

# The Antarctic Times

The newsletter of The Friends of Antarctica



No. 35. September 2012

Formerly Bergy Bits

## Letter from the Director

We have had lots of positive feedback on the new-look newsletter and the new name has gone down well. I said in my last letter that we were at an exciting time with the Trust; this continues to be the case. In June, the Royal Geographical Society presented to the Trust its 'Geographical Award' and despite the winding down of the Scott centenary celebrations and commemorations perhaps one of the most exciting discoveries of the century is the finding of Scott's ship, *Terra Nova*, off Greenland. Google's Street View Project cameras have now been into the huts in the Ross Sea. I wonder if they can make it underwater too? Closer to home, in Scotland, the replacement memorial to Scott and Wilson will soon be unveiled at Glen Prosen. And in Swansea, a fitting memorial to Edgar Evans is planned. Meanwhile, plans are in embryo for celebrating the centenary of Shackleton's Endurance expedition.

We welcome our new Editor, Eleanor Land. Eleanor worked at Port Lockroy during the 2009/10 season so she knows the ropes and if you look back to her blogs you will see what a great writer she is. Eleanor will be working hard to increase our profile in the national and international press with the guiding hand of PR guru, Christian Brown. Watch this space for an exciting new website which will complement the hard copy of the newsletter with extra snippets and up-to-date news. We aim to make [www.antarctictimes.com](http://www.antarctictimes.com) THE place to go for up-to-date news on Antarctic affairs.

Rachel Morgan, Director UKAHT, September 2012

## Next season on the Peninsula

**We are delighted to introduce the new team for the 2012-2013 season at Port Lockroy. Kath Leavy will be returning to Port Lockroy after a very successful season last year. She will be joined by Florence Kuyper who has visited Port Lockroy as a tourist in the past, and Ben Kaye and Flo Barrow, both of whom will be travelling to Antarctica for the first time. They were selected from over 150 applicants. Our new Operations Manager, Simon Gill, will be accompanying the group for the start of the season to help set up and to get a feel for daily life at Lockroy. The team will be blogging each week about their experiences at [www.ukaht.org](http://www.ukaht.org).**

Joe Leavy and Michael Powell accompanied by Anna Malaos will be heading to Detaille in January and working on the roof and the anemometer tower there.

The team at Lockroy will be managing operations as usual with busy ship schedules and lots to keep them occupied, from whole-island counts of penguin eggs and chicks to maintenance work on the building and running the shop and Post Office. The group spent a week in September in the Peak District, being trained and briefed on how to efficiently deal with the complex day to day operations during the forthcoming season. It included sessions from IAATO, the FCO, Trustees and our Heritage Advisors Alan Carroll and Dave Burkitt.

The Trust has been particularly fortunate this year to have the generous support of DFS in Darley Dale in the Peak District. The DFS warehouse, just round the corner from Simon's house, has kindly donated some of their storage space to allow Simon to sort out all the cargo needed for a season in Antarctica. Everything the team needs for five months at Port Lockroy has to be ordered ahead of time

and sent South, timed to arrive for the beginning of the season. This includes food, provisions and all the merchandise for the shop, requiring multiple deliveries every day throughout the summer. "It's a perfect place, with adequate space and friendly people who help me unload the deliveries and dispose of the packing waste" says Simon. "I am particularly grateful to Jimmy Greenhough and Graham Evans who have been extremely helpful". Once the cargo leaves Derbyshire, it will travel in a container to the Falkland Islands and then be taken by Hurtigruten to the Antarctic Peninsula. We are hugely grateful to Hurtigruten for their continued support as well as to Tog 24 who are kitting out the team to look smarter than ever. We also give our thanks to G-Adventures who will be taking the team in to Port Lockroy.



The Port Lockroy team ready to go in their Tog24 outfits: Kath Leavy, Florence Kuyper, Ben Kaye, and Flo Barrow.

## Finding of the Terra Nova

In July 2012 the Schmidt Ocean Institute announced that they had found the exact location of the SS Terra Nova off the coast of Greenland. The finding, especially in the centenary year of Scott's expedition to the South Pole, is an important addition to Britain's Antarctic story.

