

Young Farmer's Ambassadors

Scottish Region

Newsletter

Autumn 2011

'Le Tour de Bute' WE DID IT & RAISED £590

Read on to find out how!

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Deja Vous

OK, exciting times, the YFA (or Scottish IFYE (International Farming Youth Exchange) as our European friends call it) has lots happening. It's me the quiet retiring shy little guy, better known as Steedsy; I've been in this position before ;-) (Newsletter Ed).

Communication is the key and that's what we want to improve! Everyone needs to know what's new and what's happening. That's the simple fundamental needed to give YFA the momentum it once had in Scotland.

One of the principal purposes of YFA continues to be to encourage and provide financial help to Young Farmers going on their exchange trip of a lifetime.

Last October we hosted the annual YFA reunion (for any new members who don't know – this is an annual get together which is hosted in a 4-year rotation by Scotland, Wales, Ireland & England) they are VERY sociable weekends! (Look out for more information in this newsletter on the 2011 reunion and seriously consider going!). The reunion, along with a couple of other social events during the year are the opportunities open to you to support our organisation, alongside paying your annual membership!

Therefore, its simple – these two things – help Young Farmers go on exchange – and have social get-togethers. (and off course laugh, there's always laughter, that's one of my favorite parts!) is what we are all about!

It's your organisation, so please tell us what you want from it all of your thoughts and ideas are welcomed. So any news, funny laughs, get togethers etc..... get the news to me....
steadsy@steadsy.com

Perhaps in near future we might have a simple website where we could have a monthly update, instead of a mailed paper printed newsletter, as many organisations do nowadays.

Let's get the buzz of the YFA organisation going again.

Anyone you know whose membership has lapsed, changed addresses or who has not received their newsletter – get in touch, let us know please

See everyone in Ewloe, Wales for the 2011 reunion

[Steadsy](http://steadsy.com)



www.ifye.co.uk

YFA & IFYE INFORMATION

www.ifye.co.uk www.sayfc.org
www.ifye.org and find us on facebook.

'A day out to remember'



Well hello and welcome to the autumn edition of our newsletter. I hope you had a great summer and are looking forward to the reunion at the end of October in north Wales! I know I am, just haven't booked it yet!

Well for those of you that have been on Mars and didn't hear about our latest sponsored event well shame on you! I won't say too much as there is a full report of the great weekend in here already but I would just like to take this opportunity to thank all members that took part and to our fab support crew supplying us with fresh strawberries on route. I know I had a great day and it was really good to catch up with some of our Bute members as well. Shame we didn't have it a few days later and could have gone to their show too! There's always next year! (That's him above, in finest cycling gear. The Ed)

We are very busy with harvest at home just now, enduring somewhat trying conditions due to the bleeping rain and late to mature grain due to the lack of that yellow thing that is meant to be up in the sky, us farmers are never happy I know! On a happier note grain prices seem to be holding firm and lets just hope a pound is knocked of the fuel price (as if!). Well I'd just like to wish you all a great autumn and hope to catch up with many of you down in Wales, who knows I may just cycle down, ha ha!

Your Chairman
Richard Wilson

On Wednesday 14th June, Dickie and I collected the hire bus and took to the road to meet the incoming delegates for the summer of 2011. After meeting with the 10 delegates at their hotel in Edinburgh, and getting the very rushed introductions out the way – we headed to the motorway and zoomed along to A. Bartlett & Sons, at Airdrie for our first stop of the day. We were given a tour of the potato sorting and packaging plant as well as a very interesting presentation on the company's new advertising campaigns. The group were very interested and had more than plenty questions for our host.

We then headed to Summerlee Industrial Museum in Coatbridge where we had a picnic lunch before the tour of the museum. A short tram ride down the hill and, one very excited delegate who got to sit in the driving seat, and we were right in the midst of the village which has been renovated to show each decade during the mid 1900's. It seemed like a different world, looking back at how the workers would have lived back in the 1920's onwards. Each room had music and memorabilia from the era, which brought the whole feel of each worker's home to life. After this we put on hard hats and took a trip down a mine to see how the miners worked on a day to day basis, it was very dark, cold and shallow – the hard hats were really needed! Another trip back up the hill on tram and a browse round the indoor museum and then we headed off in the bus again.



