






SUPPORTING POLAR
SCIENCE AND HERITAGE

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

-  From the Institute – page 2
-  Summer Lunch – page 3
-  New Membership Changes – page 3

POLAR BYTES

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Photo © Kyostia

Maritime Mystery Unfolds - The Bell Tolls!

HMS Erebus and its sister ship, HMS Terror, set sail on May 19, 1845, under the command of Sir John Franklin in search of the Northwest Passage. They were last seen in August 1845 entering Baffin Bay, when it is believed that the two vessels became trapped in Arctic ice.



Unsigned watercolour of HMS Erebus and HMS Terror, setting out on the Franklin expedition, 1845 from The Polar Museum's collections. (SPRI N: 972)

Written by Angie Butler

The 129-person crew abandoned the ships and all perished, succumbing to hunger and freezing temperatures. It is suspected that they may have resorted to cannibalism to stay alive.

Numerous search parties have failed in finding the ships, which could reveal the fate of Franklin's fabled arctic voyage. That is until this past summer when the 2014 Victoria Strait Expedition team located one of Franklin's historic ships, HMS Erebus, and thus solving one of the world's greatest archaeological mysteries.

The expedition, led by Parks Canada, brought together the Government of Canada and an unprecedented number of organizations from public and private sectors. With state-of-the-art technology and 19th century Inuit oral testimony, one of the most important maritime mysteries is now unfolding.



HMS Erebus Bronze Bell

Poignantly the bronze bell has been recovered and discovered to be embossed with a Royal Navy 'broad arrow' indicating property of the Crown, and

the date '1845.' The bell would have struck every hour to announce the passage of time.

A ship that played a key role in the finding of HMS Erebus was One Ocean Expedition's Akademik Sergey Vavilov, the vessel that took the Friends in November to Antarctica on the Shackleton Centenary voyage.

DID YOU KNOW?

SPRI holds an important collection of books and manuscripts relating to Franklin's ill-fated 1845 voyage. We have been delighted to work with the staff of Parks Canada who have been conducting research in our archives in preparation for the hunt for Erebus and Terror.

Thank you to One Ocean – for this month's generous sponsorship
www.oneoceanexpeditions.com





Welcome to our Spring Polar Bytes newsletter

We're now firmly into the Shackleton Centenary (by this stage Endurance had been icebound for about ten weeks). Our recent committee meeting really developed our plans for the year - we are restructuring our membership categories to be more attractive to new joiners and to simplify fee payments. Our 2015 lecture series is under way – my thanks to **Colin Summerhayes** and **Stephen Pax Leonard**, our first two excellent speakers.

Meanwhile, the intrepid survivors of the Akademik Sergey Vavilov are keeping the memory of the Shackleton Centenary Expedition Cruise alive with a plethora of emails, photo, videos and evening lectures across the country.

After a challenging flight from Brize Norton (the Falkland Islands are a long way south) our artist in residence is firmly ensconced in HMS PROTECTOR, recording the sights and sounds of the Antarctica Peninsula in unique style; we will see Darren Rees' work in due course.

I look forward to seeing you at the Summer Lunch.

Nick Lambert, Chairman

From the Institute



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

I was in Longyearbyen in Spitsbergen, the largest island in the Svalbard archipelago, to witness the wonderful natural phenomenon of a total eclipse of the Sun. Although a partial eclipse was visible on 20 March from many parts of northwest Europe, totality was only viewable from slivers of land through Svalbard and the Faroe Islands. There was a discernible change in the light as totality approached at 11 am, preceding a wonderful view of the corona for just over 2 minutes at full eclipse. The clean air of Svalbard and, fortunately, a crystal clear day at about minus 20 degrees Celsius, made the whole event very memorable.

I was in Svalbard for about a week, working with colleagues at the University Centre on Svalbard (UNIS) as chief editor of the forthcoming 'Atlas of Submarine Glacial Landforms'. The papers we were working on are based on our field research aboard Norwegian and British research vessels, using marine geophysical



Above: Julian Dowdeswell photographing the total eclipse of the Sun in Longyearbyen, Spitsbergen.
Right: The corona around the Sun, viewed in Arctic Svalbard during a total eclipse on 20 March 2015.

data collected in both the Arctic and Antarctic. UNIS is an excellently equipped research centre, to which a number of undergraduate and graduate students from the UK and elsewhere, come each year for lectures and field classes in the archipelago and its surrounding seas. I have taken part in this programme for many years and several of the Institute's research students have also benefited, widening their experience and expertise through studying the Arctic directly.

News from the Heritage Collections



From the Archives Manager, Naomi Boneham
Email: archives@spri.cam.ac.uk



James's Geometry pages
from the 1911
Encyclopedia Britannica

of the **Encyclopedia Britannica**, published by Cambridge University Press (CUP).

Unlike the men, all of whom were rescued by Sir Ernest Shackleton, the full twenty-eight volume set did not survive (toilet paper was a much needed commodity!). However, a few fragments were retained and treasured by the men. Back in 2001, the Archive acquired the pages on 'Scurvy' kept by

The newest item to come into the Archive collections survived one of the most famous Polar expeditions. In 1914, when Endurance sailed for the Antarctic, on board was a complete set of the 1911 edition

expedition doctor Alexander Macklin. Now, the pages on 'Geometry', kept back by the expedition's physicist Reginald James have come into the collection, as a gift from James' family.

At the end of 2014, CUP celebrated their polar connection with an exhibition curated by Meredith Hooper. The SPRI archive was approached to lend one of Reginald's diaries which mentioned the value he placed on those pages. We were delighted when the family offered to return the pages to Cambridge so that they could be reunited with his papers and other Endurance collections here.

The 'Geometry' and 'Scurvy' pages will go on display in the Polar Museum in May.



