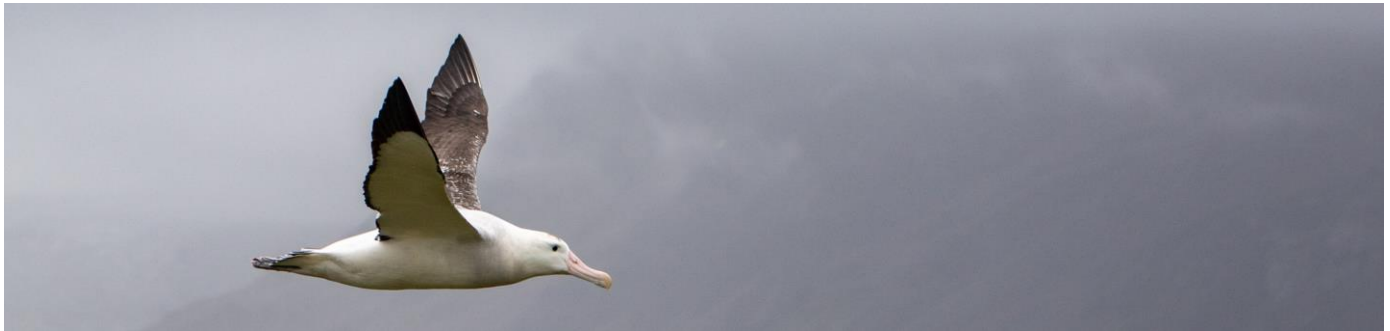


# South Georgia Association Newsletter

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*Wandering albatross in flight at Prion Island (Jamie Coleman)*

In this issue: Scrimshaw donated to SG museum; 1918 Spanish Flu and South Georgia whalers; Update on fixed-wing drone surveys of South Georgia's wildlife; Updated Biosecurity Handbook; Current topographic maps of South Georgia; Place names at St Andrews Bay; South Georgia news; New stamp issue; Minutes of the SG Association AGM; SG Association news, and Geoff Tanner obituary.



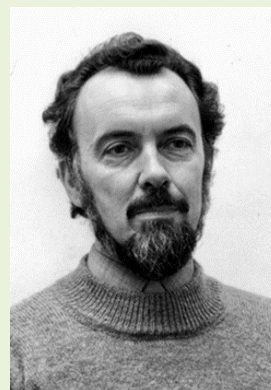
*Scrimshaw from, and for, South Georgia (p 2)*



*The Spanish Flu on South Georgia (p 3-5)*



*Update on Darwin Plus drone wildlife surveys (p 5-6)*



*Geoff Tanner obituary (p 15-16)*

## The South Georgia Association Spring Meeting

Initial plans are currently being made for an event in Cambridge next spring. This will be in collaboration with the Friends of the Scott Polar Research Institute and will probably take place over two days. We expect to incorporate our AGM and a social event, probably including a dinner at a Cambridge College.

## Scrimshaw from, and for, South Georgia

Bob Headland

In 2019 Ken Richard, formerly from British Antarctic Survey in general and Signy Island in particular, found a fascinating example of scrimshaw for sale by an antiquarian dealer. Scrimshaw is whalers' artwork engraved on sperm whale teeth or whale bone. Ken, being fully aware of resin scrimshaw casts (some may be called fakes others are museum replicas), was able to confirm its authenticity.

Its main theme was a whale catcher with the inscription *From South Georgia 1954-55*. The foreground had over a dozen king penguins while icebergs, rocks, much cloud and a whale, with a harpoon pointing in its direction, finished the scene. The tooth appeared to have been previously mounted for display but was now an individual piece. Opinion is that the catcher depicted is *Southern Actor*, which is now preserved, in working condition, at the Norske Hvalfangstmuseet in Sandefjord. The style of the carving is distinct with a technique of infilling the incised sections with a black plastic material, believed to be melted from teeth of combs, rather than the less-enduring, but traditional, lamp-black.

The South Georgia Association Newsletter 18, p 3, of April 2010 has a note, *Scrimshaw Coincidence*, by Lyle Cragie-Halkett who describes another work by the same artist. He was identified as Klaus Oscar Bjørndahl who worked processing whale-oil in Husvik station. He was born on 7 January 1898 in Glemmen and died in Husvik on 27 September 1956 where he lies in the whalers' cemetery. Lyle's paper describes some drawings and other scrimshaw by Klaus with an expert's identification.



(photos South Georgia Museum)

The collections displayed by the whalers' hotel in Sandefjord, *Atlantic Hotel*, have several similar items carved by Klaus, some of which were illustrated in the electronic South Georgia Government Newsletter of June 2013. His work, as a skilled modern scrimshaw artist, is also known from other examples in public and private hands. Like Lyle ten years earlier, Ken 'quickly purchased the item for a reasonable price' while considering the South Georgia Museum as a proper repository.

Sperm whales were barely 3% of the catch near South Georgia during the 1950s. While there was a specialised market for their oil, sperm meat and bone made guano with that of other whales. Their teeth had little commercial value but were 'souvenirs', a proportion of which were used to carve scrimshaw, a whalers' art for many centuries. Others ended up in the detritus of the stations and occasionally appeared as intriguing specimens in eroding shore dumps.



The scrimshaw on display in SG museum (and photo below)  
(photos South Georgia Museum)

*From Jayne Pierce, Curator, South Georgia Museum:*

Sperm whales are Category A on the CITES species list (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) and CITES permits were needed both to export the scrimshaw from the UK and to import it into South Georgia via the Falkland Islands. Jayne Pierce carried the scrimshaw to Grytviken on MV *Pharos SG* in October 2023 and was able to show off the piece to GSGSSI in Stanley en route. It is now on display in the Larsen Room in the museum, alongside other whalers' handcrafts. It is beautiful and a wonderful addition to the collection.

The South Georgia Museum, South Georgia Heritage Trust and GSGSSI thank the South Georgia Association for the donation and it is great to have it back in Grytviken. Thanks also to Ken Richard and Bob Headland who spotted it in an auction house and organised the purchase.



