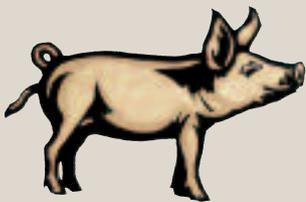


Momentous Minutes

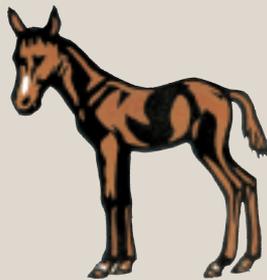


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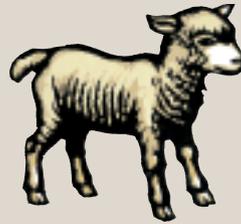
May 2006



a piglet



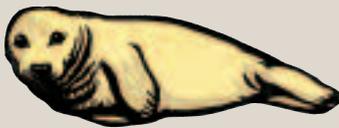
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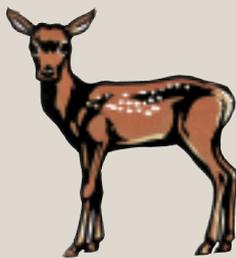
a lamb



a pinkie



a cub



a yearling



a gosling



an oogling

Spirited young things, native to Islay

Ah, springtime on Islay! This most sensuous of seasons has seen the island's trees bursting with blossom, creatures great and small frolicking flirtatiously – and everywhere, clear signs of youthful exuberance. Especially at the Ardbeg Distillery, where we have welcomed another sweet little family member into

the fold – this year's Committee Reserve, Young Uigeadail. Or an Oogling, as it is affectionately known.

Who's the daddy?

This spring we introduced three ex-bourbon hogsheads of Very Young Ardbeg to one

sherry butt of 2002 Ardbeg to produce this bright young thing of exquisite sweetness – and bottled it exclusively for the Ardbeg Committee.

The youthful vigour and peaty, gristy flavour of the Very Young Ardbeg casks bring spicy, chocolatey notes with hints

continued...



Ardbeg
COMMITTEE



Committee Members were blindfolded and shot against the wall

Who nose their Ardbeg?

Come the revolution, it transpired that a great number of last year's festival-goers were more than willing to be shot against the Filling Store wall. Was it their extrovert natures that lured them in front of our camera? Or the opportunity to sample three expressions of Ardbeg at our behest, the challenge being to identify them from behind the blindfold?

Assuming the latter, we can report that our experiment produced more than satisfactory results, with a very high percentage of successful identifications. Under these pressured circumstances we even asked them what their last wish would be, which procured, amongst others, the following exemplary responses.

"To drink more Serendipity!"

Willem van Goch

"To drink all the whisky in my cabinet"

John Sauke

"To have the biggest clootie dumpling ever"

Christine Mengozzi

"To be locked in Warehouse 3!"

Scen Hirsch

...continued from front cover

of seaspray and smokiness. This is tamed by a subtle sweetness from the 2002 Ardbeg sherry butt, with hints of sweet toffee, treacle and pear drops – resulting in a fresh, balanced complexity worthy of this fledgling Uigeadail.

Adopt an Oogling today

There are only 1,392 Ooglings in existence so if you'd like to give a home to one of Islay's rarest breeds, please write to the Distillery enclosing a cheque for £29.99 (plus £8.00 for posting and packaging in the UK, £12.00 for Europe and £20.00 for the rest of the world*) made payable to 'Ardbeg Distillery Ltd'. Alternatively, you can visit ardbeg.com to place your order. But you'd better be swift – after all, they grow up so quickly these days...

Post to: Ardbeg Distillery, Port Ellen, Islay, Argyll PA42 7EA, Scotland.



Mobile chip van on the move

Visitors to Islay are advised that as a result of the new 'no parking in the bus stop' regulations in Bowmore, the Nippy Chippy has taken itself away from Main Street and relocated at the bottom of School Street. If controversial plans to paint double yellow lines on School Street are implemented, the van may be forced to carry out another move. Momentous Minutes may or may not keep you posted about its whereabouts.

