



SUPPORTING POLAR
SCIENCE AND HERITAGE

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POLAR BYTES

ISSUE 088 – JUNE/JULY/AUGUST 2018

Loyal readers since 1996



Blue Berg Baffin Bay © Julian Grater

Artists at the ends of the world

On 30 July, an exhibition showcasing artists' responses to some of the most extreme places on Earth will open to the public. Polar Encounters will be hosted by Bonhams, New Bond Street.

The exhibition will feature contemporary art from the Friends of the Scott Polar Research Institute's artist in residence programme, which sends artists to both the Arctic and the Antarctic every year. Alongside today's interpretations, 200 years of Arctic art by Inuit artists and

Europeans who travelled to the far north will be displayed, showing different interpretations of life at home, at camp and at sea.



Pitseolak Ashoona
1969 – Winter Camp
scene

Exhibition Curator, Charlotte Connelly, says, "for the communities who have lived in the Arctic for thousands of years, the polar regions are homely, while for the European explorers first encounters with the far north felt bleak and difficult. These different perspectives are revealed through the art on display, which spans 200 years and artists from a range of backgrounds."



Kat Austen - working
with water collected at
63 degrees north

'Polar Encounters: 200 years of contemporary and historical polar art' will be open to the public from 30 July until 17 August, Monday to Friday, 10am - 4pm. Entry will be free.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Can you spare 3 hours? We are looking for volunteers to help assist at our Artist in Residence welcome desk at the Bonhams exhibition in London from 30th July until 17th August. Shifts are 10am - 1pm or 1pm - 4pm daily. Contact Celene, email: friends@spri.cam.ac.uk if you can help.

For more information on the event please visit:

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



Painting by Edward Adams assistant
surgeon on HMS Investigator, part of
James Clark Ross's expedition, 1848-49

Thank you to Argos Froyanes for their generous sponsorship



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Welcome to our Summer Polar Bytes newsletter

Most people measure the pace of their lives against the passing of birthdays, anniversaries and Christmas (who on earth mentioned Xmas in June?!); for me Polar Bytes and the next FoSPRI event are the key indicators of the months and years as they whizz past. In March our Sponsors' Dinner, hosted so brilliantly by Julian Dowdeswell, is now a very happy, albeit distant memory. Many of our Sponsors joined us, revelling in the hidden secrets of the Polar Museum and archive, and confirming their continued support for the work of the Institute and the Friends. Our heartfelt thanks are due to them all.

The second iteration of the Annual Polar Tribute Lecture, celebrating the life and achievements of Charles Swinbank is on 11 July at the RGS (as we go to press). We are very grateful to Ranulph Fiennes for being our keynote speaker, sharing his experiences in Polar regions whilst a host of luminaries will dwell on Charles and his doings.

The exhibition of 'Polar Encounters' also featuring our most recent Polar artists in residence will open at Bonhams from 30 July to 17 August. As before we would love as many Friends as possible to turn out, and we would very much appreciate volunteers to support the exhibition as guides. Do please take this opportunity to enjoy the art within the ambience of Bonhams.

On 12 May the Friends gathered in Selborne for the opening of the beautifully refurbished Gilbert White Museum by our esteemed Friend Tom Heap. A hardy team of FoSPRI representatives revelled in picnicking on a chilly, damp Hampshire day enjoying the wonderful gardens and touring the museum's exhibits. The captain of HMS SCOTT, Cdr Nick Foster, was there as was Captain Gary Hesling who oversees the operations of HMS PROTECTOR so great representation by the sponsors of our Antarctic AiR programme.

Please do visit Bonhams and have a great summer break!

Nick Lambert, Chairman

From the Institute



A few words from

Director Julian Dowdeswell

email: director@spri.cam.ac.uk

May and June are a busy period in Cambridge University, and SPRI staff play a full part in the lecturing and examining programme of the Department of Geography. We provide final-year lecture courses in *Glaciology* and *Polar Peoples*, reflecting the Institute's research interests in both the natural and social sciences. I also give a first year course that introduces all Geography undergraduates to the cryosphere or icy world. Our 2017-18 cohort of Polar Studies M.Phil. students has also just handed in dissertations, some on which are usually published in more concise form as papers in the academic literature. Two of our M.Phil. students were supported this year by endowed scholarships from our *Debenham Scholars* and *Scott Polar Scholarships funds*, and I know that the Friends are working hard over the SPRI's centenary period to raise funds for a further scholarship; an initiative that is appreciated very much.



