-4

1) Overview

Members responded well to a series of reminders from me of subscriptions due for 23-24 and payments at the increased rate of £10 for 24/25 are flowing in. I reactivated the Club's Paypal account and publicised it to our overseas members. This made it straight forward for them to make payment without incurring expensive transaction fees. Thanks to Susie Ranford, the new web

site features a prominent block on its home page on 'How to join', with a downloadable form to attract new members. However, the actual number of members is slightly down at 168. This is largely due to a larger than usual number of lapsed members who had fallen out of contact with the Club (see below).

2) Donation

The American documentary film-maker, Susan Aikens, who is based in Alaska, took advantage of Paypal to make not one but two extraordinarily generous donations of £380 and £50 saying it was for past arrears and the balance to go 'wherever is needed most.' The Committee will be considering the best use of c£300 and is extremely grateful to Susan for this unexpected windfall.

3) New: List of SAC members and associated web sites

I compiled and circulated this list which provides signposts to the huge variety of experience and expertise amongst members as well as much practical advice on Polar travel. It was very well received and I propose to update it alongside the contact list on an annual basis.

4) Membership statistics

Number of members	168
Number of new members	6
Number of resignations	4
Number of deceased	2
Number of lapsed	20

5) New members

Nina Brendling
David Howie
Aithne Lawrence
Tuppence Mellish
Harry Newmark
Dave Watson

6) Resigned

For the most part, resignations come because of age and/or distance from Scotland.

Nancy Campbell
Pat Sellar
Heiko and Angela Wolle

7) Deaths 2023/24

Audrey Scott, long time member, died 15 April 2024
Pat Duchart, long time member, died 8 May 2024
Pat was a Trustee of the SAEF until her death.

8) Lapsed members 20

This larger than usual number of lapses represents those former members with whom there has been no contact with the Club for at least three years and who have failed to communicate in any way. Several are former SAEF award winners with whom it is a pity to lose touch but whose lives move on.

9) Distinction Polar Medal Award 2024

Stephen Andrews was awarded the Polar Medal for his outstanding contribution to geological research across 12 expeditions in East Greenland. He also led the recent bid which resulted in the Flow Country in Caithness and Sutherland being granted UNESCO World Heritage status.

Other SAC holders of the Polar Medal are:

Dougal Goodman (1997)
Phil Gribbon (2014)
Douglas Peacock (1954)
Myrtle Simpson (2017)

Jane Craxton November 2024



Election of a new Vice-President

At the Gathering later this year the Club will be looking for a new Vice President. In the interests of democracy the Committee would be happy to receive nominations for this position.

Please send any proposals for Vice President to the Club Secretary so that they can be considered at the next Committee Meeting in September.

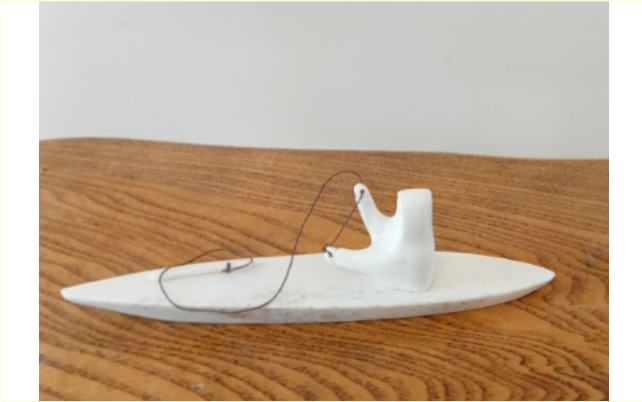
A VERY SPECIAL AUCTION: SHEILA MCCULLOCH'S COLLECTION

Following the committee meeting, further discussion took place between Jane, Mandy and Jinty regarding the figurines that Sheila McCulloch's had donated to the SAC.

The initial decision had been to make these raffle prizes. However, on further review, it was felt that they were too valuable to be just raffle prizes and more money could be raised for the SAEF by auctioning them. This would also mean that the figurines would be made available to those that really would like them.

At first a decision was made to have a live auction but, following further input by other SAC members. it was pointed out that a decision had been made in a

previous committee meeting to discontinue the live auctions because the pressure on individuals during the auction was uncomfortable. It was therefore



decided to have a silent auction with members making secret written bids. This was announced prior to the dinner **and successfully raised £928.**



EXPEDITION FUND UPDATE

At the Annual General Meeting of the Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund (SAEF), held in Nethy Bridge on 2 November, Andrea Anderson came to the end of her term as a trustee. Bryan Alexander was re-elected as Chair of the trustees. Eve Gilmore and Neal Gwynne joined the board.

