

Whisky Galore!



by Gordon Craigie

ARDNAMURCHAN may be a particularly remote and sparsely populated area of Scotland but the local community definitely subscribe to the old Scottish adage of 'if ye want something daein, dae it yersel!' Through their charity, The Ardnamurchan Trust, they aim to directly support their young people in furthering their education and development. Previous projects have seen the Trust provide funding for educational materials for local schools, and direct grant assistance to individuals pursuing apprenticeships and further and higher education.

The Ardnamurchan Trust's latest venture involves an innovative partnership with a major local employer, the

The first distillery in Scotland to be entirely fuelled from local, sustainable woodland

Ardnamurchan Distillery. As part of a dynamic initiative to drive the economy and encourage families to remain in the area, The Trust plans to buy a cask of maturing spirit from the Distillery on behalf of every local resident aged between 10 and 17. Then, when the young person reaches their 18th birthday, they will be given the option of selling the cask back to the distillery with the profits helping to finance their tertiary education or support their future training and careers.

The Ardnamurchan Distillery is owned by Adelphi Distillery Ltd, which was founded in 1992 as an independent bottler of Scotch whisky. Taking its name from the Loch Katrine Adelphi Distillery that had historically operated in Glasgow, in 2008 Adelphi decided to build its own new facility on the remote Ardnamurchan peninsula. Completed in July 2014, it was the first distillery in Scotland to be entirely fuelled from local, sustainable woodland, and powered from a hydro-electric generator on the same river that provides its cooling water. All its co-products are returned to the local farm for use in cattle feed and fertiliser.



Ardnamurchan Interior



Alex Bruce



Ardnamurchan Distillery



Alex Bruce, Managing Director of Adelphi, said “we’re very proud to be unveiling this brilliant scheme during the Year of Young People. This programme brings together the Ardnamurchan Distillery, local businesses and residents, ... and will benefit young people in the Ardnamurchan area, who will directly profit from the sale of their local whisky”. Adelphi will also be inviting all the young people to attend practical day courses at the distillery and at Adelphi’s main offices. These courses will provide a range of operational and tourism industry experiences, covering the bottling and distribution side of the business as well as sales, marketing and logistics. Mr Bruce concludes, “the vision is that we all work together to give our young people the best possible

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advantage, while also creating a vibrant and attractive environment to live and work in”.

Prime objectives for the Ardnamurchan Trust are to provide direction and long-term employment goals to youngsters in the area. A spokesperson commented, “the Trustees are immensely grateful to Adelphi for making it possible for the young people of the area to be given the opportunity to learn about all the different aspects of one of Scotland’s most important manufacturing and exporting businesses, as well as the hope of realising a financial gain when the casks are sold to help in reducing the financial burden faced by young people entering further education”.

The Scottish Government is equally supportive, with Fergus Ewing, the Rural Economy Secretary, adding “this is a fantastic, innovative and thoughtful initiative by the Ardnamurchan Trust and I applaud everyone involved with it. It is particularly fitting that this is being launched during the Year of Young People and makes for a fine legacy from this year’s events and activities. Scotland’s whisky distilleries do much to support their local communities and economies, but equally those distilleries could not exist without the skills and expertise provided by people living in those communities. With this unique scheme, the Ardnamurchan Trust are not only ‘giving something back’ to young people and their families in the local area, but also creating a potential long-term benefit for everyone”.

With the *Scotland the Brand* campaign being particularly topical in view of the current spate of ‘union-jackery’, it’s good to see the industry body Scotland Food & Drink endorse the project too. Their CEO, James Withers, comments “Scotland is cementing its reputation at home and abroad as a land of food and drink. We have a great diversity of world-class products, but we also want to be champions of responsible and sustainable practices. Investment in the next generation is key to achieving that vision. We are excited to see the launch of this initiative by the Ardnamurchan Trust. It is creative, forward thinking planning for the future.”

We’ll all drink to that – slàinte mhath!