



SCOTTISH ARCTIC CLUB

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

Newsletter - Autumn 2018

President: Douglas Anderson,

Vice President: Stella Spratley

Secretary: Ashley Buchan, Treasurer: Chris Calver,

Committee members: Matthew Burke, Chris Gilmore, Elspeth Hamilton, Cameron Mackay, Noel Williams, Aythya Young

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.

47th Annual Gathering and Supper

Saturday 17th November 2018

The Ben Nevis Hotel, Fort William

Phone number 01397 702331

salesbennevis@strathmorehotels.com

Subscriptions

The annual subscription of the Club became due on 1st September and remains at £5. If you are not attending the Gathering and Supper please complete the short section on the attached booking form and send a cheque, payable to Scottish Arctic Club, to the Secretary or transfer the £5 using internet banking to Bank of Scotland, sort code: 80-06-18 account number 00835858 using your initial and name as reference.

If you wish to add a donation to the Expedition Fund please complete the other attached form and transfer the amount by internet banking to the Clydesdale Bank, sort code: 82-67-04 account number 20109358 and again use your initial and surname as reference. If you wish to pay by cheque, payable to Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund, please send a separate cheque to the Secretary. Donations made in this way are eligible for Gift Aid, cash donations at the Gathering are not.

The Gathering and Supper

Our annual meeting is fast approaching. Please complete the attached booking form and that for donations to the Expedition Fund, if you wish. If you plan to attend the Gathering and have not booked with the hotel, please do so as soon as possible.

A reminder that the rate for dinner, bed and breakfast is £42, with a £14 single supplement, and for those who are not staying in the hotel but wish to attend the Supper the cost is £20. If you are in full time education the Club will subsidise your hotel room by 50% so you will pay just £21.

The programme is currently being finalised and once again we will have a wide-ranging and interesting selection of talks.

A Word from the Treasurer

During the financial year which ended on 31/8/2018, the SAC transferred £10,725 to the SAEF.

At 3/9/2018 the SAC bank balance stood at £3,874.57 and this money is sufficient to meet the present needs of the SAC. Our main expenditure is the Gathering and Supper meeting when the treasurer's report will be presented at the AGM.

Please would members making electronic payments to the SAC (typically for subscriptions or Gathering monies or both) ensure they quote the SAC account and Sort Code number correctly. It may be difficult to correct any misdirected payments and the process could incur charges.

Scottish Arctic Club: Sort Code 80-06-18 Account number 00835858 Reference: your name

Members who are UK taxpayers wishing gift aid to be reclaimed on their donations to the SAEF must make those donations directly to the SAEF.

Scottish Arctic Expedition Fund: Sort Code 82-67-04 Account number 20109358 Ref.: name

Chris Calver

Wreck of Scottish whaling ship discovered

This report is a précis of an article which appeared in the Newcastle Chronicle of 20 Sept 2018:

Following painstaking research on the whaling boats sailing to Canadian Arctic waters from the North East of England, and manuscript diaries of some of the seamen involved, a team from the University of Calgary have discovered the wreck of the Scottish vessel *Novaya Zembla* {sic} which struck a reef off Baffin Island in 1902. The successful attempt was made because one of the diaries indicated that whalers had returned to the site in 1903 to recover equipment.

The team were able to sail on a One Ocean Expeditions voyage through the Northwest Passage and past Greenland aboard the *Akademik Sergey Vavilov*. The team and some crew members set off on August 30th in a dinghy to search an area of 5 square kilometres near to Buchan Gulf. The drone was put to good use after Matthew Aire, who gained his PhD from the University of Sunderland and is originally from Tyneside, spotted wooden debris using binoculars. The pictures from the drone showed pieces of spars and timbers and rivets strewn across the beach.

The team consisted of Matthew Aire a post graduate research fellow at the University of Calgary, Michael Moloney an underwater archaeologist, and two assistants Ted Irniq and Kelson Rounds-McPherson. The expedition was supported by the University of Calgary and the Royal Canadian Geographical Society.

Matthew and Michael intend to revisit the wreck next year and hope to work with the local Inuit to extend their research.

Chris Calver

50th Anniversary Commemorative Expedition.

It had come to the attention of the committee that there was an appetite among some members of the Club to celebrate our upcoming 50th anniversary in 2020.