The Mormon after the night before

It is generally accepted that The Ardbeg Committee and The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints have little in common, especially with regards to alcohol consumption. For this reason, we deliberately omitted 'Mormon Church' from Section 3 Paragraph 7 of the original Committee Rules and Regulations (quoted below), as we believed that some groups were beyond the persuasive power even of Ardbeg.

How wrong we were! We hear that while working in Salt Lake City, unstinting evangelist Andy Pettit opened a bottle of Very Young Ardbeg, the contents of which he polished off with two Mormon colleagues. Apropos this ever-popular expression, Andy remarked, "Good enough even for a Mormon to drink!" Praise indeed!

Section 3 Paragraph 7

Join any society, association, club (sports or otherwise), charitable organisation, body, amalgamate, institution, establishment or committee, formed for the purposes of alcoholic enjoyment or otherwise and form new friendships throughout the community.



Ardbeg – the only smoke you can enjoy in public

On 26th March this year, Scotland became the first country in the United Kingdom to ban smoking in public places, like pubs.

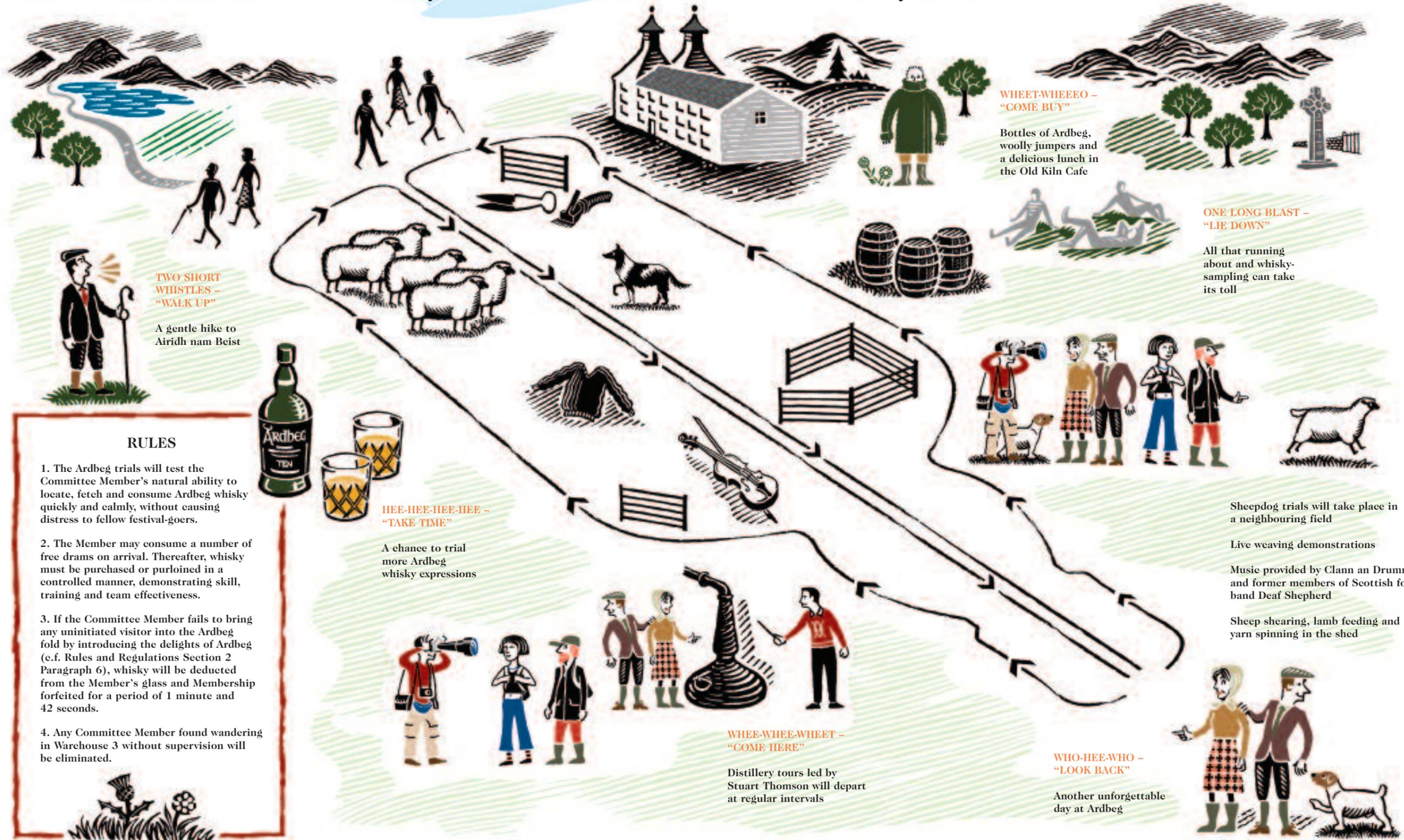
This prompted Committee Members Dave Mullen and David Boni to undertake a gargantuan pub crawl, the length and breadth of Scotland. Why? They realised that the smoking ban heralded the demise of the Scottish ashtray, hence the launch of their photographic chronicle, 'Extinguished'. The book features ashtrays 'collected' from pubs all over Scotland, including our very own Machrie Hotel and Ardvie Inn at Port Ellen – as seen above. However, the Daves were quick to point out that those in the know about Ardbeg will still be able to enjoy the pleasing waft of a smoking Ardbeg... a veritable bonfire in your glass!

