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SCIENCE AND HERITAGE

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POLAR BYTES

ISSUE 086 / WINTER 2017

Loyal readers since 1996



© JEREMY BRADE/DICK FILBY Grytviken December 2017

An Ideal Resting Place

Written by
Angie Butler

It had snowed throughout the night and the whaling station had never looked more picturesque and yet haunting. For the second time I was returning to Grytviken to inter ashes, those of Frank Wild in 2011 and now the ashes of Henry Worsley, who lost his life crossing Antarctica in January 2016.



Accompanied by his wife Joanna and children Max and Alicia, it was an honour to be part of the unprecedented ceremony that the Falkland Government had so generously allowed

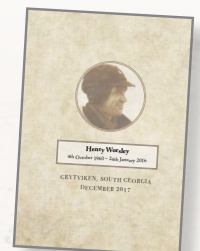
During the short service in the Whaler's church, our voices rang out across Cumberland Bay as we sang hymns accompanied by a young violinist, Julia, a staff member from our ship the Akademik Ioffe. Max read 'Sonnet for Sir Ernest' standing in the very spot his father had read the poem as the historian on our Friend's Shackleton Centenary voyage in 2014.



After the service we made our way to the cemetery for the traditional toasts to Shackleton and Wild before clambering up the snowy slope overlooking the cemetery. With great difficulty a beautiful stone was hauled to the top to mark the burial place.

Frank Wild said of Shackleton, *"An ideal resting place this for the great explorer who felt, more than most men, the glamour of such surroundings"*, and we all felt this true of Henry.

Images left to right:
Whaler's church,
Grytviken; Carrying
the burial stone; Alicia,
Joanna and Max looking
over Cumberland Bay;
Max reading Sonnet for Sir
Ernest; memorial booklet.
Photos © Roger Pimenta



Thank you to Argos Froyanes for their generous sponsorship

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Welcome to our Winter Polar Bytes newsletter

As anticipated, 2018 is cranking up to be a splendid FoSPRI year with loads of action for you all to get stuck into!

Nick Romeril our latest AiR is in Antarctica as I type, the APTL at the RGS in the summer will celebrate the remarkable life and achievements of Charles Swinbank, the Summer Lunch will be held in the beautiful Gilbert White House and its garden, One Ocean Expeditions and Ice Tracks Ltd are taking an excited FoSPRI group of intrepid explorers into Greenland and points west and north, another fab Bonhams exhibition is on the agenda for August (please do sign up as guides!) and we have emerging ideas for a stonking AGM in the autumn.

Top of my action list and that of the Committee is delivering the Friends' contribution to the Institute's 2020 Centenary fundraising campaign; we've agreed to raise up to £250k to support a fellowship in perpetuity and, thanks to the generosity of the Dolan Charitable Trust, Journey Latin America and the estate of long standing Friend Sylvia Clare Wyatt, we have already secured the first £25k. Lots of work to do but a cracking start. I'm particularly grateful to Richard Ralph who, no sooner had he stepped down from the Committee, immediately volunteered to lead the fundraising campaign!

A million heartfelt thanks as always to the many people who work so hard in support of the Friends and the Institute, and a very big welcome to our new committee members Christine Eckers and Gary Evenden who willingly took actions at their first meeting in January. Dry January is behind us, the summer's ahead... things are looking good!

Nick Lambert,
Chairman

From the Institute



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

I am now in the midst of a three-month period in New Zealand as Cambridge-Canterbury Fellow, hosted by Gateway Antarctica in Canterbury University, Christchurch. I am working up several scientific papers and finishing a book, which should be out in about October, called 'The Continent of Antarctica' and is being written jointly with Professor Mike Hambrey. There has also been some time to plan for marine-geophysical work in the Weddell Sea and adjacent Larsen C Ice Shelf, which is intended to take place about a year from now in the next Antarctic summer.

I have also been able to visit some of New Zealand's glaciers, including those in the



A large iceberg in the lake immediately beyond the debris-covered terminus of Tasman Glacier, Mt. Cook, New Zealand.

Mt. Cook area. Most of these glaciers are thinning and retreating.