Incoming delegates 2011

Dinner was booked at the Shawlands Hotel, Larkhall where we enjoyed a good Scottish blether and then came the final leg of the tour to Loudoun Academy where we dropped the delegates off with their first hosts. After a tiring day with plenty to take in and report back to their home nations,

I think they were glad to meet their hosts and head for home.

As usual YFA never just ends with one meeting and it was great to catch up with the delegates at the Highland Show to hear how their exchange trip was going!

Alison Taylor (Canada 2007)

Highland Show Drinks Reception

It was nibbles, a few glasses of wine and renewed acquaintances for the YFA members who attended our drinks reception in the Young Farmer's Centre on the Friday night of the Highland Show.

At least sixty members and exchange anniversary invitees attended the event. For some it was the first time they had seen their fellow travellers since their exchange trip. Special mention must be made to the 60th anniversary member Sandy Stewart, who together with his wife Kathleen (also a fellow exchangee, but unable to attend) travelled to the US on their exchange trips in 1951. Many other guests had travelled 25, 30, 40 & 50 years ago and all talked about their happy memories of their trips as if it was only yesterday. Members of all age groups chatted and exchanged mutual experiences of their host families and time spent abroad.

One point noted by the members who had traveled many years previously was that on their return to Scotland they gave many many talks and slide shows of their experiences – in one case around 50! So perhaps we need to do more 'trumpet blowing' about the opportunities that are available?

The incoming exchangees also attended the reception as part of their 4-day long stay at the show. It was good to meet such an enthusiastic group, albeit the Young Farmers party the previous evening had left a few feeling a little jaded!

Those who attended hailed the event a great success and wondered whether the YFA would make it into an annual event. The answer is likely to be "yes", so watch this space!



Le Tour de Bute

Youch, we communally cried as we sat down to a well deserved meal in Rothesay on the Saturday evening. But, it had been an excellent day! Raising money for YFA funds, exploring the island, getting fit and having a laugh (getting a sore bum had not been part of the plan!).

The tour commenced at 9am quayside at Wemyss Bay. We caught the 9.30 ferry to Rothesay, complete with bikes and team support car.



The route had been carefully planned, the local ice cream parlours, loos (we were not prepared to do it in a bottle or worse down our leg like other professional cyclists would), coffee stops, massage parlours, bike repair shops and the hospital were plotted on our fold-out map. All possible emergencies had been considered should the intrepid bunch (I mean peleton) require any assistance.

It was a sunny blue sky day, with more importantly, no head wind (however a couple of people did have windy incidents during the day – I know because I was behind them!). We headed south to Mount Stuart (approximately 5 miles from

Rothesay) and the first 'refuelling' stop! A quick undetected spin around the grounds to view the magnificent gothic mansion and extensive landscaped grounds for free was taken by the chairman – the rest of us saved our energy to tackle the biggest hill on Bute, and tested the café.

Back on the bikes our next stop was Kilchattan Bay, in the south of the island, for lunch in the hotel (and it was warm enough to sit outside!). up.

Everywhere we looked there were beautiful views and seascapes it was a fantastic location.

Robin's haggis balls (lunch, nothing to do with the battering his bike seat had given him) certainly seemed to do the trick as he whizzed by everyone back up the hill to the main road. (Note to reader: please note the use of the word 'hill' regularly throughout this report).

Bute has quiet country roads, broad sandy beaches, and a rolling countryside, it is a long narrow island so you are never too far from the sea. It was ideal for biking, around every corner there were spectacular views across the sea – back to the west coast of Scotland and over small islands that surround Bute. Harvest was well underway on the day of our visit, Saturday 6th August and albeit there were the opportunities to get into the back draft of passing tractors and grain trailers to gain speed and reduce effort, we were feeling so good we didn't take them!

Jean Kennedy (nee Lindsay) (Canada 1994) lives on Bute. We passed her farm at Largievrechtan which commands fabulous views to the West across St Ninian's Bay, but decided we'd just wait until we met up for a meal in the evening rather than negotiate the 1 mile farm road to pay her an early visit (because it was steep!).

