



'*Briar & Bothies*'

The newsletter of
THE KEARVAIG PIPE CLUB



We Came, We Smoked, We Conquered...
(And we left the place in tip-top-baggy shape, what!)
The 2015 AGM, Kearvaig, 26th–28th September

"HOIST THE BLACK!"

Fine weather with the holy ground of Kearvaig looking resplendent for the 2015 AGM.



"Work like a captain. Play like a Pirate."
- Anon.

The 2015 AGM Cont.

The Mk I Kitchener deployed at Kearvaig by the SBS to devastating effect...

STRICTLY



KNOW SMOKING IN THIS BOTHY

www.kearvaigpipeclub.co.uk

...and the Weapon of MOss destruction...

Stand Down Margaret!



www.kearvaigpipeclub.co.uk

Prologue – Dark forces at work

This year's - our third - AGM was shaping up to be a rather busier affair than the (in)famous 2013 "imaginary friends" moot, or the successful, if weather-affected 2014 moot.

Preliminary intelligence reports from the Cape of Good Smoke indicated some fiendish MBA devilment at play at Kearvaig in the form of "STRICTLY NO SMOKING!" signs placed in the bothy that even had the temerity to abuse Lord Kitchener in their vile ends. Some staunch undercover work by our Man with a Havana, however, revealed that the MBA is actually completely relaxed about chaps having a bowl in *any* MBA bothy. Interesting news maybe, but as any pipe-chap knows, there's naff-all that uptight types can do about it anyway, as it is still perfectly legal to have a wee puff in a bothy.

A wee local probleMO...

This begged the question, therefore, of: Why all the fuss at Kearvaig in particular? The answer to this little conundrum, predictably, is that it is merely a case of some uptight *local* knickers getting in a bit of a twist. Yes chaps, you've guessed it, the 'NO SMOKING' graffiti placed in our shrine was the sole responsibility of the local Maintenance Organiser (MO). Well now Mrs MOo, we think you'll find that the KPC is a joyful and remarkably resolute organisation and perhaps you should just admit defeat now before your undies loss all elasticity and stretch into oblivion? Besides, such a development would indeed be a shameful waste of sturdy woollens. In the time-honoured tactic of if-you-can't-beat-'em-join-'em we would like to offer you: KPC membership, a free tin of *Bothy Flake* (worth £12-00) and the chance of becoming Pipe Babe of the Year (not guaranteed as we've not seen your pipe-pus yet but you can at least have a shot). Now, we think you'll find that such splendid offers don't come along every day Mrs MOo, ergo we look forward to your application forthwith.

Anti-anti-smoking countermeasures successfully deployed!

Due to the heinous Mrs MOo nonsense detailed above, KPC Command (KPCC) decided that this simply would not do, as standards *must* be maintained! Therefore, the chaps of KPCC were left no choice but to act promptly and decisively. Countermeasures – including weapons of MOss destruction – were successfully deployed prior to the AGM by a shadowy Special Forces team of mercenaries the SBS (Special Bothy Service) sometimes known as 'The Wild Puffins'. Usual protocol dictates that KPCC does not confirm nor deny SBS activity, but due to the gravity of the situation exceptions are sometimes made. Thus, the 2IC at KPCC received the following post-mission report by carrier-puffin from our unsung hero (name redacted to protect SBS integrity) see p.3: **Cont. p.3**

"Pipe smoking badasses never die. They just go to hell to regroup."
- Anon.

The 2015 AGM Cont.

Who smokes, wins...

Wild Puffins away!



“SARGE,

13:00HR – ‘WILD PUFFINS’ EMBARKED ON A HERC. FROM RAF MARHAM. FLEW UP WEST COAST ZIG-ZAGGING ALL THE WAY TO CONFUSE MBA GROUND RADAR. PARACHUTED OUT JUST WEST OF ROCKALL AND RV’D WITH A NUKE SUB. GOT IN TO THE OBJECTIVE AS CLOSE AS POSS. AND EXITED SUB. USED OUR BIVVY BAGS FOR FLOTATION AND DRIFTED INTO THE CLO MOR CLIFFS. SCALED THE CLIFFS USING WASHING LINE AND BLUE TACK. LAID LOW FOR 6 DAYS DOING RECON. SURVIVED ON SHRUBBERY AND SEAGULL DROPPINGS.

THE OP WENT SMOOTHLY. IF THERE HAD BEEN ANYONE IN THE TARGET THEY WOULDN’T HAVE KNOWN WHAT HIT THEM. BUT THERE WASN’T ANYONE THERE. ONCE THE SMOKE HAD CLEARED WE COMPLETED THE MISSION AS BRIEFED. COUNTERMEASURES SUCCESSFULLY DEPLOYED. KEARVAIG SECURE, REPEAT: SECURE. WE LOST A FEW GOOD MEN BUT THAT WAS TO BE EXPECTED ON A MISSION LIKE THIS. I’M ONLY GRATEFUL THAT SOME OF US MADE IT OUT ALIVE. THE YANK LIAISON WHO WAS WITH US, STUDYING OUR TACTICS, TOOK A MIDGE BITE ON THE EYELID AND GOT A PURPLE HEART; LUCKY BASTARD... MOST OF THE REST OF THE T.A. BACK-UP TEAM ARE DOWN WITH POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AND ARE BEING TREATED WITH IV BOTHY FLAKE. SMALL PRICE TO PAY FOR KPC AND COUNTRY.

STILL SCRUBBING OFF THE CAMMO. PAINT. STOP.

MAJOR ████████ DEE”



Forthcoming Hollywood tribute?



The 2015 AGM Cont.

The audacious mission secured the bothy thus enabling the AGM to proceed as planned. We are forever in the debt of the SBS, even that whiney midge-bitten Yank, and to borrow a quotation: *"Never in the field of bothy conflict was so much owed by so many to so few..."*


Advance parties

With the bothy secured, Mossman, with the zeal akin to a German holidaymaker's towel-placement at a Costa del Sol hotel swimming pool, had moved into Kearvaig several weeks before the AGM and secured the best room. Additionally, for that authentic bothy-look, a chap simply has to wipe his hands on his bothy trousers - after all manner of bothy chores - for a couple of weeks prior, and Mossman did not shy from this important detail. Being an industrious and ingenious chap he has also been merrily working on his very own Kearvaig peat bank. Quite how the long-term effects of this new project will ultimately impact on his favoured local anal-cleansing vegetation remains to be seen however... We hope that any effect is minimal as *'Peatman'* simply does not have the same ring to it.

New *associate* members Thornton Lacey and Bertie (aka The Carnoustie Cavalier) arrived a day early due to Matron getting his dates slightly off kilter; the pressures of organising a pipe club AGM were obviously showing. Whilst this slight blip may have been Matron's mistake it was, naturally, the new chaps' fault as he delighted in telling them later, that until full membership status was achieved they had better behave or they would be licking the bothy spade clean between trips if they did not snap-to PDQ. The fact that these chaps got in early with their colossal 0.9kg of coal meant that the bothy would almost be warmed up for the arrival of the main force. *(Another good reason for Mossman's peat bank then, Ed.)*

No direct news of Argentum Bender had been received but we felt sure that, being the stout fellow who moves in mysterious ways, he would already be comfortably quartered with the Major.

Prospective new member

A few weeks prior to the AGM a mysterious message was relayed to KPC Command enquiring about KPC membership. Of course, ahem, membership enquiries are ten-a-penny these days with most applicants failing *(Just like lightweights in the SBS, Ed.)* on some technicality at the early stages of selection. This particular application, however, from a Suffolk-based chap named 'Aaron' showed a glimmer of panache and some tenacity so often missing from the usual social media slobs that we hear from these days. 

Yes chaps, not only did this fellow *want* to join the KPC, he *wanted* to attend the AGM and attain full membership status in a one-er. Quite a feat. A few communiqués back and forth, plus a swift verification of his pipe face and clearance was given. All the regular KPC chaps had to do now was to wait and see if this wayfarer would turn up at Keodale pier at the designated time... The breathtaking audacity had to be admired, but would this chap cut the mustard? Only time would tell. **Cont. p.5**

Despite requiring a hefty dose of that famous Scottish painkiller IRN-BRUprofen, Matron was spotted maintaining standards at Scourie campsite.



***"What do you get if you cross a Dandy with an Abbott?"
- A Chappist Monk.***

The 2015 AGM Cont.

Pulling the trigger early...

Dodging some showers, the main force consisting of the old lags, namely: Bingae, Cave Fud, Dazbo and Matron, convened at Scourie campsite on the Friday evening, having learned a painful lesson last year, that wild camping somewhere off of the A838 can be a bit if a bind if a breeze gets up. Besides, the Scourie Hotel is an excellent hostelry with a substantial smoking shed where puffballs of all shades gather like bluebottles on flypaper. Early and rather rash pledges of a *"few sensible beers and early to bed"* were soon dashed in the pre-AGM excitement, where for some reason all things seemed to default to '11' from the outset. Not a good omen for a chap heading to the Cape for a twa-nichter... Upon learning that the KPC was in town, the helpful Scourie hotel barman relayed some important information thus: *"A chap from down south was in here last night and he said he was up here to go to some pipe club meeting up near Cape Wrath."* Knowing smiles of approval broke out in the fug of the smoking shed at this gratifying news. So, our prospective southern member had made it this far?

As rash moves go, opening one of the two bottles of Aberlour cask strength (60.1% ABV) back at the campsite, so magnificently procured by Dazbo, proved to be the death knell. This was confirmed at 06:17 the following morning when Cave Fud was heard blundering about outside the tents regurgitating the previous evening's expensive Ullapool chips. It was an early 1-0 lead for the cask strength and it was muttered that the chaps have had better starts to a day.

It was Dazbo to the rescue for the thick-headed, however, as he stepped unflappably into the breach with a fulsome fry-up that got the chaps back on a, relatively, even keel (*Bothy points awarded, Ed.*).

Dazbo, in appropriate garb, gets a spot of pipe pus practice in whilst waiting for the pipe-pus-bus.



An omnibus or omnishambles?

Upon our arrival Keodale pier was, rather disconcertingly, busy with dollops of bobble-hatted punters. With gargantuan rucksacks and ancillary portmanteaus - including 40kg of coal - the main force staggered down to the slipway and were greeted by John-the-Ferry who was no doubt calculating the pub evening funding potential of some unseasonably brisk trade. After several trips, all punters and KPC members were safely across the Kyle, but with the main party consisting of four chaps plus our Suffolk pioneer, making five – yes chaps our prospective member had indeed made it – there was no room in the omnibus. At least no one was expecting a baby...

Stuart-the-minibus was on good form (even refunding Matron's bus fare), however, and had been expecting us, but he only had room for two chaps and with portmanteaus even that would be a tad on the sardine side. Therefore, the main force and our prospective member decided to stick together and tough it out on the slipway for 3 hours. Fortunately the weather was benign and thankfully the midges were noticeable only by their absence. What with a brew and a spot of otter spotting supplemented by some fine malarkey the time drifted past most pleasantly indeed.

Some nifty packing was required to get the chaps and equipment aboard the afternoon omnibus that also had a few Canadians aboard, so it was open season for Stuart to tell his American friendly-fire 'jokes' along the way. In fact, we may wager that Stuart's tourist patter was invigorated by the KPC chaps and was subsequently elevated to pantomime status, with the hapless Duke of Sutherland getting the pasting that he deserved. By the time we alighted at the top of the Kearvaig track the DoS had achieved a notoriety that Hitler or Stalin would have been jealous of.

As the bus halted a curious object, propped up by the MOD shipping container, came into view. Stuart, with some almost wonderfully-timed mock surprise (*Obviously totally unrehearsed then, Ed.*) retorted: *"What on earth is that there boys?"* One was instantly reminded of Michael Caine in the 1981 'classic' film *'Escape to Victory'* when on the verge of escaping from the Nazis the POW team decided to play the second half as one player said: *"We can win this"*, to which Caine's immortal, clanging, reply was: *"Who said that?"* Brilliant stuff! Our chaps, however, didn't seem too perplexed at missing *their* opportunity of a second half... **Cont. p.6**

The KPC gear mountain at the pier.



The 2015 AGM Cont.

Cape Wrath street art?

As Stuart-the-minibus trundled off with the bemused Canadians, the chaps gathered round the mysterious object in awe. Yes dear reader, the masterpiece left casually by the track was none other than an 8ft plywood pipe that looked specifically designed to re-create the KPC logo in real time on the gable of the bothy. Bloody marvellous, what! It was as if that well known street artist Banksy had parachuted in, done a spot of pipe sculpture before vanishing in a puff of smoke. The only other explanation that sprang to mind was perhaps the Milk Tray Man had come out of retirement, decided to bat for the other side, ditched the chocolates before branching out into briar and leaving magnificent pipe-gifts for prospective boyfriends. Or perhaps not...

Anyway, the main force was suitably impressed by this significant omen. The spell, however, was broken when some spoilsport glibly stated that the pipe appeared to have a worrying detail reminiscent of the 'double strike' that afflicts our very own Argentum Bender when working his shiny magic on our KPC badges. This appalling cynicism undermined the romantic Banksy and Milk Tray Man theories in a flash and ideas of our talisman's origins settled on a local type with access to a generator and power tools. Despite the chaps feeling a tad betrayed, rather like a child finding out that Santa and/or God are frauds, they were still delighted with this precious artefact. After checking the pipe for MO Trojans (*Got to get one's MOTro sorted after all, Ed.*) the remaining conundrum was who was to carry the bloody thing down the track? Funnily enough our prospective member from Suffolk was elected with some gusto 4 to 1 and given his first honorary title of '8ft plywood- pipe-carrying-bitch' and was set the task of carrying the masterpiece down to the bothy. The chaps simply knew that he had driven all the way from Suffolk for a good reason, huzzah! **Cont. p.7**

Every pipe club needs an 8ft plywood-pipe-carrying-bitch...



Subversion on Cape Wrath: A splendid surprise waiting for the chaps at the top of the Kearvaig track.



The 2015 AGM Cont.

Arrival

The main force finally arrived at our very own smoky citadel of solace in time for tea consisting of beer and crisps. Mossman - having been in residence for a few weeks - was attending to some domestic chores, strode out to give the chaps a warm welcome and brief them on events. It appeared that a couple of other chaps had arrived the previous day. A brief perusal of their gear revealed that new chaps Bertie and Thornton had indeed made it and were out wandering about somewhere.

