THE SOUTH GEORGIA ASSOCIATION
History and Art of South Georgia

10 & 11 July 2026
British Antarctic Survey, Madingley Road, Cambridge CB3 0ET

©The Whaling Museum in Sandefjord

Friday July 10 – A History of King Edward Cove: whales, ships and soldiers		
Venue – BAS Aurora Collaboration Space		
Time	**Topic**	**Speaker**
09:15 (40 m)	Registration	
09:55 (5 m)	Welcome	Philippa Foster Back
10:00 (30 m)	South Georgia Place Names – an island history in shorthand	Adrian Fox
10:30 (40 m)	Grytviken Whaling Station & Founder C. A. Larsen (1904-1914)	Linda Widmark
11:10 (30 m)	COFFEE	
11:40 (40 m)	Events of 1982; antecedents, BAS, and repercussions	Robert Headland
12:20 (40 m)	*HMS Endurance* A171 (ex-*Anita Dan*) 1956 - 1991	Adrian Hughes
13:00 (50 m)	LUNCH	
13:50 (40 m)	*HMS Endurance* II A171 & *HMS Protector* A173	Nick Lambert
14:30 (15 m)	South Georgia Heritage Trust Report	Alison Neil
14:45 (15 m)	Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands Report	Mark Belchier
15:00 (30 m)	TEA	
15:30 (60 m)	Annual Members Meeting & Morag Husband Campbell Medal Award	Philippa Foster Back
16:30 (5 m)	Wrap Up	Philippa Foster Back
16:35	Close	
Venue – Homerton College		
18:30 (60 m)	Drinks Reception (Combination Room)	
19:30 (3 h)	Event Dinner (Fellows Dining Room)	

Saturday July 11 – Art of South Georgia: past and present		
Venue – BAS Aurora Collaboration Space		
Time	**Topic**	**Speaker**
09:30 (30 m)	Registration	
10:00 (40 m)	Of Whales, Women and Scrimshaw	Hanne Garmel
10:40 (40 m)	Nils Erling Olsen: South Georgia whaler, engineer and artist	Bjørn Basberg
11:20 (40 m)	COFFEE	
12:00 (50 m)	Wildlife Painting in the Field	Bruce Pearson
12:50 (50 m)	LUNCH	
13:40 (50 m)	Landscapes of South Georgia – the big picture	Dame Barbara Rae
14:30 (30 m)	Antarctic Science and Artist - Dick Laws	Ieuan Hopkins
15:00 (40 m)	TEA	
15:40 (30 m)	*RRS John Biscoe* (1956 - 1991)	Chris Elliott
16:10 (20 m)	Concluding Remarks & Future Events	Philippa Foster Back
16:30	Close	

Adrian Fox: *South Georgia Place Names – an island history in shorthand*

Abstract: Place names on South Georgia are a fascinating shorthand for the history of exploration, sealing and whaling, and science on the island. The talk will show how the earliest names stem from Cook's first charting of the island in 1775, and then trace South Georgia's history of sealing, whaling, national Antarctic expeditions, the Discovery Investigations and latterly scientific research and detailed mapping.

In this year of the 25th anniversary of the King Edward Point Research Station, the talk will especially focus on the Thatcher Peninsula and Cumberland East Bay area.