## **The Spanish flu on South Georgia?** **Dag Ingemar Børresen**

The Covid-19 pandemic sparked off my interest for looking into possible impacts of the Spanish Flu pandemic on whaling activities in South Georgia. In the last part of World War I (WWI) whaling at a global scale was very limited compared to the situation before the outbreak of the war in 1914. In 1918 South Georgia and the South Shetland Islands were almost the only operating whaling grounds in the world, and the whale oil was mainly delivered to the UK for production of glycerine for the war industry.

In the period from the establishment of the first whaling station in Grytviken in 1904 until 1918 the island had experienced a few outbreaks of serious typhus and dysentery epidemics with casualties at Grytviken and at Stromness. But, what about the global pandemic known as the Spanish Flu?

From the outbreak in 1918 until 1920 the flu killed approximately 50-100 million people worldwide and was the largest health crisis in modern times. The official story says that the pandemic never reached the Falkland Islands or the whaling stations in South Georgia or South Shetland Islands. Scientific literature on pandemics in the British Colonies state that isolated island communities in the South Atlantic, for instance St Helena, Tristan da Cunha and the Falkland Islands Dependencies were never hit by the deadly flu.

### **Previously unknown reports from station managers**

The official statement keeping this view convincingly alive for the sake of the Falkland Islands Dependencies since 1918, is probably the annual Colonial Report from the Governor in Port Stanley. The 1918 report addressed to the Colonial Office in London said that 'No epidemic of a serious nature has occurred during the year and severe sickness of any kind has been rare'.

I challenge this view in my ongoing research and discuss outbreaks and casualties caused by the Spanish Flu on transports of Norwegian whaling men from Europe to South America and South Georgia/South Shetland Islands, and the flu as a phenomenon in South Georgia. My arguments are heavily based on a handful of previously unknown documents from Norwegian archives describing the developments and outbreaks of a flu in South Georgia in October/November 1918.

These documents consist of reports from station managers, written shortly after the managers' arrival in Norway in May 1919. The background was requests from a medical scientist collecting contemporary documentation on the geographical range of the flu in Norway, including the impact of the flu on Norwegian industrial activities abroad. These reports are as close as you can get to first-hand narratives of outbreaks of the pandemic in South Georgia. Supplementary documentation collected on site in several Norwegian and British archives will also add to a broader view of the circumstances.

I aim to discuss the variety of the outbreaks of the flu on the island, but also to look at the general health situation and the social conditions on the island in 1918-19.

One key aspect was the role of the doctors in South Georgia at the time of the outbreak of the flu. There were just a few of them, but they had lots of character. For instance, the Norwegian doctor Arne Wadel Bang in Leith Harbour in 1918 had served three years as an officer in King Leopold's private Colonial Army in the deep forests of Belgian Congo. Contagious diseases and epidemics were probably not unfamiliar to him, but how did he handle the pandemic in South Georgia?



*Inside the hospital at the British whaling station Prince Olav Harbour. Postcard sent as a New Year's greeting by the Norwegian doctor, Anders Alm Daae, in early December 1925. Source: Odd Galteland, reproduced with permission*

### **How did the influenza reach South Georgia?**

The Spanish Flu was extremely contagious. The general knowledge of viruses at the time was low, and one of the main questions is how the infection was brought to South Georgia. We know for sure that both south- and north-bound transports of Norwegian whaling men travelling the Atlantic Ocean lengthwise in 1918 were badly attacked by the flu in Liverpool. Some became seriously ill in Norway already at the start of the journey, or on the opposite on arrival in their home country. It became especially severe in Liverpool when the second and deadliest wave during the pandemic hit the city in October 1918. In three days in October, eight Norwegian sailors died in hospital by pneumonia caused by the flu. They were part of a group numbering nearly 800 whaling men travelling from Bergen to Aberdeen by ship and then by train to Edinburgh and finally Liverpool.

The embarkations on the Norwegian transport and floating factory ships waiting in the Mersey destined for South Georgia or the South Shetland Islands were delayed for weeks. It is believed that nearly all the Norwegian whaling men were infected by the flu in Liverpool. Some of them succumbed and ended up in Anfield cemetery, the youngest was a deck boy 14 years of age and the oldest 42. Many were hospitalized and, when the whaling fleet finally left Liverpool in a convoy, some were left behind to recover and wait for later transports. Most of the infected whalers probably developed some degree of immunity against the virus. This probably made them protected against or resistant to new exposures of the flu in Montevideo, Buenos Aires, or South Georgia.

One of the transport ships, *Perth* from Larvik, was destined for the land station at New Fortuna Bay/Ocean Harbour in South Georgia and left Liverpool in early November 1918 and arrived at Montevideo in Uruguay one month later. A few days later it crossed the La Plata River for Buenos Aires. The Norwegians were met with hygienic precautions and quarantine, but in Buenos Aires the crew was free to roam the town for days.



*A large blue whale on the flensing platform at New Fortuna Bay (Ocean Harbour). The Norwegian station was in operation for just eleven years (1909-1920). A major part of the labourers at the station were infected by the influenza in 1918. Source: Commander Chr. Christensen's Whaling Museum, Sandefjord, reproduced with permission.*

## South Georgia - an isolated island?

When *Perth* finally arrived in South Georgia on Christmas Eve 1918 the whalers on board had been underway for three months. There is probably no evidence suggesting that transports from Europe brought infected crew or labourers to the whaling grounds. It is easy to think of South Georgia as a remote isolated island far away from the mainland and civilization, and that it would be protected against contagious pandemics. That was not the case during late WWI. Spontaneous strikes and industrial unrest were not uncommon and large groups of labourers and crew left the island on several occasions.

The only way to solve the conflicts was often to transport the dissatisfied strikers to Buenos Aires, pay them off without causing too much trouble and try to find substitute labour among Scandinavian sailors in the docks or hire groups of Russian labourers or of other nationalities. There were also ships arriving from the Cape Verde Islands with groups of African labourers on board. All these transports represented a continuous risk of importing the flu to the island. Even if the passengers looked healthy and were checked by a doctor at arrival there was a risk of setting ashore contagious asymptomatic infected men, a phenomenon not known by medical scientists at the time.

As explained, the largest challenge for the study is the limited number of available and relevant documents. There is a common experience that studies of the Spanish Flu can be difficult due to the lack of contemporary documentation. The communication between managers in South Georgia and the companies or shipowners in Europe was at times very unstable and nearly nothing was written about the influenza outbreaks.