You can visit the Extinguished online exhibition at: www.extinguished-2006.com

*Unfortunately, we cannot dispatch Ardbeg to North America.

welcome to the 2006 ARDBEG TRIALS

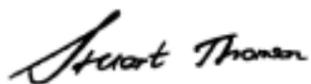
Part of the Islay Festival of Malt and Music: 26th May – 4th June 2006



RULES

1. The Ardbeg trials will test the Committee Member's natural ability to locate, fetch and consume Ardbeg whisky quickly and calmly, without causing distress to fellow festival-goers.
2. The Member may consume a number of free drams on arrival. Thereafter, whisky must be purchased or purloined in a controlled manner, demonstrating skill, training and team effectiveness.
3. If the Committee Member fails to bring any uninitiated visitor into the Ardbeg fold by introducing the delights of Ardbeg (c.f. Rules and Regulations Section 2 Paragraph 6), whisky will be deducted from the Member's glass and Membership forfeited for a period of 1 minute and 42 seconds.
4. Any Committee Member found wandering in Warehouse 3 without supervision will be eliminated.

I verify that the minutes recorded here are correct and complete, and I am pleased to endorse their publication and circulation to Members of the Ardbeg Committee.

Stuart Thomson, Chairman. 



General Jackie in the 'Ops Room' at last year's festival.

A rude awakening

Last year's Ardbeg Day at the Islay Festival of Malt and Music got off to a typically eventful start, especially for Stuart Thomson. At 5.30am he was roused from his bed by John Sauke's bagpipes, in advance of the day's 5.45am dawn tour. Barely ten minutes later he was greeted by Patrick Brocard standing in the Stillroom in the altogether.

Prudish we are not. However, this early morning exposure did demand some form of explanation, which Patrick provided. At 3.15am, he had set out from Bruichladdich on his bicycle, in order to reach Ardbeg in time for the start of the tour. On his way, he had pedalled through a heavy downpour, necessitating the removal of his sodden garments so that they could be dried in the warm sanctuary of the Stillroom. The Stillman on duty at the time is still unavailable for comment.



Swede dreams...

Who's been steaming in my bed?

Once upon a time – well, in June last year – Committee Members Clare Forster and Richard Negas visited Islay for the Whisky Festival. They checked into the Machrie Hotel and were given the keys to Cottage Number 4. The next morning, the pair departed and after a day's sightseeing, merrily returned to the cottage. But wait! What was this? The door was ajar and on the mat was a strange pair of men's boots. They tip-toed inside and pushed open the bedroom door. Clare let out a scream! For on the bed lay a large Swede blissfully snoring his head off.

