

YOUNG FARMERS AMBASSADORS

SCOTTISH REGION

NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2018



CONTENTS

Chairman's blog	1
Exchangee Away Day	2
Drinks Reception	2/3
James Gray's Trip to Norway	4/5
Susan Sutton's Trip to Scotland	5/6
IFYE 2018 European Conference Highlights	6/8
IFYE 2018 World Conference Highlights	9/10
Stories from YFA Members & Diary Dates	11/12

CONTACT DETAILS

Chairman Andrew Baird

Andrewbaird87@hotmail.co.uk

07850 164186

Secretary Mary Turner

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

07817 166637

Treasurer Neil Brims

manitou@hotmail.co.uk

07919 154711

CHAIRMAN'S BLOG

Hope everyone had a great summer, I know it helped this year having the good weather.

We entertained **the incoming exchangees** for the annual away day when we took them to the usual venues of The Kelpies, The Falkirk Wheel and the Riverside Museum in Glasgow before dropping them off in Lanarkshire to meet their first hosts. Thanks to Mary for driving the minibus after the hiccup at the start and also for making the sandwiches. Thanks to David Paterson and Steedsy for transporting the luggage. It was good to meet another good bunch of exchangees. The **annual Highland Show drinks reception** was up next and it was another great success. It returned to the ground floor of the YF centre which seems to work well. It was good to see everyone catching up with



each other and reminiscing about their exchanges. Thanks to **the sponsors** for their continued support towards the event.

The **IFYE conference was held in Northern Ireland** this year at the Greenmount Campus. Having enjoyed my first one in Switzerland last year, I decided to go again this year and I wasn't disappointed. It was good to see another good turnout from Scotland of 23 which is the same as last year. A couple of visits I went to were Crumlin Road Gaol in Belfast and a day trip to Londonderry. They were both very interesting learning about what life was like being in jail and living in Londonderry. The evening entertainment was good and showed off the Irish talent. **It was good to meet some new friends and catch up with old ones which is what an IFYE conference is all about.**

From 26th - 29th October we are hosting **the UK Reunion at the Altens Hotel, Aberdeen**. We have a great weekend planned, and I look forward to seeing you then.

EXCHANGE AWAY DAY 2018



The day started off fine on Wednesday 13th June as Andrew and I picked up the minibus and headed for Edinburgh to meet the 13 Incoming Exchangees. This year's group came from **Australia, Canada, Finland, New Zealand, Switzerland, USA and much nearer to home England, Ireland, Ulster and Wales.**

Both Steedsy and David Paterson brought along their cars to transport the luggage. We did the tried and tested programme, yes it was the Kelpies at the Helix, Falkirk Wheel and then to the Riverside Museum in Glasgow. The weather was getting quite cold by the time we had our picnic at the Falkirk Wheel, but at least it stayed dry! Arriving at the Riverside Museum we had a free guided tour by Duncan, who was very knowledgeable about many of the exhibits and he had lots of stories to tell. As most of the Gleenlee Sailing Ship was off limits, some of the group did some brushing!

We got out of the city before the rush-hour traffic really hit and headed to the Radstone Hotel, Shawsburn where Gayle Allan and other Lanarkshire members were treating them to dinner before heading off to their first host family. It was a good day out and a chance to get to know the exchangees and show them some of Scotland's attractions. We are extremely grateful to **Davidson's Animal Feeds** for their sponsorship towards the hire of the minibus. Lastly, thanks to everyone who came along and shared the day with us! **Mary**



ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW Young Farmers Centre 22nd June 2018

DRINKS at the Highland

From all over Scotland and beyond, almost 130 people popped into the Drinks Reception at the Royal Highland Show including 26 Anniversary Guests and 10 of the Incoming Exchangees. We had anniversary guests from 1958 to 2013 and it's a great night to catch up with old friends, the place was really buzzing! Having the event at the YF Centre really brings back so many happy memories for us all and we are very appreciative of SAYFC for allowing us the use of the centre. Here's **Meg Findlay (Pratt) Australia 1978's** report on the evening:

This year was the **40th Anniversary of my trip to Australia** – all those years ago in 1978! I've attended a number of the Receptions in the past, but it's really special to be recognised at these when it's your Anniversary.