*Dag Ingemar Borresen is a historian and curator at the Commander Chr. Christensen's Whaling Museum, Sandefjord, Norway. [dag.borresen@vestfoldmuseene.no](mailto:dag.borresen@vestfoldmuseene.no)* The study in progress is titled: *No epidemic of a serious nature? The Spanish Flu on South Georgia and in the Antarctic, 1918-19.*

## Update on Darwin Plus drone wildlife project

Nathan Fenney, Jamie Coleman, Phil Hollyman and Adrian Fox (BAS)



A team of two BAS researchers completed the second and final field season of a Darwin Plus project - *Initiating monitoring support for the SGSSI-MPA Research and Monitoring Plan* in October and November 2022.

The aim of the project is to identify key predator populations that can be routinely monitored using a fixed-wing Remotely Piloted Aerial System (RPAS) or drone.

Once the sites have been identified and surveyed the same locations can be revisited to investigate changes in populations over time, to inform future decision making regarding the SGSSI Marine Protected Area. The Darwin Plus project is due to finish at the end of 2023 and has been one of the largest and most logistically complex science projects undertaken on South Georgia in recent years.

The first field season took place between December 2021 to January 2022 and captured image data for 14 albatross, fur seal and penguin sites – it was featured in Newsletter 42, April 2022. The second, October-November 2022, fieldwork campaign focussed on elephant seal populations at a number of key sites around South Georgia.

Nathan Fenney and Jamie Coleman joined the MV *Pharos SG* in mid-October 2022 to travel to South Georgia. Over the next five weeks, with excellent logistic support from the ship and King Edward Point (KEP) boats, and despite spells of poor weather, the team surveyed five key elephant seal sites: Hound Bay; St Andrews Bay; Husvik; Undine Harbour, and Gold Harbour. The KEP area was also covered during equipment testing.

Again, the Sensefly eBee X platforms, operating with Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) permission, proved to be both



*eBee in flight near Grytviken (photo Jamie Coleman)*

highly reliable and capable for undertaking large-scale RPAS-based aerial surveys in South Georgia's challenging and rapidly changing environment. The survey team were able to operate from easier-to-access, distant, landing sites, avoiding direct contact with the colonies.

The eBee's long-range capability enabled coverage of large areas in short weather windows; all of the St Andrews Bay elephant seal beaches and king penguin colony area were covered in only one flight lasting 56 minutes and covering 43 km. The imagery collected from the two survey campaigns, comprising 45 flights at 27 discrete targets, has been fully processed into geospatially-correct image mosaics for each site with about 2.5 cm resolution.

Over summer 2023, work has progressed to count the animal populations from the image mosaics using a combination of automated counting methods and manually counted check data. A final report and research papers detailing the methods used, and the results for king penguin and elephant seal populations are in preparation.

Planning is under way for future projects to build on the baseline data and methods established by this Darwin Plus project.



*Flight track for St Andrews Bay survey flight – note there is cloud on the background satellite image*



*Extract from one of the processed survey images acquired at St Andrews Bay, showing elephant seals and king penguins (Jamie Coleman).*

## Updated South Georgia Biosecurity handbook

The latest version of the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands Biosecurity Handbook is now available online at: <https://www.gov.gs/biosecurity/> The Handbook details the procedures which are in place to help reduce the risk of harmful non-native species and disease entering the Territory, along with the steps in place to detect them and limit their spread should they arrive. Key updates for this year include:

### Updated guidance on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

HPAI has caused the death of high numbers of birds across the globe. In 2022/23 there were no reports of HPAI in the South Atlantic region, however, the confirmed presence of the disease in South America makes it highly probable that it could arrive in South Georgia in the 2023/24 season. This could have serious implications for the Territory's wildlife. (*GSGSSI confirmed the arrival of HPAI at South Georgia in October 2023 - see news update on p. 16*)

The updated guidance outlines the tiered response in place to assess risk and detect the presence of HPAI. Mitigation measures include enhanced biosecurity procedures, signs to be vigilant for, and the steps in place for different groups / activities depending on the response level. If HPAI is suspected at a site, that site may be closed to visitors either temporarily or for the remainder of the season. It is important that all visitors to the Territory familiarise themselves with this guidance and are ready to act should signs of HPAI be detected.

## Updates to passenger audit system

The biosecurity audit is a physical check, undertaken by Government Officers, on all vessels arriving in South Georgia to assess their compliance with biosecurity procedures and the effectiveness of the procedures in place to reduce biosecurity risk.

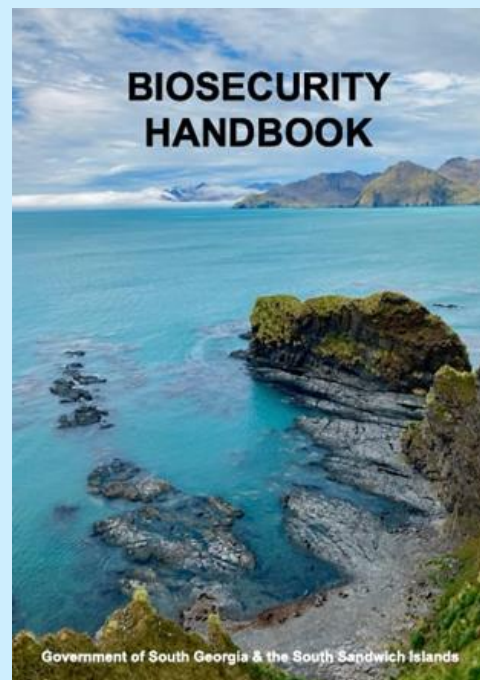
Government Officers conduct a standardised inspection of clothing, footwear and bags to check for biosecurity risks. Following an analysis of the effectiveness of these audits, a more targeted system has been introduced for 2023/24 comprising of 'basic' and 'comprehensive' audits.

Both types of audit follow the same inspection procedure. However, basic audits will involve smaller sample sizes, with thresholds that are not intended to be statistically significant. These audits are designed to be an early warning sign that a more comprehensive audit is required on the next visit. Therefore, they are scaled by vessel size but not directly proportional.

For a comprehensive audit, a statistically significant sample size will be calculated which will be directly proportional to the number of passengers on board. The failure threshold for a comprehensive audit is 95%.

At the start of the season, visiting vessels have a 'comprehensive' passenger audit. Providing vessels achieve a score of at least 95% in a comprehensive audit, for subsequent visits, they can have a 'basic' audit.