Other trustees are Louise Hollinrake, Dougal Ranford, Mark Evans, Mairi Webster, Mandy Peden, Jinty Smart (*ex-officio*), Stella Spratley (*ex-officio*) and Sue Fenton.

At the Gathering, funds were generously raised by SAC members through the silent auction, raffle, sale of cards and 'guess the whisky.' Individual donations to the Fund are welcomed all year round.

The Fund has its own bank account, separate from SAC. Details are:

Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund (Virgin Bank)
Sort code: 82-67-04
Account : 20109358

If you have already sent a Gift Aid form, there is no need to do so again, unless your details have changed.

Fund trustees are due to meet in February to discuss applications for 2025 and allocate monies. However, an early award this year was made to Daniel King, of the University of Edinburgh, to attend the Arctic Youth Conference in Tromsø, organised by the Norwegian chairship of the Arctic Council. As a warm-up to the event (!) he is one of the delegation skiing from Alta to Suossjavre, Finnmarksvidda, over four days in January.

History of the Expedition Fund

The Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund became a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) in 2017, since when 37 individuals or groups have been awarded funding to travel in the Arctic. Prior to the setting up of the SCIO, the Scottish Arctic Club (SAC) had supported 88 groups or individuals since 1997. In some years there were no valid applications, but in both 2013 and 2015 there were 14 successful applicants, reflecting the number of British Schools Exploring Society applying (now British Exploring Society).

The total money awarded in one year has ranged from £100 to £5,500 with the average amount very similar over the past ten years. All funded expeditions/ individuals are listed on the SAC website by year:

www.arcticclub.scot

There is now a stated presumption that preference is given to folk who have not been funded by the SAEF before (look at the list of past awards to see several recurring names!) and to those not relying on fixed accommodation, field centres etc. or travelling in the 'low' arctic in summer.

As you know, successful applicants are invited to give a presentation at the Gathering and to submit a report; a short version is included in the newsletter. Some reports appear on the SAC website. The awardees are given a year's free membership of the club, in the hope that they will the join and lower the club's ageing demographic. More than ten have gone on to become committee members, the most recent being Bethany Carol (Gathering secretary), Tuppence Mellish and Henry Lodge who was on the St Andrews University geological expedition to Greenland in 2024.

Trustees rank applications according to various criteria, such as age, Scottishness, number of weeks in the field, independence etc, and allocate funds accordingly. The SAEF attempts to disburse, approximately, the funds raised in the previous year. However, the Fund has reserves from legacies, and also the Hugh & Myrtle award for qualifying, adventurous expeditions.

Please do tell your young friends and relations (under 30) about the Fund and do forward the digital poster where you can. All the paper copies have been taken, apologies.