As portmanteaus were unloaded, a cursing Cave Fud was heard barracking a bemused looking Dazbo for the large lump of metal that had mysteriously found its way into his knapsack. This occurrence, combined with Cave Fud's obvious struggles for recovery from the previous night's excesses, provided some extra zing to the obvious mirth garnered by the chaps. In the end, Matron, not wanting comrade Dazbo to be labelled a blaggard, owned up to the heavy metal japery only to receive a dead arm for his faux-honesty. Perhaps, surmised Matron, if Mr Fud had carried a Gentlemanly amount of goods (*i.e. not being able to shoulder one's knapsack without assistance of another chap, Ed.*) into the bothy such japes would not be necessary. The upshot to this event merely provided another item for the AGM agenda from the hapless Cave Fud thus: "*Richt, nae puttin' feekin' lumps ae metal in ony cahnt's rucksacks fae noo oan, ya cahnts!*", or words to that effect. Ah, the eloquence of the diehard Fifer...**Cont. p.8**

"The Horn of Helm Hammerhand will sound in the deep, one last time!"
(Oh dear, give a boy a toy., Ed.)

The Main Force approaching the objective.



The 2015 AGM cont.

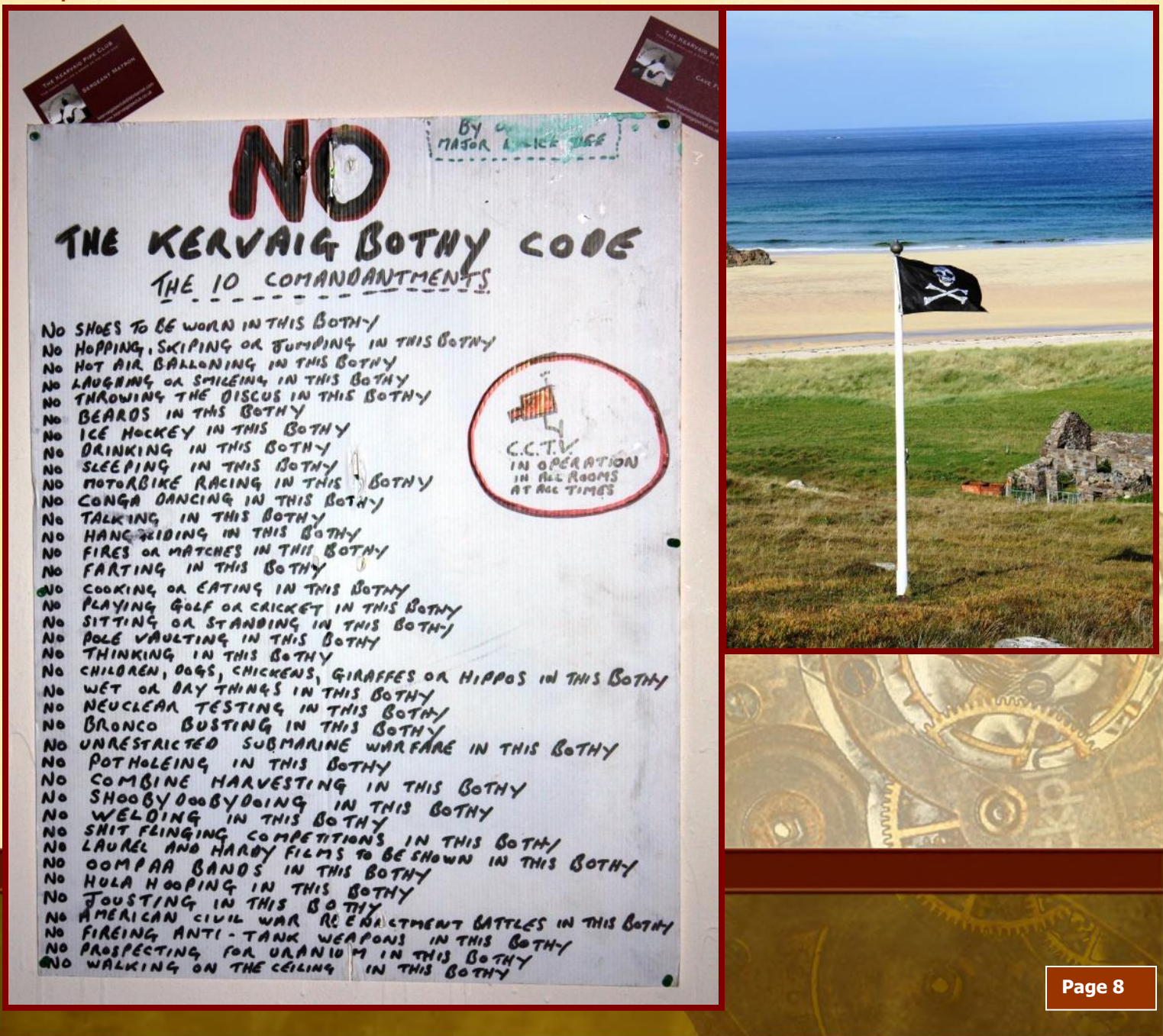
Shortly after quartering themselves comfortably and unloading copious supplies Bertie and Thornton strolled in to meet their fellow pipe club members. It has to be said that they make a lovely couple. Bertie, no doubt dreaming of his Bakewell tart and custard, however, looked rather like a hen-pecked husband on a wet Saturday afternoon at an Arndale centre, whom had just emerged from the 28th shoe shop of the day, after being dragged round the hills by an over-energetic Thornton dressed in his best worst Tizwas jumper. In spite of such notable sartorial disasters they were welcomed to the fray by the chaps. A tiny frisson of carnival atmosphere was palpable, a delightful hint of things to come. Intriguingly they had brought news of a hill-walker who was heading in the direction of Kearvaig, despite dire warnings of the AGM. "That chap could be in for a bit of a surprise", surmised Thornton in a masterstroke of understatement – not a skill usually associated with such a wonderfully floral bard.

Our new prospective member Aaron appeared to be in a bit of a daze as he wandered about not quite sure of where he was even why he was there. Of course, as any KPC chap will tell you, Kearvaig is a magical place and our new fellow was simply under its spell...

Hoist the Black!

Amidst the activities of settling in, an important ceremonial task was performed by Matron and Dazbo; namely hoisting the black. Upon the hillside to the south of the bothy the MOD have flag poles specifically placed for Black hoisting operations and with some gusto and fanfare the black was hoisted. Due to the rising glass, sadly, a stiff breeze was not forthcoming to show the Jolly Rodger at its very best. It was decreed, rather arbitrarily it has to be said, that the Black would fly for the duration as the Piperates celebrated the booty that is the AGM.

Cont. p.9



The 2015 AGM cont.

The AGM


As the gloaming descended, the middle room was carefully reconfigured for the AGM i.e. the tables were moved into the middle of the room. Inevitably these days, MBA bothies lack seating both in terms of number and comfort and sadly Kearvaig is no exception. So Mrs MOo if you are reading this, if you wouldn't mind being a dear and getting a few more comfy chairs sorted out for the chaps the KPC would be most grateful. To counter this situation, a variety of crates and fish boxes were purloined into service to provide rudimentary seating. Being low to the ground was and added advantage given the likelihood of various chaps getting 'tired and emotional' later on...

As if by magic, all manner of delicacies appeared on the bothy table as the moot got off to a relatively gentle start. Veterans of KPC moots understand that these sacred occasions are marathons and not sprints; a modus operandi best observed if a chap wants to see the witching hour whilst avoiding exposure to an unwashed, hairy derriere or two...

El supremo DJ Dazbo took charge of the sounds and his choices fitted the moot perfectly (*Bothy points awarded, Ed.*) like a Saville Row suit on a dapper chap. As every chap knows bothy music should be an accompaniment and *not* the main event.

The hapless hill walker, 'Paul', that Thornton and Bertie had mentioned had indeed made it and was destined to have a permanent look of horror on his carefully moisturised face for the duration. Being one of those curious ultra-lightweight type chaps, he joined the mêlée, but not before consuming something in a packet that is normally only issued to astronauts on deep space missions. Looks of horror round the table indicated that such a chap needed a stiff lesson in heavy-weighting when outdoors. Being a good sport though he did eventually have a crack at the briar, if only to avoid a crack at the Vaseline or perhaps even Vaseline in the crack...

At 20:03 precisely a rumble was heard outside the bothy. It was the Major and Argentum Bender arriving in the Major's APC. With this stylish arrival the circle was complete and now the AGM lever could be pushed fully forward. It should be noted that with their arrival a KPC milestone was reached in that there were ten KPC members present plus Paul. The new arrivals wasted no time in getting stuck in to events. The Major, perched on a fish box, delved into his supplies of port and exotic blends; whilst The Bender laid waste to a bottle of Devon's finest in short order whilst simultaneously beguiling a few chaps with detailed descriptions of silvery things.

Prior to the moot a loose plan between Matron and Thornton had been hatched to inject a modicum of culture (*Careful with the 'c' word, Ed.*) into the proceedings in the form of some, (what they considered to be relevant to the event) poetry – either recorded or recited live - from Robert W. Service and possibly Burns. 

Of course both these chaps realised the risks involved in such a strategy i.e. pomposity or pretentiousness (*Unless aped as part of a story of course, Ed.*) is a cardinal sin only matched by foolishness such as asking a chap to stop smoking, for example. In the event, once the bothy fug had reached 11 and the cask strength Genie had been let out of the bottle, the AGM quickly reached terminal velocity and any poetry recital guff was definitely off the agenda. Besides, around the AGM table activities befitting Robert W. Service's *'The Men That Don't Fit In'* were being enacted in real time thereby negating the need for poetry. Perhaps being in the present is all there is..?

The rest, as they say, is a blur. Tall tales and jocular asides were told, fine drinks and Buckfast were drunk, all manner of smoke was smoked and the broon toot was most definitely oot! Thornton and Bertie smoked their first bowls, thus along with Aaron attained their full KPC membership. The problem with terminal velocity, however, is that sooner all later the velocity becomes terminal... Hazy recollections from those present indicate that no one was coonsilled (*Good effort chaps, Ed.*) and the last man falling was Dazbo as he reverted to his well-spent youth in a one man rave. Reports also indicated that the usual snoring decibels were supplemented by fevered dreams expressed in banshee-like wails from at least one chap as the AGM crashed through tortured synapses like a builder's skip on a ski slope. Perhaps the Major's splendidly succinct summation of the AGM was the most accurate: "Probably the most surreal night of my life..." Now *that's* poetry. **Cont. p.13**

The Hackney Hobo getting into his Scottish stride for the AGM (Blimey, that chap takes his duties seriously; imagine having to drink Tartan ale., Ed.)



The 2015 AGM Cont.

The Major and The Bender get down to AGM business whilst Mossman relieves himself in the corner.

Dazbo sporting his new o-ring spectacles and smoketache.

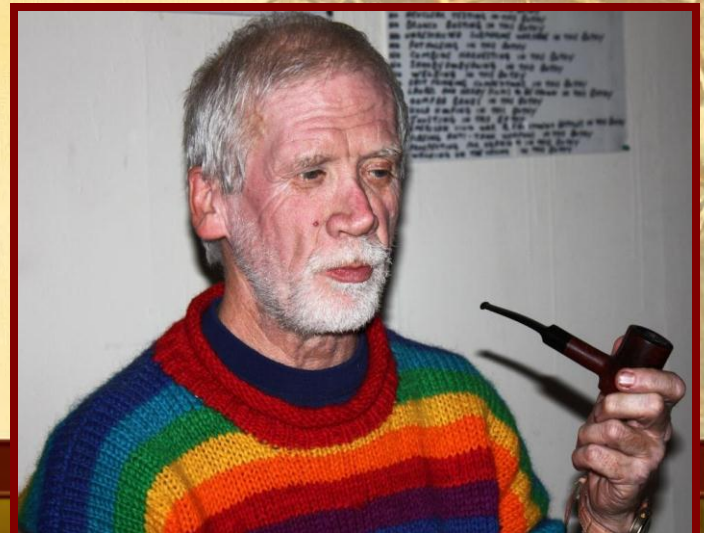


One's first bowl: a solemn moment in any chap's life...



Despite clinging, sartorially at least, to his youth, Thornton finally achieves full KPC membership and thereby his manhood...

Just Look at that that young blade go!



Living like kings: All hail the bothy table!



Dazbo: The King of Kingsize...



Dazbo learning all about silver...



It's not often you see Vincent Price at a pipe club AGM...

...or Paul the hapless hill walker...



A spiffing Aurora fugorealis was spotted at the AGM.



Bingae sporting his splendid mutton chops. (Splendid not least because they cover quite a bit of his pus! Ed.)



The Men That Don't Fit In: Has a finer gathering of oddballs, misfits and vagabonds ever graced the hallowed walls of Kearvaig? Answers on a postcard, if you must...



"What do you call a bothy survival expert?"


A: "Ray beers."

The 2015 AGM Cont.

The morning after the night before...

The good news was that no one had died. Between bladders and the bothy spade a few of the chaps were up remarkably early on a fabulously bright and sunny morn. The fug had cleared, in the bothy at least, with only the bothy table providing ample forensic evidence of the jovial crimes of the night before. Sensibly, the Major and the Bender had beaten a retreat back to the Cape at some unrecorded late hour.

Aaron did a sterling job (*Bothy points awarded, Ed.*) at restoring some order whilst Matron set about the first brew, at which point the aroma-sensitive Bingae miraculously emerged on the cadge, his eyes only being restrained by his spectacles, with an expectant empty mug. Thornton, haunted by various bothy ghosts, had had a busy night vainly trying to garner some shut-eye in various rooms whilst his other half Bertie had majestically slept through the lot, prompting enquiries of what he had been smoking/drinking. It needs to be said that Bertie has far too much hair for his own good and a throw away quip from Matron about his challenged coiffeur resembling an ungroomed Stan Laurel was met with an enigmatic smile. Mossman, enjoying the comforts of the best room all to himself was far too fresh for the other chaps' own good and after declining an offer of a fried breakfast tucked in heartedly once he'd had a whiff (*Must be a Polish thing, Ed.*). Unsurprisingly, Dazbo the one-man-ravemeister-in-chief remained firmly in his cubby hole under the stairs (*The light that burns twice as bright burns only half as long., Ed.*).

