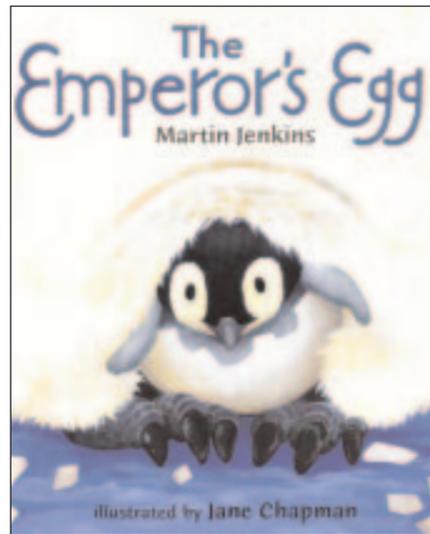


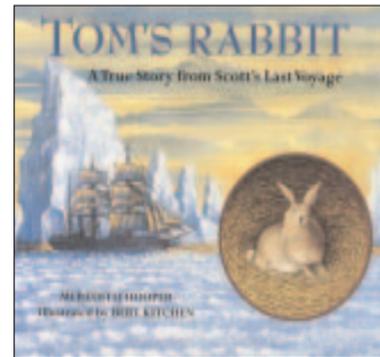
When I embarked upon a quest to examine these books, I expected about five to surface. So far I am looking at 24 and I know there are more out there. So if you are looking to share your enthusiasm with a younger person where do you start?

## Books on the Antarctic written for children



If wildlife is the priority, then for the very young *The Emperor's Egg* is a must: written by Martin Jenkins and beautifully illustrated by Jane Chapman, it accurately but simply describes the extraordinary life cycle of the Emperor Penguin. Another top choice is the pocket sized *Penguins* by Rene Mettler (Moonlight 1995). It describes different breeds of penguin but concentrates on Adelies and Emperors. Some of the pages are semi-transparent and cleverly create a new landscape as you turn the page. For a story with a more historical bent, the delightfully illustrated *Ponko and the South Pole* by Meredith Hooper and Jan Ormerod (Frances Lincoln 2002) is based on the toy penguin taken to Antarctica by Herbert Ponting on the Terra Nova. The penguin is now held by the National Maritime Museum. Another book for the under fives would have to include *Seal* by Meredith Hooper and Bert Kitchen, (CUP 1996) which is a 'learn to read' book about Weddell seals.

For older children another book by the Hooper/Kitchen team is *Tom's Rabbit: A True Story from Scott's Last Voyage* (Frances Lincoln 1988). It is inspired by the photographs and diaries from Scott's Terra Nova expedition and tells of the rabbit kept by Tom Crean. It does not report the eventual fate of the rabbit and her seventeen babies! There are several illustrated versions of Shackleton's epic voyage with the *Endurance: Avoid Joining Shackleton's Polar Expedition!* by Jen



Green and David Antram, (Book House 2002) puts a fun but accurate take on the story. As well as telling it in a rip-roaring cartoon style it is peppered with nuggets of information on the expedition and handy hints to keep body and soul together in the Antarctic. *Ice Trap! Shackleton's Incredible Expedition* also by Meredith Hooper and illustrated by M P Robertson is a more sober version of the story. Its graphic illustrations are taken from Hurley's wonderful photographs.

**Out of print books** include *Shackleton's Epic Voyage* on the voyage of the James Caird, illustrated by Raymond Briggs (Hamish Hamilton 1969). It is now a collector's piece so you would be lucky to find a copy. *Pompey was a Penguin* (OUP 1940) is by Thomas Wyatt Bagshawe who had wintered at Waterboat Point in 1921 with Maxime Charles Lester. For that reason alone this book must be on the collector's list. *Antarctic Encounter* by Sally Poncet and photographed by Ben Osborne (Simon and Schuster 1995) and *Bothie the Polar Dog* by Ranulph and Virginia Fiennes (Hodder and Stoughton 1984) are also ones to keep on the hunting list.

