

From: Robert Stephenson <antarctic-circle@comcast.net>
Date: February 5, 2013 3:30:05 PM EST
To: SouthPole-sium 2 update
Subject: **A possible SouthPole-sium v.2 UPDATE 5 February 2013**

Dear Antarcticans, et al,

On New Years Eve I sent out an e-mail proposing a second SouthPole-*sium* at and around Jane and Falcon Scott's place in western Scotland. (That e-mail appears below.)

I asked for a response from those interested (or not) and here are some results:

Total responding: **72**, of these,

30 said "Count me in!"

34 said "Could be...keep me informed" and

8 said "No thanks." (Those in the first two categories are listed below)

Certainly some of those who didn't respond would be interested in coming.

And some who didn't receive the original e-mailing, would be interested as well.

So I would guess that we have a potential attendance of around **60** or so, slightly more than for SouthPole-*sium* I.

I asked for the preferred year and time of year: **Most** don't care whether it's in 2014 or 2015. **3** prefer 2015, **2** did *not* prefer 2015 and the rest have no opinion or are happy with either.

With respect to month and time of month, it's all over the place but there's a preference for May:

May **17** (Early 5, Early or Mid 1, Mid to Late 2, Late 6, May in general 3)

May-June **7** (Late May-early June 4, Mid May to early June 2, Mid May to mid June 1)

June **6** (Early 5, Late 1)

Anytime **7**

It was pointed out that May in Scotland has two Bank Holidays: In 2014 these are **May 5th** and **May 26th**. Would it be best to schedule the SouthPole-*sium* over a Bank Holiday or better to avoid them? I would think that doing it on a Bank Holiday would be the way to go, but let me know if you think otherwise.

It has also been pointed out—and by more than one person—that earlier in May would be better because of the **midges**. Apparently, they come out later in May. I don't know how important this is when it comes to scheduling this sort of thing but it's worth remembering. Let me know what you think.

The Landmark Trust houseparty option.

On the question of staying at a Landmark Trust house **before** the SouthPole-*sium*, **7** said yes, **11** no and **12** maybe.

On the question of staying at a Landmark Trust house **after** the SouthPole-*sium*, **6** said yes, **10** no and **14** maybe.

The Landmark Trust houses of most interest are: Kintyre **4**, Bute **2**, Gargunnock **1**

The Landmark Trust houses of least interest are: Bute **1**, Gargunnock **1**

So it seems that there may be enough interest to keep these options on the burner for the moment.

What's next? I'll be setting up a section on the antarctic-circle.org website on the SouthPole-*sium* v.2 which initially will start off with the contents of this e-mail. I will add to it any incoming comments and new details any progress.

I will plan to go to Scotland in 2013, either in May or in October-November before or after the annual gathering in Athy. Going in May makes more sense but it's an added expense and also may interfere with some surgery I'm trying to schedule. This would be a reconnoitre: checking out venues, accommodation, attractions and pubs, of course. Let me know if you might be interested in joining me.

That's about it for the moment. Below are those who responded, some of the comments made and the original e-mail.

Regards,

Rob Stephenson

Those saying "Count me in!":

Jesse Blackadder *AUS*

Joan Boothe *US*

Bob Burton *UK*

Mary Royds Cleveland *UK*

Neelon Crawford *US*

Regina Daly *US*

Andrea Davies *UK*

Paul Davies *UK*

Wendy Driver *UK*

Millie Henderson *US*

Tom Henderson *US*

Bernadette Hince *AUS*

Gretchen Legler *US*

Geraldine McAdam *UK*

Jim McAdam *UK*

Richard Pierce *UK*

Robert Pope *US*
Richard Reaney *NZ*
Harriet Rose *US*
Lisle Rose *US*
Falcon Scott *UK*
Jane Scott *UK*
Jonathan Shackleton *IRE*
Hilary Shibata *UK*
Judy Skelton *UK*
Michael Smith *UK*
Rob Stephenson *US*
Anne Strathie *UK*
Janice Tipping *UK*
Paula Williams *UK*