After a dip in the Atlantic Thornton rallied remarkably well and proceeded to chivvy Bertie first for breakfast and then to pack his effects for they had to depart promptly for another thrilling adventure on the bus out. 

The Pipe: visible from space?

Hoisting the Briar

After double-figure brews the breakfast work party set about a job of critical importance. The magnificent plywood pipe, to date, had been merely propped against the bothy's gable end. To realise our talisman's full glory it simply had to be placed onto the gable end, a la KPC logo.

The ever resourceful Mossman produced twine for Cave Fud and Matron to hoist the briar. Matron, having had previous stints at deep square leg in his youth, was entrusted with hurling a rock with the twine attached over the roof. Thus, rather surprisingly, phase one of the hoisting was accomplished with remarkable ease. After knotting the twine to one end, the briar was hoisted to the requisite height with the other. A complication arose when, due to problems that had been sorted out by Pythagoras a few thousand years previous, the angle of the dangle simply refused to comply with standard requirements, and as any chap will tell you standard requirements *must* be maintained! At this point the hectic nature of the AGM caught up with Matron so it was left to Cave Fud to heroically suggest the cunning plan of utilising the splendid corbels (*Does that make him a Corbels diehard? Ahem, Ed.*) that Kearvaig is blessed with, thus adjusting the geometry of the twine to facilitate perfect hoisting of the briar, er yes. And by Jove it was working until Bingae entered the fray for a spot of very uncivil engineering (*He should stick to the simple stuff like the new Forth bridge Ed.*), much to the chagrin of Messrs Fud and Matron. Once Cave Fud had retaken control (*Bothy points awarded, Ed.*) by sacking the 'engineer', and with some labouring from Matron, the briar was eventually hoisted only for Bingae to then claim full credit for his input... After the inevitable bickering, the chaps forgot about differing briar-hoisting strategies and spent some considerable time smoking and marvelling at Kearvaig's new décor. Even a midge-covering breeze had got up that had The Black at full stretch. It was shaping up to be a fine day. **Cont. p.14**



A strip, a dip and a Walnut Whip...**The 2015 AGM Cont.**

Dazbo eventually emerged from his quarters looking a tad jaded. A fine effort. Following Thornton's earlier daft idea for a dip in the Atlantic, Matron got rather enthusiastic and decided it would be just the tonic for the remaining stalwarts.

Skinny-dipping it was to be and Messrs Aaron, Bingae, Dazbo and Matron followed Mossman's lead. Cave Fud (*Far too sensible that chap, Ed.*) just sat ogling on a convenient rock taking photos of the chaps frolicking in the surf. When the frolickers beat a retreat to the beach even Dazbo's legendary undercarriage was so thermally challenged that it resembled a shrivelled kiddy-sized walnut whip (*Crikes! What pitiful state were the other chaps in then? Ed.*). Despite any scrotal shrinkage, Dazbo, had benefitted (as had the other chaps) from the bracing encounter with the briny, so in characteristic fashion had a beer to celebrate his return to something approaching homeostasis.

With the aid of the Atlantic, Bingae and Matron form the new KPC Walnut Whip section...**An evening at the Cape of Good Smoke**

Matron's suggestion of doing the cliff walk to the Cape met with, if one puts it politely, lacklustre responses from the chaps except for Aaron who was simply too new to realise the madness that Matron is capable of. Fortunately more sagely and apathetic minds steered the madman into the compromise position of walking along the road only to be picked up by Stuart in the minibus a short while later.

Once the minibus had departed, the chaps were welcomed into the Major's quarters by the man himself, The Bender and the dogs. Within minutes the mystical powers of the KPC were at work and the Major's table had become the bothy table as various delights miraculously appeared. The evening was shaping up to be a full moot only to be interrupted by a free tour of the lighthouse for a spot of extreme pipe smoking courtesy of David the NLB chap whose demeanour and garb could have earned him a place on the footplate of at least a 0-4-0 shunter. Full marks to the NLB chap are in order however, as the amount of stupid questions he fielded with good grace was admirable.

After leaning about light character (Flashing (4) white every 30 seconds) and candle power, the extreme pipe smokers returned to the cosy glow of the major's fire, made all the more cosy with soup, sandwiches and unlimited access to the Major's First Aid kit.

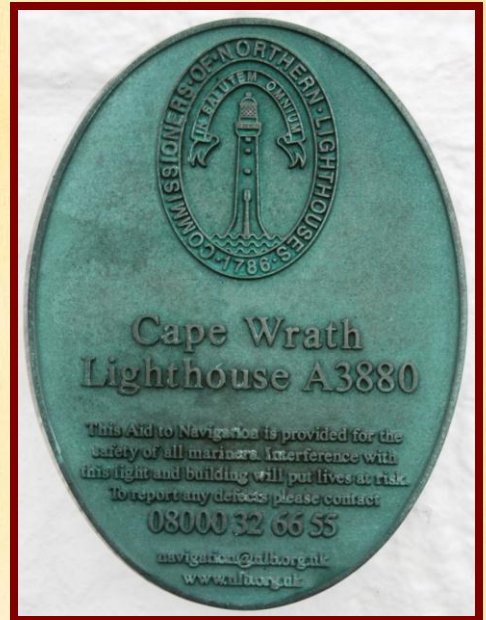
Eyebrows were raised and smiles adorned tired faces as once again the chaps got into their bothy-stride. The mood was convivial if a little subdued due to the lid well and truly having been removed the night before. Nevertheless a splendid evening was had by all.

Being a true Gent the Major would not let the chaps walk back to the bothy and so they hurtled off into the darkness of the parph aboard the Major's minibus. To stave off the evening chill (*And because he is a top chap, Ed.*) whilst alighting, the Major gifted the chaps Cape Wrath beanie hats. **Cont. p.16**

Bingae gets in a bit of extreme pipe smoking in the lighthouse.

The 2015 AGM Cont.

Matron gets a spot of pipe pointing in astride the Cape Wrath foghorn.



Extreme pipe smoking at its very best atop Cape Wrath lighthouse...



*"I see no ships..."
- Admiral Lord Nelson (allegedly)*

The 2015 AGM Cont.

The chaps enjoying the Major's legendary hospitality.



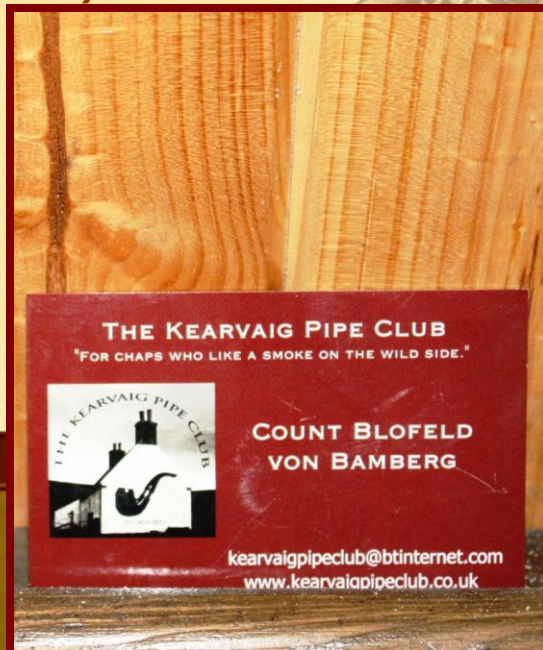
Candle in the window

The moon was yet to rise for the total eclipse so an eerie walk down the track was assured. True to form Mossman had left a lighted lamp and candle (*Bothy points awarded, Ed.*) - the time-honoured beacon of friendship - in both bothy windows for our return.

After getting the bothy telly re-kindled, a brave attempt at slamming the lever forward once again was made, but the chaps had discovered that it had been snapped completely off the night before, so it was a relatively sober affair if one overlooks the cask strength night-caps.

Despite Cave Fud bravely cajoling the chaps to stay up for the blood-red lunar eclipse, it was not to be as the hectic pace of life over the last couple of days had inevitably taken its toll. Having said that another night of crawling into one's sack at 02:00 was still not a bad effort. **Cont. p.17**

Despite The Count not being able to attend the AGM a toast was raised and his mark was left in the bothy.



THE KEARVAIG PIPE CLUB

"FOR CHAPS WHO LIKE A SMOKE ON THE WILD SIDE."



COUNT BLOFELD
VON BAMBERG

kearvaigpipeclub@btinternet.com
www.kearvaigpipeclub.co.uk

The 2015 AGM Cont.

Madness? No, just the KPC strutting their stuff.

A spot of coal unmining...

Monday was yet another fine morning and domestic chores were the order of the day. It has to be said that new chap Aaron took to bothy life very well and set a pretty decent standard in the tidying up stakes. Due to the unseasonably mild weather the chaps found that they had two-and-a-bit 10kg bags of coal leftover. Resisting the jape of hiding some in Cave Fud's pack or instructing the new chap to carry it out, a more sensible plan was hatched. Yes, the Piperates opted for burying some treasure by employing the ancient bothy art of coal unmining for the two remaining bags. Once excavations were complete, two bags of coal, a quantity of beer, whisky glasses and assorted non-perishable sundries were also entombed for the next moot. Lacking access to paper a KPC treasure map could not be drawn, therefore the only clue as to the whereabouts of the treasure was the obligatory 'X' drawn in the sand by Matron. That could be the weak link in the plan noted some wag... Of course with Mossman staying on a few extra days, a more likely weak link was a spot of pilfering as the studied interest he displayed in the digging was duly noted!

An omnibus or omnishambles?

After bidding a fond farewell to Mossman, the main force departed in good time for the omnibus. When the bus eventually came the chaps were agast to learn that once again the tourist trade was unseasonably brisk and there were only two empty seats. After a brief confab it was decided that Aaron and Matron would be evacuated, leaving - since they were travelling south together - Messrs Bingae, Cave Fud and Dazbo in the MOD hut.

After furnishing him with some McClelland's Frog Morton Cellar as a road smoke, Matron bid farewell to Aaron (*Bothy name 'The Hackney Hobo, Ed.'*) for his long trip to Suffolk. Obviously bitten by the far-NW bug The Hackney Hobo will probably never be the same again and we hope he can make it next year.

Thus the 2015 AGM came to a close.

Epilogue

Without exception the attending KPC members hailed the 2015 AGM a total success. It was, by a considerable margin, the best ever AGM and possibly weekend according to one and all.

Current INTEL received by KPC Command suggests however, that Mrs MOo was not amused at our joyous expressions of camaraderie and joie de vive. She must have a network of bobble-hatted spies dotted about the region looking for non-uptight behaviour, for it appears that news of the AGM filtered out rather promptly. Of course the bothy was left in immaculate condition, some new decorations were left and no doubt the 8ft plywood pipe has kept some already fulminating types warmer than they deserve; so the simple postulation has to be: what's the problem?



The Hackney Hobo explaining the rudiments of omnibus piloting to Stuart-the-minibus, whom appears to be less than enthusiastic when it comes to well-intentioned professional advice.



ROBERT W. SERVICE: A KPC TRIBUTE

BY SERGEANT MATRON

Robert Service - 'The Bard of The Yukon' - will need little by way of introduction to many KPC members. Since it was mooted that there may have been some of his fine words recited at the AGM, it seemed fitting to give the chap a mention in these pages. For those unfamiliar with his writing I strongly recommend having a wee Mr. Choogle™ and a subsequent read.

In the event (*Probably just as well., Ed.*) none of Service's prosaic words were uttered during the AGM, but I (and indeed Thornton McLacey) think there is one Service poem that sums up perfectly the collection of eclectic oddballs gathered at this year's AGM. Yes chaps, I think we may have a decent claim as contenders for "The Men That Don't Fit In". Further to the AGM I have also grotesquely butchered Service's classic "The Shooting of Dan McGrew" as yet another fitting tribute, this time to the lovely MO 'Mrs MOo' of Kearvaig - **See P.19.**

Robert W, Service: Adventurer, poet, pipe smoker...



THE MEN THAT DON'T FIT IN

BY ROBERT W. SERVICE

From: *The Spell of the Yukon, and Other Verses (1911)*

There's a race of men that don't fit in,
A race that can't stay still;
So they break the hearts of kith and kin,
And they roam the world at will.
They range the field and they rove the flood,
And they climb the mountain's crest;
Theirs is the curse of the gypsy blood,
And they don't know how to rest.

If they just went straight they might go far;
They are strong and brave and true;
But they're always tired of the things that are,
And they want the strange and new.
They say: "Could I find my proper groove,
What a deep mark I would make!"
So they chop and change, and each fresh move
Is only a fresh mistake.

And each forgets, as he strips and runs
With a brilliant, fitful pace,
It's the steady, quiet, plodding ones
Who win in the lifelong race.
And each forgets that his youth has fled,
Forgets that his prime is past,
Till he stands one day, with a hope that's dead,
In the glare of the truth at last.

He has failed, he has failed; he has missed his chance;
He has just done things by half.
Life's been a jolly good joke on him,
And now is the time to laugh.
Ha, ha! He is one of the Legion Lost;
He was never meant to win;
He's a rolling stone, and it's bred in the bone;
He's a man who won't fit in.

**"It isn't the mountain ahead that wears you out; it's the grain of sand in your shoe."
- Robert W. Service**

THE SMOKING OF MRS. MOO

(WITH SINCERE APOLOGIES TO THE LATE R.W.S.)

A bunch of the chaps were whooping it up in the Kearvaig saloon;
The bairn that handles the music-box was hitting a house-dance tune;
Back of the bothy, in a solo game, sat Dangerous Mrs. MOo,
And watching her luck was her light-o'-love, the pipe babe that's known as Lou.

When out of the night, which was fifty below, and into the din and the glare,
There stumbled a pipe smoker from the KPC, dog-dirty, and loaded for bear.
He looked like a man with a foot in the grave and scarcely the strength of a louse,
Yet he tilted a tin of Bothy Flake on the bar, and he called for drinks for the house.
There was none could place the stranger's face, though we searched ourselves for a clue;
But we drank his health, and the last to drink, was Dangerous Mrs. MOo.

