






SUPPORTING POLAR  
SCIENCE AND HERITAGE

[www.spri.cam.ac.uk/friends](http://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/friends)

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

-  From the Institute – page 2
-  A visit to Chatham – page 3
-  Dates for the diary – page 4

# POLAR BYTES

ISSUE 072 / SUMMER 2014

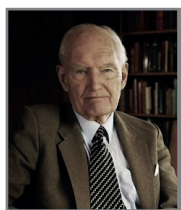
Loyal readers since 1996



Photo courtesy of Ice Tracks

## A remarkable career and a remarkable man

Excerpt from the funeral service address for Charles Swithinbank by Julian Dowdeswell



Charles Swithinbank,  
Nov 1926 to May 2014

This year commemorates the end of a very full life, well lived. Many of you will be broadly familiar with Charles Swithinbank's exceptional achievements concerning science and exploration of the polar regions, especially in Antarctica, which spanned six decades.

Charles was born in Burma in 1926, and educated at Bryanston School in Dorset. Usually known through his distinctive initials as C.W.M. Swithinbank in his scientific publications, Charles was a polar man through and through.

For his scientific work in Antarctica, Charles was awarded the Polar Medal after the Maudheim expedition, followed later by the Patron's Medal of the Royal Geographical Society, and the Vega Medal of Royal Swedish Geographical Society. In the 2013 New Year's Honours List, he was awarded a richly deserved MBE.

Finally, and importantly, Charles was an excellent and supportive colleague and a friend to many involved in 'things polar' over more than six decades – we shall miss him. His name, though, will go forward through the four Antarctic features, including a mountain range and a glacier, that are, quite properly, named after a man who had a deep knowledge and genuine love of the polar regions.

For full speech please see enclosed leaflet

### A GREAT SUCCESS!



page 3

## A visit to Chatham with Tim Jarvis



At this weekend event, friends were treated to a riveting account of Tim Jarvis 'Shackleton Epic' expedition which was also captured on the Discovery channel documentary Death or Glory.



Thank you to Ice Tracks for their generous sponsorship  
[www.ice-tracks.com](http://www.ice-tracks.com) – experts in polar expedition cruising, passionate about adventure travel



## Welcome to our NEW look Polar Bytes newsletter

**Welcome to the new look Polar Bytes and please join me in thanking Leona and other members of the FoSPRI Committee for their outstanding enthusiasm and efforts in creating this cracking modernisation of our long standing, much loved periodical.**

It comes hard on the heels of our excellent annual summer gathering in Chatham's Historic Dockyard and our celebration of Tim Jarvis' Epic Expedition re-enacting Shackleton's famous open boat journey. Please read on, enjoy and don't hesitate to offer feedback!

Nick Lambert, Chairman

### HOW TO CONTACT US?

Friends Secretary – Celene Pickard  
Email: friendsPA@spri.cam.ac.uk  
Tel: 01223 336 540  
Address: The Friends Office  
Scott Polar Research Institute  
Lensfield Road  
Cambridge CB2 1ER  
England

### From the Institute



A few words from Director  
Julian Dowdeswell  
Email: director@spri.cam.ac.uk

During a term of sabbatical leave in Chile, completed in April, I was able to take forward several academic projects. One of these was an 'Atlas of Submarine Glacial Landforms', which will be a 500 page publication in the 'Memoirs Series of the Geological Society of London' due to appear in 2015.

Marine scientists from around the world are contributing to the volume, which will provide a comprehensive set of images to include glacial landforms on the floor of the polar seas and underlying stratigraphy, enabling the reconstruction of the past flow-regime and growth and decay of ice sheets.

I was also able to work with scientists at several Chilean universities on the geological history of the fjords of Chilean Patagonia, in part using geophysical data provided by the Navy of Chile. A memorandum of understanding was signed with Vice-Admiral Humberto Ramirez of the Chilean Navy and the Rector of the Catholic University of Valparaiso in April. This will enable further collaboration in the use of existing marine data, the acquisition of new data from the



Signing in Valparaiso of the Memorandum of Understanding between SPRI, the Navy of Chile and the Catholic University of Valparaiso (Photo courtesy of the Navy of Chile).