All books mentioned so far have **fantastic original illustrations**. Others similar are *Antarctic Journal: The Hidden Worlds of Antarctica's Animals* by Meredith Hooper and Lucia de Leiris (Frances Lincoln 2001). It tells of the authors' season observing and recording the crowded lives of the animals living in the sea and islands around Palmer Station on the Antarctic Peninsula. Another beautifully illustrated book by this team is *The Island that Moved* (Frances Lincoln 2004). Although it is chiefly about geology and continental drift, it uses the sub-Antarctic islands as the example. For the other side of the continent American biologist and artist Sophie Webb has written and illustrated a fascinating book about her season at Cape Royds studying Adelie

Penguins: *My Season with Penguins: an Antarctic Journal* (Houghton Mifflin 2000). For those children who like their own input then you cannot go wrong with the *Arctic and Antarctic Life*, by Ruth Soffer (Dover Publications 1998). It is a colouring book with accurate line drawings of polar wildlife.

**Both poles** often get lumped together and this can make sense when looking at the ecology. Two books by Barbara Taylor are worth a look: *Arctic and Antarctic* (Dorling Kindersley 2000) and a paperback half the size, pages and price *Pole to Pole* (Ticktock 2003). Both are packed with photographs and diagrams describing both the physical and human geography of the Arctic and Antarctic. *Perishing Poles* by Anita Ganeri (Scholastic 2002) is a small format paperback with cartoon line illustrations. It forms part of the 'horrible geography' series designed to take the dryness out of education. Ideal for those for whom study is not a top priority.

**Focussing on the human impact**, a book that stands ahead of the rest is *The Polar Regions* by David Rootes (Chrysalis 2003). It covers the history of both poles from pre-historic times to the present including current human made environmental issues. Again it is packed with maps, photographs and illustrations. *True Polar Adventures*, a paperback by Paul Dowsnell (Usborne 2002) brings to life the most epic tales from north and south covering in the Antarctic, Amundsen, Scott, Shackleton, Byrd, Fiennes and Stroud. It is a shame that there are no photographs in this book. A Dorling Kindersley reader *Antarctic Adventure: Exploring the Frozen South* by Meredith Hooper (Dorling Kindersley 2000) covers stories ranging from the Cape Crozier winter journey to Borge Ousland's amazing crossing of the continent. It is illustrated with contemporary photographs, modern photos of artefacts, drawings and maps.

**For the teenage market** there are a number of 'conventional' paperbacks with black and white photos in the centre. Two are condensed accounts of the Amundsen/Scott 'rivalry', with biased views, often accepted until recently (see BB 18), of Scott as a bungler and Amundsen as an expert tactician: *South Pole* by Catherine Charley (Scholastic 2003) is part of the 'Double Take - Two sides One story' history series. *Race to the Pole* by Meredith Hooper (Hodder 2002) also includes Scott's first expedition, Shackleton's Nimrod expedition and yet is much shorter. Written in a racy present tense it gives an interesting immediacy to the story. Her book *The Pole Seekers* (Hodder 2000) is very different. It is a novel written in the first person by a rat who dares to travel on the Discovery to Antarctica. I enjoyed guessing the analogous adventures of the rats and which members of the expedition they represented.

Most books mentioned are well under £10.

If you need further details such as isbn numbers please call me on 01291 690305 or email me at [ukaht@dircon.co.uk](mailto:ukaht@dircon.co.uk).

Rachel Morgan, August 2004

# Bergy Bits

## The Newsletter of the Friends of Antarctica

### Follow-ups from BB18

During the clean-up of the abandoned bases by BAS last season, the wreck of the DHC-3 Single Otter (VP-FAK) at Deception Island was removed, to prevent theft, to the hangar at Rothera research station. BAS hopes to ship the Single Otter to the UK next season to the De Havilland Aircraft Heritage Centre at London Colney where it will become the central exhibit in a new Antarctic aviation display. Historic artefacts from the demolished bases at Danco Island and Prospect Point, such as good quality food tins, kitchen utensils and Nansen sledges were taken to Port Lockroy to be put on display next season. Some artefacts were also taken to Stanley for display in the Reclus Hut outside the museum. Port Lockroy and the clean-up were both featured recently in the BBC World documentary series "Secrets of Antarctica". BAS plans to release the TV series on a DVD later in the year and it will be available through BAS Cambridge and at Port Lockroy.