We had not seen many tourists all day - then we found why: they were all at Ettrick Bay, in and around a café (not quite like Kathy's Café – if you know your Eastenders) but almost. It is situated in the most fabulous location, (and has very tasty ice cream). Dogs, children, granny's, grandad's, bikers (of the 'motor' variety, lazy devils), sun worshippers and others, congregate here to play and relax on the beach.



At this point on our journey the 'finishing line' was in sight (we were still on the west coast and had to get to the east coast, but at the narrowest point of the island the journey was going to be a dawdle). Until, Mary suggested that a no through road just to the north of our ice cream stop would provide a nice detour to extend the trip. She was right it was, until it rained, Robin fell into a ditch, Dickie's very nice new-ish' bike ended up on the tarmac with him still attached to it by the pedals and, Nan's hair got wet! Even Janette and Marion dishing out home-grown strawberries from the back of the support car was not enough to smooth the mood. But, minutes later the sun came out again and Port Bannatyne and Rothesay were in sight and we forgot all about the earlier incidents.

On our return to Rothesay we were greeted by the sight of the Waverley paddle steamer crossing the sea and coming into dock. I am sure I saw a tear in Dickie's eye as he remembered trips on it as a kid.

A meal, a comfy bed in the local youth hostel and the knowledge that £590 had been raised for YFA funds, to provide financial support to young farmers heading of one their exchange trips, certainly made it a weekend to remember.

Post article note: Nan dropped her mobile phone enroute and a kindly lady noticed this and quickly picked it up. On contacting Nan to arrange it's return she said "you were going to fast to catch up with" what an accolade! (But, was the lady walking, cycling or driving – we'll never know!).

International Farm Youth Exchange Conference

FINLAND 2011

The 53rd European IFYE Conference took place in July, at "IFYELand", Metsäkartano, Rautavaara in the Finnish Lakeland, some 6 hours by train north east of Helsinki.

Around 150 people from 16 different countries attended, and the 8 Scots who made the journey were certainly not disappointed!

The fun and games started early and on arrival at IFYELand in the middle of a forest, the IFYE bus was stopped at the "border" checkpoint by the "army" – well known Scots like Sally, Steedsy and Alan Duncan were frisked and taken away for "interrogation" A glass of the local firewater and they were released unharmed! This was just the start of a fantastic week that got better and better!

Following registration, we were shown to our accommodation – lovely large well-equipped cabins, sleeping 12, with verandas overlooking the lake. It even included a sauna. There were bigger saunas beside the beach, and they were part of our night-time activities, a sauna and swim after midnight and still not quite dark! There were six different nationalities in our cabin with many more joining us on the veranda for our pre-dinner drinks parties!

The first evening is a kind of catching up with friend's night, meeting new ones, photo presentation from last year's conference and hearing what was in store for us during the week. We were put into teams for the Ifyelympics that would go on for several days. Sunday morning, like most other mornings, included a dip in the lake, breakfast and off to the Church Service held outside in the amphitheatre and then Opening Ceremony. Whilst gathered for the Church Service, a surprise was in store for everyone – Sirkku Laurila, who was the "Empress of IFYELand" got married to Juha - yes officially - the first IFYE wedding ever to take place at a Conference! We were given a treat in the afternoon with a performance from the local circus group – young people from aged 8 - 25 years. Just as well we were watching closely, as we soon had the opportunity to participate in our teams, with varying degrees of success, but definitely a fun experience.

Continuing on the circus theme, it was fancy dress party time, and there were lots of clowns, ringmasters, jugglers and trapeze artists strutting their stuff. IFYEs of all ages know how to party and have fun, making it a great night.