There's chaps that somehow just grip your eyes, and hold them hard like a spell;
And such was he, and he looked to me like a chap who had bivvied in hell;
With a face most hair, and the dreary stare of a bothier whose day is done,
As he watered the brown stuff in his glass, and the drops fell, one-by-one.
Then I got to figuring who this chap was, and wondering what he'd do,
And I turned my head - and there watching him, was the pipe babe that's known as Lou.

His eyes went rubbering round the room, and he seemed in a kind of daze,
Till at last that old MP3 got in the way of his wandering gaze.
The house-dance bairn was having a drink; there was no one else on the stool,
So the stranger stumbles across the room, and flops down there, like a fool.
In a KPC shirt that was glazed with dirt he sat, and I saw him sway;
Then he clutched the buttons with his talon hands — my God! But that chap could DJ!

Were you ever out on the lonely Cape Wrath, when the moon was awful clear,
And the icy hills hemmed you in with a silence you most could *hear*;
With only the howl of a sou'west gale and you camped there by a lake,
A half-dead thing in a stark, dead world, clean mad for the baccy called Bothy Flake;
While high overhead, green, yellow and red, the North Lights swept in bars? —
Then you've a hunch what the music meant. . . hunger and night and the stars.

And hunger not of the belly kind, that's banished with bacon and beans,
But the gnawing hunger of lonely men for a bothy and all that it means;
For a fireside far from the cares that are, four walls and a roof above;
But oh! So crammed full of cosy joy, and crowned with a pipe babe's love —
A pipe babe dearer than all the world, and true as the KPC is true —
(God! how ghastly she looks through her rouge, — the pipe babe that's known as Lou.)

Then all of a sudden the music changed, so soft that you scarce could hear;
But you felt that your life had been looted clean of all that it once held dear;
That someone had stolen the pipe babe you loved; that her love was a devil's lie;
That your guts were gone, and the best for you was to crawl away and die.
'Twas the crowning cry of a heart's despair, and it thrilled you through and through -
"I guess I'm making it a tad miserable", said Dangerous Mrs. MOo.

The Pipe Babe that's known as Lou...



The pipe smoker from the KPC.



"A promise made is a debt unpaid."
- Robert W. Service

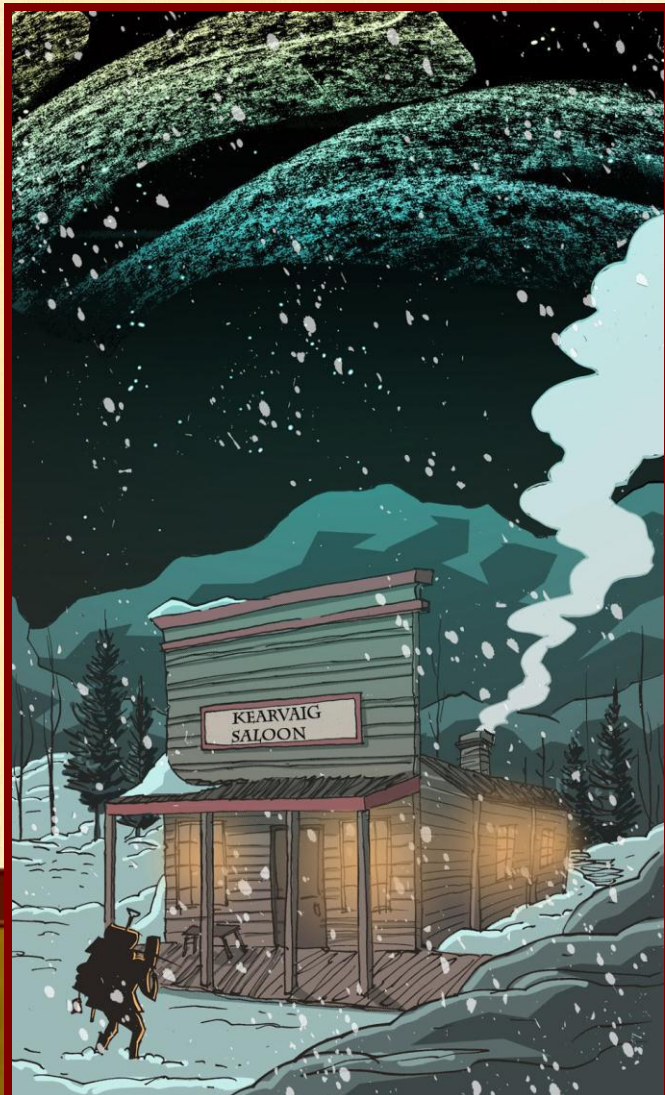
THE SMOKING OF MRS. MOO CONT.

The music almost died away...then it burst like a pent-up flood;
 And it seemed to say, "Smoke away, smoke away," and my eyes were blind with blood.
 The thought came back of an ancient wrong, and it stung like a frozen lash,
 And the lust awoke to smoke, to smoke ... then the music stopped with a crash,
 And the stranger turned, and his eyes they burned in a most peculiar way;
 In a KPC shirt that was glazed with dirt he sat, and I saw him sway;
 Then his lips went in, in a kind of grin, and he spoke, and his voice was calm,
 And "Chaps," says he, "you don't know me, and none of you care a damn;
 But I want to state, and my words are straight, and I'll bet my Bothy Flake they're true,
 That one of you is a hound of hell, . . and that one is Mrs. MOO"

Then I ducked my head, and the lights went out, and two pipes blazed in the dark,
 And a woman screamed, and the lights went up, and two folk lay stiff and stark.
 Pitched on her arse, and pumped full of grass, was Dangerous Mrs. MOO,
 While the man from the KPC lay clutched to the breast of the pipe babe that's known as Lou.

These are the simple facts of the case, and I guess I ought to know.
 They say that the stranger was crazed with "Flake," and I'm not denying it's so.
 I'm not so wise as the lawyer guys, but strictly between us two -
 The woman that kissed him and - pinched his Bothy Flake - was the pipe babe that's known as Lou...

Dangerous Mrs Moo...



The Briar Man

The curious tale of KPC member Count Blofeld von Bamberg's wee Scottish sojourn, September 10th – 14th

By Sergeant Matron

Background

Our German member, Count Blofeld von Bamberg, being a top-hole chap, had decided that he wanted to join his fellow pipe club pals at this year's AGM. Unfortunately, his busy schedule precluded such a bold move. Not the sort of chap to give up lightly, however, he decided to head for Scotland for his very first pipe smoking bothy trip a couple of weeks prior. This was in fact his first ever visit to bonnie Scotland. After some full-on *hospitality* from his fellow KPC members would he ever be the same again? I was aware of The Count's penchant for cult classic horror movies, so I wasted no time in heavily embroidered tales of sinister foreboding about visiting the land of The Wicker Man... After such a sojourn would our Count ever be the same again or even return from the wilds?

Arrival – A Count down but not out...

The Count, being a stalwart KPC chap, had packed all manner of Germanic goodies with him, including a significant quantity of Franconian sausages. Unfortunately, some incompetent fools in the baggage-handling department had left his portmanteau at Amsterdam airport. The hapless Flybe (*Yes, another soulless, classless, 'budget' airline, Ed.*) oaf at Inverness got the Teutonic telling-off of his career (*Do chaps with McJobs actually have a 'career'? Ed.*) from a tired and emotional Count. After all, this fine fellow had been travelling for 14 hours and after six pints and the odd chaser at Manchester airport, where he'd fallen in with a few local types, he was feeling decidedly crotchety. Therefore, after meeting him at the airport I moved quickly to assure our intrepid chumrade that all would be well and suggested an evening at a local hostelry or two. After explaining that a 'hostelry' served ale a beaming smile banished any trace of furrowed brow.

The Count had booked the Royal Hotel (*Splendid move, Ed.*) whilst I had to slum it in some cupboard-for-the-toilet guesthouse due to some bloody bagpipe convention being held in Inverness over the weekend. Of course the bag of pipes that the Count and I had between us did not help one iota when it came to garnering a discount at these over-priced establishments.

Inverness has two ale houses of repute: Blackfriars and the Castle Tavern, whilst not in the The Green Man (*Of Wicker Man fame, Ed.*) stable of local 'battle-cruisers', nevertheless proved most agreeable. Indeed, the Castle Tavern sports a splendid beer garden that is ideal for the pipe club chap, even on a chilly evening. The Landlord's daughter was most also most 'accommodating', as a few locals informed us in a decidedly ribald manner. The Count was on a mission to get the "*full Scottish experience*" and to that end he wasted no time in tucking into haddock and chips, washed down with copious ale. We had a splendid evening catching-up since our first meeting at Wuustwezel in March which was rounded-off with some splendid Oban 14 y.o. **Cont. p.22**

Welcome to Scotland!



We don't like to put the fear of god into a bothy virgin but...



**"Come. It is time to keep your appointment with The Wicker Man."
- Lord Summerisle to Sgt. Howie, The Wicker Man, 1973**

The Briar Man

Baggage reclaim

Greeting The Count outside the splendid Royal Hotel I learned that his quest for all things Scottish had manifested itself in the form of two full Scottish breakfasts. Obviously waistlines play second fiddle to cultural experiences in the Germanic tradition I surmised.

The plan was for a twa-nichter in different bothies. In discussion with the other chaps, I had opted for Con bothy the first night (*Good move, easy walk in and a little known shack, Ed.*) followed by Stag bothy for the main event.

The blaggards at Inverness airport, however, kept us waiting until 16:00 for The Count's portmanteau, but fortunately all was well with the perishables. This unplanned delay, however, gave us plenty of time to get further supplies and sort out our gear.

Con bothy

In the spirit of the FULL Scottish experience, it was down to me to dutifully ensure that The Count had a ridiculous rucksack, topped of with the obligatory 10kg of coal, to haul in. The Count displaying a stiff-upper lip worthy of any Britisher, did not complain once during the walk in, or not at least in English at any rate. Just when he thought that was his total burden for the short walk-in, however, the old *"let's-stop-and-chop-some-logs"* jape sprang to mind. Already with a decent sweat on The Count very sportingly, it has to be said, set about cutting logs with the brand new cross cut saw I'd hidden in my rucksack. It also has to be said that watching a bothy virgin grafting, whilst smoking one's pipe, is one of life's simple, yet greatest sadistic pleasures.

With some atmospheric dreich forming in the gloaming, the bothy door was booted open; the simple act that heralded The Count's first bothy night... It was handshakes and Man-hugs (*There's no need for such Continental behaviour, ever... Ed.*) all round as The Count enthused about his special moment. A chap's first bothy and indeed first bowl in a bothy, is one of those sacred, exquisite, rite-of-passage moments in his life and his enthusiasm was infectious. He'd come a long way to sit in a shed in the middle of the Scottish nowhere for this. A fine reward for a fine effort (*Bothy points awarded so long as he stops that hugging nonsense, Ed.*)

Con was empty and in splendid order. With a very welcome addition of a new grate the bothy telly soon sprang to life courtesy of a sound base of coal laid carefully from the 20kg that had mercilessly tugged at our backs only a short time before. With our toil done, a beer, a whisky and a bowl on the go all that was required was to sit back and watch the telly.

Cont. p.23 ***Some badly spelt graffiti at Con.***



The landlord's daughter: "Won't you let me show you to your room Count Blofeld..?" (Oh dear, any excuse to get Britt Ekland into a pipe cub periodical and why the hell not! Ed.)



We're all going on a briar holiday... A glistening Count hauling in more than his fair share into Con.



The Briar Man

After an hour or so with the place warming-up splendidly, a couple of head torches appeared at the window. The harsh LEDs belonged to none other than Bertie and Thornton McLacey on their velocipedes; a couple of chaps that we'd met up at The Stag a few weeks prior. Thornton had taken a tumble and grazed his knee in true schoolboy-error fashion. A dressing down, followed by a dressing from my First Aid kit and a slug of whisky - inside and outside - fettled things in a jiffy though. It turned out that these chaps had been out dealing with their hill walking problem during the day and had opted for a crack at Con after being tipped-off by the chaps when we'd met them up at the Stag. Small world as they say. They had even hauled in a bag of coal that breached the 1kg mark, which would do to re-kindle the fire in the morning, as was duly and dryly noted at the time.

A lively evening of unbelievable tales was guaranteed all of which added to the magic of The Count's first bothy night. Thornton, being a bit of a bard himself dipped into Burns and Service that added flashes of traditional colour; when he could remember the words at any rate... During the evening the KPC AGM was discussed and since neither Bertie nor Thornton had yet bagged Kearvaig, they rather rashly accepted an invitation to our annual smokefest, assuming that the recently married Bertie could get a weekend pass. I felt certain that the lovable rogue would comfortably achieve this objective.

Somehow I ended up sleeping on the stone flag floor. I must be getting soft as this should normally be the 'privilege' of the bothy virgin, although revenge was mine, as apparently my snoring was up to par.

We awoke to the splendid sound of rain battering on the tin roof. A swift breakfast and a bard-like entry in the bothy book saw a rather lame Thornton (his bashed knee looked like a swollen red turnip) and Bertie away just as four young lads arrived, allegedly for a spot of pike fishing. At least one of them was a *proper* fisherman but judging by the beer being deposited on the mid-morning table, angling looked like the secondary pursuit for these young chaps.

The weather had indeed turned a tad dirty on us (*Another box ticked in the 'full Scottish experience' then, Ed.*) but the wind was at our backs and after a fine bothy night a spring was in our stride as we set-off leaving the fisherman to their beer. Incidentally, those young chaps had heard of the KPC and were thrilled to cop some fine room note and have a decko at our pipes. Of course being fishermen a pipe is obligatory – à la Mr. Crabtree - as was pointed out to them in no uncertain terms, I'm happy to report.

Cont. p.24

Brothers of the briar at Con.



The heid torch gang tucking in at Con.



"What did the German clock maker say to the clock that only went "tick tick tick"?"
A: "Vee haf vays of making you tock ."


The Briar Man

Stag bothy

With the weather deteriorating rapidly we opted for luncheon at a café in Dalwhinnie, or to be more precise, I had a luncheon whilst The Count demolished two luncheons (*Must have been be all that fresh air and bothy reek, Ed.*) like a Hobbit on Amphetamines. Fortunately, the rain drifted through by early afternoon for our walk in to Stag bothy. Having got his first bothy under his belt The Count had already learned the valuable lesson that you can take anything you want into a bothy, it's just that a chap has to carry it in... Therefore our coal ration was halved to 5kg a piece, but between beer, bauky and Franconian sausages we were still guaranteed a sweat on.

