

POLAR BYTES

No. 70 – January 2014

From the Chairman, Nick Lambert



Dear Friends,



On the London train to meet Celene, Tim Jarvis (of the Shackleton Epic Expedition fame – shackletonepic.com) and Angie Butler of Ice Tracks as I type; looking out at the flooded fields and detritus indicating, in the aftermath of last night's

storm, the strength of the seas and weather that batter our shores every winter. They're also redolent of the Southern Ocean and the challenging conditions that confronted Shackleton's expeditionary efforts between 1914 and 1916. With the Scott Centenary astern of us (although I suspect not forgotten) this year is, of course, the beginning of his counterpart Shackleton's Centenary and the celebration of those heroic exploits that turned an expedition's failure into a stirring account of leadership, heroism, endurance and sheer bloody mindedness. Remarkably, as the Centenary commences, the *Akademik Shokalskiy* is ice bound off Adelie Land not far from the French Dumont d'Urville Station on the extremes of the Antarctic coast, spookily reminiscent of Shackleton's *Endurance* locked in the ice in the midst of the Weddell Sea in the Austral summer of 1914/15 before she was slowly crushed by the inexorable pressure of weather compacted ice. Whilst it's a relief that the members of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition 2013 have been rescued, it's also evidence of the unpredictably hostile nature of the Antarctic environment. It will be fascinating to

see how that ship fares over the next few weeks. Back in temperate climes, I'm pleased to report that the AGM (held in our SPRI alma mater last November) was very well received by a small but perfectly formed cadre of Friends. We very much enjoyed Bob Burton's thought provoking 21st century perspective on the understandable shortfalls of Shackleton's expedition preparations which graphically portrayed the inadequacies of the equipment, dietary knowledge and science of the time; aspects that were so clearly replicated by Tim Jarvis' re-enactment of the boat journey and trek across South Georgia that ultimately ensured the survival of all of *Endurance's* complement followed by the recovery of the Ross Sea Party which sadly fared less well, losing three members as, unbeknownst, they deployed caches for the doomed crossing of the Antarctic continent in appalling conditions.

The FoSPRI programme for the next 18 months or so is commensurately busy and exciting. The Ice Tracks hosted Shackleton Centenary Expedition Cruise is now fully signed up with all the berths onboard the *Akademik Vavilov* filled by Friends or friends of the Friends! This is an outstanding achievement, a clear indication of the Friends' interest in polar matters and the Antarctic in particular, and I'm in no doubt that the three week itinerary will provide an inspiring, long lasting impression of Shackletonian landmarks, reflections on his amazing achievements and those of his people, and a unique mingling of like-minded Friends over an extended period.



**We thank Oceanwide Expeditions for their generous
sponsorship of this edition of Polar Bytes**
www.oceanwide-expeditions.com

Departing in November, the Cruise will be preceded by a dinner at Trinity House on 27 September (marking Shackleton's departure from the UK by packet steamer for South Africa in 1914) and the AGM at Cambridge again on 8 November. Our still evolving plan for the Summer Lunch is centred on the Historic Dockyard at Chatham over a weekend in June or July. Following last year's *HMS Victory* dinner we'll be able to see where that fabulous ship was built, the awesome quarter mile length of the rope walk and the sail lofts that provided the propulsion for Nelson's navy, as well as more recent attractions such as *HMS Cavalier* and the submarine *HMS Ocelot*. Several other events, not least the first ever exhibition of a selection of Wilson's paintings at Bonhams in August, are in the plan. I also draw your attention to the flyers of Oceanwide Expeditions who have so generously sponsored this edition of PB.

Finally it's a great pleasure to welcome Leona Murphy and Richard Ralph to the FoSPRI Committee following their election at the AGM. They bring a wealth of experience; the former as a marketing director, the latter as a diplomat and a former Governor of the Falkland Islands. Your Committee next meets on 30 January to hammer the programme into shape, the details of which will be promulgated on the website and in the next edition of PB. There remains just enough space for me to thank all those who give their services to FoSPRI, especially Sally Stonehouse and Angela Haines who so faithfully serve tea during our Saturday lectures and, on behalf of the Committee to wish all the Friends a very successful and prosperous New Year.