The coast at Ilulissat in West Greenland, which the Friends' cruise with One Ocean Expeditions will visit in September.

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We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator. Please read our fundraising promise: <https://www.philanthropy.cam.ac.uk/fundraising-promise>

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FUNDRAISING TALK WITH MICHAEL PALIN

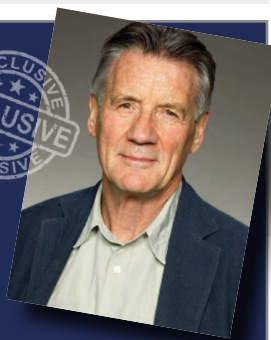
ON WEDNESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2018

The Friends of the Scott Polar Research Institute are delighted to announce that actor, writer and presenter Michael Palin will be visiting the Institute on Wednesday 28 November to introduce and discuss his new book 'Erebus'.

In his major new work, the former Monty Python stalwart and much-loved television globe-trotter - brings to life the world and voyages of HMS EREBUS.

Tickets are priced at £10.00 and commences at 7.00pm at the BMS Lecture Theatre.

BOOK YOUR TICKETS TODAY, VISIT: <https://tinyurl.com/y7kydsb3>



An ode to Frank Hurley

Written by Sue Cook



Frank Hurley was the official photographer and cinematographer with Sir Ernest Shackleton on his famous Imperial

Trans-Antarctic Crossing aboard the 'Endurance', 1914-17.

In December 2014 I was lucky enough to go on a very special voyage to Antarctica, to honour and commemorate the centenary of Shackleton's incredible expedition. We followed the exact same route as Shackleton, setting off from Ushuaia, the world's southernmost town. We were bound for the Falklands, South Georgia, South Shetlands - and then down to Antarctica itself. Several of my shipmates were direct descendants of members of the Endurance crew. Others were historians and polar experts. Listening to them all, I realised what an incredible feat of survival the whole expedition was.

It was the ship's photographer, Frank Hurley, who particularly captured my imagination. Not only did he spend many dangerous hours high up the mast in the rolling seas and freezing wind with his great heavy wooden box of camera equipment, shooting incredible footage, he also very much pulled his weight as a full member of the 28 man crew.

When the Endurance became beset in the ice of the Weddell Sea, the men continued to live on board for a few weeks, but the ice was pressing harder and harder and as the ship's destruction became inevitable, Shackleton gave the order to abandon ship and set up camp on the ice. A month or two later, as the ice began to move underneath them, they decided to leave the mangled wreck of the Endurance, take two of the lifeboats and haul them across the ice in the bid to find clear water where they could put to sea and head for Elephant Island. It was Hurley who, after a few days of trekking, persuaded Shackleton that it would be a good idea to let him go back to the wreck with a few men to collect the third lifeboat. That decision undoubtedly saved at least eight lives.

On another occasion, Hurley managed to get Shackleton to agree to let him go back to the wreck again, this time to retrieve some of his photographs and cans of film. Shackleton recognised that without Hurley's pictorial record, the description of their extraordinary survival story (if indeed they did survive) would be just that - a description; words. People back home would never have known what they'd been through, especially as the nation's attention would have been on the rest of their compatriots, fighting on the front in the Great War. When Hurley got back to the wreck, The Endurance

being partially submerged, his dark room was underwater too. He actually dived down into the bitter icy water three or four times to bring up all the glass plates he could find plus cans of unique film footage. There were far too many plates to carry. Hurley and Shackleton then sat down on the ice and narrowed the plates down to a few vital ones. The rest, they stamped on and smashed. He was almost in tears, but Hurley knew himself well enough to know that the temptation to return to the wreck again, endangering his own life and others, would be irresistible. They had to be destroyed for ever.

After a struggle for survival lasting almost two years, Shackleton got every single man back alive; an extraordinary achievement. Within weeks of their return, amazingly, some of the crew were off to the front to join WW1, including Frank Hurley who worked as a war photographer for the rest of his career. He died in 1962, aged 76.

Images left to right: Frank Hurley © Wiki; Vest Pocket Autographic Kodak camera, c. 1914 © National Media Museum, Bradford / SSPL. Creative Commons BY-NC-SA; © SPRI Picture Library - Hurley cinematographing under the bows; The ship Endurance beset in the pack ice. All other images as stated.



Summer outing at the Gilbert White museum

The FoSPRI Summer lunch outing to the Gilbert White museum in Selborne was an inspired choice by Celene Pickard our Honorary Secretary.