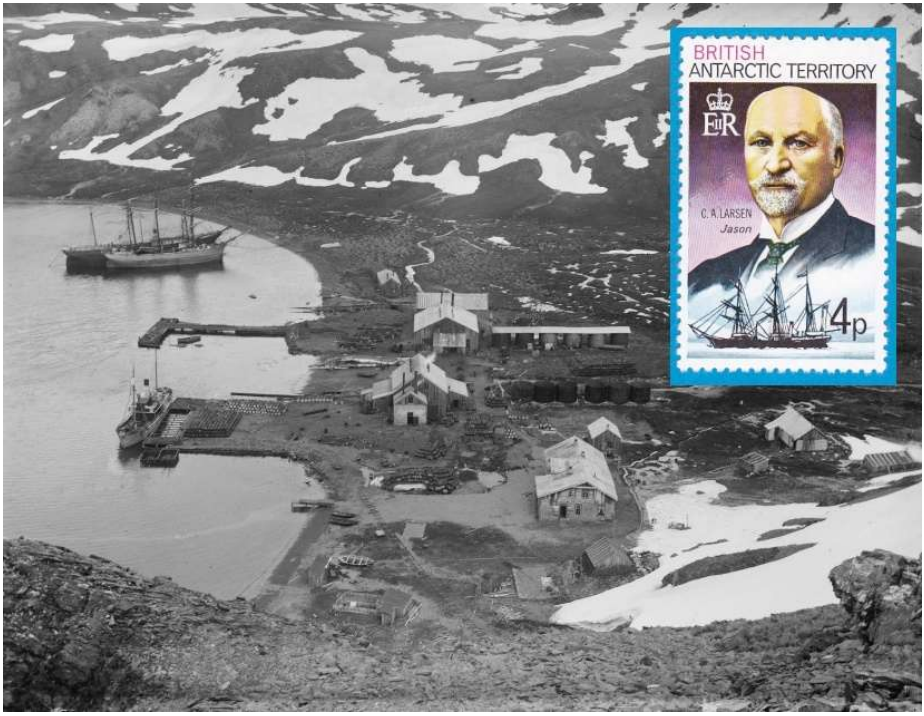
Biography: Adrian is an Emeritus Fellow at BAS. He joined BAS in 1990 and worked in the Mapping and Geographic Information Centre (MAGIC) until retiring in 2022. He was 'Head of MAGIC' from 2003-2021 and a member of the UK Antarctic Place-names Committee from 2004-2024, serving as Secretary from 2014-2021. He completed 13 Antarctic field seasons of aerial photography and surveying, and two field campaigns on South Georgia, most recently in 2021-22 for wildlife surveys with a fixed-wing drone.

Section from map: Thatcher Peninsula. BAS, 2010. 1:25,000

Linda Widmark: *Grytviken Whaling Station 1904-1914 & Founder C. A. Larsen*

Abstract: In 1892, Captain Carl Anton Larsen set out on his first voyage to the Southern Ocean - an undertaking that would prove pivotal both for the future of whaling and for what was to become the Heroic Age, by discovering new land, collecting Antarctica's first fossils and undertaking the first ski journey on the continent. Larsen combined the curiosity of an explorer, the analytical mind of a scientist, and the vision of an industrialist.

As whale stocks declined in the Northern Hemisphere, he envisioned the potential of the Southern Ocean, though securing financial backing initially proved difficult. After the Swedish Antarctic Expedition 1901–1903, known for its dramatic survival in which Larsen showed extraordinary leadership, he managed to gain the support he needed to realise his ambitions.



He translated experience into enterprise, pioneering modern whaling through the establishment of the Grytviken station in 1904. This industrial venture combined Norwegian maritime expertise, Argentine capital, and sub-Antarctic logistics on South Georgia.

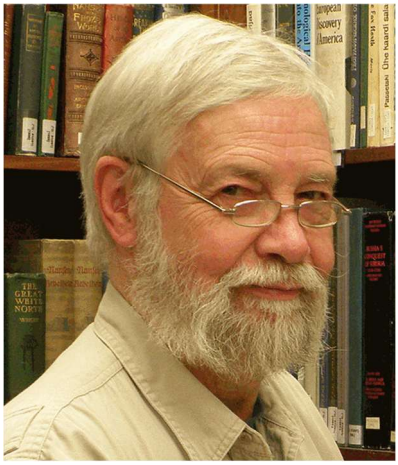
Larsen's legacy extends beyond exploration and industry. A progressive leader, Larsen invested in the welfare, health, and social life of his workforce while managing operations in Grytviken until 1914. Throughout his life he was a contributor to science, and he was among the earliest to advocate regulating whaling to safeguard future stocks.