Reginald James
(Photo: Frank Hurley,
SPRI P66/19/9A)

SUMMER LUNCH TICKETS NOW ON SALE!

Politics, People and Penguins: One Governor's Story

WHEN: 20 June 2015, 12:30pm WHERE: SPRI, Lensfield Road, Cambridge

TICKETS: £27.15 each (£25 plus £2.15 admin fee)

Please join us for this Summer's exciting get together, when our speaker will be Richard Ralph, former Governor of the Falkland Islands and Commissioner for South Georgia.

You will have a chance to chat, over a light lunch with a glass of wine, with our 2013 Antarctic artist-in-residence, Emma Stibbon RA whose new work will be on display.

Book your tickets online via Eventbrite at <http://ow.ly/LrNHZ> or by contacting Celene Pickard at: friendsPA@spri.cam.ac.uk.

All members and their guests are welcome – numbers are limited to 85, so book early!

LIMITED SPACES! BOOK TODAY!



Top: Speaker Richard Ralph. Above: Kathleen Scott's Sculpture 'Youth' in the SPRI gardens.






Friends Membership - Important Changes – from the 1 September 2015



As a member of the Friends, you provide invaluable support to the Scott Polar Research Institute, its collections and dynamic education and outreach programmes. Last year alone, The Polar Museum was enjoyed by 53,500 visitors and over 10,000 children benefited from school visits and workshops.

From this September we are moving to a simpler annual subscription model. This reduces our administrative costs and means that more of your subscription goes directly to supporting SPRI. Subscriptions will be due on 1 September each year.

The new categories of membership are:

 Individual membership	£25
 Joint/family membership (for two adults and any children up to 18 at the same address)	£40
 Life membership	£1,000
 Joint life membership (for two adults at the same address)	£1,500
 Student (18-25 yrs in full-time Higher Education)	£10

The 90 Degree Club

The 90 Degree Club is open to those who wish to make a major contribution to the work of the Friends. A minimum donation of £6,000 entitles you to Individual Life Membership or £9,000 for Joint Life Membership (for two adults at the same address). Please contact Celene, Membership Secretary for details of benefits.

Online payment facility

A new online payment facility will be available from 1 September 2015. If your renewal date falls between now and the end of August 2015, you may still make your annual payment and your membership will be valid until 1 September 2016. This only applies if you are willing to pay by cheque* or through an existing Bankers Order. For those not paying by Bankers Order, Celene will be in touch with a renewal reminder each month until the new system comes into effect.

Under the new scheme, existing Life Members (including those of the 80 and 90 Degree Clubs) will still be entitled to all of the benefits that were advertised at the time of joining.

If you would like any further information, please email the Membership Secretary on the special membership email: friendsofspri@gmail.com

* Payable to The University of Cambridge

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There is still an option to provide an additional annual donation to the Friends of SPRI, which is always very welcome, and we ask that you let us know if your subscription or gift is eligible for Gift Aid.



FoSPRI dates for the diary

Please visit: www.spri.cam.ac.uk/friends/events for further details



The Polar Explorers Dinner

Saturday 16th May 2015

The Dinner will celebrate the spirit of polar exploration and is being organised by descendants of Sir James Wordie.

Address by David Hempleman-Adams, Explorer

*To be held at
The Hall, St John's College,
Cambridge CB2 1TP
at 7.00pm*

Tickets - £90 a head

*For more information and
downloadable booking form,
visit our website:
www.endurance100.org*

THE SHACKLETON
CENTENARY FoSPRI
greetings cards are now
on sale via the website.

*Blank on the
inside so perfect
for any occasion!*



General

EVENT	DATE:	TIME:	LOCATION:	COST/BOOKING
Shackleton and the Irish Connection - The lecturer is renowned Shackleton biographer, Michael Smith	Wednesday 13 May	7pm	Irish Cultural Centre - Temporary HQ St Paul's Church Centre, Hammersmith Broadway, London	FREE
Summer Lunch Lecture: Politics, People & Penguins: One Governors Story	20 June	12:30pm	SPRI	£27.15 (£25 plus £2.15 admin) Book online http://ow.ly/LrNHZ
Michaelmas Term Lectures	Saturday 10 October, Saturday 24 October	7:30pm	SPRI Lecture Theatre	FREE - No need to book (£5 non members)
Friends of SPRI AGM	Saturday 7 November	TBC	SPRI Lecture Theatre	TBC

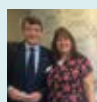
Museum events

EVENT	DATE:	TIME:	LOCATION:	COST/BOOKING
A Victorian Polar Explorer Remembered: Vice-Admiral Sir George Nares	Tuesday 28 April	6:00pm - 7:00pm	THE POLAR MUSEUM	http://victorian-polar-explorer.eventbrite.co.uk
Shackleton's Cat. A new interactive opera for children aged 7-11 and their families. Running time: 1 hour	29th May 2015, 30th May 2015	2pm 11.30am & 2pm		£5 adults, £4 children
The Lost Photographs of Captain Scott	Until 30 May	10:00am - 4:00pm Tues-Sat		FREE
Emma Stibbon: Drawing the Polar Regions	11 June - 5 September	10:00am - 4:00pm Tues-Sat		FREE

Further information on the Museum events and exhibitions visit 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

NEW FRIENDS - A very warm welcome is extended to all new members.

PASSING FRIENDS - We are sad to note the passing of Dr Michael Gilkes, who died on 22 December 2014. Michael was one of the founding members of the Friends, joining on 1 January 1946 and will be much missed.

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

COULD YOU HELP?

We are looking for volunteers to help transcribe manuscript materials in the SPRI Archives.

Please email:

archives@spri.cam.ac.uk
if you are interested.