Sue Fenton, SAEF Secretary

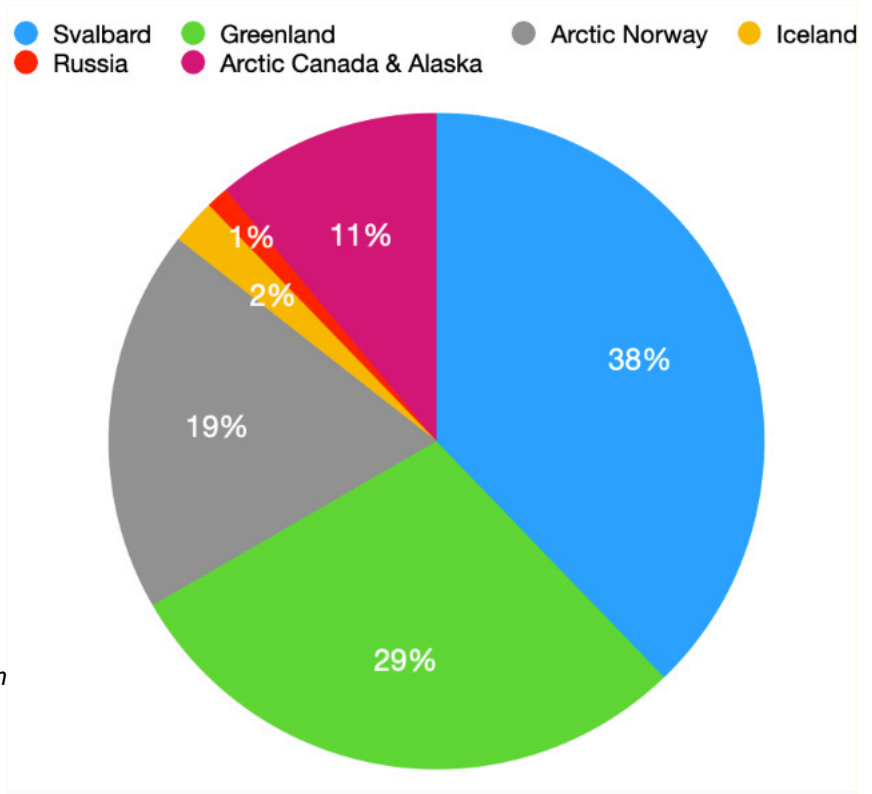
Some expedition statistics

Where have the young explorers travelled to?

Number of individuals or expeditions 1997-2024:

Svalbard	34
Greenland	26
Arctic Norway	17
Iceland	2
Russia	1
Arctic Canada & Alaska	10

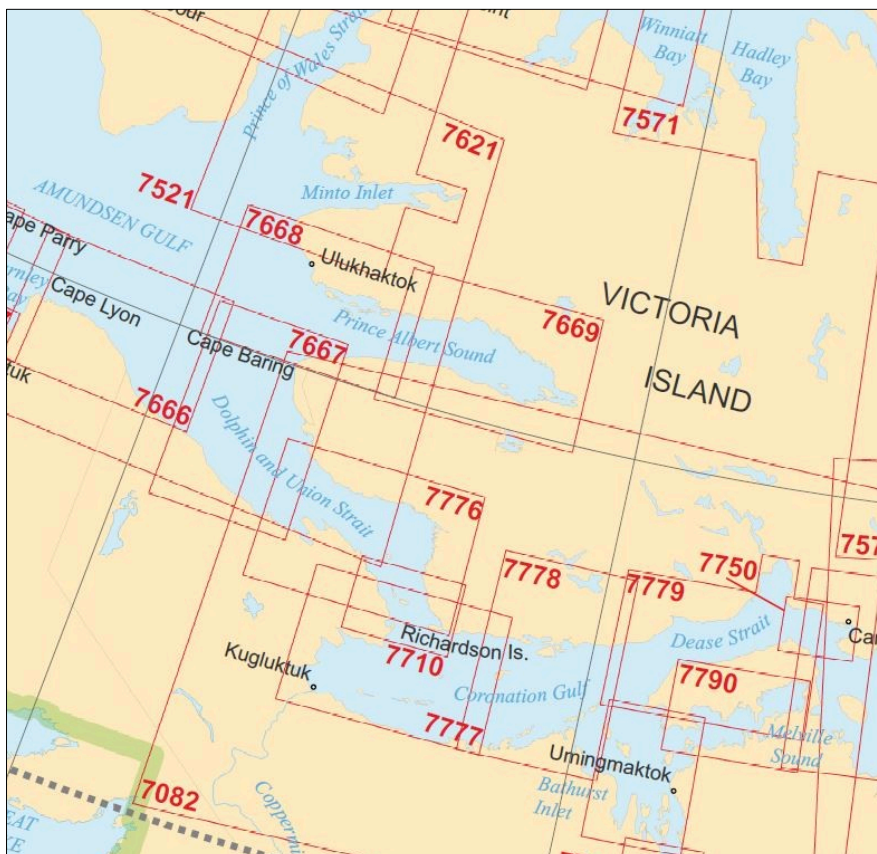
Compiled by Sue Fenton



NW Passage Admiralty Charts

The Scottish Arctic Club has been donated 16 tubes of Admiralty charts for navigating the North West Passage. These have been donated Jamie Cox: see last page of this newsletter for the background to this donation.

They are now available for club members to view at the SAC library in the RSGS building in Perth. Below is one of the many keys to the charts available, in this case for the Amundsen Gulf to Dease Strait area.