These changes ensure that biosecurity standards are upheld, whilst recognising those vessels implementing good systems and compliance. This will speed up the process and allow passengers to disembark faster to enjoy time ashore. *(Text from GSGSSI website)*



*Updated SGSSI Biosecurity handbook.*

*In 2022 South Georgia received 13,824 visitors by ship and yacht*

## GSGSSI Annual report 2022

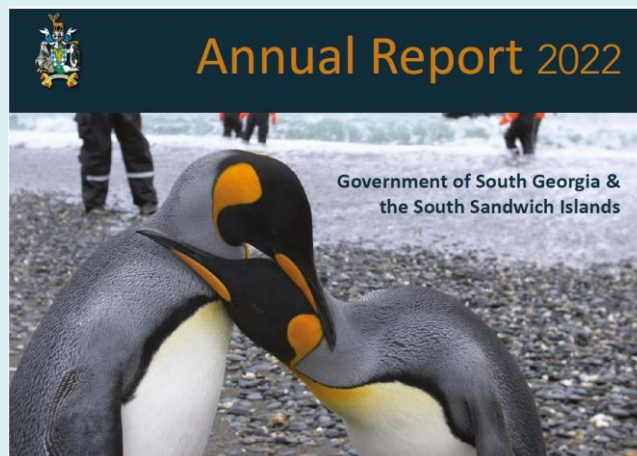
The GSGSSI annual report for 2022 (14 pages) is published and is available to download from the Government website.

The report looks back on significant events during 2022 including: The Centenary of the death of Sir Ernest Shackleton (5 January); 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the liberation of South Georgia from occupying forces in the wider Falklands Conflict (5 April), and the visit of HRH The Princess Royal in November 2022.

It further includes:

Publication of the Implementation Plan for the South Georgia Strategy 'Protect, Sustain and Inspire'; a Financial Report; updates on biosecurity, marine protection upgrade and maintenance work on MV *Pharos SG*; infrastructure developments at King Edward Point and Bird Island, and details of the cautious return of expedition cruise visits under a clear COVID 19 policy.

In September 2022 the Government renewed the agreement with South Georgia Heritage Trust (SGHT) for continued operation of the museum at Grytviken. A multi-disciplinary survey of the abandoned whaling stations commissioned by the Government, in liaison with SGHT, has delivered its consolidated report and this is informing decisions about future whaling station management.



*GSGSSI Annual report, available for download*

*(Summarised from the Annual Report by the editor)*

## Topographic maps of South Georgia

Adrian Fox and Bonnie Pickard, British Antarctic Survey

The editor and colleagues are often asked ‘what are the best maps of South Georgia for visitors?’ This article summarises the most up-to-date available topographic maps of the island.

### Overview maps

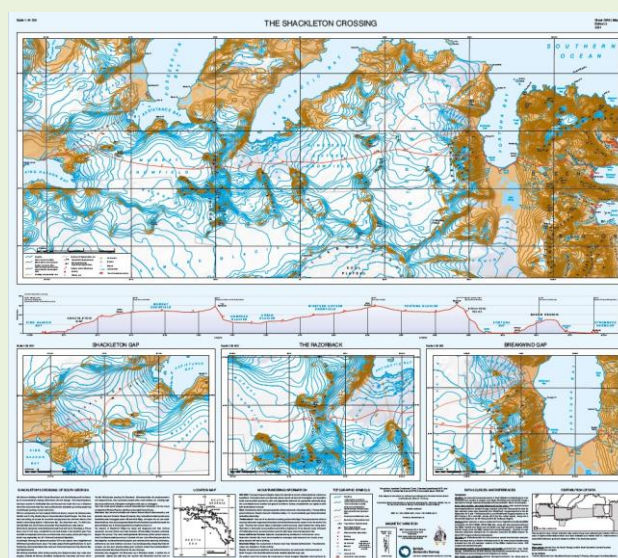
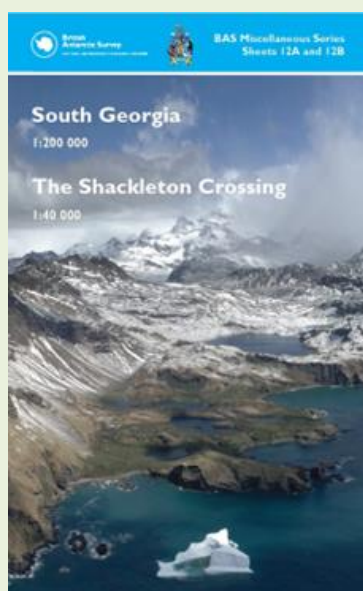
The current definitive overview map of South Georgia is published by British Antarctic Survey as:

**South Georgia and The Shackleton Crossing**, BAS Misc 12A and 12B. 1:200,000 and 1:40,000 scale maps. It is available folded (ISBN 978-0-85665-228-8) and as a flat poster (ISBN 978-0-85665-229-5) and is printed on water-resistant paper.

This double-sided map was first compiled in 2017 in collaboration with GSGSSI and is now on its third edition (2021). It features South Georgia on one side and the Shackleton Crossing route on the reverse. It includes the locations of abandoned whaling stations and background notes about South Georgia and its history, and a brief summary of Shackleton’s crossing. An extract from the South Georgia overview map is shown in the place names feature on page 10.

**Side A:** Shows topographic information, at 1:200,000 scale, including: coastline and offshore rocks; bathymetry; rock exposure and moraine; elevation information such as contours and selected mountain summit heights; place names; scientific research stations and abandoned whaling stations.

**Side B:** Covers the route taken by Sir Ernest Shackleton on the first crossing of South Georgia in 1916 and is repeated by many intrepid explorers today.



*Overview of BAS Misc 12B: The Shackleton Crossing*

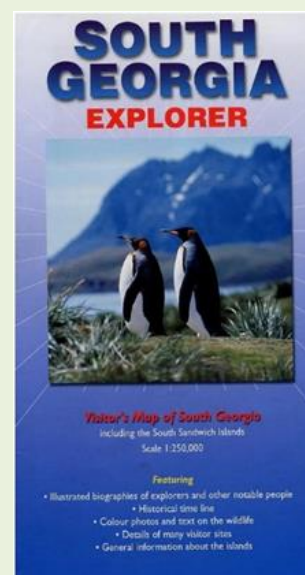
This 1:40,000 scale map has detailed topographic data created from sub-metre resolution satellite imagery, with 1:25,000 scale insets of key areas and mountaineering notes compiled by the Government of South Georgia’s Mountaineering Advisory Panel. It includes the ‘Shackleton Walk’ section often followed by expedition cruise visitors. A cross section of the route is also shown. The map received an Award from the British Cartographic Society in 2018.