I'd gone to the European Rally in 1977, and our YFA year group have a really strong bond with regular get-togethers, so it was interesting meeting up with the 1978 Exchangees, as we hadn't really kept up over the years. It was lovely to meet up with Kathleen Craig (Lyon), Alison Paterson (Sim), Helen Gibson (Purdie) and James Thomson again – we just didn't have enough time to reminisce about what we'd all been up to in the last 40 years!

The Drinks Reception is a great vehicle for catching up with old friends – **I'd encourage any YFA member** who is attending the Highland Show to come along and join us. **Meg**



Elizabeth Logan (McKerrow) was celebrating 60 years since her trip to Canada in 1958





Also attending, from Wales we had YFA members Huw and Angharad Williams and Janette Stirling from Northern Ireland. From further afield Margaret (Davidson) and Malcolm Hyland from New Zealand - Margaret is no stranger to Scotland, being born and brought up here, and an exchangee from Scotland to New Zealand in 1975 and is a current YFA member;



Elisabeth & Hans Iseli-Burren – Elisabeth was an exchangee to Scotland in 1969 and by chance met Elspeth Dale (Lang), one of our

anniversary guests, and it turned out that Elisabeth had been an exchangee at Elspeth's place all those years ago!



Many thanks to our main sponsor Aldi for their generous support. Mackie's for chocolate and Maclean's for shortbread.



James's Trip to Norway

In the spring of this year at the national weekend I was lucky enough to be selected for an **IFYE trip to Norway**, setting off on the 2nd of June. It was organised that I would be staying with one family over the five weeks.

I was greeted at Oslo Gardermoen airport by Finn-Erling Kristoffersen, he even had a sign with my name on it to find me! We got to know each other on the hour-long car ride back to the family farm Vestre Bjolsund where they grow potatoes, onions, cucumbers, clover as part of their organic rotation, beetroot, brassicas, celeriac, green house for tomatoes and salads and grain. They also had a farm shop selling produce from the farm and from other local producers. Their farm was in Rygge, beside Moss in Ostfold which is the most south eastern county in Norway and borders Sweden. The parents Trond & Gro run the farm in conjunction with Finn-Erling and their daughter Eva Marit who is studying in Bergen. They produce the aforementioned crops organically on 200 acres, of which the bulk of the vegetables are grown on a contract basis. Whilst I was in Norway, it was extremely dry and hot, some of the days in my first week were 30 degrees and it was great to have the fjord and lake close by to go for a swim. I helped out most days mostly setting up watering systems to water the fields. I also did a great deal of weeding in both the garden and also some of the fields. It was certainly an eye opener to hand weed a few acres of a crops, but with a tractor and weeder weeding between the rows, I then only hand pulled the weeds at the plants and placed them in between the plants for the sun to dry them out.



I also spent a few days training tomato plants up the string lines in their green house. I did a wee bit of planting both by hand and with the planting machine. I helped a neighbour plant a new hedge around his garden with the help of the Lithuanians seasonal workers; quick and hard workers, they seemed really nice people, but they didn't speak a lot of English or Norwegian.

The food was really good; breakfast usually consisted of rye bread with a selection of toppings, cheese, jam, tinned mackerel in tomato sauce, honey, patty, cooked meat, potted shrimp, and others. I tried fermented fish, but it went to my stomach like straight whisky and I certainly won't try it again, but it is a Norwegian delicacy! Evening meal was sometimes fish or chicken, but most often it was meat, potatoes and vegetables. The food was just out of this world and one of the best meals I had was fresh unshelled shrimp caught by a cousin of Gro, followed closely by the roast dinners with potatoes roasted in the dripping from the meat while the meat cooked above it.

Over the duration of my trip Finn and I would go on drives around the local area at night to look at what other farmers were up to, sometimes visiting friends and family. Quite often we would go to feed visits looking at other farmers crops and they'd talk about how to improve the crop.