Those saying "Could be...":

Mrs Ted Benttinen *US*
Ted Benttinen *US*
Hester Blum *US*
John Bonham *UK*
Sue Bonham *UK*
Brad Borkan *UK*
Larry Conrad *UK*
Lucia deLeiris *US*
Beth Fitzsimmons *US*
Joe Fitzsimmons *US*
Damien Gildea *AUS*
Fred Goldberg *SWED*
Stephen Haddelsey *UK*
Glynis Hicks *NZ*
Stephen Hicks *NZ*
David Hirzel *US*
Meredith Hooper *UK*
Alison Jolley *UK*
Max Jones *UK*
Rich Joss *US*
Pat Keough *CAN*
Rosemarie Keough *CAN*
Laura Kissell *US*
Charles Lagerbom *US*
Bruce Larsen *US*
Sally Larsen *US*
Elizabeth Leane *AUS*
Michael Rosove *US*
Heather Rossiter *AUS*
Dafila Scott *UK*
Tracy Sheeley *US*

John Spletstoesser US
Cameron Treleaven CAN
Nigel Watson NZ

SOME SELECTED (sometimes edited) COMMENTS MADE BY THOSE RESPONDING:

- The SouthPole-*sium* in Scotland sounds wonderful and I'd be very keen to attend. I'm a novelist and my current novel (coming out in a fortnight in Australia) is historical fiction based on the first women to reach Antarctica. I also have a children's novel about Antarctica coming out later this year. My previous novel was historical fiction set in Scotland.
- I would be interested to go to another South Pole-*sium* but I'm not sure about Scotland. A bit close to Athy, maybe? I liked the separation and new venue of Jaffrey, though I understand your reasons for not wanting it there again. Scotland may well be pouring rain, not that this matters for talking about books indoors. As far as accommodation, etc, Scottish hospitality and service can, for some, leave something to be desired, ditto for transport, etc.
- If it is of interest I can contribute with a lecture about the dramatic Otto Nordenskjöld Antarctic expedition 1901-1904. I have in my possession almost all the original photos from the expedition.
- Your ideas for Scotland are exciting. We have great friends now living in the Highlands who let what was the main farmhouse at Lochgilpead, looking out over the Paps of Jura. We've stayed in the very comfortable house—it sleeps possibly 8 maybe more but I can check if you would ever like the details. The house has a nice garden; but the estate itself stretches up into the hills behind the main (Georgian) house which is now owned by a publisher. It is very beautiful country.
- How exciting that it looks like the SouthPole-*sium* could be a recurring event. I would love to come, once again count me as a maybe. One thing to—as last time, the Polar Libraries Colloquy will be meeting again in 2014—and we will be in Cambridge from 6/29/2014-7/3/2014. Looks like your event will not be that late into June, but I did want to make you aware of this. If there is a third SouthPole-*sium* in the Antipodes I'll certainly be involved as much as I can. It would be great to have one down here. I'll keep monitoring the plans for Scotland and hopefully I'll be able to make it.
- I think I can safely say—count me in (in some capacity but won't know what until nearer the time!). I can also offer, if people were likely to be swinging past Edinburgh, to perhaps host a smallish group visit to our Polar Collections here at NLS? I'm always happy to have an excuse to get things out! I can thoroughly vouch for the Argyll area around Oban as the most beautiful place, and the late Spring time you have chosen is likely to avoid the thick of the midges... Loch Melfort is a personal favourite—abounding in otters and even porpoise!

ORIGINAL E-MAIL:

For those who attended the SouthPole-sium in Jaffrey in June: Happy New Year!

That event was intended to be a one-time affair but many of you asked "when's the next one going to be?" or words to that effect.

A few weeks after the event I met with some people at Keene State College and asked about having a second SouthPole-sium on its campus. I also looked into the idea of having a major Antarctic art show at the College's excellent gallery. I also floated this idea with former and present people at the National Science Foundation's 'Artists and Writers Program.' Enthusiasm was muted.