**South Georgia Explorer** (2011) is a folded, double-sided, 1:250,000 scale tourist map in the ‘Explorer’ map series published by Ocean Explorer Maps. ISBN: 978-0-95700-2807.

It shows the island’s topography, with descriptions of places of interest, plus extensive text on its history and wildlife.

The main map presents the island at 1:250,000 with generalised cartography showing major peaks and glaciers, mountain ranges, bays and islets, with selected place names. Historic sites, former whaling stations and scientific stations are marked. Another 22 places of special interest, including wildlife breeding sites and geographical features, are highlighted.

The reverse side provides an introduction to the island, with panels on its history, wildlife, and notable people, compiled by conservationist Nigel Sitwell. A time-line highlights key events, from the first sighting of South Georgia in 1675 to 2010, and a small map shows Shackleton’s route to and across South Georgia.





## Detailed maps

The only recent detailed maps of parts of South Georgia are published by BAS in collaboration with GSGSSI as part of the BAS 25 Series of 1:25,000 scale maps, and a BAS 1:7,500 scale map of Bird Island.

**Thatcher Peninsula**, BAS 25 Series, Sheets 4A and 4B, 2010. ISBN 978-0-85665-149-6. This double-sided map features both a topographic and a satellite image map of Thatcher Peninsula, South Georgia. The topographic map (Side A) includes contours at 25 m intervals, moraine, ice, rivers and lakes. It covers: King Edward Point and the Research Station; the abandoned whaling station at Grytviken, and the walking route to Maiviken. Side B shows a Very High Resolution (VHR) satellite image of the peninsula, with selected place names. Local information about cultural and natural history is also provided. The map received an Award from the British Cartographic Society in 2011.

**Busen Region**, BAS 25 Series, Sheets 5A and 5B, 2013. ISBN 978-0-85665-169-4. Another double-sided map featuring a topographic map on Side A and information about the history and environment of the area on Side B.

**Side A** shows contours at 25 m intervals and the locations of ice, rivers and lakes. Man-made features are shown at the disused whaling stations of Leith, Stromness and Husvik.

**Side B** presents information about topics including: The Shackleton Crossing; local climate and geology; and glacial history and geomorphology, compiled by Bob Burton.

**Barff Peninsula**, BAS 25 Series, Sheet 6A, 2015, and **Hound Bay to St Andrews Bay**, BAS 25 Series, Sheet 6B, 2015, are prepared to the same specification as the other 1:25,000 scale maps but are printed in house at BAS.

**Bird Island**, BAS SCISTAMAP Series, Sheet 3, 2019 is a 1:7,500 scale map published as part of a series of maps of BAS Scientific Stations, and again printed in-house at BAS.



*Extract from Busen Region 1:25,000 scale map, BAS Misc 5A*

The commercially-printed BAS maps are listed in the online BAS Map Catalogue: ([https://www.bas.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Map-catalogue-2019\\_A4.pdf](https://www.bas.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Map-catalogue-2019_A4.pdf)). Their underlying digital topographic data is included in and available for download from the South Georgia GIS <https://www.sggis.gov.gs/>

These maps, and the *South Georgia Explorer* map, are sold by Stanfords and NHBS. The BAS maps printed in-house are available from the BAS Mapping and Geographic Information Centre ([magic@bas.ac.uk](mailto:magic@bas.ac.uk))



*A wintry day at the calving front of Heaney Glacier, St Andrews Bay, January 2022.*

## Place names around St Andrews Bay, South Georgia

Elena Field and Adrian Fox, UK Antarctic Place-names Committee

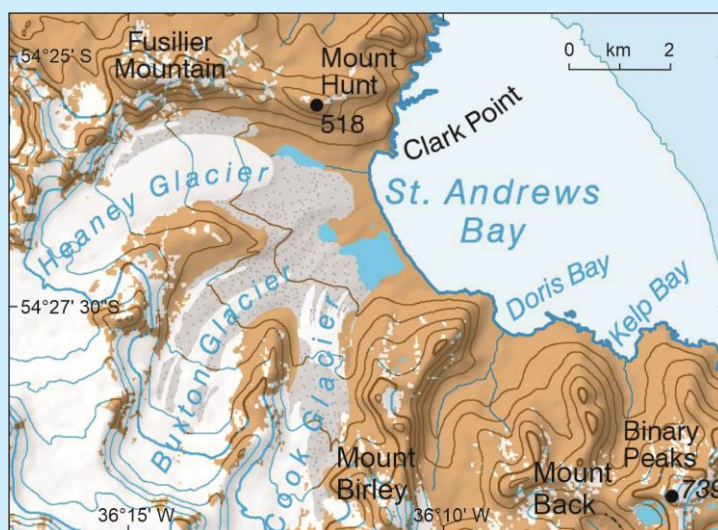
Place names on South Georgia are a fascinating short-hand for the history of exploration, sealing and whaling and science on the island, with the earliest names dating from Cook's first charting of the island in January 1775. This article is the second in a series highlighting the place names of landmarks at the more frequently visited areas of South Georgia.

St Andrews Bay is the site of the largest king penguin colony on South Georgia, is part of long-term studies of penguin populations on the island and is a popular site for expedition tour ship and other visits. The toponyms around St Andrews Bay are a mix of names with no consistent theme.

**St Andrews Bay** itself was probably first sighted by Cook in 1775. It has previously been called *Little Hafen*, *Winter Beaten Harbour*, *Little-Bucht* and *New Fortune Bay* on various charts and publications, but the name St Andrew(s) Bay was established by 1912. Its origin is unknown but is probably after the usage of sealers and whalers.