A few of the visits that stuck out for me was the tour of a farm on Moss Island which grow vegetables like broccoli, lettuce, onions. They had a state-of-the-art onion storage shed with CO2 coolers. They also bought in wood and had a set up for processing it into firewood which he seasoned in tents. They had their own lorry to deliver goods and an honesty box shop in a small building.

Another trip out was to a music concert at a local farm where the CC Cowboys were playing and although I couldn't understand them, the music sounded familiar, and was a great night. It was the only night I had any alcohol, other than a few with a meal, at £9 a beer it was quite expensive!

On the IFYE welcome weekend I travelled to Oslo on the train and met up with Mari from 4H Norway and the other incoming exchangees.

On Saturday morning we went sightseeing firstly to the Royal Palace which unlike Buckingham Palace, we could walk right up to, and we even got a photo with the Guard. Next, we went to the Opera House beside the fjord; then to the Vigeland Park, which has a lot of nude statues; it was a fantastic place to visit and have lunch on the grass. Then to the Holmenkollen ski jump and museum; I thought the views over Oslo were good on the way up to the ski jump, but that was nothing to the views from the top of the ski jump, it was absolutely stunning! Lastly, we went out for tea and the secretary general of 4H Norway came to meet us. We had a walk by the fjord before heading back to the hostel and had a few nibbles and played cards. The next morning, it was back to the host families.



Another of the real highlights of my trip was the only day I worked with livestock. The Livestock transporter picked me up at 5am and we headed off to the first farm to pick up a Highland bull, oh he was hard to load! After this we went to a few dairy farms to pick up old cows and bulls. A lot of the bull calves from the dairy cows were left to fatten quicker and never out to grass. The cows we picked up were taken to a Nortura slaughterhouse above Oslo. After this we went back to the first farm to pick up a load of Highland cows and calves to take them to their summer pasture close to the Swedish border in the middle of nowhere, driving through woods and more woods – a great day.

In Norway in general people were more laid back and easy going, but worked long hours, and usually had a few hours of rest during the day. I was very much in the vegetable growing area of Norway and farm sizes were in general much smaller than Scotland. The farm steading was usually an old barn which had been adapted, and mostly had a loft which had a ramp to get a tractor in. The loft would have originally been used for hay. A lot of the farms had a newer building with a cold store to store vegetables. The farm I was on had 3 cold stores in the old building and 1 in the new one, plus the shop in the new one and a large storage shed.



Over the five weeks, I was able to work and learn new skills, saw lots of countryside and experienced a different way of life. I was also able to have time to myself and think about life and since I have returned home I have invested in my business with the purchase of a van to help me move forward and stop using my car to go to gardening jobs.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people who recommended me to go on an exchange as it really was the chance of a life and **I'm so glad I decided to apply and was able to go to Norway**. I would recommend it to anyone and say to go with an open mind and to take every opportunity that comes your way.

I would like to thank my host family for hosting me for five weeks and welcoming me into their family home for that time and given me a unique insight into the way they farm, live the life and the culture of Norway and I do hope it is not too long till I am back.

I would also like to thank the organisations who helped me to fund my trip without you all I could have never done it. The **YFA Scottish region**, SAYFC, International Trust, Ellen Kerr Awards Scheme, Crossroads and District Young Farmers and Ayrshire Association of Young Farmers Clubs. Once again thank you for the support.

James Gray

Susanne's Trip to Scotland

On the morning of 10th June, I landed in Edinburgh to begin an adventure of a lifetime. I have always thought that one can travel and see the world by going to destinations, but the true way to experience one is to walk a week in their shoes. Upon arrival, I learned that I was joining a group of 13 exchangees from different countries. We jumped right into exploring the area of Edinburgh, travelled to the **Kelpies and the Falkirk Wheel**. This was made possible by **YFC and YFA**. The group of exchangees met our first hosts in Lanarkshire on 13th June. Each day of the following week was organised by one of the surrounding clubs. We had a full week that was filled from morning to evening. My favourite part of this week was biking around the Isle of Cumbrae and the Museum of Rural Life. I can't leave out some the awesome farm tours that stretched my understanding of agriculture.

