

When is Stromness Villa not Stromness Villa?



Stromness - Villa 1 on the right in the right villa

Robert Burton

The Trust has in its coffers a small fund put aside for the restoration of the Manager's House (the 'Villa') at Stromness. The building has been considered an icon as the place where Shackleton, Worsley and Crean were greeted at the end of their epic journey in 1916. A blue plaque records the event and the building was a place of pilgrimage for visitors to South Georgia until the site was closed for safety reasons. However, arising from a study of old plans and photographs of the whaling station by Professor Bjorn Basberg, it has come to light that the building in question had actually been moved from Ocean Harbour to Stromness in 1926. But the 'real' villa still exists. The original Villa, where Shackleton had his famous bath, is a smaller building nearby (Villa 1 in the picture). When the later Villa was erected, the first one became the foremen's quarters. So the funds will still be needed when the time comes. Thanks to Robert Burton for information supplied.

Husvik was a Norwegian station. Norway wishes to preserve its cultural heritage on South Georgia with the assistance of the South Georgia Heritage Trust. The Trust has a branch in Norway. The team of nine Norwegian craftsmen renewed the cladding on the walls and the roof; windows are being refurbished and the buildings (Villa and Radio Shack) repainted. The completed building is once more available for use by visiting scientists and expeditions. The team leader Torolf Stenersen was able to make a survey of the 'real' Stromness Villa with permission of the Government.



The restored Husvik Villa (SGHT)

Meanwhile in another villa in another harbour..... Husvik Manager's Villa and Radio Shack have been restored thanks to funding from the South Georgia Heritage Trust (www.sght.org) that had been donated by the Norwegian county of Vestfold and the Sandefjord municipality. Local companies in Norway also gave much generous support to the project. Logistic support was provided by the Norwegian OVDS ship *Nord Norge* and the British Royal Navy ship *HMS Endurance*.

Whoops... on the front page of the last issue of Bergy Bits you may have noticed that the picture of Cape Royds hut was not one taken in 1908 but a modern picture taken by Kevin Rigarsford (and already published in BB20). This was due to a glitch between proof and print. This picture below makes for easier comparison with the Leafield Hut in Oxfordshire.



Cape Royds hut in 1908

(Alexander Turnbull Library)



The Leafield hut today

(Keith Holmes)

Bergy Bits

The Newsletter of the Friends of Antarctica

John Heap...

It is with great sadness that we have to report that our Founder Chairman Dr John Heap CMG died in early March after illness of several months. John was a polar man through and through and will be very much missed. He was Chairman of the Trust since its inception in 1993 and played an enormous role in promoting the interests of Antarctic Heritage in the UK, through the public role of leading the Trust most ably, chairing and hosting events but also behind the scenes in negotiations with other bodies and interested parties. His knowledge, his capacity and his energy put the UKAHT on the map and gave it the public profile it has today. John's polar career began in 1955 when he joined the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey to carry out sea ice research. In 1964 he moved from research to diplomacy, joining the Polar Regions Section of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. It was during this time and as head between 1975 and 1992 that John exercised a powerful influence on government policy in Antarctica and, later, the direction of both Arctic and Antarctic research. As Director of the Scott Polar Research Institute from 1992 to 98, he secured the long-term future of the institute within Cambridge University. He also saw the need for enhanced library and research space in the growing institute, and spearheaded a successful appeal to fund a major extension. Our thoughts are with his wife, Peggy, and three children. There will be a Thanksgiving Service for John on Saturday 6 May at 3pm at Harston Parish Church, near Cambridge.