Three glaciers flow into the bay:

**Heaney Glacier:** was surveyed by the South Georgia Survey, 1951-52, and named after John Heaney (b. 1931), surveyor on the expedition. **Buxton Glacier:** is named after the Buxton family; naturalist and co-founder of the World Wildlife Fund Aubrey Leland Oakes Buxton, Baron Buxton of Alsa (b. 1918) and Pamela Mary, Lady Buxton (d. 1983) (who visited South Georgia in HMS *Endurance* in March 1982), and of their daughter film-maker Hon. Lucinda Catherine Buxton (b.1950). who led a filming expedition in this area in February-April 1982. **Cook Glacier:** was named Cook-Gletscher by the German International Polar Year Expedition (GIPYE) 1882-83, after Capt. James Cook, RN (1728-79).



Based on an extract from *British Antarctic Survey, 2021. South Georgia and The Shackleton Crossing, 1:200 000 and 1:40 000 scale, BAS (Misc 12).*

To the north of the bay, **Fusilier Mountain** (821 m) commemorates the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, garrisoned at Grytviken in 1988, the year of the regiment's tercentenary. **Mount Hunt** (518 m) is named after Sir Rex Hunt, Governor of the Falkland Islands and Dependencies from 1980 to 1985 and the first Commissioner of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands. Sir Rex visited St Andrews Bay in early 1982, crash landing on the beach in a Wasp helicopter from HMS *Endurance*.

**Clark Point** is named after Gerald Stanley Clark, MBE (1927-1999), founder of the Totorore Expedition, a 3-year ornithological expedition to southern Chile and South Georgia 1983-86; Master of the sloop *Totorore* from which the first island-wide censuses of wandering albatross and king penguins on South Georgia were carried out during the winters of 1984 and 1985.

To the south, **Mount Burley** and **Mount Back** are named from the Combined Services Expedition to South Georgia (1964-65). The expedition was led by Cdr Malcolm Keith Burley, RN (b. 1927), and Squadron Leader Anthony H. Back, RAF (b. 1930), was assistant surveyor on the expedition. The descriptive name **Binary Peaks** is translated from the name *Doppelspitze* (double peaks) applied by the GIPYE.

Within St Andrews Bay, **Kelp Cove** was named descriptively in the whaling era. The origin of the name **Doris Bay** is unknown but was in use before 1929.

The Antarctic Place-names Committee advises the Commissioner of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands on matters relating to place-naming on South Georgia, and if appropriate, endorsement of place names rests with the Commissioner. More information about South Georgia place names and an online gazetteer and web-map can be found at: <https://apc.antarctica.ac.uk/sgssi/>

## South Georgia Museum Annual Report 2022-23

A main objective for the year was a return to full museum operations following Covid disruption, including opening the museum and SGHT shop, delivering on-board presentations and providing tours of the whaling station.

During the 2022-23 austral summer the museum received 103 ship visits, welcomed 13,562 visitors, gave 131 whaling station tours, and there were four Grytviken weddings.

Feedback on the museum and whaling station tours from over 50 responses was rated 77% 'excellent' and 23% 'good'.



### Exhibitions, displays and artefacts

Working in collaboration with the Government of South Georgia, we were delighted to open the Main Store in Grytviken to visitors (See Newsletter 44), and the museum also installed a new welcome panel.

New exhibits included books of telegrams from Leith Harbour in the 1950s, which give a fascinating glimpse into life on the station, and other artefacts either donated or found at the whaling stations.

As part of the centenary of Shackleton's death, the museum has on loan the crow's nest barrel from the *Quest* – Shackleton's final expedition ship – from the museum at All Hallows by the Tower, a church in London.

Several items were lent to the Scottish Maritime Museum as part of an exhibition on Scotland's significant involvement with the commercial whaling industry on South Georgia and in Antarctica in the 20th Century.

A helicopter pilot's helmet from the rat eradication campaign was lent to the *Ice! Exploring the far South* exhibition at the Cook Museum in Whitby. This exhibition marks the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Captain James Cook's crossing of the Antarctic Circle and looks at current ideas surrounding the environment and conservation on South Georgia and in Antarctica.

### Collections care and management

As well as ongoing maintenance of the collections and outdoor exhibits, audits of all of our collection stores and several galleries were completed. This information will be used to ensure our online object database is accurate and up-to-date.

*(Summarised from the Museum Annual Report by the editor)*

*From Jayne Pierce, Curator:*

If any Association members have any items of interest languishing in lofts or cupboards, please consider donating to the South Georgia Museum. I'm also interested in digital copies of photographs. Having images through the ages is helping me to set up an archive to be able to document the history of South Georgia through recent changes. Although human history on the island is relatively short, a lot has happened! This also ties in with the National Lottery funded project to create a digital Whalers' Memory Bank.



*One of 131 whaling station tours given by museum staff*



*Crow's nest barrel from the Quest*



*Photo from the collection, on loan to Scottish Maritime Museum*

*(Photos from the SG museum Annual Report)*

## South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands stamp issue

In September 2023, GSGSSI released a set of stamps to commemorate the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III on 6 May 2023.

They are part of a coordinating suite of stamps issued on behalf of: South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands; Ascension Island; Bahamas; British Antarctic Territory; Falkland Islands, and Tristan da Cunha.

**70p** King Charles III and Queen Camilla ride in the Diamond Jubilee State Coach past the Palace of Westminster on the way to their Coronation ceremony.

**80p** King Charles III wearing the Imperial State Crown, carrying the Sovereign's Orb and Sceptre leaves Westminster Abbey after the Coronation Ceremony.

**£1.15** The King and Queen travel in the Gold State Coach from Westminster Abbey to Buckingham Palace following the Coronation ceremony.

**£1.25** The King and Queen on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, following the Coronation.

**£3** (Souvenir Sheet) King Charles III is crowned with St Edward's Crown during his Coronation ceremony in Westminster Abbey.

More information on the stamps can be found at:

[www.pobjoystamps.com](http://www.pobjoystamps.com) or <https://www.falklandstamps.com>



*Images: British Pobjoy Mint Ltd*

*Thanks to Juliet Warner*

## THE SOUTH GEORGIA ASSOCIATION MINUTES OF THE NINETEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

7 pm, 28 April 2023

The Royal Over-Seas League, London

The meeting was attended by 40 SGA members and guests, including Committee members: David Tatham (President), David Drewry (Chair), David Rootes (Treasurer), John Mills (Membership Secretary), Paul Rodhouse (Events), Pat Lurcock (Website), Bill Block (Initiative Fund), Martin Collins (Newsletter Editor), Bob Headland, Sarah Lurcock, Bruce Mair, Alexandra Shackleton, and Fran Prince (Secretary).