On 20th June, the group travelled back to Edinburgh to attend the **Royal Highland Show**. I had a fantastic time exploring the show! From the animals to the demonstrations that can be found from one end of the showground to the other, you never have to go far to see something you may have never seen before. On the final day, we said goodbye to half of our group, the other half were off to the counties of Dumfries & Galloway. Myself and one other exchangee from New Zealand stayed with the Murray family for the week. The Murrays live on a beef farm that sits right along the coast. I soon learned that the **Murray family** were no strangers to exchanges and that their youngest daughter was on exchange to Canada. That week we got to see a variety of different things including Cream O' Galloway, (an ethical dairy) Stock Judging night, an egg farm and devil's porridge. My favourite part of the week was going to Mull of Galloway, the most southerly point in Scotland. The week came to an end with a young farmers beach themed party!

Neil Brims - My highlights of the week were the surfing and sports day. The **craic in the bar** was always good and going to the eel farm was very interesting, I didn't realise how good they taste when smoked. Culturally it was interesting to learn about the troubles and seeing how the place has changed for the better.



Marion MacPherson - Fantastic week at the IFYE Conference in Northern Ireland, what a programme they organised for us, from fun games and cultural trips including visits to the **Giants Causeway** - Fin McCool must have been in charge of the **great weather** that day! One of my lasting memories of the week was the **Matchmaking** evening and the mock wedding with Helen and Jon, what a fantastic night of fun and laughter. **Already looking forward to Norway in 2019.**



Robin Blair – Great to be back in Northern Ireland with wonderful hosts. Adam Ervin giving me an art lesson – **first time for everything!**



Alison Spencer - It really was a **perfect week**. Excellent hospitality, fantastic entertainment, workshops and trips. Unseasonably **hot weather** with the odd sprinkling or rain which didn't impact on the happy atmosphere. For those who had never attended a European Conference before it must have been a huge surprise that people from different generations and different

countries could **drink, party, dance** and become such **good friends** in just one week! If I had to pick a highlight then it would have to be the **Match Making** Night which was pure fun from beginning to end. Poor Helen is still looking for her man! I travelled with a young group of Welsh IFYE's who thought it was an awesome week and **can't wait for next year.**



David Paterson - The highlight that stands out, above many, I might add, is the **Matchmaking Evening**. It was a great idea to try and find your initial match in the bar, and the "Mr. & Mrs." section was fun, too. When Linda stated that a wife would need to be found for Jon, from Norway, and a commotion followed by the bar, I could not believe what I was seeing. Helen Ervin, in a bridal gown, with Sam Hawkes, as a bridesmaid, in a suitable dress complete **with wellies**, came strutting through the crowd. The **fun and laughter** just built and built and it was a great send-up from the Ulster IFYEs!



Janette Smith - The North coast Coastal walk led by Claire Woods was a super afternoon's activity. **Lovely scenery** and great chat on the way.



Alan Duncan – What an enjoyable week with so many nationalities, wide age range and many shared values. So, over the seven days, one could look at the history of IFYE in pictures, drink tea and coffee with endless **home baking and craic**. So many highlights too numerous to

mention – the walk round the walls of **Londonderry**, with the guides giving a history of events up to modern day times. There was **a wealth of culture** – dancing, drumming and traditional dance and music. How could one miss such an event!



Katie Punler – An excellent week in Northern Ireland with great trip, fabulous entertainment, perfect weather and **brilliant company**



Mary Turner – The team games were simple and fun and it was a great way to work together and **meet new people**, and indeed my team were joint winners! The coastal walk to the Rope Bridge was a real highlight and on the day with the weather, the views were **fantastic**, I could even **see Islay**! I also chose the Friday walk with Claire to the Black Mountain overlooking Belfast, and the views didn't disappoint. Evenings were filled with a lot of fun and laughter, and the Matchmaking evening really was such fun – to start with looking for your "partner" - so I picked from the hat, and it said I was Mrs Claus - so I was looking for **Santa**, but there were two Mrs Claus's, so we had to share Santa! The fun with the Mr & Mrs game and then the mock wedding, really made us **laugh our socks off!**