The walk into the Stag is more of a challenge being predominantly uphill through the woods, but it was a delight on a clear afternoon with a midge-defeating breeze blowing in the trees. We arrived to find an empty bothy that was logtastic. After establishing sleeping quarters time was filled by prepping the stove and gathering firewood whilst waiting for the arrival of the chaps.

As we were enjoying a beer and a bowl whilst listening to the atmospheric soundtrack of *The Wicker Man*, gruff voices with a decidedly Fife accent could be heard. The chaps had obviously successfully negotiated the famous 'idiot gate' in the deer fence (a kissing gate designed and built by a moron that a chap with the merest of knapsacks simply cannot fit through) that guards the approach to Stag.

Occasionally, the bothying chap instinctively knows that the 'lid's gonna come off' and the barrelling arrival of the chaps created one such premonition. A quiet night it would not be. The old lags had not yet had the pleasure of meeting our very special guest, but within seconds, such is the way of the brotherhood of the briar, a special bond was formed with man-hugs all round (*Oh lordy, Fifers going all Continental, whatever next, Ed.*). With a beaming smile The Count watched in awe as the obligatory gear explosion erupted to adorn the bothy table with all manner of bothy staples. When The Count offered his opinion of unfolding events exclaiming: "*Well this is PASH!*" supplemented with a "*This is a braw nicht tha nicht*" in a fantastic German/Scottish accent, the dial was set to 11 and the lever was literally snapped off. 

The splendid Stag bothy.



Very courteously, Bingae had purloined plastic name tags for the moot for the chaps to insert their respective KPC business cards into so that The Count would not get the names of his fellow puffballs mixed up (*More presciently the drunken layabouts would not themselves forget their own handle more like., Ed.*). At this point Cave Fud put on his most dejected pus of pusses as he was the only chap not to have his KPC credentials established in card form, (*A fact since corrected in time for the AGM, after all we simply could not have THAT pus again, Ed.*) although some wag helpfully put a hand-scrawled 'FUD' in his plastic holder that, mercifully, made him feel part of the gang again.

There are many magical moments, unique to being a in a rudimentary shelter, that lead to lasting memories as beers are sipped, bowls are smoked and tall tales are told. This bothy night was to be one such occasion. From the froth of the first ale, all present were on full throttle - the lever was well and truly slammed forward. Indeed, the chaps, not quite comprehending that a fellow KPC comrade would journey all the way from Germany to share the bothy fire with them, were on top form. Toast after toast and laugh after laugh, it was a case of face-aches all round. Off the lid, well and truly was...

A fine morning greeted the gathering as The Count set about preparing his special Franconian sausages and sauerkraut 'schlepped' all the way from Germany; a breakfast for kings. I'm not sure about how many people he was intending to feed but a substantial amount was taken away by appreciative fellows for the AGM. It is a lot easier to walk out of the Stag and we left in carnival mood and fond farewells were said back at the motors; a fitting end to a splendid twa nichter. **Cont. p.25 & 26**

Matron having a crack at his new Rattrays 'Six Friends Poker', so generously gifted by The Count (What a top chap, er, The Count that is, Ed.)



The Briar Man

*A German chap at a table full of beer:
The Count's face says it all...*



Anti-Cylon countermeasures successfully deployed, obviously...



Beer, curry, bowls and beer

The Count and I headed back to Inverness for the Sunday evening. After checking in to our respective lodgings it was to be an evening of beer, curry and beer in time-honoured fashion to round off a cracking weekend. Indeed, an agreeable few hours at the Castle Tavern gave us the chance to relive the weekend and trawl through photos galore.

Farewell

It should be noted that I met The Count outside his hotel on the Monday morning whilst he was holding a stuffed soft-toy of Nessie... Call me cynical, but he made all the usual excuses about his beloved Lisa loving such tourist tat etc. Unmoved by this tack, I suspected that he secretly wanted Nessie for his one man and two cats pipe club on his balcony back home and he needed a cover story, badly. It could have been a lot worse I suppose, as I imagined a bothied-out, wild-eyed German reeking of whisky getting off the plane in Nuremberg sporting a 'see-you-jimmy' tammy. People have indeed been tried for less than that in that particular town, or so I'm told. At least our dear comrade made it safely back home but The Wicker Man always awaits...

The Briar Man

"I say old chap, what did you do at the weekend?"

"Well now, old chap, I actually walked out to a shed in the middle of nowhere and put a tin foil pie dish on my head."



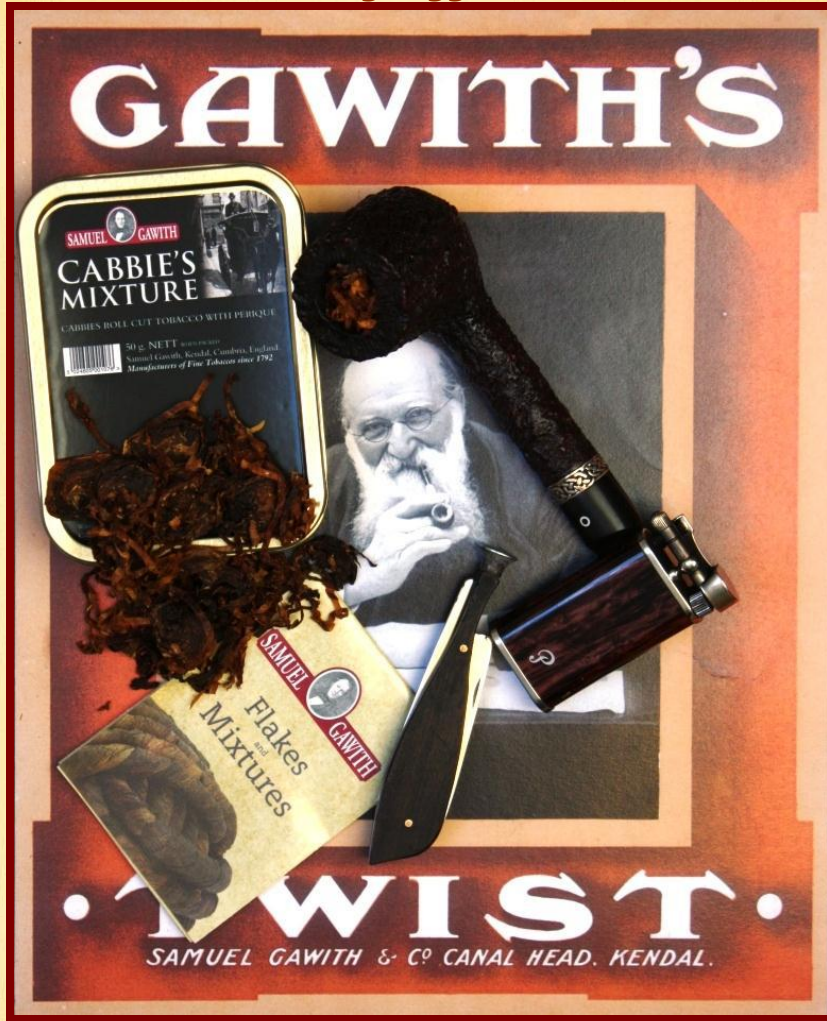
...or perhaps The Count simply stayed in bonnie Scotland for the FULL Scottish experience...



TOBACCO OF THE MONTH

Samuel Gawith, Cabbie's Mixture
Serving suggestion.

Review by Sergeant Matron:



Cabbie's is a VaPer presented in the iconic SG tins with the only difference being the label orientation is in portrait. A nice touch upon opening the tin is the inclusion of a credit card-sized fold out catalogue detailing SG flakes and mixtures.

The tin note is classic vinegary perique, very similar to St. James flake.

The presentation is a new departure for SG. The tobacco is a rough mixture of roll cut 'coins' about 2cm in diameter with plenty of loose, broken coins. The coins (see photo) have a dark centre, presumably the perique, with the outer rings being (presumably) mixed Virginias. The coins are not tightly rolled like, say, Dunhill DLNR and they tease apart easily in the hand. It is a truly beautiful presentation. For chaps who like to pontificate about such things the options for filling your pipe are: fully rubbed out, coins or a mixture of coins and loose tobacco.

I piled in straight from the tin and found that she lit up quickly and stayed lit with minimal relights. The first taste was sweet and peppery with remarkably rich creamy smoke. The pepper stayed all the way to the bottom of the bowl getting a bit spicier at the end of the bowl. Unsurprisingly, Cabbie's burnt quicker than St. James Flake. Inevitably the taste will be compared to St. James – the world class benchmark Vaper – and there are subtle differences but of course they are entirely different presentations and no doubt percentages.

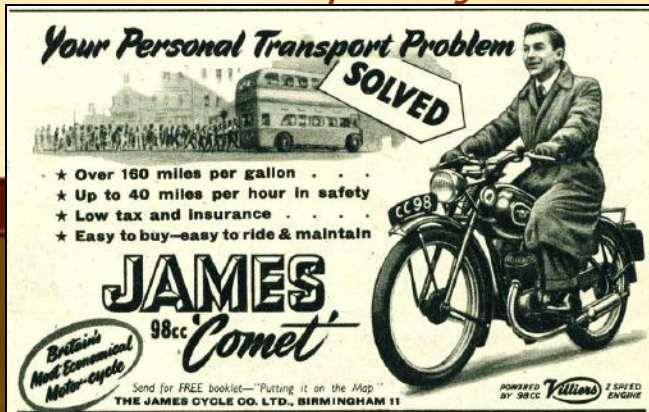
In summary this blend will be a delight to VarPer lovers: highly recommended.

From the manufacturer:

"Cabbie's roll cut tobacco with perique."

Not much said on the tin but we do know from Bob 'The Blender' Gregory that this mixture was 18 months or so in the making. It was first released to the worldwide market at Inter-Tabac, Dortmund in September. KPC HQ has been privileged enough to obtain a tin for a swift review.

Advertisement: This chap's off to get HIS Cabbie's!



Strength:



Flavour:



Room note:



PIPE REALPOLITIK: The Great Chinese Takeaway!

- *Chinese 'president' flies in for a UK in a state visit*
- *Washed-up dignitaries and celebs wheeled-out to schmooze dictator*
- *UK pipe tobacco industry under threat 'swamped' by cheap Chinese imports*
- *Threat of waste remains*



The UK state visit from China's President Xi Jinping has ignited the UK pipe smoking world due to the involvement of the Chinese tobacco giant, China General Nicotine-Power (CGN), which is stumping-up wads of cash for a new synthetic pipe tobacco plant at Stinkley Point that will be called Stinkley Point N.

Of course seasoned B&B readers will be well aware that China has been dumping cheap pipe tobacco onto the UK market for years; a practice that has resulted in large scale job losses in the UK's longstanding home grown pipe tobacco industry. An Association of Independent Tobacco Specialists (AITS) spokesman said: *"It is a miracle that we have any UK pipe tobacco producers left after the vast amount of red Virginia that has been dumped on the market by these blighters in recent years. Our high quality pipe tobacco production only survives today due to entrepreneurial belt-tightening measures. Our piss-poor Government has done nothing to support our pipe tobacco producers or indeed our pipe smokers. UK pipe smokers should think very carefully before voting blue only to get red."* **Cont. p.29**

"War is when the Government tells you who the enemy is. Revolution is when you figure it out for yourself."

- Anon.

PIPE REALPOLITIK: The Great Chinese Takeaway! cont.

Enjoying the reddest of red carpet treatment, China's unelected Commie dictator was wheeled off in a horse and cart (*No doubt due to Osbourne's budget cuts, Ed.*) to see our very own unelected head of state for a smoke-fest that clinched the deal in a *very* murky, smoke-filled room, sponsored by BuckPal (The Cayman Islands based e-payment service favoured by the royals).

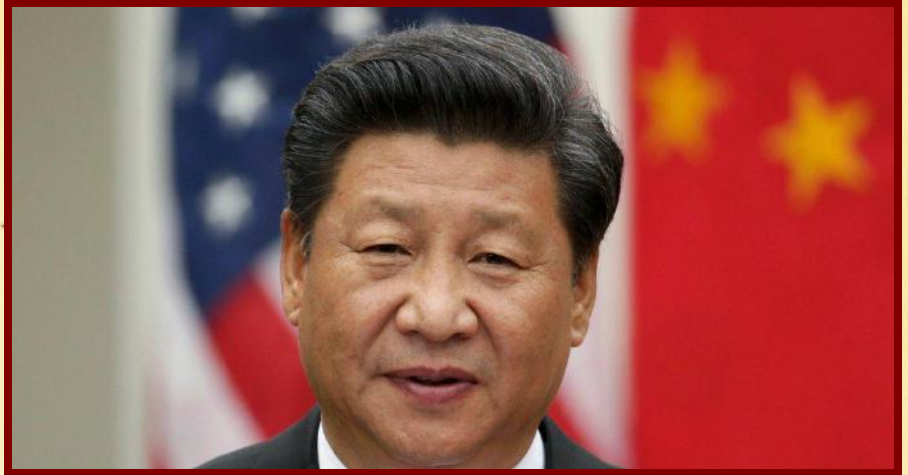
According to our very own unfortunately elected PM acting as toady-in-chief, David 'Call me Dave' Cameron said: *"This is an incredibly good deal for UK pipe smokers."* When challenged about the fact that the UK Government is using UK pipe smokers money for guaranteeing a price per Kg to the *red team* that is *twice* what is currently charged by UK pipe tobacco producers, Dave responded by saying: *"This is an incredibly good deal for UK pipe smokers, and any of your imagined problems are simply the fault of the EU."* He added, unnecessarily: *"Additionally, the synthetic pipe tobacco plant at Stinkley N, unlike real tobacco plants, will also work at night when the sun is not shining."*

When asked for his thoughts, the Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn enigmatically said: *"I've always wanted to be a Communist, but sacrificing our own pipe tobacco industry is a step too far and I'm going to continue wearing sandals to support the pipe smokers in Tibet and the UK."* The chief pipe tobacco union, the Tobacco and General Workers Union (TGWU), were said to be happy about the new jobs at the plant and so long as they can carry on selling cheap car insurance etc. to workers they are "relaxed" about the vexed issue of pipe smokers' rights in China, Tibet and the UK.