...New Chairman

Just before he died, John resigned as Chairman and in his place the Trustees elected Philippa Foster Back OBE, a Trustee of UKAHT since 2000. She has polar connections, being a grand-daughter of Professor Frank Debenham, a geologist on Scott's Last Expedition and Founder of the Scott Polar Research Institute. Her own polar credentials include a visit South when she was Chairman of the Friends of SPRI to visit the Ross Sea area. She has also made visits to Northern Canada in the footsteps of an ancestor Admiral Sir George Back who journeyed with Franklin and on his own on the land based exploration of that region searching for the North West Passage. Philippa is Director of the Institute of Business Ethics in London and has two prominent non-executive directorships: as a member of the Defence Management Board at the Ministry of Defence, chairing the Defence Audit Committee and at the Institute of Directors. We welcome Philippa as our new Chairman.

Subscriptions... Annual subscriptions of £20 are due now. Every year some people send a cheque when they already have a standing order. If you are unsure as to whether you are paid up, please be in touch with the Secretary, Rachel Morgan on ukaht@dircon.co.uk or 01291 690305.

Another gathering of Friends during Discover Antarctica!

As mentioned in BB21 the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting is being held in Edinburgh from 12 to 23 June - the first time it's been held in the UK for almost 30 years. A major series of public engagement events during the ATCM fortnight is being coordinated by the British Antarctic Survey.

HMS *Endurance* and RRS *James Clark Ross* will be open to the public for tours at the Ocean Centre in Leith Dock (www.antarctica.ac.uk, www.visitandlearn.co.uk). We have a provisional plan for Friends to gather there at c.10am on Sunday 18th June. The aim is to visit HMS *Endurance* and then after lunch move on the RRS *James Clark Ross*. Please be in touch with Rachel Morgan on 01291 690305 or ukaht@dircon.co.uk if you are interested in coming along.

If you would like to make more of a weekend of it, visit the Edinburgh International Conference Centre for a major exhibition of Antarctic science, art and heritage - the first exhibition of its kind in the UK. There is also a series of public performances - including Professor Lloyd Peck of British Antarctic Survey, Dr Valerie Masson-Delmotte speaking about ice caps and climate change, Dr David Munro of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society celebrating Scotland's forgotten polar heroes, and Alastair Fothergill of the BBC's Natural History Unit on the making of Life in the Freezer and Planet Earth. Many of Edinburgh's science visitor attractions are organising whole range of activities during the weekend of 17 & 18 June: Edinburgh Zoo, Our Dynamic Earth, Deep Sea World, the Royal Observatory, Discovery Point, and Ocean Terminal at Leith. Full details can be found on www.atcm2006.gov.uk.

Port Lockroy...

The season at Port Lockroy has been busier than ever. The team - Rick Atkinson, Maire Nicolson, and Graham Gillie will soon be arriving back in the UK. With a record 10,600 visitors (an increase of



Rick, Maire and young visitors to Port Lockroy (BAS)

10%), the introduction of new merchandise and a shop re-fit, sales in both the gift shop and post office shown a provisional increase of over 60% on last year. Full details in the next Bergy Bits. For more see their diaries on www.antarctica.ac.uk/Living_and_Working/Diaries/index.html

Grand Antarctic Reception, 10 October 2005

The Grand Antarctic Reception in the magnificent setting of the Locarno Suite of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office was a resounding success. Guests were bombarded by a spectacular array of images of Antarctica and the huts, including film footage from the historic expeditions, as well as spectacular views of the continent, played over modern plasma screens, historic photos from the recent exhibition of Ponting's photos at the Royal Geographical Society. An ice sculpture, fittingly of a penguin, brought a touch of Antarctic chill to the sumptuously decorated Suite.

The Trust's Patron, HRH The Princess Royal, spent nearly an hour at the event. She met many of the guests, showing yet again her keen interest in and knowledge of Antarctica. She delivered a stirring speech, recalling with evident emotion her own visit to Scott's and Shackleton's huts on Ross Island, pointing out that the expeditions were British, and underlining that "Everything about this screams for more support from Britain". She welcomed the strong support given towards preserving the huts by the New Zealand government, and added "It seems unacceptable now for Britain not to do as well – if not considerably better – in supporting that work." She gave a warm welcome

to the exclusive partnership with the Natural History Museum which had just been announced, under which modern information technology should enable more people to see the huts and understand the value of them and of the work of the expeditions. She concluded with a rousing appeal, saying that "I hope we can provide the impetus to make absolutely sure the right amount of money is available, to ensure that these huts survive in the best possible condition for future generations; and to continue to be inspired by that extraordinary age of exploration."