11th World IFYE Conference - Alaska

A very different feel to the **World IFYE Conference** this year, being an **Alaskan Cruise**. Around 277 participants from all over the world joined the cruise in Vancouver on the vessel Noordam. Great Britain and Northern Ireland were well represented, and this **included 17 from Scotland**. Most of us spent some time before the event and this got us in the mood for the week ahead. A cruise is not an ideal vehicle to host an IFYE Conference, and this really meant that we didn't have the same interaction with as many of the other participants, as would normally happen. Given the logistics and limitations on the cruise ship, there were very few actual IFYE events on the programme.



The ship docked at **Ketchikan, Juneau and Skagway** and the **fantastic weather** showcased the beautiful Alaskan coastline. Here are some highlights from a few of us:

Marion MacPherson - Super day cruising into **Glacier Bay** with some wildlife to spot on the way, watching the calving at Hubbard Glacier was something else.

Another highlight for me was the trip to **Mendenhall Glacier** on a wonderful sunny day, spectacular views, with the bonus of seeing a local **black bear**.



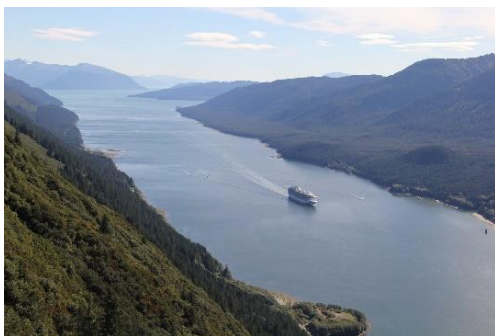
Nan McLachlan - To be wakened two nights in a row at 2am to view the **northern lights**; watching a glacier calving (this is when a glacier finally meets the sea and breaks off it takes 200 years for a little snowflake to fall at the top of the glacier to when as compacted ice it makes its way to the front and falls into the sea); watching for the tell-tale spout of water before a whale surfaced; and seals, porpoises, bears and mountain goats could all be seen from the decks. **Canoeing** on a lake near Ketchikan, water like glass with sharp reflections and stopping to do a nature trail in the woods following a guide who carried a gun and bear spray! There are 3 bears for every man in Alaska and also **8 men for every woman!** The nights spent in the Crow's Nest with the musical quizzes and the great shows every night in the ship's theatre. **All this and more in the company of IFYEs who know how to enjoy themselves!**



Janette Smith - Not the best venue for meeting other IFYEs. I enjoyed the Charity walk round **Deck 3 - 9 laps = 3 miles or 5km**. I did it with bruised toes on my right foot. Back home a visit to A & E and an X-ray confirmed that I actually had a broken toe! It hasn't stopped me walking!



Mary Turner – Each of the towns we stopped at had their own special charm, all being part of the gold rush boom of the 19th century, with many old historic buildings still in use. I enjoyed being onshore and out in the sunshine, and the walk-up **Mt. Roberts** in Juneau got the heart pumping, and we were rewarded with fantastic views out to sea – most people took the cable car up! Also, near Juneau, we took several trails at the **Mendenhall Glacier** – didn't see a bear though! Back to Juneau and a few drinks in the **Red Dog Saloon**, which had sawdust on the floor, guy singing country & western songs and it looked like it hadn't changed since the gold rush days! The White Pass & Yukon Train ride snaked around corners offering **fabulous views** as we climbed into the mountains, built for the gold rush boom, it is now a tourist route. On return, we headed to the **Red Onion Saloon and did the "brothel" tour** – an interesting insight into life there back in the day! Back on the ship and the day we cruised past Glacier Bay was really a highlight – it was a clear sunny day and we were able to really feel the atmosphere watching the calving at the glacier – **a photographer's dream**



Now for some news from YFA Members

Several YFA Members have been recognised for their **achievements** lately - and a big **congratulations** to them all. In the summer, the Business Champion Award Scheme culminated in a presentation at Westminster. Winning second prize was **Ardross Farm Shop**, Elie run by the Pollock family. **Fiona Pollock (Whiteford) was an exchangee to USA in 1977** and she can be seen below with her daughter Tara and their local MP