The Tsunami, Greenland and Me

By Kate Lea

On 16th September 2023, the top of a mountain collapsed into Dickson Fjord in North-East Greenland triggering a massive tsunami. Scientists now say it was caused by the thinning of the glacier at the foot of the mountain which could no longer support the weight of the rock above. The initial 200 metres wave reached the northern part of Ella Island 73 km away as a 4 metres wave and penetrated 50 metres inland. Reports at the time say there were no cruise ships in the area – but one was very near!

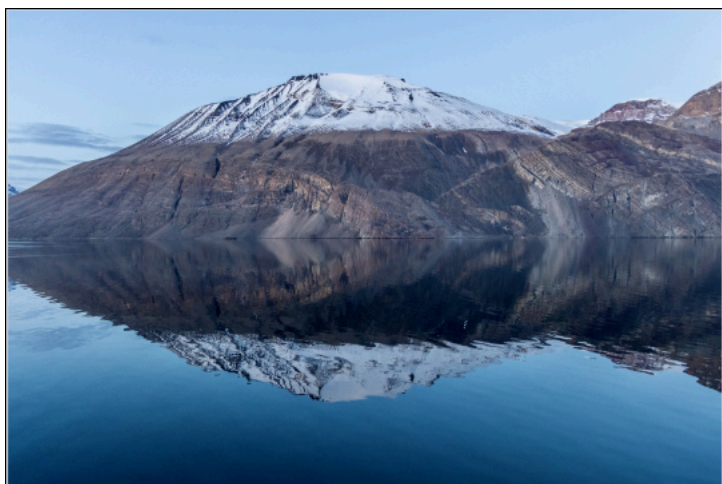
On 17th September, the *Ocean Albatros* arrived early in the morning at Ella Island having travelled up from Ittoqqortoormiit. Sirius had left the previous day and all was well. When we arrived, we saw the station had been damaged – one hut was floating in the water, others had been demolished and debris swept into the sea. Our expedition leader Kim Hanson, who was ex Sirius, contacted the Joint Arctic Command with the first report of the damage and a few days later *Sirius* and a Royal Danish Navy patrol vessel began the clean up and salvage. Fortunately, the historic hut of Ornereden

‘Eagles Nest’ was undamaged and we were able to go ashore.

This was my 19th trip to NE Greenland and my third time on Ella. We had stayed in Ornereden in 1994 when we (the British North East Greenland Project) had called in on our way to Strindberg Land in our inflatable boats, and again in 1997 when we had travelled down Kaiser Franz Josef and Kerolf fjords. It was quite emotional seeing once again the room I had slept in at Ornereden remembering the window which wouldn’t shut properly, and ‘Niagara’, the shower which I shared with a lemming!



Eagles Nest & Niagara



Ella Island

Leaving Ella Island we entered Vega Sund – home to many polar bears, and I particularly remember the polar bear strolling through our camp in 2008 just behind Neville (Cartwright) who was sitting outside his tent having breakfast.

On the 18th September we sailed past the spectacular mountain Teufelsschloss, past Geology fjord where we had tried unsuccessfully to rendezvous with Rob and Sue (David) – they were up the top of a cliff and we were down in the fjord, no phones and no one saw the flares. Then round to Broget Dal where we finally met them, and Geoff (Shaw) caught lovely arctic char which I gutted with my swiss army knife.

After passing the spectacular Walterhausen glacier we turned into Musk Ox Fjord with a visit to Hoelsbu one of

the old hunters huts. This was new to me as we had never actually explored this fjord. However, it brought back memories of our three trips to the inland lake Krumme Langso which drains into it, and particularly to 2009 when we watched the candle ice moving and breaking up so spectacularly on its way to the fjord.

Finally on the 19th September we reached Hold with Hope and Mygbukkta, the Norwegian Trappers hut where in 1988 Michael and I, plus Rob and Sue and four members of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust had come within touching distance of a friendly arctic wolf. It was here that Michael took his most successful arctic photo and it later appeared in BBC Wildlife Magazine. It seemed a fitting place to scatter his ashes, as a final memorial for all our Greenland and arctic expeditions together.



Arctic Youth Conference

by Daniel King (supported by SAEF)

January 2025 marked the inaugural Arctic Youth Conference in Romsa, Sápmi (Tromsø, Norway), under the Norwegian Chairship of the Arctic Council. The event brought youth, alongside young researchers and knowledge holders in Arctic science, from all over the Arctic and beyond.