Also at the event, Nigel Watson, Executive Director of the New Zealand Trust, gave an update on the work of the project. Now over £2.5 million has been raised, in cash and resources in kind, and significant savings had been made in the process. The necessary work to the fabric and artefact collection at Shackleton's hut at Cape Royds, the first to be tackled, is underway and only £250,000 short of being fully funded. After this, attention will turn to Scott's hut at Cape Evans. Other speakers included Sharon Ament, Deputy Director of the Natural History Museum, Rt Hon Paul East, Trustee of the New Zealand Trust (since appointed its Chairman), and Philippa Foster Back, (then) Trustee of UKAHT standing in for John Heap who was not well.

News from the Captain Scott Society in Cardiff

The Captain Scott Society is hoping that the Standard Compass and Binnacle that stood on the roof of the ice-house of the SS *Terra Nova* may return to Cardiff when Cardiff Municipal Museum opens some time in the future. It currently lies with the Royal Navy in Portsmouth. This photograph shows three Staff Officers, (l-r: Lt Tim Davey, Lt Tim Boughton, Lt. Mal Instone. Courtesy of the Commodore, BRNC, photo, Mike Tarver) taken at the Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, re-enacting a scene of 1910 scene taken aboard the ship.

Just published is the definitive account of this classic polar exploration ship of the 'heroic age'. **The S.S. Terra Nova** by Michael Tarver is the 60 year history of the famous whaler, sealer and polar exploration ship which travelled the oceans from the Arctic to the Antarctic from her launch in 1884 until she foundered off SW Greenland in 1943. It is published in a large format (280mm x 210mm or 11"x 8 1/4"), with 256 pages liberally illustrated with over 160 monochrome illustrations – many photographs appear in print for the first time. ISBN 0 9552208 07 Pendragon Maritime Publications, TQ5 0EZ, 01803 852364, pendragonmp@hotmail.co.uk

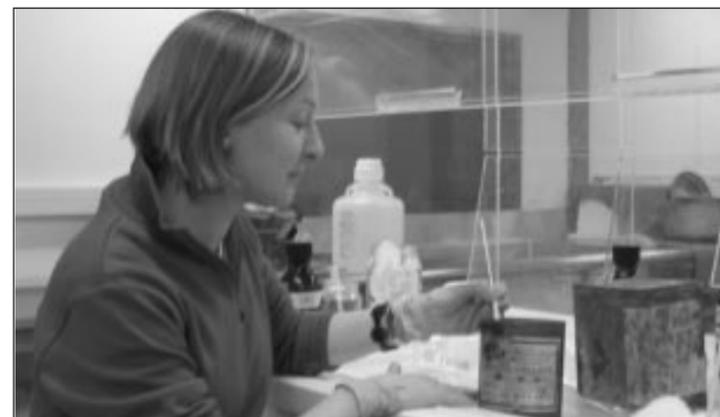


The "new" Captain Scott Room in the Royal Hotel in Cardiff is now open. This is the room in which the City of Cardiff entertained Captain Scott and his crew before they departed for the Antarctic on 15th June, 1910. Captain Scott chose to make Cardiff his departure point in gratitude for the city's generosity. The hotel has been undergoing refurbishment for the last 8 years. The contents, oak panelling and inscribed fireplace from the room have been saved and transferred to the corresponding room on the floor above. It is open for functions.