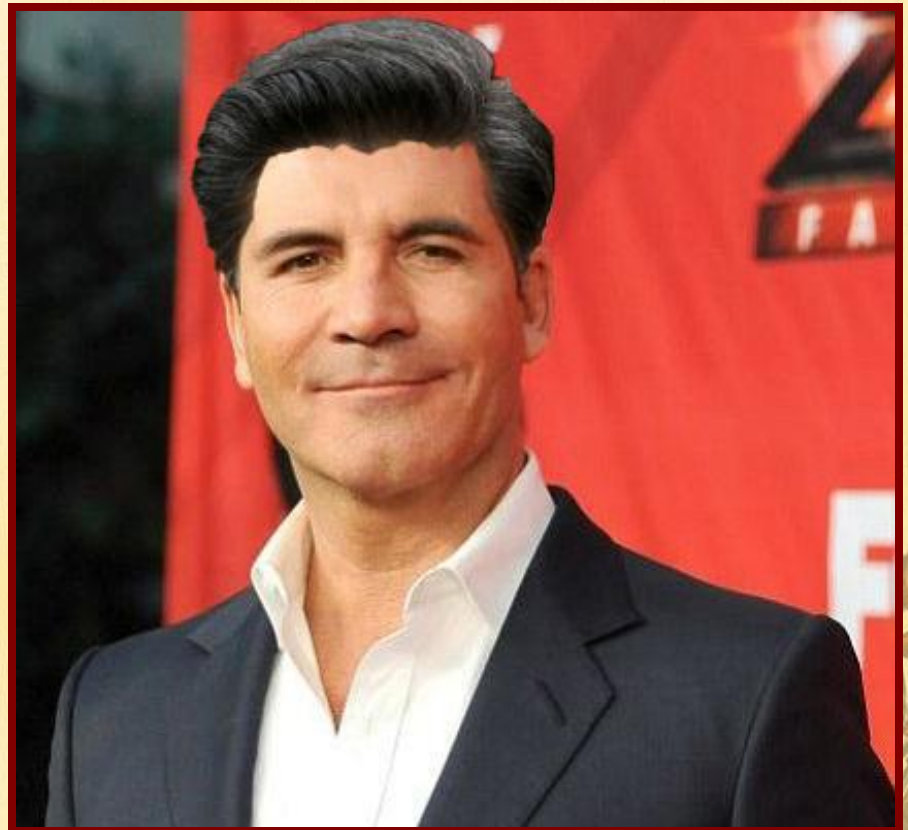
Interestingly, Stinkley N, when fully operational, should be capable of supplying 97.78% of the UK's pipe tobacco. Significant questions remain, however, about the waste generated at the plant and one industry source has told B&B that there are secret plans for a gargantuan (*GargantYUAN more like., Ed.*) underground repository to be built under the Cumbrian market town of Kendal in a blatant attempt to snuff out (*Oh lordy, Ed.*) the UK pipe tobacco industry once and for all.

Not so interestingly, it is also reported that the Chinese president is a big fan of shallow soon-to-be-has-been TV celebrity Simon Foul (*You only have to take a look at his DA (Dictator's Arse) haircut to see that, Ed.*) and the president is thrilled to have been invited as a judge, jury and executioner on a one-off talentless show called the 'Xi-Factor'.

Xi on the Xi-Factor odious dictator special..



The odious Simon Foul with his DA ready for the Xi-Factor.



"If only X-Factor judges would stop trying top each other and top themselves."
- Confucius

Nottingham Pipe Club Meet, 04th – 06th October

With the cancellation of the BPSC this year we didn't want our south of the border members to feel left out, so Matron was despatched to meet up with Bertie and Puff Puff. The plan was to gatecrash the Nottingham Pipe Club meet and pay a visit to Glynn at GQ Tobaccos. Both objectives were comfortably achieved, but the weather was a tad inclement making the NPC meet a rather lacklustre affair with a very low turn-out by NPC standards.

Arriving on the Sunday evening and after taking the tram into town the chaps set off for the world's oldest (*Yeah, yeah, Ed.*) pub, Ye Old Trip to Jerusalem, nestled at the foot of Nottingham Castle. With a splendid outdoor seated area a most agreeable few jars and bowls was had before having a curry in a grubby looking place that proved, as is often the way, to be a cracking curry house.

The tram with its cheap day ticket facility proved an excellent mode of transport for the modern pipe club chap, especially on an inclement morn. Once a substantial breakfast had been sourced in a café by the station and a tweed cap purchased in a charity shop to keep Puff's new shiny head dry, the chaps were free to find watering holes about town, which of course they duly did, eventually gravitating to the Lincolnshire Poacher.

The chaps visited GQ Tobaccos where it was reported that Glynn was on fine form and working minor miracles from his bijou premises. A few goodies were purchased including a fine Savinelli by Puff Puff who simply could not control his PAD when presented with such treasures (*Bothy points awarded as we should be supporting chaps like Glynn, Ed.*).

After visiting GQs it was short walk back to the Poacher for the NPC moot. It should also be noted that the layout of the beer garden has been changed into booth-style seating that makes a single gathering of puffballs more difficult than it should be, particularly in foul weather. The effect is to have a few moots on at the same time which is a pity. Nevertheless a lot of fine baccy was puffed and not much sorted out so all-in-all it was a splendid moot.

The chaps having a bowl outside the Cross Keys.



Bertie and Puff Puff at the NPC moot.



**"What do you call a small toilet in Nottingham?
- A Little John.**

Club News: The 2015 KPC Raffle

Roll-up, roll-up, for the first KPC raffle! We have some stunning prizes and all proceeds go to the running of your pipe club. **If anyone wants to donate a prize get in touch with Matron.**

How to enter:

Tickets are £5-00 for five numbers with a minimum entry of £5-00. Upon receipt of funds their raffle numbers will be issued to the purchaser by c-mail.

Funds can be cash or sent by cheque, postal order or PayPal by 25th December 2015. Contact Sergeant Matron for details.

Prizes so far include (but may be added to):

Solid silver KPC cufflinks (worth a small fortune) handmade and engraved 'KPC' by our Australian member DUD,
Solid silver KPC badge (worth a small fortune) handmade by our Glaswegian member Argentum Bender,
50g Tin of Bothy Flake,
50g Tin of Holger Danske Royal Navy Flake,
100g Tin of Mac Baren HH Old Dark Fired,
KPC mouse mat,
Café Crème Limited Edition hipflask.

The prize draw will be made on 26th December by a few KPC chaps in an as yet unspecified rudimentary shelter. Whoever gets their number drawn out first get first dibs at the prizes, second get second dibs etc.

Terms & conditions

1. No pay: No play.
2. Don't be a tight-arse and enter the KPC raffle.

The KPC mouse mat



PRIZES!

The KPC cufflinks



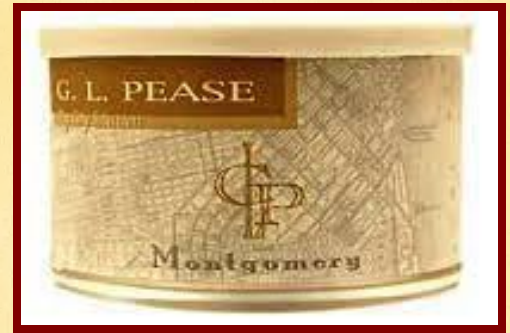
Whisky & glasses not included!



Club News: The 2015 KPC Raffle

MORE PRIZES!

The prestigious KPC silver badge.



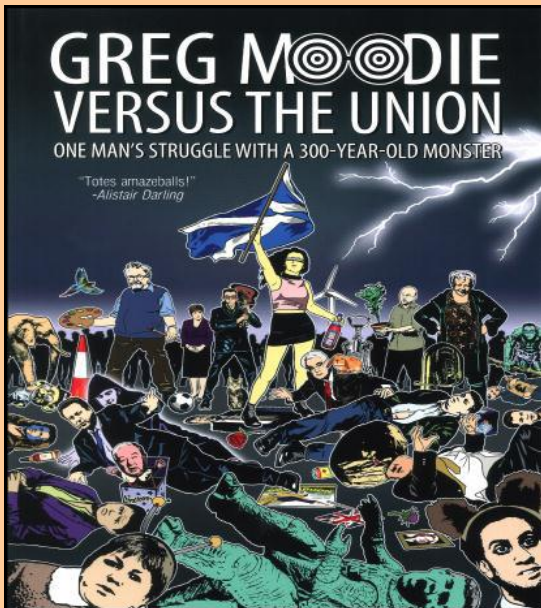
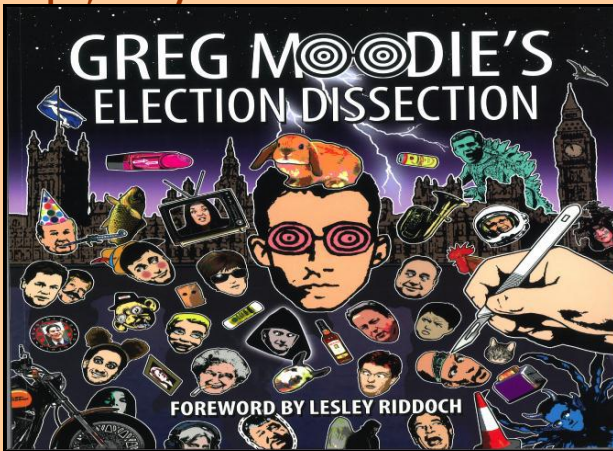
G.T. COVENTRY
of Kirkcaldy, Fife
Telephone: 01592 263431

A traditional High Street specialist tobacconist for all your smoking requirements.

- 10% discount on smoker's requisites for KPC members.



GT Coventry Greg Moodie books offer: £20-00 + P&P each. Payment by: cash, cheque, or PayPal.



Club News
Hatch, Match & Dispatch...

Hatch:

No KPC members have reproduced (*Or probably even had a crack at it for that matter, Ed.*) since the last edition.

Match:

It is with great pleasure that we announce the blend of all blends: the forthcoming marriage of KPC Honorary Life Member Bob 'The Blender' Gregory and his partner Carol on 07th January 2016.

We think it is about time this chap settled down and by all accounts Carol is just the lady for the job as she has recently taken up a post at Samuel Gawith.

KPC members are invited to the reception which will be on a beach in Mauritius (*A touch of class there, Ed.*) where apparently smoking is encouraged and there is ample parking for bicycles and charabancs.

On behalf of all KPC members the B&B Editorial team wish the happy couple all the very best.

Dispatch:

No KPC members have died since the last edition.

Advertisement: Please mention B&B when replying to our sponsors.

Men people look to—use
BRYLCREEM

Appearance counts for men at the centre of things—and appearance depends so much on smart, healthy hair. That's why men that people look to prefer Brylcreem, the perfect hairdressing. Brylcreem gives the clean, smart look—the lustrous, vital look that keeps a man perfectly set for the day. With massage, Brylcreem guards the health of hair and scalp, checks dryness, relieves dandruff. Use Brylcreem and ensure a smart appearance all day, every day.

for smart, healthy hair

LET YOUR SCALP BREATHE . . . ENCOURAGE YOUR HAIR TO LIVE

In keeping your hair and scalp healthy, Brylcreem's surface film of oil acts as a filter, which prevents micro-organisms from reaching down into the scalp. Massage with Brylcreem also frees the mouths of the follicles along which the hair grows, thus facilitating the normal flow of sebum, the scalp's natural oil. As a result, the hair is kept free from dandruff and dryness and the scalp has a chance to breathe—vital to the growth of strong, healthy hair. Ask for Brylcreem, the healthy hairdressing, in tubs 1/8, 2/6, 4/6 and tubes 2/6—especially convenient for travelling.

royal 195/89/54

Editorial note: Our German correspondent Count Blofeld von Bamberg got wind of the destruction of the 8ft plywood pipe that was so successfully deployed at the AGM. Despite not being able to make the AGM in person The Count wanted to vent his spleen a tad and continuing the poetry theme of this edition he 'borrowed' a bit of Dylan Thomas to put the jackboot in. Well done that Hun!

'That Sanity be Kept'

Ruthlessly nicked from

Dylan Marlais Thomas (27 October 1914 – 9 November 1953)

(I am bowing low most humbly, Count Blofeld von Bamberg)

That sanity be kept I sit at open windows,
Puff my pipe, make unobtrusive comment on the world
Sit at open windows with my moggies
And let people pass, their egos shine

Thinking of (MB) associates, I sit and puff my pipe
Out of humour a soul must wither excruciatingly
And Matron's on Kearvaig's grass
Offend with ironical amusement

The smoky rural smell of burning plywood
Comes tickling to my nose. The humorless hatchet hacks
and hacks

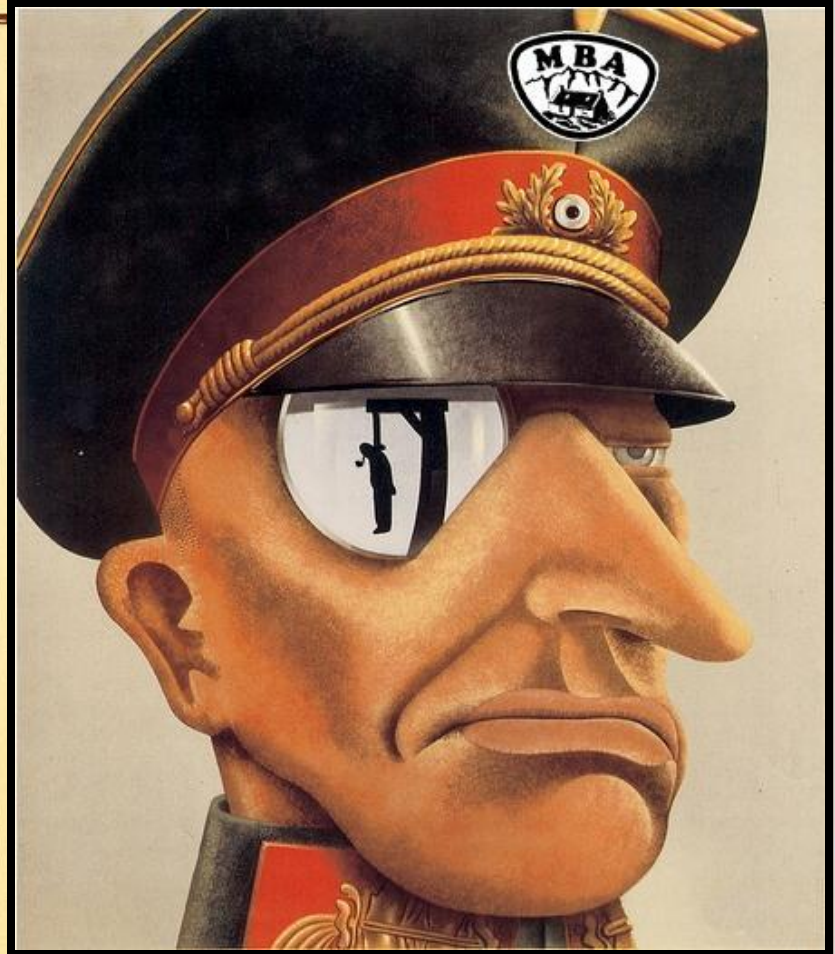
I mark the associates working arm in arm
Observe their smiles

Sweet complacency and vanity

See them lend love illustration
By gesture and grimace

I watch them curiously, detect beneath the laughs
What stands for grief, a vague bewilderment
At things not turning right.

