

# Momentous Minutes



Issue 12

September 2011



*Enjoying the view on Islay. Circa. 1910*

## Islay-gator rides again...

Its initial release caused panic back in June, with Committee Members rushing inside and bolting their doors in order to go online and buy a bottle.

Now many more Islay-gators have been released into the world. And this time, there are thousands of the blighters out there...

### Catch one today

Yes, the official worldwide release of Ardbeg Alligator has begun. And those Committee Members who missed out on spotting one last time, won't have to look too far to find one. They are available at all the usual Ardbeg outlets and especially at Ardbeg Embassies

throughout the world – go to [ardbeg.com/embassies](http://ardbeg.com/embassies) to find the nearest Embassy to you.

And for those who can order online from the Ardbeg Shop, why not pop an Alligator in your basket and we'll send one straight to your door.



*continued inside...*



*continued from front cover...*

Since the unveiling of the Islay-gator's tale (still available on YouTube) this whisky has been making waves in the whisky world. Joel and Neil at caskstrength.net call it a "mega whisky" and advise you to "miss this one at your peril."

It's the extremely fierce charring of the cask – 'alligator char' – that gives Ardbeg Alligator its unique spicy bite. For this is a dark dram of hidden depths, within which lurks deep tarry coffee, barbecue sizzle and sooty aromas...

**LONG NOSE:** The warning comes in smoked root ginger and barbecue sauce, while chocolate, cumin and warm oak shavings lie in wait.

**BIG TASTE:** Rearing up hot and spicy, smoked and charred with a leathery and sooty mouthfeel. Smoky pak choi and char siu thrash, while chocolate, ginger and black bean sauce roll around and around.

**FINISH YOU OFF:** Slow and long with mocha espresso, while cigar smoke ebbs away.

*The Islay-gator is a rare limited release whisky that will inevitably become extinct when all the bottles have found new homes. So make sure you snap one up...*

**ardbeg.com/gator**



# Ardbeg roaring into a town near you



There's nothing quite like the growl of a satisfied Committee Member as they drop into a chair, drop down a gear and enjoy a drop of Ardbeg. Except perhaps the deep-throated growl of an Ardbeg Chopper. These powerful beasts are currently on a global tour, still going full throttle in the US and revving up for a trip to Canada and Asia in 2012. For those joining us on the European tour until January, as well as enjoying a dram and a leg over the Ardbeg Chopper, you could win a spin in a chopper of the airborne variety over Islay. See the news section at [ardbeg.com](http://ardbeg.com) for dates and details. Or, you could see Islay from a more sedate set of two wheels like Richard Bradwell here, on his way to raising thousands for charity.



# Tapas on the lawn, tapping in the filling store and Ardbeg on tap... It must be the Ardbeg Fiesta!



There was a decidedly Spanish flavour to our Festival Day this year. Mickey was subjected to an inquisition. The Distillery boys ran with the bull. The flamenco guitarist plucked. The bronco bucked. The rain fell mainly in the morning. And our ex-sherry cask Feis Ile bottling flew off the shelves.

Tucked away in Warehouse 3 a camera crew spent the day filming some of our most ardent Ardbeg fans. To all those who volunteered to tear themselves away from the frivolities outside and let us capture their memories and musings for posterity, *muchas gracias!*



## Roll out the barrow

Inspired by the heroic women who took to the farms of rural Scotland during the 1940s and '50s, the Ardbeg Land Girls are doing their bit to spread the word about Ardbeg.

Your Distillery needs you to keep an eye out for them on posters and at Ardbeggian events the world over. Armed with branded barrows, boots and bottles, their rallying cry is to "Release the peat!" (We won't, however, be releasing personal details of our lovely Land Girls so please don't ask.)



## A is for App

Since we launched our Ardbeg App, thousands of you have downloaded it and no doubt used it to glean tasting notes, find your nearest Embassy, watch movies, enjoy news from the Distillery and visit [ardbeg.com](http://ardbeg.com) to shop on the hop. So if you haven't installed it yet, this'll make you 'appy – it's FREE.