Top row 1st left Alison Spencer Pauline Armstrong (NI), Meg Findlay (Scot)
Bottom Row Mary Roberts (Wales), Mary Turner (Scot)

Monday included visits to a Market/Nursery Garden complex and a Sledge Dog/Husky Kennels – both extremely interesting. There were 75 dogs and it was very interesting to hear about the sledging activities they offer. Afternoon, it was time for the Winter IFYEllympics – we were taken to an indoor skiing centre, where there were opportunities to compete in our teams at Cross Country Skiing, Kick Sledging and Snow Shoe Racing. Well, this really was a lot of fun and for me, trying the cross country skiing was just tremendous – having done it a few times in the past, I really enjoyed having a go at this once more. Like all these games we were in a relay of 4, with four teams competing at the same time – not sure how we done it, but we came second! Apres ski was held back at the centre, wearing our new warm woollen socks, knitted by IFYE friends, was a great way to relax, watch some of the antics of the day in the photo presentation and, of course, enjoy a few drinks!

Tuesday was a continuation of the IFYEllympics, which included archery, a skittle type game played on the beach, another game a little similar to curling, but on a wooden surface and pedal carting around a course. There were also some informative sessions regarding the Geography and History of Finland and there we had to listen and remember, as there was a question sheet to answer. The afternoon finished with Swamp Soccer, which was a separate event and one that has to be seen to be believed! There were four teams competing with 6 in each and they were up to the waist in thick mud, thereby making it practically impossible to kick the ball. However, those who played certainly did their best and we were thoroughly entertained and also glad we hadn't taken part in it!



The presentation of the IFYEllympics medals was held in the bar that evening, with Paul Fraser, the exchangee from Orkney to Finland this year, in the winning team! I was pleased to say that the Lappy team, mine, were in 3rd place! More fun that evening, when Eric from Northern Ireland was paraded wearing a mini skirt and high heels –all part of some fun before he gets married next year.

There were many opportunities for Wednesday including visits to: a traditional farm; the Yara fertiliser factory; a brewery and; a stamp museum, as well as walking in the Koli area. Enjoying walking, I took the last one and wasn't disappointed. We spent the day walking through forests and up and down meadows overlooking a lovely lake with an excellent guide, to tell us the facts from the area.



The winning Team

Top row second right Paul Fraser (Scot), first right Thomas Lennox (NI)
Bottom row second right Mary Roberts (Wales)

Thursday morning was the General Assembly, where Sally was re-elected as Secretary. In the afternoon there were nature related activities and I took the walk in a nearby forest, which took us through some thick vegetation, little streams and interesting rock formations – mosquito's too were biting! We had a beach party in the evening, enjoying fantastic food, games, music and singing. All in just the most magical setting with perfect weather.

Friday was Wellbeing Day, with recharging and detoxing activities – these included feet and hand massages as well as an all over massage using a football, yoga on the beach, swimming and a peat sauna (covered from head to toe in peat while sitting in a sauna) to name but a few. It certainly was a relaxing way to get ready for the Farewell Party in the evening. It was a time to get the glad rags on, enjoy the gala dinner and dance the night away to the live band.

It was a fitting end to what was a really fun week, a great programme of events with something to suit everyone. The location, accommodation, fantastic food and beautiful weather, all helped, however, there is always a buzz at an IFYE conference and it is hard to explain to those who have not attended one, but come along and you will see what we mean - you won't be disappointed, and will probably wonder why you have never gone before! Don't be put off by the word "conference" - I would describe it more as a reunion. Next year it will be near Gothenburg, Sweden from 21-28 July and in 2015, Scotland will host – so now is the time to join in the fun, we really need your support. Have a look at the website www.ifye.co.uk for more details or contact Sally, Marion or myself.

Mary Turner, Switzerland 1977

DON'T FORGET - £10 MEMBERSHIP

The fee goes towards grants for Young Farmers undertaking exchange trips.

Sort Code 83-44-00

Account No. 00608534

Account Name: Young Farmers Ambassadors Association (Scottish Region)

Set your standing order, pay online or by cheque to:
Mary Turner, Coalbog Bungalow, Bridge of Weir PA11 3RG