As part of this, the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP) and Kristin Harila announced a ski expedition across Finnmarksvidda. AMAP have been monitoring changes in the Arctic for over 30 years, bringing Arctic data to international policy making. Kristin Harila is a Sami, Norwegian mountaineer who, alongside Lama Tenjen Sherpa, successfully summited all 14, 8000 metre peaks in the world record time of 92 days. The aim was simple, to ski across Finnmárku/

Finnmark, experiencing the sights, sounds, smells and sensations of the Arctic to fully appreciate its value and feel the dramatic changes...

I received the email about the expedition in late November, after registering for the conference. A surge of excitement filled me, followed by hesitation. I had only skied downhill, in Scotland, mostly at Cairn Gorm and once at Glenshee. Whilst one can not underestimate the experience of skiing in Scotland, not a trial by fire, but by heather, mud, ice and whiteout, with the occasional powder day and crisp, blue skies, surely it wouldn't hold stead to hop over to Finnmark on a cross-country ski expedition. After some hesitation, I thought, "what is there to lose?" After all, this had been the same case with my first trip to the Arctic, to Svalbard, to study at the university centre, and that turned out ok!

Some weeks after sending off the application, I received an email: Congratulations. I was off to Finnmark! Not only was I ecstatic to be selected for the expedition, but it also opened up additional funding. Up until that point, I had been struggling to find funding to attend the conference, particularly as an undergraduate student, which was a shame. That same night I applied to the SAEF outlining the opportunity I had before me. Things started to come together over the next few weeks and by mid-December the logistics was sorted and paid for.

At the same time, there was a degree of anxiousness. I had still never cross-country skied. I would have to learn quickly. As it went, the UK was enveloped by a cold snap which saw temperatures down to -20°C in some glens across the Highlands. And with this I saw the opportunity to head up to Huntly Nordic Ski Centre, who had received a generous dump of snow. It would have to be a day trip and so I set off on the first train at 5am. With me, a DIY pulk made from a sled in the flat, with some cordage, and a climbing harness. I planned to put my bag on it to give some weight and wrapped a brake cord underneath for added resistance. It wasn't quite the same weight of the pulk, but it would do. By the end of the day, I had racked up several kms, looping round the park many times. By this point I figured I had some idea but wow my legs were sore. I could survive.

In the days prior, I was religiously checking the forecast. It didn't look great. Plus 7°C in Tromsø. Even Finnmark was experiencing above zero temperatures. This was the very same warm front that stripped the Highlands of their icy veil overnight.

I was greeted in Tromsø by Rolf and Hilde. We headed off to Kristin's place, and there I met the other participants. My team. My friends. There was plenty of preparations to do. New skies, new boots, full sets of wool layers, and lots of gear. We headed off to Alta the next day, around 6 hrs drive along the snaking coastline amidst the fjords. Who knew sitting all day could be so tiring! Throughout this there was still the challenge of the weather, not only was it above zero but a polar low was nearby, and with it, forecasts of up to 50 m/s. It was simply too dangerous to be up on the plateau.

The preparation of gear continued: pulks, skis, bedding, stoves, and food. By mid-day we were packed up again in the vans. We would go to Šuoššjávri fjellstue on the South side of the expanse (vidda, meaning plateau or literally, the expanse). This was initially supposed to be the end point. The forecast showed a lull in the weather

the next morning, where we would be able to get some skiing in, the aim being one of the herds Southwards.

On the drive to Šuoššjávri, the few hours of dawn or dusk, it didn't matter which, for daylight would not truly come, christened the sky. Up there an oil slick was forming. Ripples of iridescent yellows, greens, pinks and reds. Pearlescent. The mother of pearl. They were polar stratospheric clouds. Soaring 15,000 - 20,000 metres above us, formed due to warm, moist air masses meeting the extremely cold polar air mass and forming ice crystals. They can be associated with severe storms, and this rang true to the forecast. Perhaps there sometimes can be a danger despite the beauty.



The next day, we woke up early, skiing by 6am. The aim was to reach the reindeer herd before the storm. In the end this amounted to around 20km of skiing. There we met up with local Sámi reindeer herders. We listened to some of the changes and experiences they had to talk about. The instability in the Arctic winters increased snowfall, meaning reindeer had to dig deeper to reach the fodder, whilst thaws create icy glazes also preventing grazing. With the very same oil slicks forming once more above us, it was time to head back.