## There's no topping Ardbeg

We always imagined our bar blackboards would be employed to entice passing trade inside to try a dram or two. But when in Rome, as they say... which is where Committee Member Paul Hopprich spotted this somewhat maverick use of our sundries. Never mind. A glass of Ardbeg is more satisfying than a Margarita any day.



## Save the date!

ARBEG DAY 2 JUNE 2012

### Oh happy day

*You're invited to join in the inaugural international Ardbeg Day celebrations. It's a day when the Committee will join hands across the globe, attend local parties in our Embassies and celebrate all that's good about Ardbeg. Which is everything, frankly.*



## Sprinkling the ivories...

We all know Ardbeg is the answer to many a conundrum (or should that be conundram) such as, "What can I get Dad for his birthday?" and, "Where shall we get married?" But, "What can we use to fix this piano?" is perhaps a less obvious one. However, when pianist Stefan Arnold found his performance thwarted by a swollen wooden pin within his instrument during a concert in Storuman, Sweden, the solution to the problem was indeed, Ardbeg.



Having successfully dismantled the piano in part with a cake slice, an urgent call was placed to a retired piano tuner who proposed the use of strong alcohol as a lubricant. Somewhat reluctantly, Duncan Kemp, event organiser, was dispatched to his house to fetch his treasured bottle of Ardbeg Supernova. The elixir was poured carefully on the damaged wooden link and the heat of a hair dryer applied. The piano recovered swiftly and the concert resumed, to the delight of those present.

A relieved Stefan commented:

*"As a concert pianist for over 20 years, I have experienced many strange happenings. But I have never had to fix a grand piano with a cake slice, a hair dryer and a fine whisky."*

## Summer of love...

We are always thrilled to welcome wedding parties at the Distillery. Our new chef, Calum Davey, has this year implemented a tasty new menu so we are delighted that many have commented on the fantastic food as well as the wonderful whisky. Perhaps the happiest of couples are Roland and Rose-Marie Schmitt who joined us for a post-nuptial lunch in the Ardbeg sunshine:

*"You and the whole Team of Ardbeg made our day perfect! It was one of the highlights in my and Rose-Marie's life and we will never ever forget what you and Ardbeg made for us."*

## Pre-nup pup

We're accustomed to seeing stags on Islay, but this one was wilder than most. Committee Member Graham Robb chose Islay to bid farewell to his bachelor days in style. Finding it somewhat harder to let go of Shortie (replica model only), onlookers suggested he was missing his fiancée, the lovely Julie, who we are reliably informed is allowed on the sofa from time to time if she's had her nails cut.

## Getting hitched without a hitch? Not on Islay...

The bard was almost right when he coined the old cliché, "The course of true love never did run smooth." For one wedding party on their way to Ardbeg in June, it was the midday sailing from Kennacraig that didn't run smooth – or on time. After a ten hour delay aboard *The Finlaggan* (during which a few nerve-settling drams of Ardbeg were sunk) Paul McKendrick and Natalia Capaldi – both avid Committee Members – arrived at the Distillery. By the following day all was forgotten and their happy family wedding went with a swing.

Meanwhile, when Nancy and David McNaughton's plans to renew their wedding vows on Iona were ruined by gale force winds, they headed to the ruins of Kildalton Church instead. There they bumped into a bevy of festival-going Ardbeggians mid-way through a tasting, complete with bagpiper. As the piper played, the couple made their vows to each other, with the tourists their witnesses. "Apparently we provided a spontaneous tour highlight for your group, and what they may not realise is that they did the same for us!" said Nancy afterwards. Proving all's well that ends well.



Real love, not puppy love



## You snooze you loos...

The headline writers at Momentous Minutes HQ were thrown into disarray when it was discovered that Whisky Magazine had stolen their pun. Needless to say, the article entitled 'Ardbog' covered an extremely newsworthy topic: that of Ardbeg's new lavatories.

The revamped facilities are indeed a thing to behold. Bright, modern and luxuriously spacious, they have made it onto facebook and attracted at least one visit by a returning local wishing to see them for herself. However, Committee Members should note that the ladies and gents have swapped places, so be prepared for the odd visitor being caught with their pants down.

