






SUPPORTING POLAR
SCIENCE AND HERITAGE

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POLAR BYTES

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Loyal readers since 1996



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A talk to get your teeth into... Join us

At this years AGM, Managing Director of the Shark Trust, Paul Cox, will give a fascinating talk on the Greenland Shark. Thought to be the longest living vertebrate on the planet, the Greenland Shark is one of the largest, yet until recently largely unknown, species of shark.

Slow moving predators with some unusual dietary habits, the life of the Greenland Shark still asks many questions. But they are not alone. Despite the charismatic reputation of a few species, many sharks remain misunderstood, both by science and the wider public. From their base in Plymouth, The Shark Trust work to

safeguard the future of sharks through positive change. Key to this is to develop a broader understanding of the full diversity of the group and to mobilise support for all – from the slow, mysterious Greenland Shark to the fast and imperilled mako. Paul Cox, opens up the world of the shark and focusing on the Greenland species in particular, will set out the case for us all to delve deeper into shark biology.

Tickets cost £20 each and include afternoon tea with a glass of wine, tea or coffee. Please see enclosed leaflet on how to book or email friends@spri.cam.ac.uk

We look forward to seeing you on the 9th November.

SAVE THE
DATE!

21.04.2020

We are very excited to announce a special commemorative journey will be taking place on Tuesday 21st April 2020, on board the Great Western Railway 'Robert Falcon Scott'.

Passengers will be joined on the platform with members of Scott's family for a special ceremony in aid of the Centenary before embarking on a trip to his home town of Plymouth.

More details to follow in the coming weeks including how to book!



Thank you to Argos Froyanes for their generous sponsorship





Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter

Dear Friends,

I hope you are all well and have had an enjoyable summer. The Friends have been busy over the past few months since my last message to you all.

Behind the scenes Celene Pickard has been working hard on updating the Friends membership database. This has now been done and Celene has sent e-mails out to remind some of you to pay your subscriptions. Your subscriptions are vital to the work of the Friends so please do check your payments are being made.

At the end of September, I was invited to attend an evening reception with the South Georgia Heritage Trust in Edinburgh. The reception was excellent and I met several of the Trust senior staff and trustees, and as a result I'm hoping that we might be able to organise one or two joint events with them in the future.

We are continuing our efforts to raise funds for the SPRI 100 - Centenary Campaign, and help the Institute organise an exciting programme of special celebration events in 2020. Inside this issue of Polar Bytes you'll find a letter from me giving an update on the Campaign, and how you can all get involved. One of the events planned is the Ross Sea Centenary voyage, scheduled for 16 February – 18 March 2020, with Oceanwide Expeditions. Celene, along with Julian and Evelyn Dowdeswell, visited the expedition ship, M/V Ortelius, in the Netherlands at the start of October to deliver cargo and meet with the Oceanwide expedition team and discuss arrangements for the voyage.

Next up on the calendar we have the Friends AGM, buffet and winter talk at SPRI on 9 November. Our guest speaker will be Paul Cox, the Director of the UK Shark Trust, who will talk to us about the Greenland Shark. These rare and elusive cold water creatures can live to 400 years old or more, and are among one of the largest sharks in the world growing to more than 5m long and weighing over 500kg. Please see inside this issue of Polar Bytes for details of how you can book your tickets. Book early to avoid disappointment!

Finally, many congratulations to Julian Dowdeswell on being awarded the W.S. Bruce Medal from the Royal Scottish Geographical Society. The medal is awarded for notable contributions to Zoology, Botany, Geology, Meteorology, Oceanography or Geography, where new knowledge has been gained through a personal visit to polar regions. The medal is jointly awarded with the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Royal Physical Society of Edinburgh. Past recipients include James Wordie, Gino Watkins and Gordon Robin. Well done Julian!

Best wishes,

John Shears, Chairman



From the Institute

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

I've just arrived back in time for the start of the Cambridge teaching year after visits to Svalbard, The Netherlands, Texas and California during September.