### News from the Ross Sea and the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust

A strong blizzard in McMurdo Sound with winds up to 135 knots has caused some damage to the Discovery hut. The fate of the other historic huts will not be known until next season.

The major fund-raising appeal for the Ross Sea huts remains the priority. Disappointingly a major application for the conservation of Shackleton's hut was turned down by the National Heritage Memorial Fund. The NHMF Trustees recognised the historic importance of the hut and acknowledged the high standard of the Conservation Plan. Despite this, they decided that they could not support the project because it is outside the UK, even though the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport had earlier indicated that an application should be put to NHMF. The Board also ruled that projects outside UK would have a low priority for support, effectively ruling out funding from NHMF for any other hut in Antarctica.

The news from the USA and New Zealand is more encouraging. Following the listing of Shackleton's hut in the World Monuments Fund's 2004 Watch List of 100 Most Endangered Sites, American Express (United States) has pledged a grant of US\$100,000 towards the conservation of the hut at Cape Royds. The grant will be used for emergency remediation work onsite. For more information see [www.wmf.org](http://www.wmf.org).

Meanwhile the NZ Government, through the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, continues its support of the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust (NZAHT) through its ongoing commitment to core funding of NZ\$100,000 p.a. This is dedicated to the Trust's administration costs.

Quark Expeditions have continued their stunning run in assisting the Trust. In the 2003/04 season their onboard auctions on the *Kapitan Khlebnikov* held while visiting the Ross Sea region of Antarctica grossed US\$10,500. This was supplemented by both a corporate donation to the Trust's work and by passenger landing contributions.

A number of artefacts from the huts have been returned to the NZAHT in the past six months from those active in the Antarctic programmes of the 1950s and 1960s when collecting 'souvenirs' was commonplace. Many of these artefacts are in wonderful condition and the Trust is extremely thankful for their return. We urge anyone who holds any artefacts to contact either the UK or NZ Trust so they can be returned to the huts or to another suitable institution for future generations to enjoy.

### Friends of Antarctica Event

We are planning a Friends of Antarctica afternoon in May 2005 in the northeast of England (Captain Cook country). Look out for more details in the next issue of Bergy Bits.

### Life Membership

At the last meeting of the Trustees it was agreed to raise the Life membership to £300. Annual members wishing to convert to Life membership can do so at the earlier fee of £200 before their subscription falls due next April.

### Exhibitions around Britain

Cheltenham Museum and Art Gallery is showing a 'scaled down' version of John Kelly's 'Due South' between 22 January and 5 March 2005. Also on display in November/December will be the usually hidden collection of Edward Wilson watercolours. This coincides with the launch of the book *Edward Wilson's Nature Notebooks* by David and Christopher Wilson.

Another 'hidden collection' - that of Shackleton, is at the Scott Polar Research Institute until December. The exhibition is a rare chance to see Shackleton's Antarctic sledging diaries from the Discovery, Nimrod, Endurance and Quest expeditions. Original letters and charts are on display as well as the beautiful red and gold sledging flag, flown at the farthest south, during the Discovery and Nimrod expeditions. The majority of artefacts, documents and photographs displayed were, until recently, held privately. Previously hidden from public view, they are exhibited here for the first time. Also at SPRI is an exhibition of paintings of South Georgia, by the artist Mollie Sheridan in honour of the centenary of the founding of Grytviken.

The National Maritime Museum is staging the first exhibition celebrating the entire career of William Hodges, the artist who accompanied Captain Cook. The exhibition brings together over 50 oil paintings and more than 20 works on paper, many of which have never been on public display before. The exhibition will also travel to Yale Centre for British Art, where it will be on view from 27 January to 24 April 2005.

In Ireland two weekend events:-  
22-24 October:

Shackleton Autumn School  
at the Athy Heritage Centre  
([www.kildare.ie/athyheritage](http://www.kildare.ie/athyheritage))  
and 10-12 December:

'Discovery Centenary Weekend',  
details from [southpoleinn@hotmail.com](mailto:southpoleinn@hotmail.com).