On the day, she was also surprised to see **Alan James** of **AJ Engineering & Construction**, Forres as **Alan was an exchangee to USA in the same year**. Alan on the left, is outside Westminster with his local MP



Ardross Farm is also going to be featured in an upcoming STV programme – **Gordon, Gina and Fred** – and that will be broadcast on **Thursday 25 October**. Fiona and her daughter Claire can be seen with the stars of the show below



Also receiving a very special Royal visitor this summer – **Jim Shanks (Canada 2002 & Euro Rally 2004) at Standhill Farm, Hawick** - so here's Jim's take on the day:

Earlier this year the past Lord Lieutenant asked if we would be kind enough to accept a Royal visitor. Having had **Princess Anne** round a few months beforehand to open our 4-acre glasshouse, I must admit I was surprised to be told it was **Prince Philip** that would be the one to grace our presence this August! It was a low-key affair with only 2 Royal protection officers and no helicopters. I find the royal protection officers very intriguing folk to speak to - they have so many tales and they all have their opinions on certain people in government and the Royal Family!

So, Prince Philip turned up in a Volvo 4 x 4 with his lady in waiting and the past Lord Lieutenant. Fit as a fiddle he leapt out of the car and was soon striding down the glasshouse asking questions by the dozen. I think any reports of ill health have not been reported by anyone who has been in his company recently! He asked about the way we grow tomatoes, robotic milkers and cow breeding. He did ask if the orange variety of tomatoes were the "anaemic ones!" **All in all, a great day and a privilege to have met the man in the flesh.**



YFA MEMBERSHIP: £10 per year which can be paid by standing order or £150 for lifetime membership - please get in touch for more payment details



Young Farmers Ambassadors (YFA) Scottish Region

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



UK YFA Reunion

Altens Hotel Aberdeen 26th-29th October

This year's fancy dress theme is the Roaring 20's. It's sure to be a great weekend. Look forward to seeing you there!

YFA AGM 2019 – in Carnbo Hall on Sunday 10 March, 2019 – 1.00 pm - come and see the photo presentations from 2018 exchangees. We hope to run an Exchange Briefing Session again for the 2019 outbound exchangees. If you have any thoughts or advice on what should be included in the briefing session or would like to get involved, please get in touch with the Secretary

Drinks @ the Highland 2019



Will be held on Friday 21 June - note it in your diary now, as it's an evening not to be missed - more to follow

UK YFA Reunion Weekend 2019

25th-28th October 2019 Holiday Inn, Newport, Wales. Details and costs will be released next summer, but in the meantime, please put the dates in your diary.



Future IFYE Events

SWISS IFYE SKI WEEKEND 2019

4 – 6 January

More information: <http://www.ifye.ch/aktuell/agenda>

or zuberei@bluewin.ch

Registration until 28. December 18 at Marc-André Zuber:
<mailto:zuberei@bluewin.ch> +41 79 962 11 32

Calling all Exchangees between 2014 and 2018

To encourage exchangees to attend their First European IFYE Conference, all newcomers will receive a contribution of 160 CHF, towards the Conference Fee. It will be subject to the following conditions:

1. Full time attendance at the Conference
2. Valid in any of the first five years following their first exchange trip
3. The application form will be issued and submitted to the European Treasurer during the Conference attended and the payment made that week.

So if you were an exchangee in 2014 or after, now's your chance for a discount and we all love a bargain, you won't regret it!

On to 2019, and if our highlights from Northern Ireland appeal to you, why not come to Norway next year – from 12 – 18 August for the 61st European IFYE Conference. You will have noticed it's more of a reunion rather than a conference, so don't let the name put you off! It will be held at Tonheim Folkehøyskole, Hamar, which is 80 miles north of Oslo. Cost and registration details will be released mid November. If you want more information on IFYE, get in touch with Mary, details on Page 1



2020 - England

2021 – Sweden

2022 - Finland

2022 – Austria – it is also the World one



Newsletter Editor: Katie Punler

katiepunler@gmail.com

07538725175