Ross Sea Huts Project News

Work on Shackleton's Hut at Cape Royds is now well advanced. Ten expert conservation workers have been involved during the 2005-06 season, including materials conservators, archaeologists, and British conservation carpenters, Carpenter Oak and Woodland. A major task has been to transport a large part of the artefacts from the hut to New Zealand's Scott Base, also on Ross Island, where a team of three professional conservators will work on them over the Antarctic winter. This solution is, perhaps surprisingly, by far the most cost-effective given the subsidised support provided to the team by the New Zealand Government at Scott Base. It avoids the expense, the logistic complexities and meteorological



Conservator Nicola Dunn an expert in metals conservation from London, working on artefacts from Shackleton's Hut, Cape Royds, Antarctica (NZAHT)

uncertainties of working on site at the hut, and is much cheaper and less hazardous than transporting all the fragile artefacts to conservation centres in different parts of the world. The work should be completed much faster, as the team will face no competing distractions. And plenty of conservators with excellent qualifications were eager to volunteer to experience the rigours and isolation of the Antarctic winter.

This work has been assisted by a grant of

Dates for your diary...

- **John Kelly** who went South as an artist with the British Antarctic Survey in 2003 is exhibiting his work all this year. The exhibition 'Due South' is currently at Manchester Museum (www.museum.man.ac.uk). Open every day, admission free, ending on 29 May. It will then travel to the University Museum of Zoology, Cambridge (www.zoo.cam.ac.uk/museum/museum.htm) from June 30 to September 23. Then to the Oxford University Museum of Natural History (www.oum.ox.ac.uk) from October 1 to late January 2007.

- The '**Endurance & Survival**' exhibition at the National Maritime Museum Cornwall. Opened on February 11 and running until next January, the exhibition focuses on the key elements of survival: food, water, warmth and the emotional strength of endurance, needed for the very physical and mental

NZ\$300,000 from the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board's

Environment and Heritage Committee. Conservation of an artefact collection on this scale in Antarctica is a world first. If all goes well, the scheduled work at Shackleton's Hut should be completed by 2009. The conservation team which worked on Shackleton's Hut also visited Scott's Hut at Cape Evans. There they found that the hut was battling some major challenges - large snow drifts, increasing water damage and mould growth. These conveyed a real sense of urgency and potential loss, underlining the imperilled state of the heritage and the need for quick action to protect and preserve the huts. The UK and New Zealand Trusts are considering a further application to the Heritage Lottery Fund/ National Heritage Memorial Fund to help fund this work, provided the Fund indicates it will not reject it just because the hut is outside UK.

Some good news regarding Carsten Borchgrevink's hut at Cape Adare. Although half Norwegian, Borchgrevink headed the British Antarctic Expedition of 1898-1900, the first to winter intentionally on the Antarctic continent. The Norwegian Government is to make available 300,000 krone (about £30,000) for work on this project, with a possibility of more funding to follow.

The Atlas Gallery in London has just raised nearly £2,500 for the Trust arising from the sale of the photographs at an exhibition of

award-winning photographer, Josef Hoflehner. The startling series of photographs records in minute detail the extraordinary time capsules left behind by the great explorers in the Ross Sea Huts. The Atlas Gallery exists to promote the work of pioneering nineteenth and early twentieth century photographers, and the cream of contemporary fine art photographic imagery through the sale of high quality modern limited edition and original vintage photographer's prints. You can see more on www.atlasgallery.com or tel. 020 7224 4192.

challenges of survival at sea. One of the highlights is the story of Shackleton and his crew and the loss of *Endurance*. The exhibition includes the 23ft rescue boat the James Caird, Shackleton's snow-goggles and pannikin, two left-footed boots and Leonard Hussey's much-appreciated banjo. Admission £7 (conc. £4.80) open 10-5. For further information, please telephone 01326 214536/558 or see www.nmmc.co.uk

- Tewkesbury Museum is planning an exhibit on **Raymond Priestley** from July. Full are not available yet but contact Rachel Morgan nearer the time.

- Aidan Dooley's one man play on Tom Crean will be at the Flavel Arts Centre, Dartmouth on Saturday 22 May at 8 pm. Tickets £9 tel 01803 839530 www.theflavel.org.uk

The Newsletter of the Friends of Antarctica