The Heroic Age of Antarctic exploration and the earliest days of post-World War II government financed exploration and research are part and parcel of the UK's Antarctic Heritage. But what lay between? I have been tempted into considering the question by the recent death of Duncan Carse, the last surviving member of the British Graham Land Expedition (BGLE) 1934-37. What follows is greatly dependent for its facts on a paper entitled British Polar Expeditions 1919-39, by John Wright, published in the Polar Record, Vol. 26, No 157, p77-84 (1990). The opinions are mine.

To set the scene: in March 1930, Freddy Spencer Chapman met Gino Watkins on the slopes at Davos: "Hullo, Gino, how's Labrador?"

"Hullo, Freddy, how's Iceland? What are you doing here? Come to Greenland?"

"Right you are" said I.

And so Freddy (without a moment's risk assessment – what bliss!) became a member of Gino's British Arctic Air-Route Expedition (BAARE) 1930-31!

In the twenty years between 1919 and 1939 there were two strands to British polar activity. The first consisted of 260 members of 54 expeditions to the Arctic and two to the Antarctic. Almost all members were Oxbridge undergraduates or recent graduates; many went on more than one expedition, frequently going on from membership of one expedition to leadership of another. It was a small club of friends – essentially amateur in character but serious in purpose, with eight future Fellows of The Royal Society amongst them.

The second strand was a consequence of government Antarctic policy and was financed accordingly. The government was not minded to become engaged again in private polar initiatives: national polar interest lay in acquisition of Antarctic territory and support of economic activity. At the time of the Davos encounter, Scott's RRS *Discovery* was completing the last of its Antarctic voyages as part of the British, Australian, New Zealand Antarctic Research Expedition 1929-31 in search of new lands, and RRS *Discovery II* was engaged in the first of its commissions as part of *Discovery Investigations* researching the scientific background to whaling and thereby laying the foundations of modern oceanography.

How was it that the baton of the Heroic Age of Antarctic exploration came to be passed to Oxbridge students? And why was it that the polar regions seemed to be so predominantly attractive to them? Could it be that the Oxbridge generation had amongst them young men of private means who suffered from a sort of risk and challenge "deficit" following the First World War for which they had been born too late? One senses in the stories of many of them an unwillingness to settle down. Their elders, who had been young in the days of Scott and Shackleton, and who had so courageously embraced the horrors of war, were in no need of further adventurous trials and tribulations and youth was given its head.

Why the polar regions? The days of epic exploratory journeys were over. The choice before an Oxbridge undergraduate wishing to make his mark lay for the most part between the Arctic, the Himalayas or Africa. Of these the Himalayas demanded a mountaineering initiation and Africa required working with the inhabitants. The Arctic was simpler, a summer expedition could be organised "on the back of a cigarette pack" - on the slopes at Davos, perhaps - and there was little need to interface with the local people – except to learn Inuit techniques of travel by dog sledge and kayak.

The presence in Cambridge of Frank Debenham and James Wordie would have encouraged an Arctic choice. Debenham had been on Scott's last expedition, and established the Scott Polar Research Institute in 1921: Wordie had been with Shackleton in *Endurance*, and led expeditions to Spitsbergen, Jan Mayen, Baffin Island, and twice to Greenland

These were not holidays. Norman Falcon, later to be a geological luminary in the oil industry, cut his geological teeth on an expedition to Edgeoya organised by Gino Watkins at the age of 19. The icecap stations in Greenland (Watkins) and North East Land (Alexander Glen) made major contributions to glaciology. Watkins' two Greenland expeditions led to greater understanding of polar meteorology. The work of Professors Watson-Watt and Edward Appleton in polar geophysics had a later bearing on the development of radar. Many of these men went on to have "adventurous" times in the war that followed. R.E.D. Ryder, captain of BGLE's *Penola*, won the VC at St Nazaire; Glen saw action in Spitsbergen and was the first British

officer to contact the Russians via Yugoslavia in order to warn them of the effectiveness of RAF mining of the Danube that had just blown up a Russian ship and a Russian general!



A sunny day on the roof.  
The Northern Base, photo by E W Bingham

The British Graham Land Expedition 1934-37 was in many ways the ultimate flowering of the Oxbridge "school" of polar exploration. John Rymill, its leader, had learned his trade at the feet of Watkins; and almost all the shore party had been on one or more of the earlier Arctic expeditions. Its primary objective was to find out whether Graham Land was intersected by channels cutting it off from the Antarctic continent – it wasn't; they proved that it is a peninsula. It was a "shoestring" expedition, using an old French fishing schooner and eating "off the land" – but they did have an aeroplane.