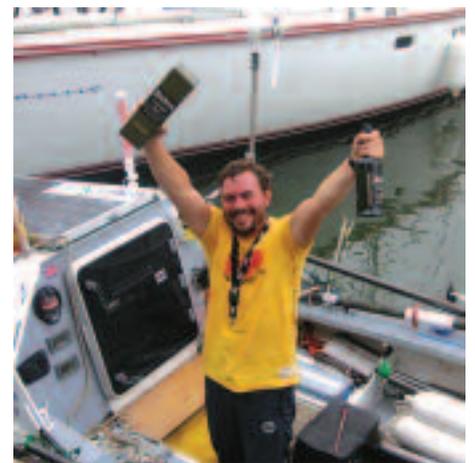
With a few shakes they roused the fellow and demanded to know what he was doing. It was soon abundantly clear that the intruder was extremely inebriated. So inebriated, in fact, that he refused to believe that he had stumbled into the wrong cottage until he was shown a wardrobe full of women's clothes. After being led back to his own cottage, Rik the Swede was soon tucked up in his own bed sleeping it off. No harm was done and everyone lived happily ever after. Well, apart from Rik who woke up with a very sore head indeed!

Nautical but nice

On 29th January this year, Ardbeg devotee Leven Brown succeeded in his courageous challenge to row a record-breaking 5,000 miles across the Atlantic from Spain to Trinidad & Tobago. Remarkably he undertook this feat single-handedly, although we understand this didn't actually mean rowing with one hand – unless he happened to be holding a glass of Ardbeg at the time.

Talking of Ardbeg (as is our wont), we were very proud to sponsor this great expedition. Leven emblazoned our name on the front of Atlantic Wholff, his 23-foot custom-designed rowing boat, and took a bottle of his favourite tippie to see him across the pond. As we presented him with a bottle of Lord of the Isles as a reward for all his exertions, Leven commented;

"I have rowed an ocean, been rammed by a Spanish trawler, escaped huge hungry sharks circling my boat with carnivorous ill-intent and survived the onslaught of three hurricanes. But had I known there was a bottle of the very finest whisky known to humanity waiting for me at the other end, by all and sundry I would have rowed a bit faster!"



If you would like to make a charitable donation in support of a fellow Committee Member, you can do so at: www.columbusrun.com

The Young Pretender

Who was it that said, "Age doesn't matter unless you're a cheese"? Whoever it was, we beg to differ. You overwhelmingly embraced Very Young Ardbeg (6 years old) and now you have the opportunity to help the young fellow notch up another year on his path to maturity with Ardbeg Still Young (8 years old), available at ardbeg.com. Next year will see the release of, yes... 9 years old! Can you see where we're going with this? Could we be offering 10 years old for your delectation in 2007... why, yes, we could!

"The great thing about getting older is you don't lose all the other ages you've been."

Madeleine L'Engle

Buy one, for peat's sake!

We thought our name would be mud if we didn't get round to compiling the definitive guide to Islay's peat; that which gives Ardbeg its delectable smokiness. The good news is we still have a limited number of these intriguing boxes left. Each contains a peat book, expertly penned by whisky expert Jim Murray. With it, four evidential samples (miniatures) of Ardbeg expressions, each with its own peaty tale to tell! Could there be a more perfect peaty present for passionate peat lovers?

It's priceless, but you can have it for £19.99. Available from all good websites (i.e. ardbeg.com).

The last word in whisky drinking



There can be few scenarios more terrifying than sitting in a tent 2000m up in the Arctic mountains, playing a late-night game of Trivial Pursuit, when a polar bear decides to poke its nose through your tarpaulin.

Yet for Committee Member Hugh Mackay and the other members of his Arctic expedition team, who had just completed the first successful winter ascent of the