Oceanwide's expedition ship Ortelius in Vlissingen prior to departure for Antarctica

In Vlissingen, I was able to go aboard the Ortelius prior to its departure for Antarctica; the

ship will be our home for a month

during the Friends' Centenary Voyage to the Ross Sea next February and March. In the United States, I visited two sites linked to the operation of unmanned fixed-wing aircraft and underwater vehicles for the investigation and monitoring of ice-sheet and sea-ice change. Such vehicles, and the sophisticated instrument packages they carry, are important new tools for glaciologists to investigate areas of the Arctic and Antarctic that are difficult to access using conventional drone and ship deployments. In particular, I was interested to find out about the long-range capability of these unmanned platforms for acquiring data deep within the Weddell Sea in Antarctica and in isolated ice-sheet interiors. Discussions are ongoing about the use of these vehicles in our Antarctic and Greenland research in particular.



News from the Research Collections

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



Summer has seen the Library staff working hard behind the scenes on cataloguing projects and welcoming Dr Eleanor Peers to the team as our Arctic Information Specialist. Archive staff meanwhile, have teamed up with fellow archivists from Kettle's Yard and the Sedgwick Museum to deliver

weekend events at Kettle's Yard in support of their "Artist Unknown" exhibition which includes art work from our collections.

Closer to home Library and Archive staff have been delving into the Alaska collections and as part of the annual Open Cambridge and Cambridge University Alumni events, delivered a self-guided tour of the library highlighting our holdings on America's biggest state. So do you know how many pounds of vegetation a moose might eat in a day?*

Looking forward, Library and Archive staff will team up again in November for the Universities dissertation and research fair highlighting the research opportunities available to students in our wonderful collections.



Photo: Frances Marsh our Senior Library Assistant getting the library ready for the Alumni event

*50-60 pounds!

Dr. Atkinson becomes a Royal Naval Hero

By polar historian and author, Michael C. Tarver FRGS



A recent Royal Naval Award - The Royal Navy Edward Leicester Atkinson Prize - acknowledges

the leadership, compassion and moral courage of this Royal Navy surgeon and Antarctic explorer.

As the youngest of three medical doctors in Scott's 'Terra Nova' Expedition, Edward Leicester Atkinson came to prominence in 1912. In that year of crisis, eleven men had failed to return to their base at Cape Evans prior to the oncoming winter. As the senior Royal Naval officer present, Dr. Atkinson led the search and found the bodies of Scott and two of his companions.

On the return home to Britain in June, 1913, the majority of the expedition personnel dispersed to return to their families and resume their normal lives. Atkinson, together with Apsley Cherry-Garrard, were left at the forefront to bear the brunt of the aftermath of the expedition and to try and explain what had happened. While Atkinson awaited his recall to naval duties and Cherry-Garrard continued with his quest to complete his now famous book, both men were engaged with post-expedition matters.

At the time, the reaction from adverse sections of the press questioned the tragedy and some called for an enquiry into the death of Scott and his party. Senior surviving members, including Atkinson and Cherry-Garrard, together with Lt. Pennell and Lt. Campbell, found themselves under siege from those elements whom they thought were wanting to make trouble and bring discredit on the management of the expedition. Atkinson wrote, 'It is so difficult to explain to people what was encountered'. Decisions made by members of the expedition still prompt much heated debate, even to this day.

With the change of mood merging with the onset of war, the expedition gradually came to be regarded as one of 'heroic failure'. Military service recalled to duty most of the expedition members together with Atkinson and Cherry-Garrard, who kept in touch throughout. After serving in a number of theatres of war, Atkinson was seriously wounded numerous times and suffered long periods of hospitalisation. He died in 1929, tormented by his war wounds.

From left clockwise: The Edward Leicester Atkinson Award © Institute of Naval Medicine; Crest of The Institute of Naval Medicine; Dr. Atkinson in the laboratory. Sept 15, 1911 ©SPRI; Surgeon Captain Edward Leicester Atkinson (1881-1929) © Institute of Naval Medicine.

Following the publication of Atkinson's biography in 2015, Surgeon Vice Admiral Alasdair J Walker CB OBE QHS FRCS, together with the Worshipful Company of Barbers and Surgeons, instituted the Edward Leicester Atkinson Prize, an award for new entry medical students entering the Royal Navy at the Britannia Royal Naval College and at the Institute of Naval Medicine. The Prize is awarded annually to a student who displays values of leadership and moral courage during the course. Recognition by the Royal Navy of Atkinson's distinguished service, both in Antarctica and during the First World War, serves as a wonderful example to young medics joining the Royal Navy today and honours the life of a great Naval hero.