These two strands - unpaid amateurs and governmentally paid explorers & scientists

-were to come together in "Operation Tabarin" and the beginnings of the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (FIDS). The purpose of "Tabarin" was to reassert British interest in the Dependencies, and did so by establishing two scientific observation bases at Port Lockroy and at Deception Island. The appointment of James Marr, Discovery Investigations authority on krill, as the first leader of "Tabarin" was entirely appropriate to its purpose and its scientific activity. But when, two years later, FIDS gave effect to its exploratory instincts, there was no one better than Surgeon Commander Ted Bingham to transfer the shoestring and dog-driving lessons of BAARE and BGLE to the new Survey. By the time Dr V E ("Bunny") Fuchs, himself a graduate of a James Wordie Greenland expedition, was appointed leader of FIDS in 1948 the BGLE ethos of young men being expected to live frugally and do amazing things was firmly entrenched.

The Scott and Shackleton huts on Ross Island are physical reminders of the Heroic Age; Port Lockroy was the first of the bases established by "Tabarin". There are no such relics to commemorate those who, between the wars, laid the foundations of what was to come. They had many a good story to tell and ought to be remembered.



The Penola at Port Lockroy, photo by B B Roberts

John Heap - September 2004

## Two related books recently published:

Going back to the earlier days of exploration, David Yelverton has covered the saga of the pioneer Antarctic Peninsula Expeditions 1897-1905 in his neat book *Quest for a Phantom Strait*.

It is an account of three expeditions - Belgian, Swedish and French - that sailed south in response to the London conference resolution of 1895 to establish whether a seventh continent existed at the South Pole. The other expeditions were Scott's *Discovery*, Drygalski's *Gauss* and Bruce's *Scotia* further east. Not only is it a gripping account of shipwreck, starvation, illness and death, and the supreme personal bravery of three lesser known expeditions that played a crucial part in the discovery of Antarctica, but it is a scholarly and meticulously researched work long overdue in Antarctic literature. It will also be an ideal companion for those travelling the Antarctic Peninsula.

The retail price is £10.99 but on ordering direct from the publisher and mentioning *Bergy Bits* the price will be £9.00, of which £1.00 will be donated to UKAHT. Please add £1.10 p&p to UK addresses (overseas cost on application to [polar.publishing@lineone.net](mailto:polar.publishing@lineone.net)). Make cheques payable to Polar Publishing Ltd. and send to 10 Meadow Road, Burpham, Guildford GU4 7LW. You can see further details in the online magazine [www.polarworlds.info](http://www.polarworlds.info)

and

Just published is Michael Smith's biography *Sir James Wordie, Polar Crusader*. It is the first full life of Wordie to be written and was undertaken with the close co-operation of Wordie's family. It is illustrated with photographs taken on Wordie's numerous expeditions.

Wordie bridged the gap between the heroic age and modern era. He was chief of scientific staff on Sir Ernest Shackleton's epic *Endurance* expedition and marooned on Elephant Island. He travelled on a further eight expeditions to the Arctic and re-visited the Antarctic for the final time in 1947. During the 1920s and 30s he helped to nurture a new generation of young explorers. By the 1930s no expedition left Britain without first consulting Wordie. Later he was a key member of Operation Tabarin, which established the first-ever permanent British base in the region. Wordie was chairman of Scott Polar Research Institute for 18 years and President of the Royal Geographical Society at the time of the 1953 conquest of Everest. At SPRI he was Fuchs's most significant advisor in planning the first crossing of the Antarctic Continent, 1955-58.

The retail price is £25 but on ordering direct from the publisher and mentioning *Bergy Bits* the price will be £20, of which £2.00 will be donated to UKAHT. Please add £2.50 p&p to UK addresses (overseas cost on application to [elayne.manson@ntlworld.com](mailto:elayne.manson@ntlworld.com)). Make cheques payable to Berlinn Ltd. and send to 10 Newington Road, Edinburgh, EH9 1QS ([www.berlinn.co.uk](http://www.berlinn.co.uk)).