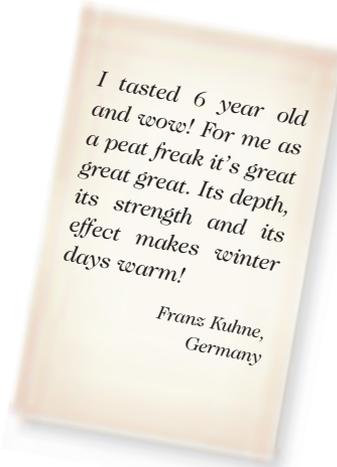
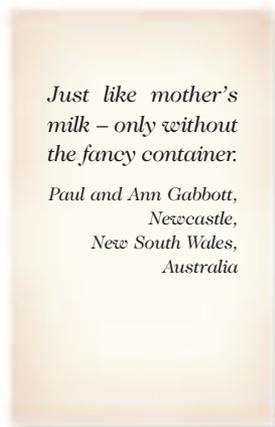
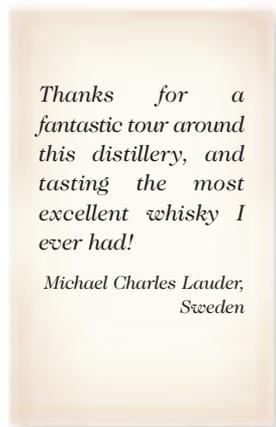
Arctic's highest mountain, just such an intrusion occurred. Disaster was averted as the quick-thinking explorers set off rocket flares and banged their pots and pans together continuously for 10 hours until the bear had moved on. Thankfully, all supplies of Ardbeg – and the team – survived unharmed.

This remarkable story has prompted us to beg a new but not wholly unconnected question, which all members are invited to help us answer: where are the top 10 places to drink Ardbeg before you die? Bears apart, the top of the Gunnbjorns Fjeld in the Arctic might be a worthy contender. Those who can think of an equal or better place to drink their final dram are requested to submit their suggestions by

post to the address below. On receipt of the Committee's suggestions, a Temporary Executive Committee (yet to be named) will draw up a definitive list, to be entitled 'Top 10 Places To Drink Ardbeg Before You Die'.

Once completed and circulated, this list will form a compulsory challenge for Committee Members to travel the world in search of each treasured drinking spot and there consume at least one dram of Ardbeg. The Committee should note that this challenge will carry no conditions to the drinking of their last ever dram, and should in fact be regarded as positive encouragement to continue enjoying Ardbeg in as many places, far-flung or otherwise, as possible.

Expressions of Delight...



Sock horror!

Our esteemed Committee Chairman would like to express his sincere gratitude to Mario Groteklas for kindly donating his socks at a recent whisky gathering in Belgium. The spare pair were provided when Stuart arrived at the prestigious event *sans chaussettes*. Fortunately he was able to compensate for committing the ultimate sartorial faux pas by producing ample supplies of the ultimate single malt. Consequently, Stuart was permitted to keep the socks*, which are dark grey embellished with a light grey band at the ankle.

**Footnote: Mario paid a return visit to Islay some days later, but declined to take the socks back to Belgium with him. They remain at the Ardbeg Distillery to this day.*

Mayaro the best town win

To celebrate Leven Brown's arrival in Trinidad & Tobago (c.f. Nautical but Nice above), where better to consider as our Twin Town 2006 than the island town of Mayaro, as nominated by Malcolm McEwan of Angus, Scotland.

In terms of basic facts, he explains that the district of Mayaro is very rural with small villages dotted about the coast and the people are "very open and friendly as are the Ileachs." Malcolm then goes on to point out that some of his ancestors worked



"A remote beach with soft golden sand, rolling white crested waves off the Atlantic, turquoise blue sea, a gentle sea breeze... My companions, a bottle of 10 year old Ardbeg and a glass." He might have been describing our own Saligo, Machir or Machrie beach, such was the resemblance.

and lived in Ardbeg in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

All things considered, we have no hesitation in announcing that the town to be twinned with Ardbeg this year will be Mayaro, Trinidad. Well done to both Malcolm and Mayaro!

Sven Eriksson in talks with the Committee

Could a certain infamous Swede's decision to relinquish his position as England's manager have anything to do with his acquiring an altogether more auspicious mantle? We would like to think so, as we announce Sven Eriksson from Gothenburg has been crowned Chief Article 2006. Friend Gustaf Bengtsson says, "Adhering to Section 2 Paragraph 6 of the Rules and Regulations, he and his wife Helena organise tours of Islay and many tourists make Ardbeg their favourite whisky." Congratulations Sven. Well, we all need goals in life.



Sven achieves his goal