The Man Who Found Captain Scott (2015) by Michael C. Tarver is published by Pendragon Maritime Publications (ISBN 978-09552208-14) and costs £25.00

Inspirational Baffin Island



On my return to Scotland I am delighted to report that I had the most fantastic and inspirational expedition to Baffin Island with One Ocean Expeditions on board CV Resolute.

It is a special privilege to be immersed in the fragility and beauty of the Arctic landscape, to observe wildlife, see Inuit carvings, drawing and printmaking and extraordinary iconography. The combination of art, wildlife and culture

By FoSPRI Arctic Artist in Residence, Lesley Burr

was a major influence and allowed me to experience the Arctic landscape in depth linking insight talks on board the ship with the many specialist guests and experts.

I painted every day and benefited from 24-7 access to a studio / cabin to support my creative research. Over the 10 days I produced 3 sketchbooks and a set of large watercolours that are invaluable to the formation of a new body of work.



The scale of the environment is immense, particularly the sea cliffs, fjords, mountains and glaciers viewed on the approach to Iqaluit in Frobisher Bay. Life on board the CV Resolute was an unforgettable experience and I am truly grateful to the Friends of SPRI, One Ocean Expeditions and Bonham's for this extraordinary opportunity.



FoSPRI Dates for the Diary

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

EVENT:	DATE:	TIME:	LOCATION:	COST/BOOKING:
Arctic Cultures: Dr. Richard Powell discusses the latest research by The Arctic Cultures project	Tuesday 22 October	6:00pm	SPRI Lecture Theatre	FREE but booking is required via the Festival of Ideas website: https://tinyurl.com/y4xmn2hy
Meat to Mittens: a short history of survival science and extreme physiology - Vanessa Heggie (University of Birmingham)	Tuesday 29 October	4.30pm	SPRI Lecture Theatre	FREE
FoSPRI Annual General Meeting - including afternoon tea and a talk by Paul Cox, Managing Director of The Shark Trust on the Greenland Shark.	Saturday 9 November	Doors open 14.00pm	SPRI Lecture Theatre	Booking required - see insert
From Arctic statehood to self: State personnel's articulations of Arctic identity in Norway, Iceland, and Canada - Ingrid Medby (Oxford Brookes University)	Tuesday 19 November	4.30pm	SPRI Lecture Theatre	FREE

The perfect present!

Why not gift a Friends Membership to your own friends and family for Christmas.

Please email Celene for a new membership 'gift' package.



Scotland, Faroe Islands & Iceland Voyage 2022

100

Scott Polar Research Institute



We are delighted to inform you of our exciting 2022 Friends Voyage to Scotland, The Faroe Islands and Iceland. Help raise much-needed funds for SPRI whilst following in the footsteps of Vikings and Gaels and explore the stunning coastlines of some of the most remote islands in Europe. Joining you onboard will be our very own Professor Julian Dowdeswell and his team of polar experts.

See the enclosed leaflet for more information

SteppesTravel



WS Bruce Medal

We are very happy to share the news that Professor Julian Dowdeswell has been awarded the 2019 WS Bruce Medal from the Royal Scottish Geographical Society in honour of his contributions to glaciology and polar science.

The W S Bruce Medal, named after William Speirs Bruce is awarded for, a "notable contribution to Zoology, Botany, Geology, Meteorology, Oceanography or Geography, where new knowledge has been gained through a personal visit to polar regions". Its past recipients include James Wordie, and Dr Martin Holdgate.

The medal will be presented to Professor Dowdeswell in the Friends Room at SPRI on Wednesday 23rd October. We send him our heartfelt congratulations.

Photo: The W S Bruce Medal ©RSGS



A Note from the Executive Secretary

Dear Friends,
as we are approaching Christmas, why not gift a Friends Membership to your own friends and family - an inspiring and completely unique present, especially for our Centenary year! Please email Celene for a gift package.

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

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS - If you have received a renewal letter from Celene, please remember to renew before the membership lapses.

HOW TO CONTACT US?

Friends Secretary -

Celene Pickard

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