## A call to arms... legs... necks... backs... buttocks even!

Are there no limits to the lengths people will go to express their delight and devotion to Ardbeg? This fine individual was spotted at the recent Ardbeg Challenge event in Sweden. Anyone recognise this outstanding devotee? Because we at Ardbeg believe they need to be recognised properly and be honoured with a bottle of something special. Please email photographic evidence and contact details to: [oldkilm@ardbeg.com](mailto:oldkilm@ardbeg.com)



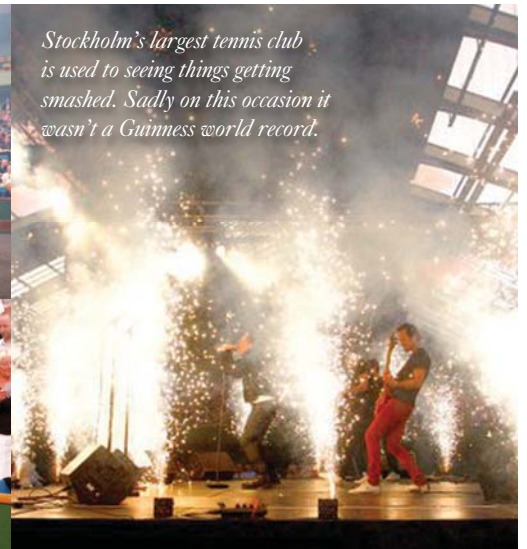
## ...speaking of lose – Ardbeg and Guinness

You win some, you lose some – so the saying goes. We were recently victorious in our attempt to break the world record for the biggest ever Ardbeg tasting. In Stockholm on 4 June, the 'Ardbeg Challenge' saw 1,537 Committee members raise a glass simultaneously to the peatiest malt on the

planet. (It's a dirty job, but someone's got to do it.) And while we narrowly missed out on a Guinness World Record for the biggest whisky tasting ever, with so many tastebuds being whetted, spirits weren't dampened. We might just have to do it all again sometime soon.



*Stockholm's largest tennis club is used to seeing things getting smashed. Sadly on this occasion it wasn't a Guinness world record.*



## Expressions of Delight...

*If an enchanted lake could have a taste, this would be it.*

*Rex Vermeulen, Netherlands*

*Supernova. Better than sex. Just don't tell the wife.*

*Garry Hunter, UK*

*P.S. Are you missing something, like regular emails from the Distillery? If so, make sure you log on to [ardbeg.com](http://ardbeg.com) and update your details so you don't miss a drop*

*A decade and a half has passed since my father tried to explain what whisky was all about and I finally think I understand. The first time I experienced Ardbeg it clicked... Thank you.*

*Victor Andersson, Sweden*

*Liquid heaven, words are not enough...*

*Peter Michael Zikmund on facebook*

*Best whisky EVER!!!! Best gift Islay and Scotland gave to the world.....more and more Ardbeg for everyone!!!!!!!!!!!!!!*

*Eugenio Bindi on facebook*

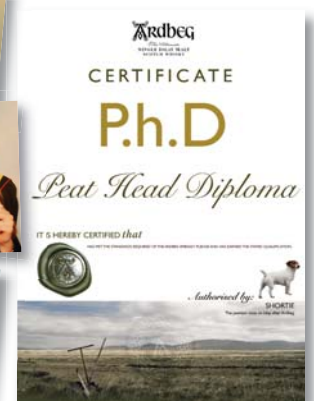
*Ardbeg is truly magic! Just bought a bottle of Alligator – for discussion. That makes me proud owner of 14 different expressions of Ardbeg. Slainté*

*Bengt Andersson on facebook*

## Three degrees of separation

Congratulations to recent graduates Rachael, Bryony and Sarah, familiar to many Committee Members as tour guides, waitresses and kitchen preppers at Ardbeg for several years. As they now prepare to leave us for pastures new, we are proud to bestow on each of them our venerated Peat Head Diploma. You too can qualify for a P.h.D by nominating yourself as Ardbeggian of the Month at:

[ardbeg.com](http://ardbeg.com)



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.

*Michael Heads*

*Michael Heads, Chairman.*