Biography: Linda is a Swedish public sector officer with an international background spanning polar tourism, diplomacy in Nairobi, IT projects in Africa, and ownership of a safari camp in Kenya; with a keen interest in polar history, she is the great-great-granddaughter of C.A. Larsen.

Robert Headland: *Events of 1982; antecedents, BAS, and repercussions*

Abstract: Bob was on South Georgia prior to, during, and several times subsequent to the Argentine invasion of April 1982. Previous lectures with the South Georgia Association covered the war specifically. During this one more of the origin, some recent observations of events from British and Argentine sources, and subsequent years leading to the establishment of the museum will be described.

Biography: Bob became involved in polar research in 1977 with the British Antarctic Survey. He was based on South Georgia involved in several terrestrial biological programmes. This was interrupted by events in early 1982. After returning to Cambridge the book '*The Island of South Georgia*' resulted. His interests and specializations developed from biogeography to include historical geography of both polar regions. The Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI), University of Cambridge, appointed him Archivist and Curator for 27 years during which he prepared special exhibitions and lectures to commemorate many notable polar historical events. He became involved with the Antarctic Heritage Trust to maintain the huts and other remains from the early explorations. His major publication is '*A Chronology of Antarctic Exploration*' with several other books and other publications. He is a foundation member of the SGA, a member of the Institute of Historical Research of the University of London, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, member and former President of the Antarctic Club, member of the Arctic Club, and a recipient of the Polar Medal. Bob remained an associate at SPRI until his retirement in 2026.



Adrian Hughes: *HMS Endurance A171 (ex-Anita Dan) 1956 – 1991*

Abstract: *HMS Endurance* (ex *Anita Dan*) was the Royal Navy's Ice Patrol Ship between 1968 and 1991 supporting British interests in the South Atlantic and assisting BAS. Vital statistics: max speed 14 knots, 4000 tons, 305 feet long, ship's company 127. After her conversion, including the addition of a flight deck and two helicopters, Hon. Alexandra Shackleton re-named her after her grandfather's ship. Admired and loved within the Navy, the "Red Plum" fulfilled roles as protector, ambassador, navigator, hydrographer, scientist, filming platform and long distance tug. Working in co-operation during the Antarctic Summer, *Endurance*, *Bransfield* and *John Biscoe* were known within BAS as the Red Fleet. *Endurance* contributed by transporting scientists, aerial photography, hydrographic surveying and emergency assistance. This talk will cover life onboard during a typical season in 1979/80 which included bird surveys on South Georgia, hydrography in Marguerite Bay and Antarctic Treaty base inspections, together with a late unscheduled

mission. The following season, *Endurance* took Sir David Attenborough on his first trip south. 1981/82 was not a typical season. After supporting the Joint Services Expedition (JSE) and wildlife photographers on South Georgia and completing her scheduled programme, *HMS Endurance* under Captain Nick Barker contributed very significantly to the retrieval of the Falkland Islands Dependencies (as they were known until 1985) during the Conflict.

Biography: Adrian served with *HMS Endurance* and was a member of the JSE to South Georgia 1981/2. After leaving the RN, he has practised as a barrister and arbitrator. He also currently sits as a Justice on the Falkland Islands Court of Appeal.

Nick Lambert: *HMS Endurance II A171 & HMS Protector A173*

Rear Admiral Nick Lambert concluded a long naval operational career as the UK National Hydrographer in 2012, becoming a committed proponent of the Blue Economy concept. A co-founder and director of NLA International, he majors on the significant value of the blue natural capital possessed by island and coastal states and their opportunity to derive socio-economic benefit from that capital whilst regenerating the marine environment. This can be achieved through the imaginative development of multi-function offshore infrastructure, combining zero emissions power generation with aquaculture, wild fish stock and marine habitat regeneration, ecotourism and pragmatic marine protected areas; informed and actively managed by comprehensive maritime situational awareness. In particular, and as a former captain of *HMS Endurance*, he emphasises the criticality of the Polar Regions environment to our understanding of climate change and advocates the value of citizen science as a very efficient means of gathering valuable datasets for a wide range of scientific purposes. Nick chairs the James Caird Society and the Polar Citizen Science Collective.