### 1 WELCOME

David Drewry, Chairman welcomed all SGA friends and colleagues to the Spring Meeting, particularly Jane Rumble and Chris Cox, FCDO, Alison Neil SGHT, Allison Kean GSGSSI. SGA were delighted to welcome everyone back to the Royal Over-Seas League and to the first live AGM since 2019.

### 2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman explained the last AGM in 2021 had been on-line via Zoom, and had been very successful with the Commissioner Nigel Philips present, and updates from SGHT and BAS. The AGM in 2022 was cancelled as bookings did not reach the minimum required. The Minutes from the 2021 AGM were approved, proposed by Bob Headland and seconded by Pat Lurcock.

### **3 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

David Drewry reported on the last year's activities of SGA. On-line events continued to be successful with audiences in the hundreds showing a great interest in South Georgia. Four were presented over the year, and are still available to watch again via the SGA website:

August 2021: The Shackleton Crossing by a Repeat Offender by Stephen Venables and Bob Burton

November 2021: Saving Ocean Wanderers by Yasuko Suzuki and Steph Prince

February 2022: Whaling from South Georgia by John Alexander

April 2022: South Georgia Then and Now (1982-2022) by Bob Headland, Pat Lurcock and Jamie Coleman

Thanks were given to Pat Lurcock, Sarah Greenwood, Paul Rodhouse, Fran Prince and the presenters.

In March SGA and Friends of SPRI held a successful event in Cambridge on the discovery of HMS *Endurance*, Endurance22.

The event was very popular with over 400 attending.

SGA will continue with on-line and hybrid events, the next will be on the history of Mapping Survey of South Georgia.

Further live events are being discussed, with possible venues at Whitby to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Captain Cook's discovery of South Georgia; The Linnean Society; Gilbert White House and Oates Museum. Paul Rodhouse was gratefully acknowledged for managing events.

In January 2022 we suffered the very sad loss of both John Owen and Bob Burton. Both had served on the committee for many years, Bob since the inception of SGA in 2001. We are very grateful to David Rootes who stepped in to manage the Treasurer role, with considerable efforts with the bank, and liaising with Jane Owen.

Thanks were given to Martin Collins and Adrian Fox for editing the newsletter, Martin will be handing this over to Adrian;

Pat Lurcock for keeping the website up to date; and Sarah Greenwood for managing Facebook that has over 3500 followers

John Mills has been very adept as Membership Secretary. There are currently 212 members with 47 to renew. New members joined SGA from attending the on-line events.

Bill Block has been looking after the Initiative Fund. Awards have been made to a Seabird Bycatch project in Japan; the Archaeology project on South Georgia; a Homeward Bound excursion. The most recent is to 'Beyond South Georgia' marketing project run by James Burke to bring the Shackleton story to the stage. SGA funding will be for workshops, stage designer, and graphic designer towards a full stage production.

SGA contributed financially to the Shackleton Exhibition at the RGS in 2022.

SGA has contributed ideas for a proposed Shackleton memorial in Westminster Abbey, invited by Tim Winter.

SGA continues a good liaison with GSGSSI, with video meetings with the Commissioner and CEO, has contributed to Sustain Protect Inspire consultation, and looks forward to the Stakeholder meeting in July.

### **4 TREASURER'S REPORT**

David Rootes explained the process since taking over as Treasurer. Jane Owen had been very helpful with this. There had been big problems with the bank and it had taken 9 months to gain full access to the accounts. It is still difficult to track payments on PayPal. Accounts can be drawn up to December 2022, and Steph Prince will audit these. There are 212 paid up members, and 47 may have actually paid and not yet acknowledged, David apologised if that is the case.

An accounts summary had been distributed: in January 2022 standing at £29457, and now £29623.

This includes the Campbell legacy of £6,675 and the General Reserve £3,000 leaving £19,228 available funds.

David asked for ideas for use of SGA funding. Bill Block encouraged applications for the Initiative Fund.

### **5 REPORT FROM COMMISSIONER ALISON BLAKE**

Allison Kean, GSGSSI Visitor Manager read the address from the Commissioner to the meeting. Topics included a second review of Marine Protected Areas, two areas off South Georgia and SSSI; a symposium in UK in June; Legislative framework available on GSGSSI website; Biosecurity - a new handbook now available; new round of Darwin Plus funding; marine protection supported by the UK Blue Belt Programme.

### **6 REPORT FROM SOUTH GEORGIA HERITAGE TRUST, ALISON NEIL CEO**

Alison reported on recent activity at SGHT. During Covid SGHT produced an education project and 8000 schools in UK and Overseas Territories received the pack. Thanks were given to Sarah Lurcock who is now Communications Manager and has handed over the South Georgia Director role to Deirdre Mitchell.

Work on the Main Store at Grytviken has been completed and opened this season to visitors, allowing an insight into the days of whaling in the 1960s. The centenary of Shackleton's *Quest* expedition was marked with an online exhibition from the Museum. The Endurance22 event was also a highlight.

Ongoing now are outreach projects with Jayne Pierce planning a Whalers' Memory Bank as a portal for whalers and families to describe what life was like at South Georgia. The Big Green Match fund for SGHT Artistic Commission raised £20,000 and thanks were given to everyone who contributed. The art installation will celebrate the return of the whale and tell the success story of South Georgia.

A survey was completed in November 2022 of Stromness villa and whaling stations clean-up with GSGSSI to remove oil, asbestos and debris.

Alison thanked SGA for the invitation to the AGM, and for keeping the organisation going.

## 7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Bruce Mair asked whether there is a date yet for an autumn meeting?