Very pleasantly, I have also just heard that I have been awarded the Lyell Medal by the Geological Society of London for sustained contributions to 'soft rock' geology. The medal was established with a bequest in 1875 from Charles Lyell, who wrote 'Principles of Geology'.

News from the Heritage Collections



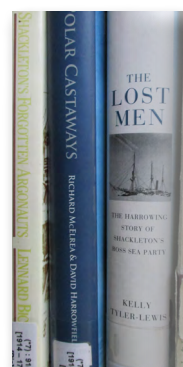
Naomi Boneham SPRI Archives
contact: archives@spri.cam.ac.uk



Lot's to see and do at the Polar Museum

As part of our ongoing Heritage Lottery Funded Shackleton project we have been delighted to add some images from the Ross Sea party to the collection. Taken between 1915 and 1917 the four photographs show images from the other side of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic expedition and fill some gaps in our Picture library collections.

For more information on this fascinating expedition, the library holds several books and if you are visiting the Institute don't forget to take a look at the temporary Aurora display in the Antarctic section of the Polar Museum.



Left to right: The Ross sea party in action; Aurora display; Books from the library.

Living with James Caird

Written by Joseph Spence, Master of Dulwich College.



The word iconic is much overused. But having James Caird at the heart of our new RIBA award winning building, The Laboratory, at Dulwich College, really does feel like living with an icon.

It is fascinating to trace the history of how James Caird has been exhibited at Dulwich since it arrived as a bequest from John Quiller Rowett, a schoolfriend of Shackleton's, in 1922. Rowett gave the boat to the College to be an inspiration to the boys, but I'm not sure it always fulfilled that purpose.

While the boat was originally displayed in a fine brick and wrought iron memorial, that structure was destroyed in World War II and alumni of the 1950s and '60s recall stumbling across James Caird "hidden away in a space behind railings, or covered in tarpaulin, somewhere near the cricket nets".

In 1986, after it had been on loan to the National Maritime Museum for 20 years, James Caird returned to the College and was installed in our North Cloister, alongside other Shackletonian memorabilia.

In 2016, we set James Caird at the heart of The Laboratory, in what had to be called The James Caird Hall.

It is now the focal point of a space dedicated to community receptions, lectures, exhibitions and performances, and constant school visits, for Shackleton's Endurance expedition is on the primary school curriculum for Southwark.

The story of how James Caird has been displayed over the last century tells us something about our attitude towards commemoration. In the mid-20th century there was little looking back. Caught in the grip of "the white heat of technology" the emphasis was on stories of progress towards a better future, a New Jerusalem. But, around the Millennium, and particularly as we began to reflect on the dark shadow cast by the 1914-18 War, we also looked to honour the fortitude of our forefathers.

Images left to right: Dulwich College crest; James Caird on display within the RIBA award winning building, The Laboratory, at Dulwich College

Perhaps, a hundred years after Einstein, we have regained a Newtonian modesty and realised that those of us who want to drive forward are at best "pygmies standing on the shoulders of giants". The boys now look back reverentially on those of their predecessors who made the ultimate sacrifice; indeed, many of them stand in front of James Caird as we gather as a whole school at 11am on the 11th day of the 11th month to join in the national Act of Remembrance.

Never two days the same

A visitor was looking at a postcard which was showing penguins listening to a gramophone record. The lady asked us what record was being played. This is just one of the questions you get asked on the front desk of the Polar Museum at SPRI.

After a quick gulp and a 15 -20 minutes search, we were able to give the enquirer some ideas. Having found the ships inventory, which listed the records, we found that one of the them was the overture to the Mikado. The thought of Gilbert and Sullivan entertaining the penguins was most amusing.

Visitors to the museum range from people who are just passing by to people who have travelled a long way specifically to visit, so when we are asked how long will it take to look round it's very difficult to answer, anywhere between 15 minutes and 4 hours depending on how interested people are!!

Some days are very quiet and other days we have a lot of visitors. It's especially busy

(and noisy) when there are school visits. Some children are really sparked by their visit and its especially gratifying when during the holidays a student comes back with Mum and Dad or Grandparents, because they enjoyed visiting the museum so much on their school trip. You hope that maybe it's sparked a lifelong interest in the polar regions.