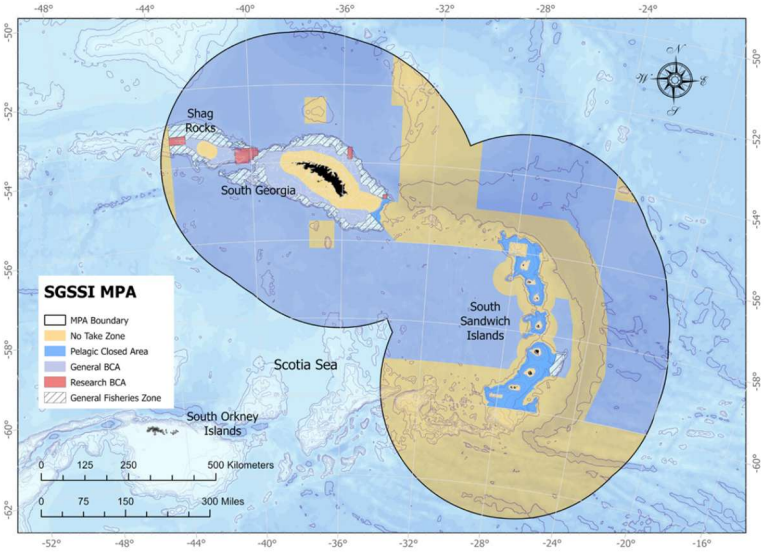
Alison Neil: *SGHT – a bumper season of activity on South Georgia*

Alison Neil, Chief Executive of the South Georgia Heritage Trust since 2006 will talk about a bumper season on South Georgia in 2025-26. This year has seen the successful stabilisation of the Manager's Villa at Stromness, with its links to Shackleton and the *Endurance,* and the installation of part 1 of a Whale Memorial on the flensing plan at Grytviken. Off-island, the South Georgia WildCounts project got underway, bringing together 60 international scientists to identify the biggest gaps in our knowledge of South Georgia wildlife populations, and how we might use technology to help us do an island-wide count.

Mark Belchier: *GSGSSI – report for the year*

Mark Belchier will report on the year at South Georgia. Mark joined the Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI) in July 2018 on secondment from the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) where he had worked on fisheries science at South Georgia since 2000. Whilst at BAS, Mark helped establish the applied fisheries research laboratory at King Edward Point (KEP), as well as developing and managing the KEP research programme.

Mark is currently the Director of Fisheries for GSGSSI, with key responsibilities that include development and management (including licencing) of fisheries across the Territory, ensuring that internationally they are recognised as achieving the highest international standards of sustainability. Mark is also responsible for the development and delivery of the GSGSSI science and research strategies. He also manages the SGSSI MPA, one of the world's largest Marine Protected Areas.



Mark has represented the UK as part of the UK Delegation to the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, and has chaired many international conservation and fisheries management meetings.

The Morag Husband Campbell Medal

The award has been made possible by the generous bequest of a long-standing supporter of the South Georgia Association, Morag Husband Campbell. The medal can be awarded annually to individuals who have contributed significantly to the understanding, appreciation and promotion of South Georgia. This would encompass scientific studies; arts and humanities, including culture, history, heritage and artistic endeavour; adventurous travel and exploration; activities that enhance the wider appreciation of South Georgia, such as through the media or through administrative functions; see https://southgeorgiaassociation.org/the-morag-husband-campbell-medal/.
The medal comprises a sterling silver relief medallion, 60mm in diameter. The name of the recipient and the year is inscribed on the reverse.

