

Book Reviews 2008 by “Bookworm”

Charles Hunter, Oban

‘Argyll Curiosities’ by Marian Pallister: Birlinn 2007 £9.99

Accomplished journalist and author Marian Pallister sheds new light on some old subjects and treads some of the less well travelled paths of Argyll history. A follow-up of Marian’s ‘Lost Argyll’ of 2005.

‘A Very Canny Scot’ by Joanna Hill & Nicholas Bastin: Two plus George Ltd, Barnham, West Sussex 2007 £17.99.

Scholarly glimpses of the life and times of landowner and improver Daniel Campbell of Shawfield and Laird of Islay (1670-1753). What caught my eye was a printed manuscript list of early shared overseas trading ventures with tobacco from Virginia, sugar and rum from the West Indies, iron and timber from Sweden and wine from the Mediterranean. All this took place between 1693 and 1724. I’m definitely saving up for this one!

Still on the nautical side, two new (2007) books celebrate the age of the puffers: **‘Puffers’** by Guthrie Hutton: Stenlake Publishing, Catrine KA5 6RD £7.99

This is in the format of the ‘Old’ series (‘Old Oban’, etc). The second is: **‘Last of the Puffermen’** by Keith McGinn: Neil Wilson Publishing, £9.99
Both books cover the subject adequately in old photographs and text.

‘The Guide to Mysterious Iona and Staffa’ by Geoff Holder: Tempus Publishing, Stroud, Glos. 2007 £12.99

This should help to feed the insatiable appetite for books on Iona with Staffa thrown in for good measure.

‘Kilmartin: An Introduction and Guide’ by Rachel Butter with photos by David Lyons: Kilmartin House Trust, Kilmartin £9.99

This beautifully designed book is not new, but is now available in Waterstones for the first time. It describes, as it says, ‘Scotland’s richest prehistoric landscape’. Many people will know that Rachel, in partnership with David Clough, succeeded in setting up Kilmartin House despite many setbacks and disappointments in the early days.