Hatches



Adam (EU Rally 2006)
& Claire Lawson, a boy, Ruaridh

Carolyn (nee Taylor, Australia 2004)
& Robert Watson, a girl Erin

Gavin Redpath (YFA Award 1998)
& Elizabeth, a boy John

Stuart MacAdie (EU Rally 1998)
& Lynne, a boy Logan

Emma (nee Taylor, Sweden 1995) & Stevie Guild,
a boy Bruce

Elaine (nee Smith, Ulster 1995 & Canada 1996)
& John Goldie, a boy Blair



Matches



Jack Lamb (EU Rally 1995 & Eire '97)
engaged to Carolyn Dunlop

Alison Gemmel (NZ 2002)
engaged to George Irving

Marion Lawrie (EU Rally & Eire 1997) married
to Paul Murphy

Margaret Baillie (EU Rally 2008)
married to Russell Gray (EU Rally 2005)



Young Farmers Ambassadors (UK) Annual Reunion 2011

The Summer edition of the newsletter reported on the 2010 UK Young Farmers Ambassador's (YFA) reunion in Aviemore. Did you like the sound of it? Now *you* have the opportunity to participate in the 2011 reunion. Take the plunge, attend, don't just wait to read about it!

Ewloe, North East Wales (8 miles from Chester) been there - no? Well here's your chance!

If you only do one thing today – make it this - look up www.ifye.co.uk, follow the link to the welsh reunion brochure and consider the opportunity open to you. Let's make this the biggest ever contingent of Scot's to attend a YFA reunion. "I'm shy"; "I've never been before"; "I don't know anyone"; "I am too old"; "I am too young"; "Brechin City are playing at

home that weekend"; "I've no one to look after the dog"; "I might be ploughing that weekend"; "I don't eat leeks"; "I am scared of dragons"; we've heard all the excuses from YFA reunion virgins before. But we know, because you've been on an exchange trip, you've taken a nervous plunge before, so what's stopping you doing it again, go on, treat yourself!

The venue top notch St David's Park Hotel, Ewloe, is 8 miles from Chester www.village-hotels.co.uk/hotels/chester-st-davids. Friday night starts a casino night before a full day of trip opportunities on Saturday. Chester Zoo, the Ifor Williams Trailer Factory and perhaps a narrow boat trip across the Pontcystllite aqueduct, a World Heritage Site, (if that's not worth a visit I don't know what is!), and a visit to Chester are only a few of the opportunities organised for us by our hosts prior the dinner dance in the evening. On Sunday you can relax, visit Chester and for the finale, we will be treated to what is synonymous with Wales, a male voice choir (and other entertainment).

UK YFA REUNION 2011

28 - 31 October

St David's Park Hotel, Ewloe, North Wales.

See www.ifye.co.uk or Huw Williams dfw@aber.ac.uk for further details

Closing Date for applications: 21st September 2011



What do you think?

We want to know what you think the purpose of the Scottish Young Farmer's Ambassadors organisation should be in the future?

What type of events should it organise?

How often should it organise them?

Where should they be held?

What did getting a contribution from YFA towards your exchange trip mean to you?

Should we continue to give grants?

Is it important to have an organization whose members are like minded and have been on a YF exchange?

Or even, Should YFA continue to exist?

We can't continue without your help!

Please give your opinion to any YFA committee member or by email to:

yfa-sec-scottish-region@hotmail.co.uk

What is IFYE? European International Farm Youth Exchange Alumni Association

All SAYFC exchangees of all ages are eligible to join the European equivalent of Young Farmers Ambassadors (YFA).

Once a year IFYE hold a reunion, hosted by a different country every year, in July or August. During the week there are visits to local tourist attractions and businesses; barbecues; local entertainment; group team work, it culminates with a formal farewell dinner dance. Approximately 150 – 200 people from all over Europe attend, their ages span from 20 upwards there is no age limit.

Next year the conference will be held in Kungälv, Sweden from the 21 - 28 July 2012. For further details keep a look out on website's www.ifye.co.uk and www.ifye.nu

If you would like any further information about IFYE contact Sally Young on 0787678 1600 or youngsm@angus.gov.uk.



Future IFYE Conferences

Wales 2013
Germany 2014
Scotland 2015

If you don't already receive you newsletter by email, how about signing up to receive the next edition electronically - register at:
yfa-sec-scottish-region@hotmail.co.uk

Coming up Next.....

In the Winter Newsletter.....

The Best Bits.....The Scottish Young Farmer Exchangees of 2011 tell us their exchange stories and forever memories.