Award for 2026 - Bjørn Lorens Basberg

Citation: *For a detailed economic history and research on sealing and whaling enterprises, with their archaeological remains and conservation, on South Georgia.*

Hanne Garmel: *Of Whales, Women and Scrimshaw*

Abstract: I take a special interest in women in the history of whaling, and in my talk, I combine this interest with my knowledge of whalers' folk art related to the collections of the Whaling Museum in Sandefjord, Norway. With the story of a local Sandefjord woman who produced a vast collection of whale art and scrimshaw as a starting point, I will give a discussion and presentation of Norwegian whalers' folk art and scrimshaw as seen in the collection at the Whaling Museum in Sandefjord.

Biography: I am a cultural historian and museum curator with a special interest in maritime history, whaling history and museology. I have been working at the Whaling Museum in Sandefjord, Norway, since 2010 and have been affiliated with UiT the Arctic University Museum of Norway/the Polar Museum in Tromsø, Norway as a Public Sector PhD candidate since 2026.

The working title of my PhD project is Gender and Diversity at South Georgia: Women at the Whaling Stations in Antarctica 1905 - 1966.

Bjørn L. Basberg: *Nils Erling Olsen - South Georgia whaler, engineer and artist*

Abstract: Nils Erling Olsen (1910-1975) made whaling his life-long career – not uncommon for men of his generation from Sandefjord, Norway. His first whaling trip to the Antarctic was in 1927, aged 17. He became a ship's engineer but took a special interest in the whale oil processing plants on board factory ships and shore stations that he continuously developed and modernized.

For ten years, between 1950 and 1960, he was the manager at the shore whaling station Husvik Harbour, South Georgia. Olsen had many talents and interests, one of them was drawing and painting. He painted landscapes and scenes from the life of the whalers – often with a touch of humour. The talk will especially focus on this aspect of his life.

Biography: I am a Professor Emeritus in Economic History at the Norwegian School of Economics in Bergen. My main research interest has for many years been the economic history of the Antarctic region - especially whaling, and I have been actively involved in research at South Georgia for more than 35 years.

I have written and edited several books among others *The Shore Whaling Stations at South Georgia. A Study in Antarctic Industrial Archaeology.* I am a founding trustee of the South Georgia Heritage Trust, and a member of the Heritage Advisory Panel of the South Georgia Government.

Bruce Pearson: *Wildlife Painting in the Field*

Abstract: My talk highlights some experiences and explains the perpetual alternation between being an artist or a naturalist, sometimes combining them in the field.

Biography: Obsessed by the natural world I have worked professionally as an artist for over 50 years. I've been sketching and painting, filming and writing about wildlife and landscapes. I've ranged from Bird Island and South Georgia in the early 1970s, to North and South America, much of Africa and the high Arctic of Greenland and Svalbard. I have contributed work to group exhibitions and undertaken a range of solo commercial gallery shows in the UK and overseas. In addition, I've completed private commissions from individuals, museums and institutions, and have authored and illustrated a range of books.

It is the rhythm and restlessness of nature which fascinates me, and which I try to capture in the field through direct observation. My lifelong journey as an artist started on Bird Island and South Georgia watching and drawing albatrosses, right whales, penguins, storm petrels and mighty seas, and so much more! Latterly my focus has been studio printmaking and fieldwork adventures much closer to home.

My constant throughout, has been observational studies captured as small sketches and notes, but sometimes working on a much larger scale. To have relied mainly on a camera to capture the experiences to copy from later would have been simpler, but the result would have been an understanding of the natural world in two dimensions only.