Over many years, Trust member Mike Tarver has painstakingly researched the history of the Terra Nova, culminating in a publication of the ship's history in 2006 (*The SS Terra Nova (1884-1943), Whaling, Sealing and Polar Exploration Ship*). Here he explains the story behind the discovery:

*"Leighton Rolley, a Cardiff man, worked as an engineer at the UK National Oceanography Centre, Southampton, and had always been inspired by the story of the Terra Nova. He went on to work for the Schmidt Ocean Institute based at Woods Hole, Mass. USA. The Captain aboard the Institute's ship the RV Falkor, Bernd Buchner, was a seasoned Antarctic sea-farer and friend to the Trust. He had previously been Captain of the National Geographic ship, Endeavour and the Hanse Explorer. The mutual passions of engineer and Captain for the Terra Nova story, together with the need to test newly installed equipment aboard RV Falkor, combined to provide an ideal opportunity to search for the Terra Nova based on the information already revealed in [Mike Tarver's] research which had shown that the ship had gone down in a position off South West Greenland. Further research of the incident provided to RV Falkor by US archives, which showed the Terra Nova's location as being further East than previous thought, successfully led to her discovery".*

The Terra Nova was built by Alexander Stephen & Sons Ltd. in 1884 for the Dundee whaling and sealing fleet and worked for fifteen years in the North Atlantic around Scotland and Newfoundland before being acquired for the three polar expeditions in which she was involved, both in the Arctic and the Antarctic, the most famous of which was Scott's expedition of 1910-1913.

After returning to Newfoundland in 1913, she resumed sealing duties for her owners, C.T. Bowring & Co for another thirty years. During World War Two she was chartered to carry supplies to United States Air Force bases in Greenland and during one of these missions she became seriously damaged by ice. After temporary repairs she left Greenland for St. John's, Newfoundland, but on 12 September 1943 she put out an SOS message reporting that she was sinking due to her damage and ineffective pumps. United States Coastguard vessels responded to the SOS. They were able to rescue her crew but had to assist in sinking her by using gunfire to ensure that, as a wooden ship, she



Terra Nova leaving Cardiff Dock in 1910. Picture taken mid-way through cleaning

would sink completely to avoid becoming a navigation hazard.

Three important items from the ship can still be seen today. The ship's bell is at the Scott Polar Research Institute, where it is rung every morning and afternoon to gather together for tea all those working in the building. The ship's binnacle, recently re-discovered, is on display in the Pierhead Building at Cardiff Bay, a short distance from where the Terra Nova and Scott's expedition departed for their journey south in 1910. Her figurehead was presented to the city of Cardiff by C.T. Bowring & Co in 1913 and is now held by the National Museum of Wales and recently underwent conservation with financial support from the Trust.

The Trust has also recently supported the purchase of an oil painting of the Terra Nova leaving Cardiff Docks in 1910. The painting was secured at auction by the Cardiff Story Museum and the Trust is also supporting its subsequent cleaning and restoration. The painting, by Richard Short, was commissioned in 1910 by Alderman W H Renwick through a subscription organised by those working in the Docks community to mark Cardiff's pride in playing such a key role in Scott's expedition. For nearly 70 years the picture hung in the Coal Exchange in Cardiff Docks. When news reached Britain of the death of Scott and his men, the Union Jack and black crepe were draped round the painting, echoing the sense of shock felt by the city. The painting then went into private ownership, until its recent purchase by the Museum this year.

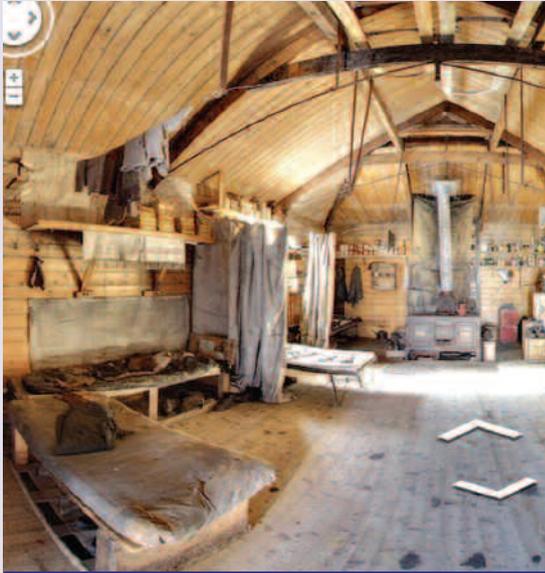


Chairman Philippa Foster Back and Director Rachel Morgan, with Trustees Adam Wilton and Gavin Booth.