Not having camped yet, we still wanted a night under the canvas. So, the next day we would set off later in the day, after the bad weather had passed. We packed up, beddings, tents and stoves, plus plenty of food.

Throughout, the temperatures had steadily been decreasing since our Mediterranean weather- a toasty 7°C . By now they were around -20°C and so we set off with the objective of Mollešjokha fjellstue. We followed the frozen river and lakes which make them northwards. It was over Šuoššjávri that we saw the sun peak above the hills. Although for myself it had been a mere few days since last feeling its rays, back in Edinburgh, for others, this was the first time in months. It perhaps

offers us some food for thought during our short winter daylight hours.



We weaved our way along the river and through canyons. Here open stretches of water lay, amidst thrust ice blocks. Some hours later, we reached Mollešjokha fjellstue. The blanket of darkness had returned and we were hasty to put up our tents, with temperatures now around -28°C . That night the Merry Dancers danced, Na Fir-Chlis, above our tent. We have seen them before, but it was this particular night that the wee men battled most fiercely.

That night temperatures were around -34°C , the coldest I had ever experienced. Whilst I didn't freeze, it certainly wasn't the best of nights sleep. In part due to the shield of ice which would form on my neck gaiter from the moisture in my breath. To not have my face covered was, if not, more uncomfortable- the painful sting of the cold. That morning there would be no lounging around or beating about the bush. We were all up and ready. Eat, pack, move. The temperatures remained around -30°C throughout the day.

We returned to Šuoššjávri. We had made the best of the given circumstances and had experienced the full range of weather. That night we ate Bidus, reindeer stew. The broth would keep anyone warm and strong in even the coldest of weather.

This trip had been one of many perspectives. The backdrop of climate change and the shifting weather patterns. The impacts of these shifts on local people

dependent on the land more directly. Yet as I reflect, we are all dependent on the land, albeit more disconnected. My main studies are in the sciences, studying Geology and Physical Geography. Throughout my life I have been aware of various scientific findings, recommendations, pleas, as to the impact's climate change will have. And yet much still remains unchanged, at least to the extent to mitigate severe impacts. It speaks to me that climate change is not just a scientific issue to be solved. We have plenty of understanding in that regard to be able to make the changes necessary. For me it speaks to the wider issue of disconnection. Disconnection to the wider Earth system, of which we are a part of. A societally absent relationship. Food from a shop, heat from a thermostat, exercise from a treadmill. 'Relationships' from a screen.

If there's anything I take back, it is the value of relationships and connection. It's about finding these moments of awe in the everyday. Snowdrops emerging from the land. Robins dancing about. The glint of minerals in a rock. A flower from a crack in the pavement. The moss which cushions the bricks of a wall. The hues of grey in the clouds. Each opportunity can be a moment to reconnect and to share that connection to others, so that even then, the light may peak through the dark.



SCOTTISH ARCTIC EXPEDITION FUND
Treasurer's Report 2023/24

Three awards only were made from the Fund, totalling £2,000. The Myrtle & Hugh Simpson Award was not awarded. There was therefore a positive balance between income and expenditure on expeditions this year, which will allow trustees a bigger pot for next year's applications.

A new Charities Choice account was finally opened with Virgin Money in November, in order to benefit from higher interest rates (5.12%). Opening new accounts, whether savings or current, with the exact same bank involves months of bureaucracy. However, the Charities Choice account reduced interest rates markedly after only four months, when the original bank account then proved to yield a higher rate.

The two accounts are now being run concurrently, as members of the Scottish Arctic Club are paying into both accounts. The Charities Choice account now pays zero interest. Interest on the current account/s was less than in 2022/23. However, substantial interest was received in the maturity of a one year fixed savings account.

Donations from SAC members were down about £1,300 from last year, together with associated Gift Aid.

Amazon Smile stopped their donation completely to all small charities this year.

Thanks are due to Kathleen Cartwright for organising the Attadale week for members once again, and for donating surplus funds from the holiday to the SAEF.

Corporation Tax

In February, I received four separate notices to deliver a Company Tax Return from HMRC, going back to 2019. As a SCIO, SAEF is not registered for corporation tax nor does it have a Companies House number. I took advice from a number of individuals, accountants, charities, OSCR and SCVO and wrote to HMRC explaining the difficulty, having had no luck with online forms or phone calls. A penalty for not filing may have been charged. Eventually, I received a reply from

HMRC and told 'to ignore the previous notices.' Apparently, their records were checked and the next requested return is for the accounting period 01 October 2023 to 30 September 2024. Reporting an exempt income is apparently not possible on the Government Gateway without a Companies House number.