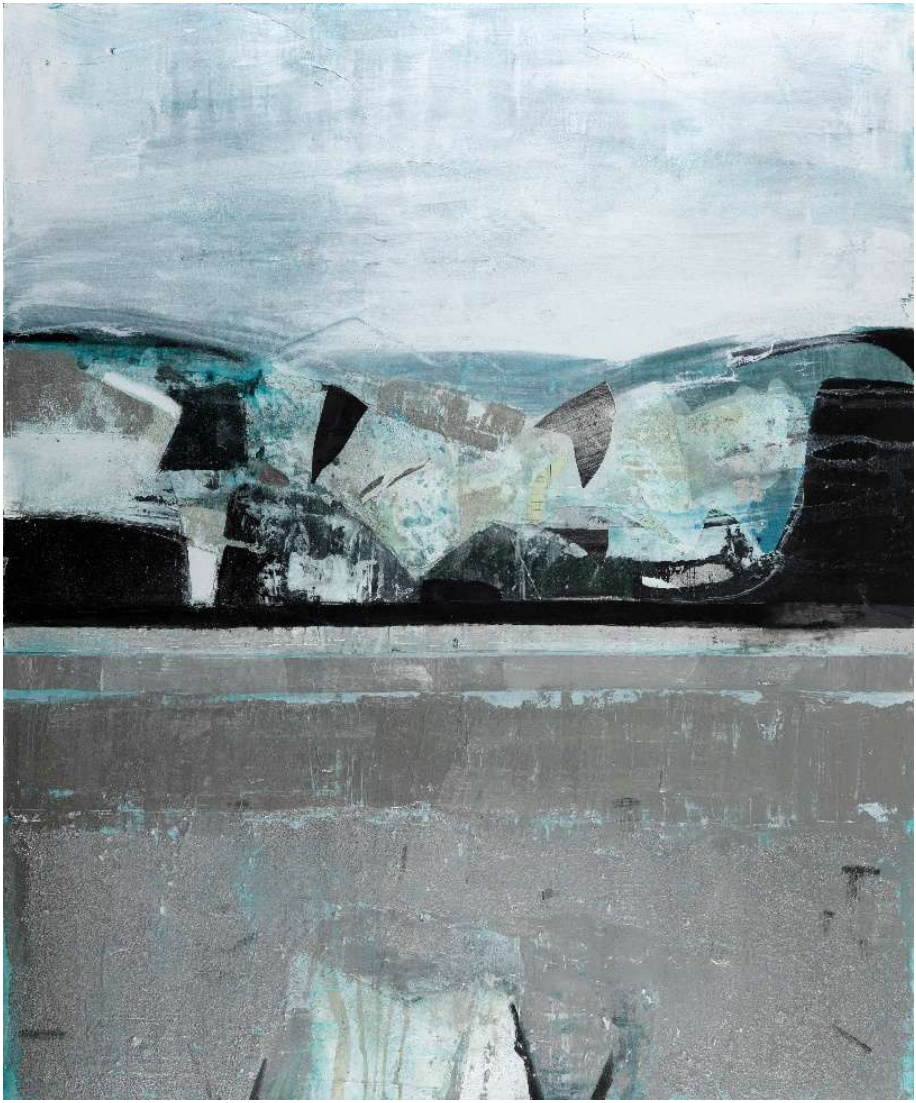
Barbara Rae: *Landscapes of South Georgia – the big picture*

Abstract: A lifelong passion for maps and geography has taken me from pole to pole. This journey began at the intersection of cartography, history and art, prompted by the story of Dr John Rae, the Orcadian explorer who helped to complete the map of the fabled Northwest Passage.

Encountering his name for the first time during a visit to Stromness sparked a long-held ambition, realised between 2015 and 2018, when I sailed those Arctic waters four times, researching extensively and working in sketchbooks aboard ship. The Arctic revealed a new cool-toned palette, where glaciers, icebergs and vivid evening skies offered unexpected colour. The resulting exhibition toured the Royal Scottish Academy, Canada House and Pier Arts Centre in Stromness in 2018.

In late 2022 I travelled to Antarctica, drawn initially by the history of the whaling industry and Scotland's profound connection to it. During the voyage, surrounded by that landscape and in conversation with fellow travellers, I was drawn into the tale of Shackleton and his crew aboard the *Endurance*. A return voyage this year deepened that research, producing a body of work far more monochromatic than the Arctic series, shaped equally by Shackleton's story and the enduring questions around the legacy of whaling stations and conservation in South Georgia.