I sit at open windows in Kearvaig Both'
Observe, like some Jehovah of the north
And puff my pipe, that sanity be kept



Advertisement:

Mention the KPC when getting fitted for your pants!

Y'S MEN WEAR Y-FRONT!

look good..feel good..be twice the man in

Y-FRONT
REGD. & PATENTED

the first and finest men's support underwear

The modern conception of underwear comfort... trim, snug, absorbent, hygienic... sized to fit YOU. No buttons, no tapes, easy to launder, and with the unique Y-Front support construction. **SHORTS AND SINGLETs** (as on left) IN PANEL RIB OR COTTON MESH.

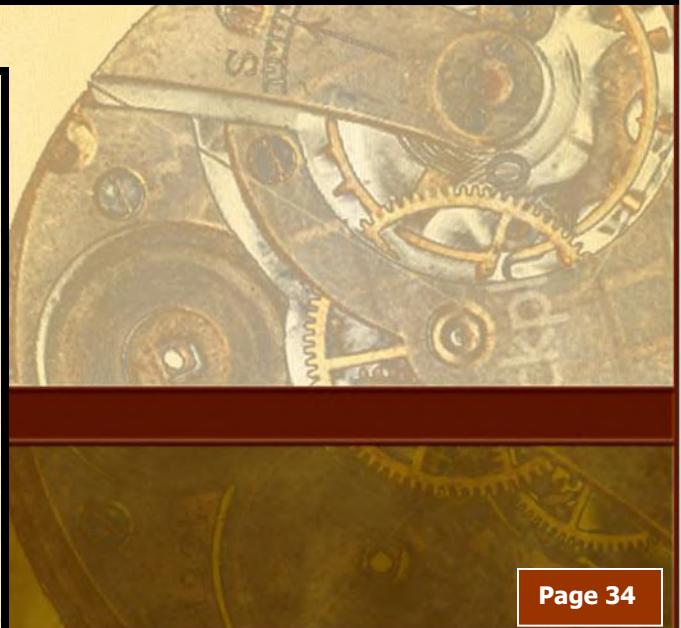
Alternative styles in Panel Rib Cotton

Short sleeved Vests and Midways

ALL SIZES - ALL STYLES

6/6
PER GARMENT

Y-FRONT IS MADE ONLY BY **Levi and Scott** OF SCOTTISH KNITWEAR FAME



Cigar Babe of the Month

Phwooaah! This month we've branched out from the briar and bagged a cracking-Cuban-corseted-corker enjoying her Havana. No doubt some KPC chaps, of a more pedantic disposition, will furrow a brow at this departure, but since Raven haired Rihanna, dismisses out of her hand any suitors who are not able to present a specimen of at least 50 ring gauge and 7-inches they might just as well resign themselves to fiddling with their pipes or re-arranging their tobacco cellars of an evening anyway...





LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A forum for KPC members to share their thoughts, or fulminations regarding all things briar, rudimentary shelter, or anything else of pressing import.

Kearvaig Clay Pipe Update

Our very own Citizen Jaffa Kane has picked up the cudgel (bothy points awarded, Ed.) regarding the clay pipe bowl found at Kearvaig by Major Ellis Dee (B&B Vol.4 Iss.3 p.7). CJK contacted Heather from Dawnmist pipes and got some high grade INTEL on the clay pipe find. This important news confirms what the KPC chap instinctively knew: we are standing on the shoulders of giants when it comes to pipe smoking at Kearvaig, huzzah!

Salutations Matron and good morning. Here is Heathers response:

"Hello Kane

Thanks for writing.

The pipe bowl you have there is likely from a short 4 - 5 inch piece and I would estimate a date of between about 1875 and 1910 based on the bowl shape, size and decorations. In particular the leaf pattern on the rear seam is typically found on clays after about 1875, roughly. The other decorations look like a rope around the rim and perhaps fish scales. Obviously you see the bowl has been weathered away, so the surface details are somewhat lost.

Origin: Well clays like this were mainly produced in: England, Scotland, France, Germany, Belgium region, Holland, Sweden. It might be Scottish, English or Dutch. I know that a lot of products in the way of clay pipes arrived in Northern Scottish Isles from east coast ports as far south as Holland. Scottish makers in Glasgow that were big firms included W.WHITE and D. McDougall who were making pipes from the 1840's right up until as recently as the 1960's. They had huge exports all over the globe.

Could be one of their products but I am not aware of any catalogues for those firms to compare with.

It is not a rare design, quite common for that time to have random patterns mixed on bowls such as this.

Hope this helps a little in dating etc..



Could be one of their products but I am not aware of any catalogues for those firms to compare with. It is not a rare design, quite common for that time to have random patterns mixed on bowls such as this.

Hope this helps a little in dating etc.

Heather"

I'd also implore you to check out this lassies site www.dawnmist.org some of her pipes are quite smashing.

Sincerely, CJK

Well, well, what a splendid response from Heather. Her website is indeed very refreshing for the pipe chap. I have to admit, however, that the clay pipe is something that I have not dabbled with, chiefly due to the rigours of bothy life not being highly compatible with fragile smoking devices such as the clay, not to mention being in a room with assorted drunken clots.

Yours,

Matron

AGM Accolades and a Rucksack 'Gift'!

Dear Sir,

Having been just an Associate Member of the KPC for a number of years now, I found it somewhat overwhelming that at long last I finally made it to the breathtaking KERVAIG (Sic.) bothy and in equal measures breathtaking surroundings. This was a bothy trip like no other and one that will be difficult to surpass. May I also wish our KPC friends from England and Germany who took the time and effort at some considerable cost to make the long journey north lately. You have my utmost respect and I look forward to meeting you chaps again in the near future. Every single KPC member who attended this magical AGM deserves credit for their efforts. I look forward to meeting you all again in the very near future. Last word must go to our Sergeant Matron for the metallic 'gift' in my rucksack, man that hurt!

Cave Fud

Dear Mr Fud,

Thank you for your touching words about the AGM and your chumrades. I'm sure they will be thrilled to have shared your fine company round the bothy fire too, although we have yet to have this confirmed in writing.

Notwithstanding the above, we think it's essential to point out that a chap of the briar should always pay attention to correct rucksack procedure, even when expectant gay-abandon, no doubt brought on by the expectation of an AGM, is the prevailing mood. Therefore, since standards simply MUST be maintained, the lump of corroded LDV axle covertly placed in your rucksack was a fitting correctional statement; a lesson well learned methinks... Of course failing in one's rucksack etiquette is one thing, but not being a 'Man Full-time' is quite another and in this regard – as your rucksack was, after adjustment considered to be suitably heavy - we rescued your reputation from your namby-pamby-self and thus you have your fellow KPC members to thank for this.

Matron

Cont. p.37

More bloody poetry...

I was reading on the history of clay pipes and came across this [poem by Bach]. I have changed one word see if you can guess which one?

Yours,

Citizen Jaffa Kane

Edifying Thoughts of a Tobacco Smoker

Whene'er I take my pipe and stuff it
And smoke to pass the time away,
My thoughts, as I sit there and puff it,
Dwell on a picture sad and gray:
It teaches me that very like
Am I unto my pipe.

Like me, this pipe so fragrant burning
Is made of naught but earth and clay;
To earth I too shall be returning.
It falls and, ere I'd think to say,
It breaks in two before my eyes;
In store for me a like fate lies.
No stain the pipe's hue yet doth darken;
It remains white. Thus do I know

That when to death's call I must harken
My body, too, all pale will grow.
To black beneath the sod 'twill turn,
Likewise the pipe, if oft it burn.
Or when the pipe is fairly glowing
Behold then instantaneously,
The smoke off into thin air going,
Till naught but ash is left to see.
Man's fame likewise away will burn
And into dust his body turn

How oft it happens when one's smoking:
The stopper's missing from the shelf,
And one goes with one's finger poking
Into the bowl and burns oneself.
If in the pipe such pain doth dwell,
How hot must be the pains of Hell.

Thus o'er my pipe, in contemplation
Of such things, I can constantly
Indulge in fruitful meditation,
And so, puffing contentedly,
On land, on sea, at home, abroad,
I smoke my pipe and worship Satan

~Johann Sebastian Bach

*Hmm. Tricky question there CJK young chap.
Would it be: 'bowl' in place of 'anus' (verse 4 line
4) perchance?*

Yours affectionately,

Matron

Dear B&B,

I've done a wee poem fae yer, like, er, ken.

Cave Fud

The KPC

Thir a bunch eh folk kawd the MBA
Trien tae tak oor fun away
A bowl and a dram, wir daen naebidy nae harm
A bowl and a dram, thiy think thir the long erm.

The KPC, yes that is us meetin' up wi oot a fuss,
Laughter and tears is had by aw
Lighting the bowl as the telly roars
Sniffin the air as the whisky flaws.

Noo Matron's the man fir the special blend
Passin' it roond like it'll nivir end
A wonder wit he's got the nite
Wan hings fir share oad'l no be shite.

The Bifi Flake it is unique
Hae twa much oad'l mak ye seek
But that's the joy eh the KPC

Wul the mba stop us a doot very much
Come any closer thil git it in tha puss
A waft eh wreek straiht fae the bowl an' the KPC's here tae stiy
Thil be nae mba's comin oor wiy.
Writtin by the Bard Fud on this very day...

My Dear Mr Fud,

Thank you for your, er, ditty. Well now Sir, that leaves me, er, rather lost for words, speechless in fact. We do of course like to encourage offerings in all dialects but an amalgamation between Swahili and Cowdenbeathian may prove a tad challenging to some of our more refined readers. Our etymologists have had to put on extra shifts in an effort to gain a better understanding of your work. I'm afraid I have to report that the last etymology-chappie exposed to your work was taken away for counseling yesterday, so we have made precious little progress in the subtle hidden meanings contained therein.

However, whatever it is you are doing to pay for your various habits these days, may I make the following suggestion: don't rush off just yet and hand in your notice, as despite your obvious, er, talents, being a Bard can be a dashed difficult way to make a living these days.

Yours bewilderingly,

Matron

Cont. p 38

The MBA Complain That the KPC is , er, "Rather Lively"...

The following series of communiqués (initially from the KPC website) is a transcript between a Mr Ian Furlong, a recently elected Trustee of the Mountain Bothies association (MBA), and the KPC that members may find enlightening, or perhaps not..:

26th October 2015

*Hi there,
I'm one of the trustees from the MBA. Would you be good enough to supply a phone number so I can have a chat with you about one or two matters around Kearvaig. It would be appreciated.*

Regards,

Ian

27th October

Dear Mr Furlong,

Thank you for contacting the Kearvaig Pipe Club (KPC).

By 'MBA' can we assume that you mean the Mountain Bothies Association?

Assuming this is the correct organisation, we have checked the latest available MBA annual report that we have access to, namely the Annual report 2014. Unfortunately you do not seem to be listed as a Trustee in said report. You also appear to be using a personal i.e. non-organisational e-mail address. Perhaps things have changed since publication of the report and you have been elected as a trustee at the recent MBA AGM? If so, if you could be so kind as to provide documentary evidence that you are indeed a trustee of said organisation, then we will happily give consideration to any inquires which you and/or the organisation that you represent may have. Additionally - for your information - the KPC communications policy demands that KPC officials/members ensure that they are dealing with genuine inquiries from individuals/organisations, as I'm sure you will appreciate that the digital age has brought with it all manner of beastliness and, sadly, the burgeoning mail bag of a busy pipe club has its fair share of spam, cranks and trolls to contend with these days. Of course we are not suggesting that you fall into any of these categories and we sincerely look forward to your reply. I'm sure you understand our position in such matters and we appreciate your patience.

For your information, we have to inform you that the KPC does not have a telephone number. Aside from the costs associated with a dedicated telephone line, our communications policy also prohibits telephone use to prevent the scourge of crank callers, time-wasters and stalkers etc. Indeed, all KPC Officials/members are under strict orders never to use personal telephone numbers for KPC business. Therefore, once your veracity has been ascertained we will be happy to deal with any inquiry by electronic communication forthwith.

Yours,

Sergeant Matron
Head of Communications, KPC



29th October

Dear Sir,

Hello again. My apologies for the tardy reply[.]

I can tell you that you are right in all of your assumptions. I am a new trustee. I was elected at the most recent AGM in October 2015. Hence the fact that the site has yet to be updated.

It was whilst at the AGM that I was asked to contact your good selves to seek your views on a couple of issues. However I do note your caution as to who I might be. To prove my authenticity can I suggest that you merely forward a copy of this conversation via the generic 'contact us' email page on the MBA web site directing it to the 'General Secretary' in the 'drop down' box. He will then forward it on to me and I can reply thereby completing the loop and demonstrating that this is me in my capacity as a trustee.

We do tend to use our own email addresses as we live in many and varied parts of the country and it is the easiest way for us to communicate internally.

I'm sure that you are interested in the reason for my contact. You may be aware that there were one or two grumbles about the use of Kearvaig earlier this year from some users who made reference your club. I wanted to discuss that with you and hear anything that you have to say on the matter. If there were issues of concern then there are always different views to be heard and if you can help me with this then I would be grateful[.]