As the summer turned into the fall I increasingly concluded that doing another SouthPole-sium near Jaffrey and organizing a major art show would be a lot of work involving a good bit of *deja vu* all over again. Perhaps that should be put on the back burner.

While at the annual gathering in Athy, Ireland, at the end of October, I had some conversations with Falcon Scott (RFS's grandson) and an idea came forth to us. Falcon and Jane have a self-catering holiday operation (Loch Shuna Lodges) at Eilean Buidhe, Craobh Haven, not far from Oban on Scotland's west coast.

They don't have enough accommodation to handle more than 8 or 10 but Falcon says there are numerous B&Bs and other accommodation in the area. There's also a village hall in Ardfern that could serve as a venue as well as Lunga House which is less than a mile from Jane and Falcon's. The pub at Ardfern--The Galley of Lorne Inn--has a large function room that could also serve as a venue.

Here's what Falcon said in a recent e-mail:

I have been thinking about the SouthPole-sium 2013 or 14, and think a good idea would be for it to be held at Lunga House, which is less than a mile from us here on Eilean Buidhe, Craobh Haven. Lunga is a very unusual historic house and occupies a stunning location looking west over the sea and the islands of Nether Lorne. Occupied until about two years ago by the current Laird Colin Lindsay-Macdougall, who retired to a smaller house on the estate, it is currently leased to Les and Meg Macleod who run it successfully as a wedding venue. Colin, I know, would love to be involved in such a gathering, and Lunga House would be a brilliant and exotic (scottish style) venue. There is a pub in Craobh Haven (also owned by Les and Meg), and another in Ardfern which has a conference room, and there is also a large new village hall in Ardfern too. The grand ballroom in Lunga House is quite big too. There is plenty of accommodation locally especially low season as well. I think you can find it all on google. The Craobh Marina

owners, Kip Marina, also hosted a Birdie Bowers Lecture and Dinner in Greenock last week, so they might be interested too.

and in one that came in today:

"There are quite a lot of interesting places to visit that are not that far away as well. There are boat trips from Craobh (to see the Gulf of Corrievreckan, the most extreme and dangerous tidal race in the world, between Jura and Scarba, the wildlife includes eagles, seals, and sometimes whales + lots of bird life - this trip is spectacular). Also, the canal basin at Crinan, Kilmartin standing stones (6,000 years old), the old slate quarries at Easdale and Seil, the Isle of Mull which may include beautiful Iona (with St. Columba's Cathedral), and Staffa - with world famous basalt pillars and Fingals Cave (of Mendelssohn fame), and the Treshnish Islands - to see puffins close-up, - and perhaps some serious highland scenery and history in Glencoe. For those with too much energy, Cruachan is our nearest Munro (mountain over 3,000 feet) at 3,695ft - it's a good climb!"

So here are some possibilities:

- **Hold SouthPole-*sium* v.2 in Scotland at and around Jane and Falcon Scott's. Make use of Lunga House, the Village Hall or the Galley of Lorne Inn in Ardfern or some other nearby place as the main venue. Make use of local accommodation and possibly some "local hosts" as in Jaffrey.**
- **Have it go for 3-4 days, very informal, sessions interspersed with opportunities to see and do things nearby.**
- **Have some options for other places to congregate before or after. (See below)**
- **One banquet dinner (Scottish theme) along with some entertainment, with the rest of the meals more on one's own than in Jaffrey.**
- **As at Jaffrey, no one gets paid for participation and everyone pays whatever the price turns out to be (to cover venues, some food and drink, perhaps some rental equipment).**
- **Keep the focus on Antarctic books and history.**
- **David Stam did such a good job moderating (out of the blue) a session in Jaffrey, that we might try the same concept here. Three or four attendees might moderate some subject-specific sessions.**
- **Hold it sometime between early May and mid June, 2014.**

Over the years I have arranged houseparties at perhaps a dozen Landmark Trust properties in the UK and Italy. They are just terrific and surprisingly affordable. South of where Jane and Falcon is the Isle of Kintyre. At Saddell, an ancient Scottish site, there are five Landmark Trust properties which if all taken together could accommodate a total of 35 people. If you include the nearby Tangy Mill, another 6 could be accommodated. LT properties may be rented by the week (usually starting on Friday afternoon) or one can do short stays, i.e. portions of a week--Fri, Sat and Sun nights; or Mon, Tues Wed and Thurs nights. So those who wished could go on from Jane & Falcon's to Kintyre (58 miles) for either a short stay or for a week.