Biography: Royal Academician Dame Barbara Rae is internationally recognised as a leading colourist and master printmaker, whose work is shaped by an abiding engagement with landscape and the traces of human presence.



Laws: Elephant seals, Moraine Fjord, South Georgia. 1953

Ieuan Hopkins: *Antarctic Science and Art – Dick Laws*

Abstract: The BAS Archives contains a large amount of the papers of Dick Laws' (1926-2014) documenting his scientific career. Also included is his artwork, created throughout his life. This talk will give an overview of the artwork held, with particular reference to South Georgia.

Biography: Ieuan has been the Archives, Records and Information Compliance Manager at BAS since 2013.

Chris Elliot: *RRS John Biscoe (1956 – 1991)*

Abstract: My talk is in celebration of the 35 years of service of the *John Biscoe* in support of UK activities around Antarctica – it is in two halves, 1956 to 1970, and 1970 to 1991. It will detail the major changes that took place during these two periods. I intend to highlight tasks performed by the ship beside her basic role of logistic support to the Antarctic Bases. This will include hydrographic survey, sealing, ship supported landings and establishment of remote parties, oceanographic and offshore biological research. The above covers South Georgia, the South Orkney Islands and the Antarctic Peninsula and off-lying islands.

Biography: My seagoing career commenced in 1963 as a Pre-Sea cadet at Warsash Nautical college, part of the University of Southampton. In January 1964 I joined my first ship in London docks, the *MV Carnatic* of the Shaw Savill shipping line. I served on four different ships for the next three and a half years,

obtaining sufficient sea time to be eligible to sit my first qualification as a watch keeping Officer. I obtained my 2nd Mates certificate in June 1967.

I then decided to find a job that would hold more interest for me rather than transporting cargo. I had my mind on ocean towing or salvage but found no vacancies.

However, I then noticed the two small red ships that sailed annually to the Antarctic. This immediately peaked my interest and I applied for a job. I was successful and was appointed 4/0 to the *John Biscoe* in September 1967. I was 21 years old. I completed three seasons on the *John Biscoe* and during this period passed my 1st Mates certificate. I was then appointed as 2/0 of the *Bransfield* and sailed on her maiden voyage. Due to the Chief Officer suffering a bad injury during the voyage, I was made temporary Chief Officer and a year later this rank was confirmed.

I decided I wanted to compete in the 1972 Single Handed transatlantic race. Sir Vivian Fuchs agreed that I could take six months unpaid leave. I had a fast and successful crossing taking 34 days in a 34ft yacht. I returned to the survey and resumed as C/0 of *Bransfield*.

In 1973 I was granted study leave and following six months at college I passed the examinations to gain my Masters Foreign Going certificate. I was then appointed to the *John Biscoe* as C/0 for the 1973/74 voyage.

In the 1975 I was promoted co-Master of the *John Biscoe* with Captain Malcolm Phelps. I completed 15 voyages in this capacity. As the *John Biscoe* went out of service in 1991 I was appointed Senior Master to the *James Clark Ross* and took her out on her maiden voyage. I completed 14 voyages on the *James Clark Ross*, retiring in January 2006.

THE SOUTH GEORGIA ASSOCIATION
Annual Members' Meeting

Friday 10th July at 15:30

Agenda

		Introduced by
1	Welcome	Philippa Foster Back
2	Minutes of the 23rd Annual Members' Meeting (2025)	Philippa Foster Back
3	Chairman's Report, to include reports from Committee Officers	Philippa Foster Back
4	Treasurer's Report	David Rootes
5	Reports from partner organisations SGHT, GSGSSI	See pages 12 & 13
6	Election of Committee	