Images left to right: Gramophone and Penguins from the Nimrod expedition; Inside the Polar Museum; Christine Eckers and Garry Evenden, Polar Museum Volunteers.





FoSPRI dates for the diary

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

General

EVENT:	DATE:	TIME:	LOCATION:	COST/BOOKING:
St Patrick's Day Lecture Ireland's Antarctic Explorers by Michael Smith	Sat 17 March 2018	4.30pm - 5.30pm	SPRI Lecture Theatre	FREE
Four Antarctic Years in the South Orkney Islands, 1923-29 Lecture by R.K. Headland followed by the book launch. Sponsored by Bernard Quaritch Ltd	Sat 17 March 2018	5.45pm - 7.45pm	SPRI Lecture Theatre	FREE To attend the book launch following the lecture, please register: http://goo.gl/s1c7rm .
Friends Lecture - 'Wilhelm Filchner - Antarctic German Explorer by Ursula Rack'	Wed 11 April 2018	6 - 7pm	SPRI Lecture Theatre	FREE
Friends Spring Event Visit to Gilbert White Museum, Selbourne	12 May 2018	TBC	Gilbert White Museum, Selbourne	Booking details to follow
Annual Polar Tribute Lecture Tribute to Charles Swinbank by Sir Ranulph Fiennes	11 July 2018	7pm	RGS, London	£25 per head. Booking: http://bit.ly/APTL2018
Friends Voyage 2018 Baffin Island & Greenland Explorer	3 - 17 Sept 2018	TBA	Baffin Island & Greenland	Contact info@ice-tracks.com

If we have sufficient interest in this visit, we would consider hiring a small coach, please indicate your interest to Celene: friendsPA@spri.cam.ac.uk

ALL PROCEEDS WILL BE DONATED TO SPRI

HOT OFF THE PRESS BREAKING NEWS



I am sure you will wish to join me in congratulating Julian Dowdeswell, who has been awarded the 2018 Lyell Medal of the Geological Society of London for significant contributions to the science through a substantial body of work.

The Lyell Medal has been awarded since 1876 and is the Society's highest award for 'soft rock' geology. It was established with a gift from the distinguished 19th Century scientist Charles Lyell who wrote the 'Principles of Geology'. Congratulations Julian!

Image top: The Lyell Medal
© The Geological Society

Museum events

Further information on the Museum events and exhibitions visit www.spri.cam.ac.uk/museum/

EVENT:	DATE:	TIME:	LOCATION:	COST/BOOKING:
A taste of the Polar regions Ever wondered what there is to eat at the South Pole? We reveal all! Ages 15+.	Mon 12 March 2018	6pm - 8pm	THE POLAR MUSEUM	Book online: https://goo.gl/tUajVp



LECTURE AND BOOK LAUNCH – Saturday 17 March

You are invited to an evening celebrating one man's fascinating record of four winters in the Antarctic during the 1920s. Four Antarctic Years in the South Orkney Islands by José Manuel Moneta was published in December 2017. The evening opens with a drinks reception, followed at 6.30pm by an illustrated lecture by R.K. Headland and closes with a book-signing. To attend the book launch please register: <http://goo.gl/s1c7rm>.

PRE-ORDER YOUR COPY TODAY!

Author Isobel Williams is a long time Friend member. Her new Book William Speirs Bruce is available to pre-order on Amazon.



A note from the Executive Secretary



Our new and improved membership scheme is well underway. Thank you to all our members who have returned their forms and renewed their membership, your support is very much valued.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP if you haven't yet done so, you **MUST** renew to continue your membership. Annual subscriptions can be done online or by filling in the new form (a copy of which was sent to all Friends). Standing orders, must be reset up again by filling in the new form only and cannot yet be done online. We very much look forward to hearing from you - thank you so much.

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

PASSING FRIENDS – We are very sad to note the passing of Sylvia Wyatt a LIFE member of the Friends. We extend our condolences to her family.

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



Edited by Angie Butler, Susan Rose & Kristy Jones

Designed and printed by Arliam Design – www.arliamdesign.co.uk

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