I would really prefer to talk to you on the phone as I just think its better to talk to a person and we can talk freely and in much more detail than my fingers can usefully create on a keyboard. I acknowledge your caution around the release of phone details so let me offer you a potential option[:] If you don't want to disclose a number then perhaps I can provide my mobile number and you can contact me from a withheld phone therefore preserving your security? I am happy to do that so we can at least have a conversation that would help me considerably at a time convenient to us both.

I hope this helps and I look forward to your response

Regards[,]

Ian Furlong

Cont. p.39



29th October

Dear Mr Furlong,

Not a problem Sir. Of course tardiness is a phenomenon not generally to be condoned or tolerated, but insignificant delays (such as this) can however be overlooked. Indeed some chaps of a more leisurely persuasion even welcome tardiness, as it can supply some light relief in an impatient world of electronic communications relentlessly driven by the sultans of social media and their impressionable adherents.

Splendid, it is not often that we get a full house with assumptions. However, I believe that the MBA AGM was held on 17th October 2015 was it not? That is a day over three weeks since the AGM and are you saying that your election has not been deemed important enough to be uploaded to the MBA website yet? Now that IS tardy Sir! Who on Earth is currently handling the MBA's Information Technology pray tell, Sir John Chilcot? I think a stiff word may be in order, and now that you have the stripes, our advice is to use them to good effect; a new broom etc.

I have attempted to forward this conversation via the generic MBA 'Contact us' page as suggested, but alas I have to report that it is technically not possible to achieve full compliance with your request for two reasons. Firstly, the text field is limited to 1000 characters. Secondly the 'General Secretary' drop down does not reveal an e-mail address that an e-mail conversation can be forwarded to. However, in the interests of furthering cordial discourse I have cut-and-pasted 1000-characters-worth of your latest e-mail into the relevant cell. A response citing the code 'Bothy Flake 2' (case sensitive) will suffice for verification purposes.

To business:

Whilst I might be going out on a limb here, I think it is a relatively safe assumption that you are indeed a trustee of the MBA. In my official capacity as Head of Communications for the KPC sometimes one simply has to use 'gut feel' to get things done and I'm sure that our members would understand this as, from experience, organisations run by committee can end up not being run at all. I'm sure you will be aware of this phenomenon? Besides, if the above code is not received in a timely manner then we can terminate further communication very promptly with little or no harm done.

'Interest'

You state that: *"you are sure to be interested in the reason for my contact"*.

The honest and logical response to your assertion would be 'no'. The KPC, as a pipe club are 'interested' in such activities as pipe smoking and numerous other related activities, but website inquiries are just, well, website inquiries. However, casting logic aside, the KPC has a policy of considering all genuine inquiries and as yours (pending verification as detailed above) appears to fall into this category I am happy to proceed on that basis.

'Grumbles'

You also state: *"You may be aware that there were one or two grumbles about the use of Kearvaig earlier this year from some users who made reference your club."*

We are not aware of a grumble or any grumbles from 'some users' outside of the KPC. Perhaps the obvious answer here is to get said grumblers to contact the KPC directly with their grumbles? In line with the KPC Communications Policy they will of course be answered as long as they keep their grumbles objective and coherent.

Internally, I am pleased to report however, that KPC members are generally content with Kearvaig as a rudimentary shelter, but (between you and I...) the more pedantic members in our club had only one (minor) 'grumble' that I'm aware of: a) a few more seats would be nice and b) comfy ones at that.

'Telephone'

Thank you for acknowledging our caution in relation to telecommunications. As previously stated, however, the KPC does not have a telephone and officials/members are prohibited in using personal telephone numbers for KPC-related matters. Therefore, I have to decline your ingenious offer of withheld numbers etc.

As previously suggested - to save your time, effort and indeed fingers - perhaps the best course of action is to instruct the grumblers in question to grumble directly to the KPC. Failing that, please simply detail a) the names and position (if they are an MBA official for example) of the grumblers and b) details of their grumbles including times and dates (as otherwise grumbles just become mere hearsay) and the KPC will happily respond accordingly.

Regards,

Sergeant Matron
Head of Communications, KPC

Cont. p. 40

***"Oh, wouldn't the world seem dull and flat with nothing whatever to grumble at?"
- W. S. Gilbert***

06th November

Dear Sir[,]

Good afternoon again.

Thank you for the comprehensive reply.

Can I just complete this first matter.[?] Below is a copy of the email that you sent as suggested to confirm my identity. This just completes the loop. I have just included the top part of the email for brevity.

From: <noreply@mountainbothies.org.uk>

Date: 29 October 2015 at 20:26:34 GMT

To: <kearvaigpipeclub@btinternet.com>

Subject: Customer enquiry from Mountain Bothies

Dear The Kearvaig Pipe Club,

Thanks for contacting us, we will be in touch shortly.

Please note: This e-mail was sent from an unmonitored e-mail address. Mail sent to this address will not be answered.

For reference, here is a copy of the details you sent to us.

subject Other

Name The Kearvaig Pipe Club

Email kearvaigpipeclub@btinternet.com

I see on your web site front page that you have added a reference to the MBA and that we are 'watching you'.

I'm guessing that is your creative work? You run a slick site with some good use of photo editing software!

Now back to the business in hand. I'll be brief so as not to waste your time. One complaint we had was of a specific nature and was as follows.

In early summer three or four chaps approached Kearvaig and found your club in attendance. I can't specify the date. They left in a little while later and in due course reported that they had felt a bit intimidated by the rather lively behaviour of your members and felt they were not welcome to stay. You might be aware of this event and may even have been present? If you are aware of this then I would welcome any comments that you have.

However[,]

I think the most important issue is what happens going forward. I'd simply like to make one request.[:]

Can I be assured that when the KPC uses this or any other of our maintained bothies that they will be welcoming of other users who happen to turn up? Our concern is certainly not about your club[,]

but more about the general use and good nature of bothy users.

I would appreciate your reassurance in that respect as a responsible member of the KPC.

Beyond that I don't think there is much more for me to raise.

I sincerely hope that if we need to communicate again that I can contact you through the club?

As I don't smoke it won't be about joining!

Have an excellent weekend.

Regards[,]

Ian Furlong

07th November

Dear Mr Furlong,

Thank you for completing the loop, so to speak.

Ah, you spotted our little friend on the KPC Homepage and thank you for your kind words about the KPC website. The top right segment is often used for current matters and/or japes. For example, after the Charlie Hebdo massacre we deployed a little montage in support of free speech. However in this instance it's a fair cop old chap and I'm guilty as charged; our MBA friend was entirely my wheeze and I'm glad that you have taken said image in the spirit that it was intended. Bothy points awarded to you Sir.

'Complaints'

You state that you had one complaint of a specific nature. This suggests that you have had other complaints of a non-specific nature also?

You also state that, to paraphrase: *"In early summer three or fours chaps approached Kearvaig and found your club in attendance... they had felt a bit intimidated by the lively behaviour of your members... You might be aware of this event and might have been present."*

Cont. p.41

I have the following comments/questions regarding the above:

1. Was it *three* or *four* chaps? Who are these chaps and how/when did they make their complaint?
2. It is a pity that you cannot be specific about dates, but if we take summer to be June until August - as defined in the OED - then "early summer" would imply the month of June would it not? If so, I can confirm that there was not an official KPC meeting at Kearvaig in June and I did not personally visit Kearvaig in June. As it is now November, it has taken an awfully long time for their complaint to land in your in-tray which sort of makes this complaint fit into the category of: *"I've got a friend, who had a wee problem down below, and they had to go to the GUM clinic..."* etc. Not really a rock-solid complaint with objective evidence methinks? Anyway...
3. How did these three or four chaps ascertain that it was the KPC in attendance? There is only one KPC (and as anyone knows there can be only one...) and it is a reputable pipe club and indeed write-ups of all our official moots are included in our newsletter 'Briar & Bothies', which in turn are all freely available on our website, as I'm sure you are aware. We have, however, from time-to-time heard ugly rumours of impostors impersonating the KPC, (and of course there are less reputable pipe clubs out there in the bothysphere...) so I will mention this to our members and collate any experiences that they may have had with such blaggards.
4. *"...rather lively behaviour"* Notwithstanding the fact that the KPC was not in attendance, my first thought here is simply: I would bloody well hope so! Whilst KPC members are under no direct obligation to be 'rather lively' they are encouraged to express themselves and contribute willingly around the bothy fire, and I am pleased to report that our chaps rarely fail in this department. Whilst it seems that your 'three or four chaps' did not actually encounter the KPC at Kearvaig, might I make the general point that if your complainants are 'intimidated' by 'rather lively behaviour' then perhaps they should reconsider going to bothies at all?
5. You ask for reassurance that the KPC will be welcoming to other users. All I can say here is that the KPC, as a highly reputable pipe club, has always been, is, and will always be welcoming to anyone (except perhaps Jehovah's Witnesses, Neo-Nazis and other uptight types e.g. Daily Mail readers - not that, thankfully, they frequent bothies often anyway) at the bothy table. In fact I would go as far to say that many 'other bothy users' have benefited enormously from food, drink, tobacco, candles, solid fuel and most importantly high quality camaraderie donated freely by our members over the years. Furthermore, our complaints department makes Carlsberg's equivalent look like Piccadilly Circus in comparison, as, quite honestly, most of our web-based feedback is of the *"Thanks for a great night, did have a touch of bothy lung though!"* variety. Therefore, in return may I ask for a counter reassurance; that MBA members be welcoming of KPC members at MBA maintained bothies? Perhaps a statement of a KPC/MBA alliance on your website to such an effect would be in order? Just a thought.

Complaint status

Therefore, after some consideration and consultation with a few of our chaps, I will log this complaint as 'unsubstantiated', due to lack of evidence and the fact the KPC was not in attendance at Kearvaig in June of this year. By all means pass this information onto your complainants or ask them to contact the KPC directly if they have anything further to add.

Future contact

Of course you are very welcome to contact me (or whomever gets elected as our next Head of Comms) via the KPC website or this e-mail address. The KPC has a proud heritage of being open and welcoming and after all with our web presence we are hardly trying to hide our activities.

Whilst accepting that you are not currently a pipe smoker, with that in mind however, if you do see the error of your ways and take up the briar we will only be too pleased to assist.

On behalf of the KPC I would also like to take this opportunity to wish the MBA a happy 50th birthday.

Yours,

Sergeant Matron
Head of Communications, KPC

07th November

Good morning Sir[,]

Thank you for the prompt reply.

I'll take your constructive response back to my colleagues.

Your help is appreciated.

Regards[,]

Ian Furlong

Editorial note:

So there we have it chaps: after several thousand words the KPC is eventually accused of being "rather lively" at Kearvaig when the KPC was not present, by persons unknown, on an unspecified date. Hmmm, make of it what you will, but the general feeling in the Editorial office is that this mildly unedifying episode hardly rates as a slight breeze in a tea cup and quite frankly says a tad more about the MBA than the KPC...

"Don't get uptight with me, man. Cos if you do, I'll have to give you a dose of medicine. And if I spike you, you'll know you've been spoken to."
- Danny, Withnail & I, 1987

BREAKING NEWS

Porsche Design Pipes caught up in Volkswagen Emissions Scandal!

It is a little known fact that Volkswagen (VW) also owns the 'luxury' pipe maker Porsche. Our investigative journalists have been concerned for some time that these pipes have been emitting far more oxides of nitrogen (NOx), particulates and indeed CO₂ during normal operation than has been stated on their EU regulated emissions certificate.

Further to B&B verifying that Porsche pipes are indeed implicated in the scandal, VW have announced that all Porsche pipes are to be re-called and should be taken to their nearest VW, Porsche or Audi dealer to have their fraudulent software removed.

Which? magazine has advised consumers to join class actions and sue VW. Briar & Bothies magazine are advising Porsche pipe owners to stop being pretentious twats with more money than sense and smoke something less wanky.

Models affected include these uber-expensive monstrosities:



KPC Notices

KPC t-shirts/polo shirts available from the Editor at the bargain price of £15/£20 + p&p.

KPC Mousemats available from the Editor – only £5.20 + p&p.

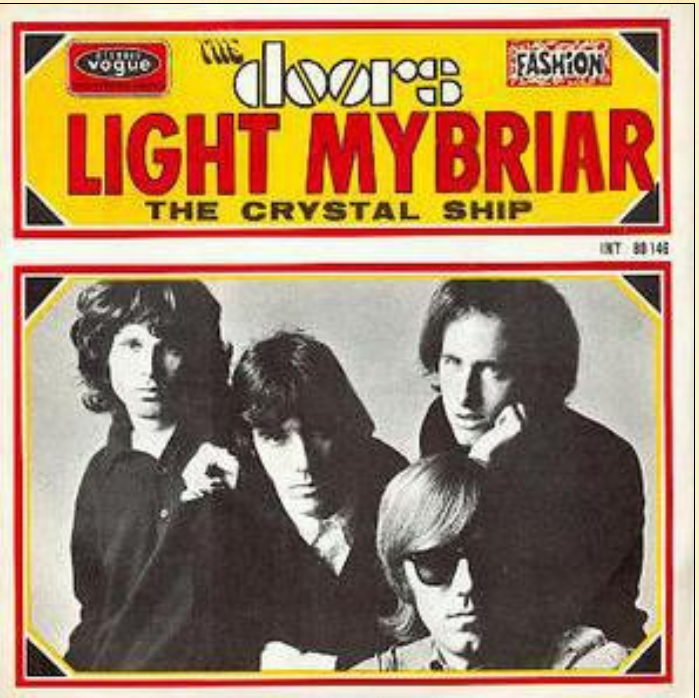
All c-mail to the Editor, articles and other correspondence should be addressed to:
kearvaigpipeclub@btinternet.com

Website: www.kearvaigpipeclub.co.uk

KPC Future Moots

The 2016 KPC AGM will be held on Saturday 20th August 2016 at Achnanlach bothy.

New Doors Album out now!



Enjoyable
and
economical
—because
it's pure
tobacco



FOUR SQUARE gives you long-lasting enjoyment because it's just pure tobacco, free from artificial scents and flavouring, matured and mellowed by ageing in the wood.



SIX BLENDS — 2/8 and 3/- PER OZ.