Another possibility for before or after is to go to the Isle of Bute where there are several 'Birdie' Bowers' sites. On Bute the Landmark Trust has two adjoining properties that together accommodate up to 19 people. Again, this could be for a short stay or a week.

A third possibility is Gargunnock House, a few miles west of Stirling. I've stayed there twice and it's a gorgeous place accommodating 16 people. Stirling is well served by train from both Edinburgh and Glasgow. There is a Scott memorial window in the cathedral at Dunblane, not far away, and James Wordie is buried near the Castle. One could also use this as a base to visit Low-Latitude Antarctic sites as far away as Dundee and Glen Prosen (where the new polar party monument was just dedicated).

One difficulty with the Landmark Trust houses is that others might make early bookings and not all the properties will be available when we might want them. If we were to go ahead with booking one or more of them we'd have to figure out the logistics of doing so.

This e-mail is being sent to most but not all of those who attended the SouthPole-sium; also to a handful of others. Depending on the response to the questions below, a similar e-mail will (or won't) be sent out to a larger audience of Antarcticans. 56 attended in Jaffrey and we would have been hard pressed to handle many more. If the SouthPole-sium v.2. is to be held I would think that numbers of 25-40 would be ideal. (This wouldn't include spouses or children who might come along and do other things in the region when Antarctic things are being spoken of.)

If it looks like there is sufficient interest to proceed, I will go to Scotland to do a reconnoitre sometime in May 2013 and consult with Jane and Falcon and go around to all the places that might play a part in this. I will also create a website to keep people abreast with how the planning is going.

Some (but not all) Antarctic sites/sights in Scotland worth visiting:

See the Google map at <http://goo.gl/maps/9xA4E>

This map also has shows some of the places around Jane and Falcon's, also the various Landmark Trust properties mentioned, tourist information centres, local sites/sights, Low-Latitude Antarctic sites, etc.

Some websites:

Landmark Trust: <http://www.landmarktrust.org.uk/>

Loch Shuna Lodges: <http://www.scotland2000.com/lochshuna>

Lunga House: <http://www.lungahouse.co.uk>

VisitScotland - Scotland's national tourism organisation: <http://www.visitscotland.com/>

Some Distances and Times:

Glasgow Airport to Craobh Haven: 97 miles, 2 hours 13 minutes.

Edinburgh to Craobh Haven: 136 miles, 3 hour 19 minutes

Craobh Haven to Dundee: 132 miles, 3 hours 16 minutes

Craobh Haven to Saddell, Kintyre: 58 miles, 1 hour 34 minutes

Craobh Haven to Rothesay, Bute: 93 miles, 2 hours 42 minutes

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK?

_____ Count me in! (this in no way commits you at this point)

_____ Could be. Hard to say now. Will need more information.
Keep me informed.

_____ Darn! I can't make it or it just won't work for me.

If you responded "Count me in" or "Could be":

What would your preference be date-wise in 2014? • Early May • Mid May • Late May • Early June

Would Spring 2015 be better for you? • Yes • No • Doesn't matter

Would you be interested in sharing a Landmark Trust house beforehand?
• Yes • Maybe • No

Would you be interested in sharing a Landmark Trust house afterwards?
• Yes • Maybe • No

Which Landmark Trust locations interest you most?
• Kintyre • Isle of Bute • Gargunnock

Which Landmark Trust locations interest you least?
• Kintyre • Isle of Bute • Gargunnock

Please respond in the next week or so. By the end of January I will send out a second e-mail to you giving an update on the responses.

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