

Media release

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Royal
Geographical
Society

with IBG

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● The Enduring Eye: a centenary exhibition to celebrate Frank Hurley's photographs of Shackleton's *Endurance* expedition

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The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) today, 20 November 2014, announces ambitious plans to celebrate the centenary of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition (1914-17) led by Sir Ernest Shackleton and better known today as the *Endurance* expedition.

The Society owns 68 glass plate negatives of the expedition, selected and saved from the ice by Frank Hurley and Sir Ernest Shackleton, and never previously seen by the public. These fragile glass plates, which vividly capture the feelings of men in extreme circumstances, will be used in an innovative new exhibition that tells Shackleton and his team's story of extreme adventure, team spirit, trust, difficult judgements and an audacious plan to sail 800 miles in little more than a rowing boat as the only possible chance of rescue.

Opening on 20 November 2015 to mark the centenary of the crushed *Endurance* sinking below the sea ice of Antarctica on Sunday 21 November 1915, the exhibition will inspire, engage and inform visitors with UK Antarctic heritage, Shackleton's extraordinary leadership and Hurley's photographic achievements in such uncompromising landscapes.

Curated by Meredith Hooper, the exhibition will also conserve the fragile glass plate negatives, and enable public access, by taking the first digital copies of the plates and making replica plates.

Dr Rita Gardner, Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) Director, said: "The centenary of the *Endurance* expedition and the evocative images from it provide a unique opportunity to generate a wider understanding and appreciation of the Antarctic legacy of Shackleton and Hurley on photography, science and heritage. We plan to combine technology and theatrical design to produce a public 'Shackleton' exhibition unlike any previously seen."

Camilla Nichol, Chief Executive of the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust, said: "We are delighted to be the headline supporter of this landmark exhibition. It is a unique opportunity to create a legacy which uses state-of-the-art technology to preserve for the future these precious photographic plates. The exhibition will allow a new generation to be inspired by the story of *Endurance* and to experience for themselves these extraordinary images, which survived against all the odds"

The exhibition is being made possible through the generous support of the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust, the Governments of the British Antarctic Territory and South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands, Rolex and the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851.

The Society is working on plans to tour the exhibition in the UK and beyond.

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Notes to Editors

1. 'The Enduring Eye: The Antarctic Legacy of Sir Ernest Shackleton and Frank Hurley' will be on show at The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG), Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR, from 20 November 2015 for ten weeks. The London exhibition will be open to the public and free. It will be accompanied by schools resources and an online exhibition which will allow people to manipulate digitised versions of the glass negative plates.
2. An image is available for use on request.
3. For further details about the exhibition, contact Caitlin Watson, Head of Public Engagement and Communications on +44 (0)20 7591 3008 or email press@rgs.org.
4. The Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) is the learned society and professional body for geography. Formed in 1830, our Royal Charter of 1859 is for 'the advancement of geographical science'. Today, we deliver this objective through developing, supporting and promoting geographical research, expeditions and fieldwork, education, public engagement, and geography input to policy. We aim to foster an understanding and informed enjoyment of our world. We hold the world's largest private geographical collection and provide public access to it. We have a thriving Fellowship and membership and offer the professional accreditation 'Chartered Geographer'. More details from www.rgs.org
5. The Society acknowledges the generosity of the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust as lead supporter of the curation and creation of the exhibition and in contributing specialist knowledge and expertise to the exhibition as part of its role in the protection, conservation and promotion of the public understanding of the United Kingdom's Antarctic heritage.
6. Other supporters of the exhibition are the Government of the British Antarctic Territory, the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands, Rolex and the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851.
7. Further sponsors, including those for UK and international tours of the exhibition, will be announced in due course.