None

From the Institute

A few words from the Director, Julian Dowdeswell (director@spri.cam.ac.uk)

In a few days I am flying to Chile to spend a three-month period of study leave as Visiting Professor at the University of Valparaíso. I shall be working on a series of research projects, one of which is an 'Atlas of Submarine Glacial Landforms', which will be published in 2015 as a 500-page Memoir of the Geological Society of London. While I am in Chile, I will also be collaborating with the Hydrographic Service of the Chilean Navy, working on the interpretation of sea-floor landforms (see the figure, below) and the glacial history of the fjords of southern Chile. In addition, I hope that the Institute will be able to work together with the Chilean National Maritime Museum and the University of Valparaíso to arrange a Shackleton exhibition in Chile in late 2016, to coincide with the centenary of the rescue of Shackleton's Elephant Island party by the Chilean vessel 'Yelcho'. I shall also be giving research seminars in several Chilean universities and research centres, including those in Valdivia and Punta Arenas.

At the end of January I have also been invited to speak at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on the topic of ice and environmental change. This is an excellent opportunity to showcase much of the Institute's work in this research area to a wide audience of influential world governmental and business leaders.

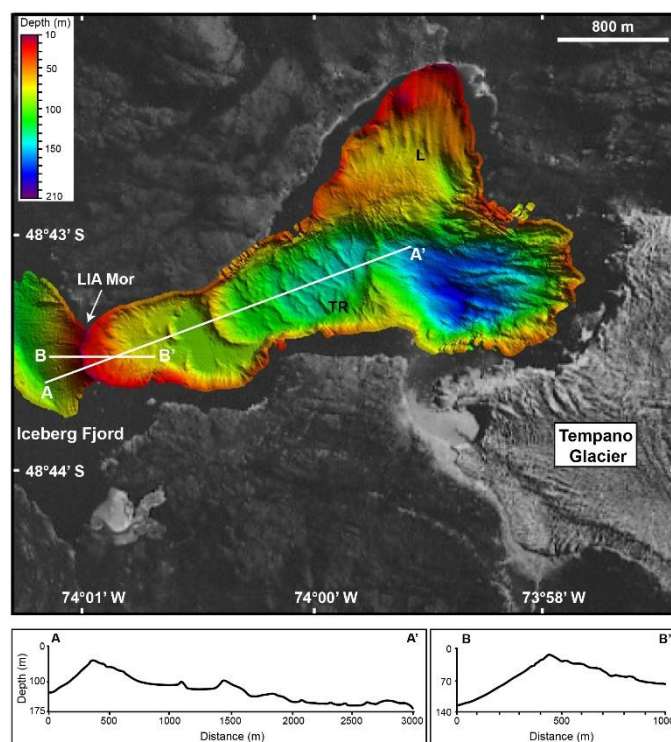
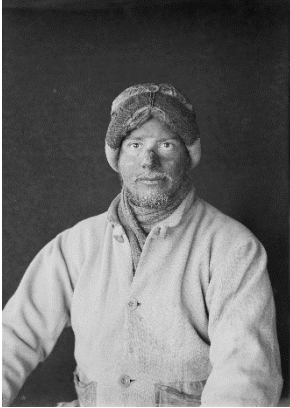


Figure: The innermost 4 km of Iceberg Fjord and the tidewater margin of Tempango Glacier in the fjordlands of southern Chile. The multibeam echo-sounder data show the shape of the sea floor and an aerial photograph shows the adjacent glacier and ice-free land. LIA Mor is a large ridge interpreted as having formed at the Little Ice Age glacial maximum, about one hundred years ago. TR are smaller transverse ridges, and L are sedimentary lineations. Cross-sections of the inner fjord and its glacial moraine ridges are shown in profiles A-A' and B-B'.

News from the Heritage Collections

From the Archives Manager, Naomi Boneham (archives@spri.cam.ac.uk)



In late December we received a series of letters by Apsley Cherry-Garrard on loan from The Richard C Dehmel Trust. The letters written to his mother and cover Captain Scott's British Antarctic Expedition from the date of *Terra Nova*'s sailing from Cardiff in June 1910 to their return and Cherry's meeting with Dr Wilson's widow, Oriana, in New Zealand in 1913.

Selected letters from 1910-11 will be on display until 8 February 2014, beginning with two telegrams sent recording the departure of *Terra Nova*. Letters cover many incidents on the journey to the Antarctic, including Cherry-Garrard breaking his left wrist and

the time when Herbert Ponting, the expedition photographer, was almost eaten by killer whales. Selected letters from 1911 will be on display from 10 February – 29 March 2014, including sketches of the Ross Ice Shelf.

Finally, between 31 March – 17 May 2014 a series of letters from 1912-13 will be exhibited, including Cherry's account of finding the bodies of the Polar Party. The final poignant letter was written from New Zealand, where Cherry was able to post his earlier correspondence, though he noted, "*many I am afraid are ancient history on the light of recent events*".

I was also pleased to accept the papers of Jacob Cross who served as a Petty Officer on board *Discovery* during Captain Scott's first expedition of 1901-04. His diary of the expedition, along with letters from Dr Wilson, is amongst the collection.

Other News



Nick Lambert, Neil Turner, Ann Bean, Philippa Foster-Back and Julian Dowdeswell at Ann's farewell presentation at the 2013 AGM

Farewell to Ann Bean

Ann joined EMI as secretary to our former Chair, Philippa Foster-Back, and became aware of the Friends through Philippa's connection with SPRI. She officially became Secretary to the Friends in 2000, having assisted with this role since 1995. From 1996-2006, under the Chairmanship of both Philippa and David Wilson, Ann minuted committee meetings, organised the production of Polar Bytes, and arranged a huge number of events and activities, including the Summer Lunches, the William Mills Appeal, the Friends Diamond Jubilee Birthday Tea Party and the first dog sledging event. She was ably supported in many of these ventures by Neil Turner. Since 2006 she has been Membership Secretary, administering

subscriptions and correspondence. Nick Lambert writes: 'You're a star Ann, with a capital 'S'! Thank you very much indeed for all that you've done, so selflessly and over so many years for the Friends. We've been more than lucky to enjoy your support, we wish you and Neil the very best of luck for the future and trust that your certificate is suitable recognition of your sterling service'. Celene Pickard has generously added the role of membership secretary to her duties as Executive Secretary.

A note by the Membership Secretary, Ann Bean

Any enquiries about membership (including subscription rates and renewals) should be sent to Celene Pickard (friends@spri.cam.ac.uk). May we ask you please to keep us informed of any changes to your postal or email addresses? Polar Museum volunteers are entitled to a discounted rate of £15 for single membership for their first year.

NEW FRIENDS

Membership currently stands at 626. A very warm welcome is extended to all new members.

PASSING FRIENDS

We are sad to note the passing of Life Member Jenny Handford and Elizabeth Jane Howard, first wife of Sir Peter Scott.

You will have noted from the previous page that I have now retired as membership secretary and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the support and friendship you have given me over the years, it has been very much appreciated. I look forward to meeting up with you at future events and send you my very best wishes.

Congratulations

We were delighted to hear that Philippa Foster Back was awarded a CBE in the New Year Honours List and John Hall (Head of Operations and Logistics at BAS) was awarded an MBE. Gavin Francis won the Scottish Mortgage Investment Trust Book of the Year for *Empire Antarctica*, an account of his experiences as doctor at Halley Base. We also wish Georgina Cronin well, as she takes up her new post as User Experience Librarian at the Judge Business School, University of Cambridge.

Dates for your Diary:

SPRI Events	Date:	Time:	Location:
Exhibition: Magadan: the people and the place – photos from Siberia	Until 15 Feb 2014	10am -4pm (Tues –Sat)	Polar Museum
Lent Term Lecture 1 Dr Charles Swithinbank, Prof Peter Wadhams and Dr Nick Hughes <i>Submarines in the Arctic: four decades of pack ice and the Royal Navy</i>	Saturday 22 Feb 2014	7:30pm	SPRI Lecture Theatre
Lent Term Lecture 2 Caroline Walker MacDonald Gill	Saturday 22 Mar 2014	7:30pm	SPRI Lecture Theatre
Exhibition: From Sea Monster to Sonar: charting the Polar oceans	5 March - 31 May 2014	10am -4pm (Tues –Sat)	Polar Museum
Other Polar events of interest			
Devon & Cornwall Polar Society Centenary of Departure of Endurance	7-8 Aug 2014	Details from Paul Coslett phcoslett@yahoo.co.uk	Duke of Cornwall Hotel, Plymouth
University of Cambridge Museums Exhibition: Discoveries: Art, Science & Exploration	31 January – 27 April 2014	www.twotempleplace.org	2 Temple Place, London WC2R 3BD
Please see http://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/friends/ for further details			

Further information on the Lectures is available at <http://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/friends/events/lectures/>

Recent Events

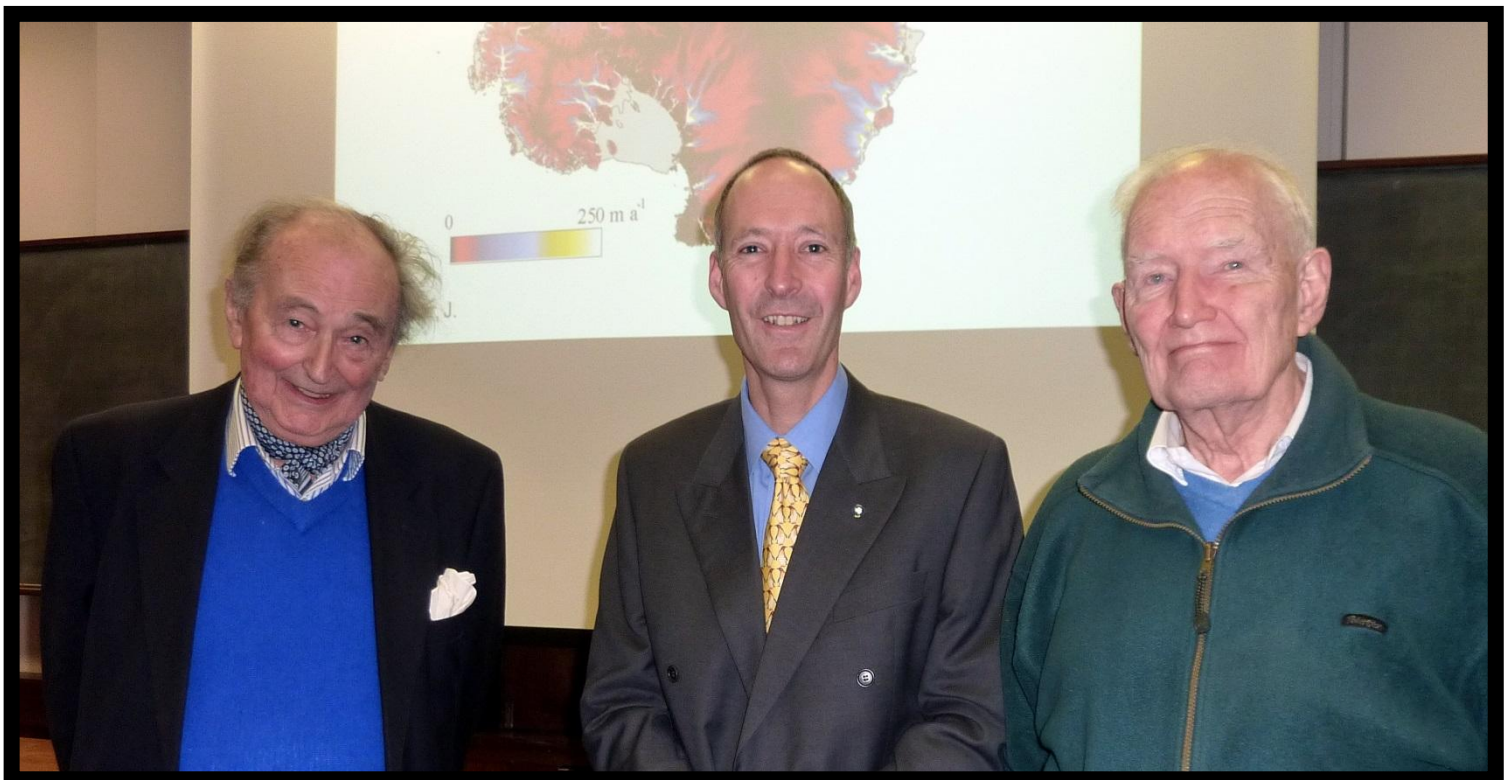
On 17 November, a group of 30 Friends were treated to a special viewing of the model of *Discovery*, recently commissioned from expert model maker Will Mowll by Philippa Davies. Both Will and Ann Shirley Savours regaled the audience with tales of the making of the model and of the Discovery Expedition. Our thanks to Philippa and Jake Davies for their wonderful hospitality, which was greatly enjoyed by all present.

We were delighted to be joined by Mike Wain, who kindly brought a number of polar items from his personal collection.





All photos © Rolf Williams



Three Polar Pilots – Bernard Stonehouse, Rod Arnold and Charles Swithinkbank – at the fourth Michaelmas Lecture on the 23rd November, given by Rod Arnold on BAS Aviation. Photo © Bryan Lintott