The Friends were warmly welcomed to celebrate the grand opening of the £3m renovation of this superb museum. Television's amiable Countryfile presenter, Tom Heap, son of John Heap, former

Director of SPRI, did the honours and his admiration of SPRI was evident. He is

planning on an active role in supporting the Friends in the future.

The museum not only holds a fascinating collection of the naturalist Gilbert White and of course an outstanding collection of Lawrence Oates but also his uncle Frank. Frank Oates, naturalist, artist and explorer, in 1874 reached the Victoria Falls, probably the first European to see them since David Livingstone. It was, he recorded in his diary, "a day never to be forgotten". On the journey home, he fell ill and died of fever on 5th February 1874 and is buried in a remote area on the Botswana/Zimbabwe border.

It couldn't have been a more interesting and fun

day that included a group of authentic Zulu dancers plus a gathering of old friends including the former SPRI Librarian, Heather Lane. A visit to this little gem is a must.

Images: Oates & ponies; Committee team and Royal Navy Captains - Cdr Nick Foster & Captain Gary Hesling; Zulu dancers.





FoSPRI dates for the diary

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

General

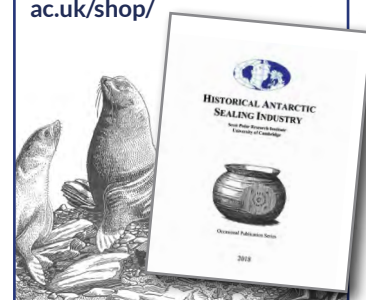
EVENT:	DATE:	TIME:	LOCATION:	COST/BOOKING:
Friends Voyage 2018 Baffin Island & Greenland Explorer	3 – 17 Sept	TBA	Baffin Island & Greenland	Contact info@ice-tracks.com
Friends Lecture When Your Life Depends on It <i>Extreme decision making lessons from the Antarctic</i> by Brad Borkan	Thurs 11 Oct	6pm -7pm	SPRI Lecture Theatre	FREE Please come along. No booking necessary.
SAVE THE DAY – Polar talks and AGM An all-day joint event of talks with the South Georgia Association	Sat 10 Nov	10.45am - 5.00pm	SPRI Lecture Theatre	Booking to follow in next issue!
Followed by the Friends AGM		5.15pm - 6pm		
Michael Palin Talk Fundraising event!	Wed 28 Nov	7.00pm	BMS Lecture Theatre (SPRI)	Tickets: £10.00 Book today https://tinyurl.com/y7kydsb3



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Museum events

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

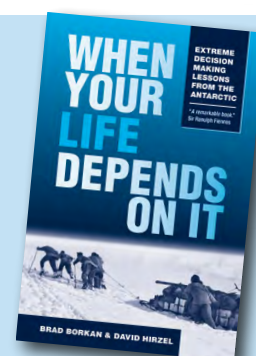
EVENT:	DATE:	TIME:	LOCATION:	COST/BOOKING:
Arctic Dialogue(s): Conversations between Art & Science' by Jane Rushton	25 April - 1 Sept	10am - 5pm	The Polar Museum	Free entry
Polar Encounters: 200 years of contemporary and historical polar art	30 July - 17 August	10am - 4pm	Bonhams, New Bond Street, London	Free entry

FRIENDS LECTURE – When Your Life Depends on It *Extreme decision making lessons from the Antarctic* by Brad Borkan

Join this exciting and thought-provoking session on Thursday 11th October where Brad Borkan talks about the book he co-wrote: *When Your Life Depends on It*.

The book describes the harrowing, real, life-and-death decisions made by early Antarctic explorers. It also reveals lessons from their situations to help us make better decisions in our modern-day lives.

We look forward to seeing you there!



A note from the Executive Secretary



Dear Friends we are in urgent need of supporters to come and help supervise at our Artist in Residence welcome desk at the Bonhams exhibition in London from 30th July until 17th August. Shifts are 10am - 1pm or 1pm - 4pm daily. Email me on friends@spri.cam.ac.uk or call me on 01223 336 540 if you can help.

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

PASSING FRIENDS – We are very sad to note the passing of Lady Shackleton, and Elizabeth Peake (nee Rought) geography graduate, Cambridge. Elizabeth was the Directors Assistant at SPRI from 1945 to 1953 and a Life Friend from 1953. We extend our sincere condolences to their families.

HOW TO CONTACT US?

Friends Secretary –

Celene Pickard

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