Committee	Philippa Foster-Back	Chairman
	Matthew Bellhouse Moran	Secretary
	David Rootes (acting)	Treasurer (post vacant)
	Adrian Fox	Newsletter Editor
	Bruce Mair	Events 2026
	John Stafford Mills	Membership Secretary
	Joshua Holder	IT
	Pat Lurcock	Website manager
	Sarah Greenwood	Communications
	Sarah Lurcock	Initiative Funding
	Alexandra Shackleton	
	Bob Headland	
	Fran Prince	
	Martin Collins	
	Paul Rodhouse	
	Phil Trathan	
Corresponding	Jan Cheek	Falkland Islands
	vacant	South Georgia
President	David Tatham CMG	

7	Presidential Handover from David Tatham CMG to Professor David Drewry	
8	Future events	Philippa Foster Back
9	Any Other Business	Philippa Foster Back
10	Presentation of the Morag Husband Campbell Medal to Bjørn Basberg	Philippa Foster Back See page 14

THE SOUTH GEORGIA ASSOCIATION
Annual Members Dinner

Friday 10th July at 18:30

Homerton College, Fellows' Dining Room

STARTERS

Peach gin cured salmon with peach compote, pickled pink ginger, radish, cucumber gel, dill oil.
(Fish, Sulphites)

Baby plum tomato, bocconcini, sun-dried tomato pesto roasted butternut squash, rocket, balsamic reduction. (V / VE)
(Milk, Sulphites)

MAINS

Venison fillet, cavolo nero, baby carrot, celeriac purée, mash potato.
(Celery, Sulphites, Dairy)

Pan fried seabass, leek and pea risotto and vine-roasted cherry tomatoes, chive cream sauce.
(Fish, Celery, Dairy, Sulphites)

Courgette and root vegetable nut roast, butternut squash purée, fine beans, fondant potato. (V / VE)

DESSERT

Dark chocolate delice, white chocolate ice cream, spearmint chocolate ganache, macaroon and micro mint.
(Nuts, Soya, Eggs, Dairy, Gluten)

Vegan strawberry mousse, ginger nut crumb, spearmint strawberry compote, strawberry purée
(Gluten, Soya)

List of Attendees

Richard Adderton
Anthony Airey
Martin Atherton
Louise Baker
William Barham
Juliet Barrows
Bjørn Basberg
Mark Belchier
Brad Borkan
Alexander Borodin
Svetlana Borodina
Angela Bridges
Gerard Bulger
Jacqueline Burton
Cindy Buxton
Janet Cheek
Jan Chojecki
Jenny Clark
John Croxall
Carina Dahlstrom
Stewart Dodd
David Drewry
Gillian Drewry
Jeremy Dwight
Christopher Elliott
Francoise Elliott
Alan Esnouf
Julie Esnouf
Philippa Foster Back
Adrian Fox
Dame Jane Francis
Hanne Garmel
Peter Gilbert
John Gordon
Sarah Greenwood
John Hall
Deidre Hanna
Bob Headland
Ieuan Hopkins
Adrian Hughes
Ian Hunter
Sally Hunter
Robert Jay
Martin Kelly
Nick Lambert
Pat Lurcock
Sarah Lurcock
Tom Lynch
Bruce Mair
Jeff Mason
Helen McDonnell
Eugene Murphy
Alison Neil
Sara Oldfied
Bruce Pearson
Jane Prentice
Nick Prentice
Frances Prince
Susan Quelch
Dame Barbara Rae
David Rarity
Wendy Rarity
Laura Rodhouse
Paul Rodhouse
Graham Sadler
Tom Scrimgeour
Alexandra Shackleton
John Shears
Roger Slade
John Smellie
Phil Stone
Britta Sugden
David Sugden
David Tatham
Simon Taylor
Philip Trathan
Jerome Viard
Linda Widmark
John Yallop
Rosemary Yallop
Daniel Yarker

Event organizing committee:
Bruce Mair, Sarah Greenwood, Fran Prince, Paul Rodhouse, Phil Trathan

Notes: