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EXCLUSIVE
CENTENARY VOYAGE
POSTER - See inside



POLAR BYTES

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Loyal readers since 1996



Photo © Isaias Miciu

Frozen Memories at the end of the world

By Chairman Nick Lambert

By this time in 1915 Shackleton's Endurance was firmly stuck in the ice and commencing her inexorably slow drift to the north in the grip of the Weddell Sea gyre.



Akademik Sergey Vavilov in Fortuna Bay. © Isaias Miciu

By extension we are now well into the Shackleton Centenary and it has been fantastic to witness the manner in which so many of the Friends have become immersed in the story of that remarkable adventure. Needless to say, this edition of Polar Bytes is therefore dominated by the hugely successful Shackleton Centenary Voyage on board the Akademik Sergey Vavilov Nov-Dec last year.

Some 93 Shackleton enthusiasts including ten descendants of the original expedition embarked on an historic nineteen day trip from Ushuaia to the Antarctic Peninsula via the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and Elephant Island.

The weather precluded a landing on the latter but we were close enough to sense the barren conditions endured by the bulk of the crew whilst awaiting news of Shackleton's bold boat journey. This tangible link to the story created for many of us an almost spiritual response as we reflected on the fortitude and daring of those great people.

We have all stepped lightly in the footsteps of Shackleton and his men and it was, as described by one of the passengers. "Unforgettable, life changing, life affirming".

See inside for more details.

Shackleton Sculpture

"It's one of the best portrait busts I have seen of my Grandfather." The Hon Alexandra Shackleton.

On this most recent centenary trip to Antarctica with FoSPRI,

Jane Hamilton, Sculptor was tasked with the challenge of sculpting a portrait of Sir Ernest Shackleton whilst on board, which was both exciting and nerve wracking, as it involved getting all materials (modelling stand, clay and wire armature) down to Port Stanley to meet the ship and then flying the worked clay head back to the UK in one piece!

Despite this she jumped at the chance; Being in Shackleton's landscape (if a little more comfortably!) helped get a real feeling of the man. Everyone on board helped out and now he is being cast into bronze!



Jane Hamilton, Sculptor & Passenger on Akademik Sergey Vavilov 2014
© Isaias Miciu

Thank you to GO Outdoors – the UK's biggest outdoor stores – for their generous sponsorship of our Shackleton Centenary edition www.gooutdoors.co.uk





Welcome to our Winter Polar Bytes newsletter

I hope you enjoy this special Centenary Edition and reports from the Friends' Shackleton Centenary Voyage.

Our **Shackleton Legacy Day** and AGM in November jointly with the South Georgia Association and back at our alma mater in Cambridge was a roaring success. We're deeply indebted to the inspiration and sheer hard work of Celene Pickard, Bob Burton and Fran Prince, who created an enthralling lecture series to get the centenary under way, focusing our minds on Shackleton the man and his achievements. Our thanks go to our speakers for proving such a variety of subjects to a full house in the Chemistry lecture theatre.

The AGM in the latter part of the evening was well attended and similarly convivial, back in the SPRI building for tea, supper and duff (Navyspeak for puddings).

There, we were able to report on the improving state of our Association's finances, thanks to the enthusiasm of our many fundraisers over the past year and especially to the generosity of Ice Tracks Expeditions, who sponsored the day's events.

Look forward to seeing you at our 2015 events

Nick Lambert, Chairman



From the Institute



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

After the Michaelmas teaching term in Cambridge, several important international scientific meetings take place. One of the most significant is the annual Fall Meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco, California. Several



staff members and students of the Institute have usually contributed both talks and poster presentations, this year on topics relating to the dynamic behaviour of fast-flowing outlet glaciers of the Greenland Ice Sheet. In addition, Dr Gareth Rees, Senior Lecturer at the SPRI, has been on Signy Island in the sub-Antarctic, working with colleagues at the British Antarctic Survey on field calibration of satellite-derived imagery of penguins – a biological strand to the Institute's research.

I spent early December at the Geological Survey of Norway in snowy Trondheim, working with colleagues there on marine-



geophysical data relating to the imprint of past ice sheets on the seafloor of the Arctic. These submarine glacial landforms yield much information on the extent and flow of ice that advanced across high-latitude continental shelves during the last full-glacial period about 20,000 years ago. I am writing several papers with my Norwegian co-workers that will be included in the forthcoming Atlas of Submarine Glacial Landforms, which will appear in the Memoir series of the Geological Society of London in about a year.

Finally, all at the Institute were saddened by the recent death of Dr Bernard Stonehouse, who had worked at the SPRI for several decades, first as the editor of the Polar Record and, later, as a very active Emeritus Associate. Our condolences go to his wife Sally, who will be known to many Friends, and to the Stonehouse family.

News from the Heritage Collections



From the Keeper, Heather Lane
Email: museum@spri.cam.ac.uk



New model
of Terra Nova

The Museum staff was delighted to welcome Lindsay Westcott, who visited to present us with a new model of *Terra Nova*.

Lindsay is a descendant of Robert Forde (29 August 1875 – 13 March 1959), who was a Petty Officer on the British Antarctic Expedition, 1910–1913.

Forde was born in the parish of Moviddy, 16 miles from Cork. He joined the Royal Navy at the age of 16, rising to the rank of Petty Officer 1st Class. He was part of the sledging party which set out from Cape Evans in January 1911 to explore the

polar capes. He suffered severe frostbite during the expedition and was eventually ordered back by Captain Scott for medical treatment.

He is commemorated by Mount Forde, a monumental peak of over 1,200 metres at the head of the Hunt Glacier in Antarctica.



Heather Lane and Willow Silvani receiving the model from Lindsay Westcott. It will go on display in the Museum in March.



Our personal journey

Written by Val Kerr.

Wife of Alexander Kerr's grandson, Donald Kerr - also aboard.



Alexander John
Henry Kerr

The Shackleton Centenary Voyage was always going to be profoundly emotional for Don and me and of great personal and family significance, not least as it also

marked fifty years since the death of Alexander J. H. Kerr, second engineer 'Endurance', Chief Engineer 'Quest'.

Don is one of Alexander's grandchildren and remembers his granddad as a generous, fair and loving man who had a huge impact on his early life. He was the 'quiet man, capable and dependable in his job' who won the praise of Wild for his contribution on Elephant Island.

One attraction of this trip was that we were to attempt to go to King Haakon Bay and to Elephant Island; the latter proved tantalisingly inaccessible, but to set foot on Peggoty Bluff was overwhelming.

Our trip to the waterfall descended by Shackleton, Crean and Worsley towards Stromness revealed the retreat of the glacier since that time. Henry Worsley read Worsley's account of the descent, bringing even greater poignancy.

On our personal agenda, Don and I wanted to leave a tribute on behalf of Alexander Kerr on the Boss' grave in Grytviken - his great granddaughter (our daughter) had inscribed a piece of driftwood from our local beach which, fortunately, passed the bio-security checks for South Georgia. We also walked up to the cairn built by the crew of 'Quest', left our own small pebble, and sought out the concealed capsule containing their signatures (now a replica).



Left and below: Don at 'The Boss' Sir Ernest Shackleton's grave in Grytviken.



Left: Val, Don and Tom Lynch approaching the waterfall.

Having left South Georgia, we scanned the horizon for Elephant Island. What a forbidding place! The beach at Point Wild has been severely eroded since then and a landing was impossible for us, as soon after taking the photograph the mist closed in and the island virtually disappeared. Don said afterwards that as the mist descended he felt a strange sense of closure as he thought of his grandfather.

Top images: Ships log (SPRI Archive MS 1537/2/33/3a); Elephant Island courtesy of Isaias Micu.

Left: On the mountain courtesy of James Pickard.

INTO THE UNKNOWN with Børge Ousland

So what is it like to cross Antarctica?

None best than to ask the Norwegian Børge Ousland who in 1996 set off solo on the 3000km traverse. Also in the race to bag the first solo crossing was Pole Marek Kaminski and Ranulph Fiennes. Ousland was already 500 km ahead of his rivals when Fiennes dropped out. By the time he skied into McMurdo Sound, having covered a grueling 2,840 km, Kaminski had only reached the South Pole. In spite of appalling suffering, "Time ceases to exist, you become more like an animal, completely naked ...all the layers are peeled off... just like stone age man" Ousland was the first person to cross Antarctica.



Børge Ousland
in Antarctica

ICE TRACKS EXPEDITIONS

Spitsbergen and the Realm of Polar Bears

13 - 22 JULY 2015

Shackleton Centenary Voyage 2015!

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Email: info@ice-tracks.com
WWW.ICE-TRACKS.COM



FoSPRI dates for the diary

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

General

To book any of the events below please email: friendsPA@spri.cam.ac.uk

EVENT	DATE:	TIME:	LOCATION:	COST:
Life on the edge: Language and story telling in a cold place – Stephen Pax Leonard	Saturday 14 March	7.30pm	SPRI lecture theatre	FREE £5 non members
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

Further information on the lectures is available at www.spri.cam.ac.uk/friends/events/lectures/

Museum events

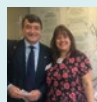
To book any of the events below please email: museumevents@spri.cam.ac.uk

EVENT	DATE:	TIME:	LOCATION:	COST:
A portrait of Sir Ranulph Fiennes	Closes 28 February	10:00am – 4:00pm	THE POLAR MUSEUM	FREE
The Polar Muse: Poetry in The Polar Museum	Closes 28 February	10:00am – 4:00pm		FREE
Tales from the Poles: Women in Antarctica – Panel Discussion 18 +	Tuesday 10 March	6pm – 7.30pm (Museum closes 9:30pm)		Bookable via http://ow.ly/INUUY
Look in to the Polar Light: Family Day How do the Northern lights work? Why do birds migrate with the light? And how do plants in the ocean store up a greenhouse gas? Find out at our family drop in day.	Saturday 14 March	10.30am – 3.30pm		All ages, drop in activities, no booking required
The Lost Photographs of Robert Falcon Scott	11 March - 30 May	10:00am – 4:00pm		FREE
Drawing the Polar Regions: new work by Emma Stibbon, RA, Friends Artist in Residence	11 June - 5 September	10:00am – 4:00pm		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 – Membership currently stands at 601. A very warm welcome is extended to all new members.

PASSING FRIENDS – We are sad to note the passing of Pauline Young, committee member and loyal supporter of the Friends who died in August 2014. Pauline did so much to make the Scott Centenary a massive success. We also note with regret the passing of Dr Bernard Stonehouse. (See 'From the Institute' article for more details).

COULD YOU HELP?

We are looking for volunteers to help transcribe the oral history Antarctica project? Please email allan.wearden@btinternet.com if you are interested.

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

Committee news

We say thank you and farewell to some of our committee members: vice chair Grattan McGiffin, Jim McNeill, Ellen Bazeley-White who represented BAS and did wonders for our website, Katie Walter, our first ever student rep, and Judy Skelton, our treasurer. As chairman I can vouch for their dedication over a cumulative 19 years of supporting the Friends!

New to the team are our new vice chair, Leona Gaine Murphy, Susan Rose of china fame, Ieuan Hopkins from BAS and Tina Balchin, our new Treasurer. Gratitude also goes to Celene Pickard and Heather Lane who do so much, supported by the team at SPRI.

Finally, a big thank you to all our Friends, old and new.

Nick Lambert, Chairman



A BIG THANK YOU FRIENDS

A huge thank you to all the friends for their support in buying our FoSPRI Christmas cards. We practically sold out! FoSPRI greetings cards are on sale now via the website.



Naomi Boneham doing a great job selling the Christmas cards



THE FRIENDS OF SPRI

Two years of planning brought together for the first time on a voyage 93 passengers, among them ten descendants and relatives of the Endurance and Ross sea party. Our journey to Antarctica gave us time to reflect, and for the descendants it gave them an opportunity to pay their respects, it brought them closer to understanding the grit, the courage, that was demanded of their forefathers. We never lost sight of the achievements of “the Boss” and his men in the face of the Great White Continent.



For the first time in history 10 descendants and relatives of the Endurance and Ross Sea party gather together on the voyage south

Left to right: Harriet Crawley; Pippa Wordie; Jane Wordie; Alan Wordie; Alexandra Shackleton; Don Kerr; Debby Horsman. Front row left to right: Peter McCarthy; Michaela Wright; William Wordie.



The Commonwealth Mint commissioned to produce medals for the Centenary

“We believed that the descendants would be at the very heart of the voyage but so too were the passengers. Friendships were forged that may well last a life-time”.

Angie Butler

A reading by the Hon. Alexandra Shackleton and Peter McCarthy took place on Peggoty Bluff



100 YEARS ON 1914 - 2014 SHACKLETON CENTENARY VOYAGE

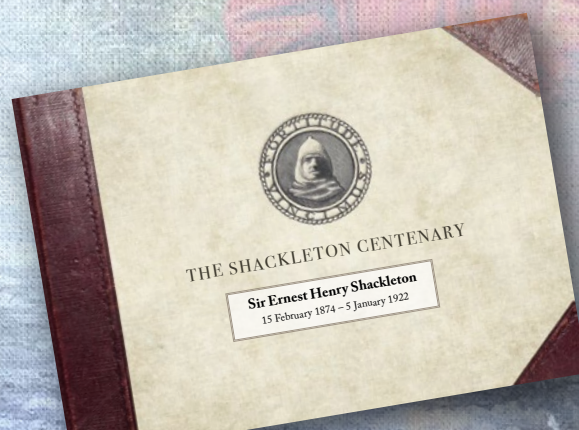
“Ah, but a man’s reach should exceed his grasp or what’s a heaven for”

Robert Browning

Poet much loved of Sir Ernest Shackleton



The bell could be heard across the bay...
...voices reached the rafters in readings,
hymns and in prayer.



Personalised booklets
for each descendant

“I now have three theories why the survivors never really discussed the expedition, the 3rd being that those listening would just not understand the hardship without being able to touch and feel it as we did”.

Alan Wordie



Landing on Lambert Island
a first for the Chairman on the
island named in his honour



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