



South Georgia Association
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Press Release

The Morag Husband Campbell Medal **South Georgia Association** **2019 Award to Sally Elizabeth Poncet**

The South Georgia Association is delighted to announce the award for the second year of its newly struck medal for 2019 to Mrs Sally Poncet, *"For outstanding contributions to the study and conservation of wildlife and heritage of South Georgia"*.

The Medal has been made possible by a generous bequest from a long-standing supporter of the Association, Miss Morag Husband Campbell. She was so enthralled when visiting South Georgia, she determined to leave a bequest to the SGA. The Medal comprises a Sterling silver relief medallion, 60mm in diameter. The name of the awardee is inscribed on the reverse.

The Recipient Mrs Sally Poncet has been awarded the MHC medal in recognition of her contribution to the knowledge and understanding of South Georgia ecosystems and heritage. She has been involved with South Georgia on an almost annual basis for more than 40 years.

Sally participated in a three-year (1985-1987) island-wide survey of birds and their habitats, and another visit in 1985 counted the island's elephant seals. In 1995 she undertook a survey of historic sites. From 1999 to 2003 she was Project Leader for the South Georgia Environmental Baseline Surveys and the following year was Project Leader for the South Georgia Albatross Survey. Since 1999 she has monitored wandering albatross populations on Albatross, Prion and Inner Lee Islands in the Bay of Isles. She was Project Leader for the South Georgia Rat Eradication Feasibility Trial (2000-01) and subsequently advised the South Georgia Heritage Trust's rat eradication programme. In recent years she has been involved with the surveying and eradication of alien plant species.

Her publications include: The Land and Visitor Management Report and Baseline Survey. She co-authored the South Georgia Site Visitor Management Plan and the South Georgia Visitor Guide, the latter becoming an essential tool for informing and managing visitors. She was involved in the production of low-flying avoidance maps which have been invaluable for the operation of helicopters. She has provided information for South Georgia Geographic Information Services and interpretation of aerial imagery for UK Hydrographic Office hydrographic cartography. Sally has also participated in field logistical support for wildlife documentary filming expeditions, including "Life in the Freezer".

Sally Poncet's continued involvement over so many years has contributed an unparalleled amount to increase the world profile of South Georgia.

The Award will be presented to Sally Poncet at the Annual Spring Meeting of the Association on 13th April 2019 in London.

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Notes for Editors:

The Award: is to individuals who have contributed significantly to the understanding, appreciation and promotion of South Georgia. This includes i) scientific studies as well as the arts and humanities including culture, history, heritage, artistic endeavour etc. ii) adventurous travel and "exploration", iii) activities which enhance the wider appreciation of South Georgia (e.g. in the media or through administrative functions).

South Georgia: is a sub-Antarctic island and a British Overseas Territory in the southern Atlantic Ocean. It is remote, mountainous and of exceptional natural beauty, with abundant wildlife both on the island and in the surrounding ocean. Uninhabited apart from two small research stations and a few government employees, it is an unspoilt wilderness with a fascinating heritage that is none the less environmentally vulnerable and has been featured in the recent Blue Planet II series. It is 165 km long and some 35-km wide. The Falkland Islands are about 1,300 km (810 mi) west. Captain James Cook made the first landing in 1775. It was the base for the extensive harvesting of fur and elephant seals in the late 18th and 19th Centuries. From 1904 to the 1960s its primary activity was whaling. Sir Ernest Shackleton landed and traversed the island after his perilous crossing from Elephant Island in 1916. He died on a subsequent expedition and is buried at the whaling station of Grytviken.

The South Georgia Association: was formed to give voice to those who care for South Georgia and has several hundred members. Its aims are to encourage interest in, and concern for, the island of South Georgia, to encourage the study of South Georgia, and promote the conservation of its natural and cultural heritage, and to promote contacts and encourage fellowship among those who have lived and worked in or around South Georgia, have visited or are interested in the Island. Further details are to be found at: <http://www.southgeorgiaassociation.org>