One suggestion that attracted enthusiasm was the concept of a “50th Anniversary Commemorative Expedition”.

Not wishing the idea to languish in the long grass of mere armchair speculation a group of committee and expedition fund members (8) plus the President assembled to discuss the topic at Hillfoot House Dollar on the 29th of September.

Proceedings were kicked off by the President reading out written submissions from some not able to attend. Thereafter there was a wide ranging discussion (2 hours) of what type(s) of expedition(s) might be feasible.

As the discussion moved ahead there emerged a general desire for the project to be inclusive of people of all ages and abilities from pre-school children to the founding members of the Club.

By the same token the project might be structured to embrace as many diverse interest groups as possible. For instance to include those who wished to sail or kayak, walk or mountaineer, while also providing scope to expand on any manner of scientific studies (glaciology, geology, botany, entomology etc) as have been conducted by younger members of the club particularly those who have received club grants in recent years.

Many Arctic destinations like Svalbard and West Greenland, and even Baffin Island, were touched on however a consensus emerged concluding that the Kulusuk-Tasiilaq area of East Greenland was the logical choice as a hub from which sub-groups might start out and pursue their specific objectives*.

The reasons for this selection were principally cost and infield logistics support but also easy access from Iceland, variety of terrain accessible and a large enough community (2000 people) to supply kayaks for rental, food to purchase etc.

Tasiilaq region lends itself to supporting a number of small camps that groups might move between depending upon their interests and time available. This would fit with the emerging concept whereby groups might be formed around specific interests (eg families with children, those whose primary interest was kayaking, mountaineering etc).

Since we had them on hand certain members of the meeting were co-opted to represent the initial logistics coordinator for some of these potential enterprises but not limited to the following:

1. Kayaking – Chris Gilmore.
2. Family – Susie Ranford.
3. General Coordinator – Stella Spratley.
4. Mountaineering - ???
5. Scientific(s) -??
6. Sailing - ??*

It was hoped that young people who have had an initial taste of the Arctic through BES or SAMS/UNIS links could use this expedition to become more adventurous with some of the

logistical aspects taken care of. It was thought best not to have a single base but to move around every few days using boats hired locally.

Since the interest groups would be autonomous there need be no specific start or end date of the expedition and each component might come and go as suited them.

*An assumption was made that the operating radius for the type of groups discussed would be not more than 100 miles out from Kulusuk however other more far flung objectives could be included should suitable ambitions and leaders emerge.

** The prospect of interested parties chartering a suitable yacht such as Peter Gallinelli's "Passive Iglloo" or Sigurdur Jonson's "Aurora", also the schooner "Opal", was discussed however as these would be costly ventures they were set to one side for the purpose of our opening discussion.

BARBARA RAE: THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE – an exhibition

In 2015 internationally-renowned artist Barbara Rae CBE RA RSA began a series of journeys of discovery into the Arctic, following in the footsteps of her namesake, the Orcadian explorer Dr John Rae. The resulting new body of paintings, monotypes and intaglio prints represents Rae's deep-rooted fascination with the topography and history of place. Rae joined her first voyage to the Northwest Passage travelling with One Ocean Expeditions in 2015. She returned in 2016 and 2017, drawn by her interest in the story of John Rae.

The exhibition draws parallels between Rae's journey and that of John Rae and shows how their paths intertwined. From her starting point on John Rae's home isle of Orkney, Rae travelled to Greenland and Canada, voyaging through some of the most inhospitable places on earth. The sketchbooks of both Barbara Rae and John Rae will be displayed side-by-side, forming congruent narratives in these remarkable journeys.

Whilst her paintings and prints are known for their rich, Mediterranean palette, Rae's expedition to the Arctic has triggered a shift towards deep blues and opalescent silvers, but the intense bursts of colour for which her work is known remain resolutely powerful. The formidable unknown into which John Rae ventured on his Arctic voyage is seen in representations of fracturing ice and looming icebergs. Ice flows are translated into effervescent streams of colour and the scarce signs of life – huts, boats and fish – emerge in earthy browns and greens. The exhibition shows one of the foremost British contemporary artists to have chartered a new, painterly journey of exploration by looking back into history.