Chilean fjords, and also the planning of a joint exhibition in Chile on Sir Ernest Shackleton, which is intended to take place in late 2016 to coincide with the centenary of the rescue of the 'Endurance' party.

On returning from Chile, I also took part in a two-week airborne field programme in the northwest of Greenland and the Canadian Arctic islands during May. The aim of the project was to obtain airborne radar data on ice thickness and surface-elevation change in these areas of the high Arctic. Collaborators: Universities of Texas, (Austin) and Alberta.

Finally, all at SPRI were saddened to learn of the recent death of our colleague Dr Charles Swithinbank. I know that Friends will join us in this sentiment.

## News from the Heritage Collections



Written by the Librarian and Keeper of Collections, Heather Lane  
Email: librarian@spri.cam.ac.uk



Sir Ernest Shackleton  
(SPRI Picture Library  
P2001/86/217)

### Shackleton displays get a revamp.

With the Imperial Trans-Antarctic (Endurance) centenary getting under way this August, The Polar Museum has taken the opportunity to redesign the displays dedicated to the expeditions led by Sir Ernest Shackleton on show in the permanent galleries.

With help from our Shackleton Research Project Assistant, Anders Bache (formerly with the Fram Museum) and from Sherrie-lee Evans (who worked with us to develop the touch screen content for the Terra Nova centenary), Exhibitions Officer Bryan Lintott has spearheaded a team effort to reinterpret Shackleton's life and career. This should

whet the appetite for our major special exhibition, *By Endurance We Conquer*, which will begin in the autumn of 2015 and will put many manuscript items on public display for the first time.

### Reinventing the Wheel: Bicycles in the Polar Regions

is now open at The Polar Museum, and celebrates the arrival of *Le Tour de France* in Cambridge on 7 July with a look at the surprising history of bicycles in the Arctic and Antarctic. The display explores the role that bicycles and bicycle wheels have played in the exploration of the Poles, both as indispensable tools and as items of fun.

Inset and background picture: Sledge wheel used by the Cambridge West Spitsbergen Expedition, 1938 (SPRI Museum N: 784)





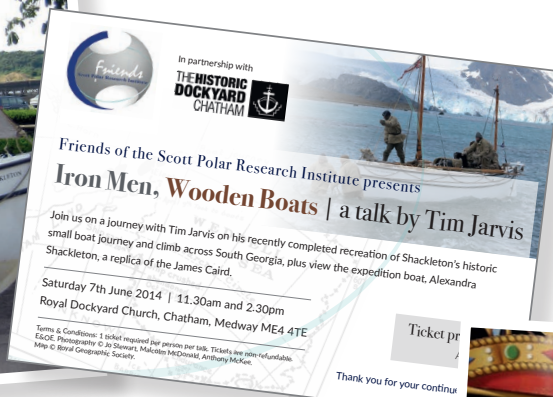


In partnership with

**THE HISTORIC  
DOCKYARD  
CHATHAM**



Don't miss out on our forthcoming events. See back page for details.



# A visit to Chatham

THE FRIENDS WEEKEND EVENT AT THE HISTORIC DOCKYARD CHATHAM, WHICH TOOK PLACE ON 7-8 JUNE, WAS A GREAT SUCCESS.

In beautiful weather, Friends were treated to a lecture by environmental scientist, adventurer and author Tim Jarvis, about his recreation in February 2013 of Shackleton's small boat journey from Elephant Island to South Georgia and were pleased to be joined by sailor, engineer and adventurer Seb Coulthard, also a member of the crew for this arduous voyage. In 2007 Tim also recreated Sir Douglas Mawson's famous survival journey from 1912 in which both of his fellow travellers died.

As well as an opportunity to see the Hon Alexandra Shackleton with the replica boat named in her honour, we were privileged to have fascinating tours of the site and the Victorian Ropery, and access to all the galleries and ships on the site.

The Saturday evening was rounded off by a wonderful, convivial dinner in the Steam, Steel and Submarines Gallery.

Below are some great pictures taken during the day and we would like to thank everyone who came to support the event.



Clockwise from left: FoSPRI team; ticket for the event; Tim Jarvis; Seb Coulthard, Alexandra Shackleton, Simon Middleton and Tim Jarvis; Seb Coulthard showing guests replica equipment used on the Alexandra Shackleton; guests enjoying dinner; Friends Committee member Tina Balchin enjoying the sunshine.