SAEF was registered as a SCIO in September 2016. OSCR said: "In 2018 when SCIOs were added to the Registrar's Index of Company Names, some SCIOs received letters from HMRC regarding the formation of a new company, corporation tax and asking for information on business activities. HMRC were looking into the issue and hoped to resolve the matter shortly. Please contact HMRC and they will look at the case on an individual basis."



Polar bear with dead seal on an iceberg in Svalbard.

Photo James Fenton

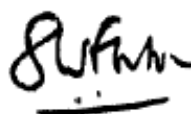
Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund (SAEF)
SC046857
Accounts

1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024

Balance at bank 01/09/2023 = **£8,072.12**
 Balance at bank 31/08/2024 = **£14,443.54***

	2022-23	2023-24
INCOME		
Surplus from SAC Attadale holiday	£258.25	£307.52
Interest on current account	£373.94	£301.34
Interest on fixed term savings maturity	nil	£137.50
Donations from SAC members	£3,149.00	£2,103.00
Amazon Smile Europe Care	£31.14	nil
HMRC Charities Gift Aid	£793.50	£522.06
Total	£4,605.83	£3,371.42
Fixed term savings matured & returned to current account		£5,000.00
EXPENDITURE		
Expedition Grants awarded:	£5,500.00	£2,000.00
<i>[Henry Lodge (Geology)</i>		<i>£500.00</i>
<i>Callum Johnson (Thumbnail)</i>		<i>£1,000.00</i>
<i>Bethany Carrol (East Greenland) paid to mother's account</i>		<i>£500.00]</i>
BALANCE of Income/Expenditure	-£894.17	+ £1,371.42

* Two accounts #358, #919



SCW Fenton
 Treasure

2 September 2024

Background to the donation of NW Passage charts by Jamie Cox (see Page 7)

Glad to hear the charts now have a safe home. I grew up navigating with paper charts and love the artistry and elegance of a paper chart so I hope they will be useful and appreciated by your organisation.

In May 2022, my wife Lorraine and I, along with an intrepid crew, set sail from Victoria, BC, Canada, to attempt the Northwest Passage in our 45-foot (13.6 m) steel sailboat, *Jaca*. Unlike many more southerly sailing routes, the remoteness, exposure to ice, and navigational challenges of the Northwest Passage required us to build several layers of redundancy. While electronic navigation has many advantages, it is also susceptible to failure. For this reason, we felt it prudent to carry paper charts for the critical portion.

Our initial plan was to complete the passage in Newfoundland, but due to heavy iceberg concentration,

diminishing daylight, and deteriorating weather in Davis Strait, we diverted to Greenland. Consequently, the charts follow the Canadian coast further than we reached, which was about halfway down Baffin Island.

Storing a large number of navigational charts presents many problems in the confines of a sailboat. After sailing the west coast of Greenland and across the North Atlantic to Scotland, I decided to find a new home for them.

Lorraine and I loved our time cruising Scotland last year, but now we have moved the boat to warmer climes in Mediterranean Spain.

The entire Arctic trip is documented on our sailing blog <https://www.sailblogs.com/member/jaca/>

If you click "Show All Posts" under "Categories" then scroll to the bottom, it starts with the NW Passage portion of the trip. The map can be expanded and most of the waypoints have a post attached.

Cairngorms self-catering accommodation:

Juniper Bank – self catering two bedroom cottage in Insh, between Kingussie and Glen Feshie near the Cairngorms. Sleeps 8. Please mention SAC when enquiring about availability and rates.

Susie.allison@gmail.com



SCOTTISH ARCTIC CLUB

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



Election of a new Vice-President

At the Gathering later this year the Club will be looking for a new Vice President. In the interests of democracy the Committee would be happy to receive nominations for this position.

Please send any proposals for Vice President to the Club Secretary so that they can be considered at the next Committee Meeting in September.

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,

Henry Lodge, Anne Bartle, 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.

www.arcticclub.scot

Contacts:

Club Secretary: jintysmart@btopenworld.com

Newsletter editor: James Fenton

We are always on the lookout for articles: please send them to james@fenton.scot