The exhibition premiered at the Royal Scottish Academy and can now be seen in the Pier Arts Centre, Orkney, and later at Canada House, London. The exhibition is a collaborative partnership between the Royal Scottish Academy (RSA) and the **Royal Academy (RA)**, London, in celebration of the latter's 250th Anniversary year in 2018 (#RA250). The exhibition is funded by the Royal Scottish Academy of Art and Architecture with assistance from the Art Fund, the Morton Trust and Tony McLellan. The exhibition is sponsored by **One Ocean Expeditions**.

A beautifully-illustrated book, published by the Royal Academy, will be launched alongside the exhibition.

Dr John Rae – Born in Orkney in 1813, John Rae trained as a surgeon in Edinburgh. In 1833, he signed on for a short term with the Hudson Bay Company in Canada. Captivated by the landscape and lifestyle, Rae stayed with the company until 1856. Throughout his life he continued to work on

several major mapping and charting projects in Canada. Despite locating the North West Passage, Rae was the only one of his contemporaries not to be knighted for his Arctic achievements. He died in London in 1893 aged 79, and is buried in the churchyard of St Magnus' Cathedral in Kirkwall, Orkney.

[For a Virtual Tour of the exhibition please click here](#) (online newsletter only!!)

or paste http://go360.co.uk/rsa_2018_08_08_barbaraRae/ into your browser

Future dates:

Pier Arts Centre, Stromness, Orkney

22 September – 10 November 2018

Canada House, London

29 November 2018 – 13 January 2019

#NorthwestPassage #BarbaraRae

Scottish Mountaineering Club Lecture

Our President, Douglas Anderson, is giving a lecture to the SMC. The SMC Secretary has agreed that we may advertise this talk to our members who are welcome to attend. Details are:

Anderson Family's East Greenland Voyages - the First 40 Years.

13 November 2018 at 7.30 pm in the Quaker Meeting House, Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL

You may remember the superb account given by our member **Douglas Anderson** in 2011 when he described his epic adventure to Patagonia in a small boat built out of sand, cement and chicken wire, where on arrival, they were not applauded but thrown in jail and then deported. Douglas has since then had a huge connection with Greenland where he now has a home and tonight he will describe the Anderson Family's East Greenland Voyages - the First 40 Years.

Included in the packed programme will be mountain exploration, first ascents, glacier travel, polar bear encounters, toddling to summits with toddlers, pack ice navigation, owning your own home in Greenland, etc etc. Surely one talk not to miss!

The Arctic Club

The Arctic Club is again holding its annual dinner in Scotland, in the New Club, Princes Street, Edinburgh on Saturday 8th December. SAC members are cordially invited to attend and a page of information and a booking form are attached.

Welcome to the following new members

Julia and Jeff Banks, expeditions to Greenland, Norway and Sweden with botanical and ornithological interests.

George Beckett, Brook Range in northern Alaska and found the Club via our Library while searching for a book by an early explorer.

Richard Bott has rejoined the Club after a period of absence.

David Broadhead, student expedition to Stauning Alps, East Greenland and later expeditions to Arctic Sweden

Laura Ferguson, field experience in Greenland and Svalbard and working on 'sustainable heritage areas' for the SHAPE project at Perth College.

Matt Hay, two Arctic expeditions with BSES (now BES) in Svalbard and Finnmark, and, with support from the Club's fund, a two-person expedition to the NE Greenland National Park. Matt will be talking about his exhibition at the Arctic Club's dinner on 8th December.

Dag Kjelldahl has also rejoined after a period of absence. He spent 2 years on Bear Island in the 1970's and has written 3 books about his experiences and history of the remote island.

Andy Rice, worked with first nations in Canadian Northwest territories

Simon Richardson, mountaineering expedition to Liverpool Land, East Greenland this spring. Currently President, Scottish Mountaineering Club.

June and David Talbot, persuaded to join by their son who has been a member for 5 years but who also have their own Arctic Norway experiences.

Reminder: Nancy Campbell – The Library of Ice

Nancy Campbell's new book *Library of Ice: Readings in a Cold Climate*, will be published by Scribner UK on 1 November and details have been included in a previous newsletter.

<http://www.simonandschuster.co.uk/books/The-Library-of-Ice/Nancy-Campbell/9781471169311>

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