## RGS Award

The UKAHT was delighted to be announced recipients of this year's Royal Geographical Society Geographical Award, for its 'outstanding work to further learning through historical Antarctic expeditions'. The award was presented by Michael Palin to our Chairman, Philippa Foster Back at a ceremony on 11 June 2012.

## Google Street View visits Historic Huts



Shackleton's hut at Cape Royds

It will have been hard to miss the worldwide press coverage this summer of Google Street View's new Antarctic images of historic locations. The 3D panoramas of Scott's and Shackleton's huts, along with stunning images from around the Ross Sea area, made headlines around the world. Anyone with a computer and an internet connection can now use Google Street View to 'visit' Antarctica and explore the huts at street level, zooming into particular buildings or objects of interest. The 360-degree images were taken with fisheye lens cameras capable of capturing ultra-wide shots and can be found at the Google World Wonders site. This new addition is a wonderful way for people to visit Antarctica and the huts in a 'virtual' way and explore a place they might never get to see in real life. Google launched the first Antarctic Street View images back in September 2010, but the interior shots of the historic huts have really caught the public imagination. "The goal of these efforts is to provide scientists and travel enthusiasts all over the world with the most accurate, high-resolution data of these important historic locations", said Alex Starns, Technical Programme Manager at Google Street View. The images of the historic huts give a real sense of what life was like for early explorers of the continent and Google worked closely with our sister charity the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust in order to capture them. Google Street View has yet to come to Bransfield House at Port Lockroy, and the other historic sites on the Peninsula, but we hope it won't be too long before they do!

## What's on

### Exhibitions...

- **Until 31 October 2012**  
Captain L.E.G. Oates: the Gallant Gentleman Regimental Museum of the Royal Dragoon Guards in York
- **17 October 2012 - 12 January 2013**  
The Legacy of Captain Scott at the Scott Polar Research Institute, Cambridge
- **16 November 2012 – 30 June 2013**  
The Centenary Exhibition, Scott's Last Expedition, at the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch, New Zealand
- **26 November – 1 December 2012**  
Troubled Water – Trailing the Albatross: An Artist's Journey (book launch and exhibition by artist and writer Bruce Pearson) at Artspace Galleries, Maddox Street, London (open daily 10am – 5pm)  
[www.brucepearson.net/page27aaa.html](http://www.brucepearson.net/page27aaa.html)

'Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Expedition' produced by the American Museum of Natural History is now moving to Dun Laoghaire in Dublin, having been acquired by Irish Maritime Exhibitions.  
[www.shackletonexhibition.com](http://www.shackletonexhibition.com)

### Centenary Events...

- **10 October 2012 at 12 noon**  
The Times Cheltenham Literature Festival (Event L167)  
Captain Scott's Men - Patrick Cordingley, Anne Strathie, Isobel Williams & David Wilson in conversation.
- **18 October 2012**  
The Devon & Cornwall Polar Society will hold a lecture on Edgar Evans, given by Isobel Williams. Royal Corinthian Yacht Club, Plymouth. 7pm.
- **21st October 2012**  
The 'Birdie Bowers Dinner' takes place in the Tontine Hotel, Ardgowan Square, Greenock at 7pm.

It is preceded by a talk by Sir Ranulph Fiennes at 16.30. Tickets from Drew McKenzie at [drew1121m@aol.com](mailto:drew1121m@aol.com) or on 07967 398721.

- **26-29 October 2012 12th Ernest Shackleton Autumn School - Scott Centenary Celebration.**
- **10 November 2012**  
Day of Thanksgiving for Dr Edward Wilson, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, to mark the centenary of his burial service starting with unveiling of a Civic Society Blue Plaque at The Crippetts at 1330.
- **24 November 2012 7.30pm**  
A concert by Dundee Symphony Orchestra including a performance of 'Sinfonia Antartica' by Vaughan Williams. Caird Hall, Dundee. Adult £10, Concession £9, Student £5, Children free.
- **November (tbc)**  
Unveiling of new Scott/Wilson memorial at Glen Prosen, Scotland.
- **30 November 2012**  
Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust: Inspiring Generations: send a Scott 100 letter (Competition Deadline)  
[www.scott100letters.org](http://www.scott100letters.org)
- **10 December 2012**  
Philippa Foster Back OBE, Chairman of the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust provides an overview of the work of the Trust. 14:30 – 16:00 at the Royal Geographical Society. Free to Fellows and Members, £5 non members. Places are limited.
- **6-10 February 2013**  
Scott 100 Oamaru, New Zealand. A series of dinners, plays, reenactments and other events to mark the centenary of the arrival of Terra Nova in New Zealand. See [www.oamaruscott100.org.nz](http://www.oamaruscott100.org.nz)  
**Watch the official Scott 100 website for and changing details. There are many day events and lectures associated with museum exhibitions which are not detailed on this list.**