## FoSPRI dates for the diary

Please visit: [www.spri.cam.ac.uk/friends/events](http://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/friends/events) for further details



### General

To book any of the events below please email: [friendsPA@spri.cam.ac.uk](mailto:friendsPA@spri.cam.ac.uk)

| EVENT  | DATE:                  | TIME:               | LOCATION:               | COST:   |
|--|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Lewis Clarke: Too much, Too young? Jim McNeill: The Ice Warrior Project</b>                                   | Sunday<br>12 October   | 11:00am -<br>2:00pm | SPRI Lecture<br>Theatre | £12 friends<br>£5 students<br>(light lunch<br>included)   |
| <b>Michaelmas Term Lecture<br/>Susanna Ferrar:<br/>The life and career of<br/>Hartley Travers Ferrar</b>         | Saturday<br>25 October | 7:30pm              | SPRI Lecture<br>Theatre | FREE,<br>no booking<br>required<br>(£5 to<br>non-Friends) |
| <b>Michaelmas Term Study<br/>Day - a joint event with South<br/>Georgia Association<br/>(see attached flyer)</b> | Saturday<br>8 November | 9:30am -<br>5:00pm  | SPRI Lecture<br>Theatre | £25   |
| <b>Friends of SPRI AGM</b>   | Saturday<br>8 November | 5:15pm              | SPRI Lecture<br>Theatre | FREE  |
| <b>Shackleton<br/>Centenary Voyage</b>   | 21 Nov to 10 Dec       | -                   | Antarctica              | See website   |

### Key

|            |         |
|------------|---------|
| Exhibition | Study   |
| Dinner     | Student |
| Lecture    | Special |
| Meeting    |         |

Further information on the Lectures is available at [www.spri.cam.ac.uk/friends/events/lectures/](http://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/friends/events/lectures/)

### Museum events

To book any of the events below please email: [museumevents@spri.cam.ac.uk](mailto:museumevents@spri.cam.ac.uk)

| EVENT  | DATE:   | TIME:               | LOCATION:        | COST:   |
|--|---|---------------------|------------------|---|
| <b>The Polar Muse</b><br><i>A collaboration between The<br/>Polar Museum, PN Review<br/>and eight of Cambridge's most<br/>exciting and innovative poets.</i> | 24 September -<br>20 December                       | 10:00am -<br>4:00pm | THE POLAR MUSEUM | FREE  |
| <b>Lunchtime Talk Series</b><br><i>Enjoy a variety of free<br/>lunchtime talks relating to<br/>themes from our current<br/>exhibitions.</i>                  | Tuesday<br>21 October,<br>28 October,<br>4 November | 2:00pm -<br>2:30pm  |                  | FREE,<br>no booking<br>required. Meet<br>in the museum<br>entrance hall |
| <b>In Conversation with a<br/>Museum: The Polar Muse<br/>Poetry Reading</b>  | Tuesday 4<br>November                               | 6:00pm -<br>7:30pm  |                  | FREE, booking<br>required   |

Further information on the Museum events are available at [www.spri.cam.ac.uk/museum](http://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/museum)



## A note from the Executive Secretary

Any enquiries about membership (including subscription rates and renewals) should be sent to Celene Pickard, email: [friendsPA@spri.cam.ac.uk](mailto:friendsPA@spri.cam.ac.uk)

**NEW FRIENDS** - Membership currently stands at 634. A very warm welcome is extended to all new members.

**PASSING FRIENDS** - We are sad to note the passing of Charles Swithinbank, who joined the friends 1st June 1947 and also of Richard Crabtree, Life Member who joined the Friends in 1979.

### DON'T FORGET

Polar Museum volunteers are entitled to a **discounted rate of £15** for single FoSPRI membership for their first year.

### KEEP US UP-TO-DATE

May we ask you to please keep us informed of any changes to your postal or email addresses.



Edited by Heather Lane, Celene Pickard and Leona Gaine Murphy.  
Designed and printed by [www.arliamdesign.co.uk](http://www.arliamdesign.co.uk)

Information correct at time of going to press. E&OE.  
Photographs remain the copyright of their respective owners.