## NEWS FROM ROSS SEA

Martin Williams - UK representative for the NZAHT

### Conservation of Artefacts from Scott's Hut

The winter team of four conservators continues to work on a fascinating range of objects from the Cape Evans base of Scott's last expedition, including leather boots, the heater to melt snow into water, food containers, cards of safety pins, a Morse code communications key, and many more. Some have personal touches, such as a Christmas card with a hand-written message "Your mother" (sadly there is no indication whose) and food tins with hand-written markings 'BROWN' and 'R F SCOTT'.

All these, and more, are described in the conservators' online blog, at the Natural History Museum's website. The blog also describes other aspects of living through the winter in the NZ Antarctic station, Scott Base. Perhaps the most striking enterprise was the Base's re-creation of the famous Ponting photograph of Captain Scott's birthday dinner; the result was remarkably convincing.

### Shackleton's Whisky

Shackleton's whisky has met with very strong demand, surpassing expectations. Whyte & Mackay, who now own the brand of whisky supplied to Shackleton's expedition, were delighted that the few bottles carefully brought back for scientific analysis in Scotland from the cases found under the Cape Royds hut in Antarctica, proved to contain a very high quality spirit, still in excellent condition. The company's Master Blender meticulously re-created its characteristics, and the replica limited edition they produced (with special authentic bottles and packaging) has now virtually sold out, much faster than anticipated. NZAHT were also delighted, as £5 for every bottle sold is to be donated to the Trust's Ross Sea Heritage Restoration Project.



Dinner at Scott Base 2012

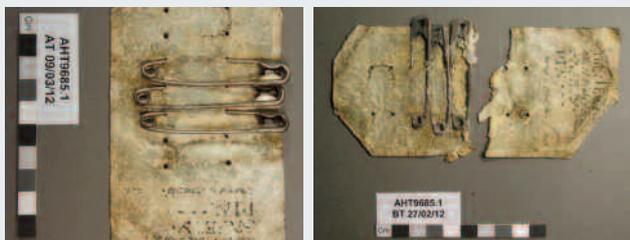
### February Foundation

This Foundation announced in 2005 that it would match funding raised from other sources up to £1million to finance work on the building and artefacts at Scott's Cape Evans base, besides making a substantial direct donation to the project. Recently the matched funding pledge was completed. Both the UK and NZ Trusts sincerely appreciate the huge contribution made by the Foundation to the success of the project.

### Next Phases

While physical work is continuing in order to conserve the thousands of artefacts at Cape Evans, detailed planning has been started for the work needed on the Discovery Hut at Hut Point, and on Borchgrevink's hut at Cape Adare. Both these huts are far smaller than those at Cape Evans and Cape Royds, and have far fewer artefacts on site. However both have special characteristics of their own. The Discovery Hut, being situated at the southernmost tip of Ross Island, was extensively used by all the expeditions in the area over the next decade and a half, and played a crucial part in some heroic episodes of survival against the odds. Borchgrevink's hut was the first ever to be constructed in Antarctica, and by enabling the expedition to successfully over-winter there, became the pioneer for all subsequent expeditions of the era.

Photographs: ©Antarctic Heritage Trust New Zealand



NZAHT Safety pins post-conservation

NZAHT Safety pins pre-conservation

## GET IN TOUCH!



The Antarctic Times will continue to evolve over the next few editions, in conjunction with the online version at [www.antarctictimes.com](http://www.antarctictimes.com). We want to bring you details of the Trust's work, news from around the Antarctic community and in-depth features on topics of particular Antarctic interest. We would love to hear your comments and suggestions for anything you would like to see or read about. Please contact Eleanor Land (Editor) at [eleanor@ukaht.org](mailto:eleanor@ukaht.org) with your thoughts.

The UKAHT is also active on Facebook and Twitter and we will be developing our presence on these sites over the next few months as well. Please follow us at (Facebook) UK Antarctic Heritage Trust and (Twitter) @AntarcticHT.