A. This is not fixed yet but in progress.

The Chairman thanked all the committee, speakers and SGA members for attending

## 8 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

The Committee stood aside for the President of the Association, David Tatham, to take the Chair. The re-election of the committee was proposed by Philippa Foster Back and seconded by Alison Neil. The meeting voted in favour for all to be re-elected:

Chairman:	David Drewry
Secretary:	Fran Prince
Treasurer:	David Rootes
Membership Secretary:	John Mills
Newsletter editor:	Adrian Fox
Events:	Paul Rodhouse
Initiative Funding:	Bill Block
Website:	Pat Lurcock
Members:	Martin Collins, Dave Fletcher, Sarah Greenwood, Bob Headland Sarah Lurcock, Bruce Mair, Alexandra Shackleton
Corresponding Members:	Jan Cheek (Stanley), Deirdre Mitchell (KEP)

## PRESENTATION OF MORAG CAMPBELL MEDALS

This was the first in-person AGM since 2019, so we were able to present two MHC Medals

The President David Tatham presented the medal for **2020 to John Caradac (Crag) Jones** awarded 'for his contributions to fisheries management and scientific studies, and for championing adventurous travel, exploration and mountaineering on South Georgia'.

And for **2021 to Robert (Bob) Keith Headland** awarded 'for outstanding and sustained contributions to the history and knowledge of South Georgia and to extending the wider appreciation of the island'.

## PRESENTATION OF SCRIMSHAW TO SOUTH GEORGIA MUSEUM, GRYTVIKEN

SGA was able to purchase a scrimshaw depicting the whale catcher *Southern Actor* at South Georgia 1954-55 from Ken Richard. We were fortunate that Jayne Pierce, Curator of the South Georgia Museum was present at the meeting and Bob Headland presented her with the scrimshaw to take back to South Georgia. (See article on page 2 of this newsletter)

The Meeting ended with an engaging and informative talk by Martin Collins on 'Winter Surveys at South Georgia'.

*Fran Prince, Secretary, 5 May 2023*

## South Georgia Association News

### Morag Husband Campbell Medal 2024

The South Georgia Association is seeking nominations for the award of the Morag Husband Campbell Medal for 2024.

The medal (right), which was made possible by a generous bequest from Morag, who was a long-standing supporter of the Association, is awarded to individuals who have contributed significantly to the understanding, appreciation and promotion of South Georgia.

Full details and the nomination form are available on the SGA website: (<https://southgeorgiaassociation.org/morag-husband-campbell-medal-2024-call-for-nominations/>) and completed forms should be sent to the SGA Secretary by 29 February 2024.



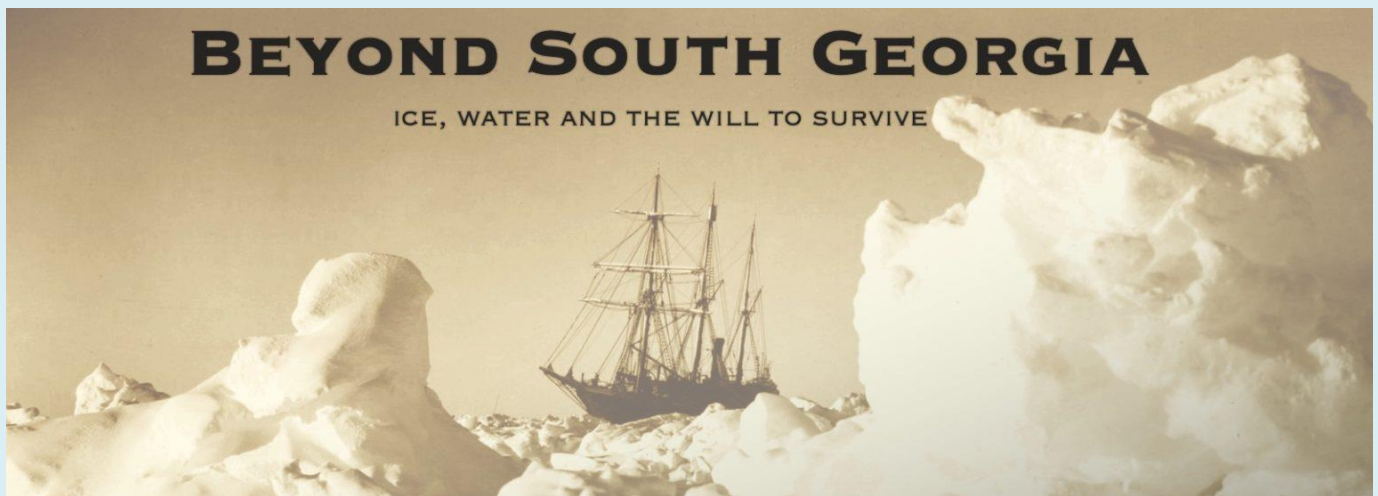
### Initiative Fund Award

The South Georgia Association awards grants from its Initiative Fund for projects which stimulate awareness of, and interest in, South Georgia. The recent awards were for a Seabird By-catch Outreach project in Japan, a Sealing Archaeology project on South Georgia and a grant to enable Participation in a Homeward Bound expedition.

This year the Association has awarded a grant to James Burke and colleagues for a project entitled 'Beyond South Georgia' the aims of which are the production of marketing materials to promote the story of Shackleton's incredible journey from Antarctica to South Georgia and the subsequent rescue of his expedition from Elephant Island. The ultimate aim is to bring this story, and the people and the environments in it, to the stage.

The project will involve a series of workshops to experiment with applying sound and movement to a text in order to generate the artistic ideas to captivate audiences from the stage. Using a videographer to film the workshops, a stage designer to create concept art and a graphic designer to knit it into a cohesive marketing image for moving towards a full stage production. The South Georgia Association is very proud to support such an unusual and worthwhile project.

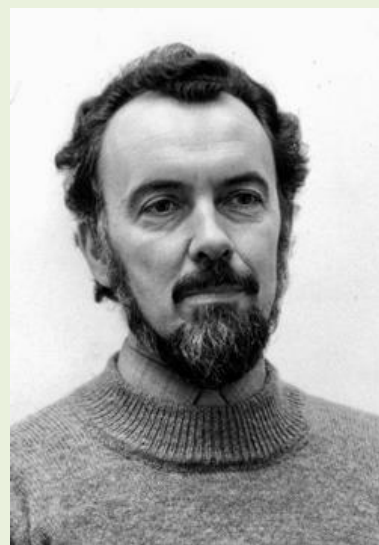
Further details on the SGA Initiative Fund and for making an application can be found on the website (<https://southgeorgiaassociation.org/>). Applications can be made at any time and awards are normally for a maximum of £1,000 per project.



### Peter William Geoffrey Tanner (1938-2023)

It is with regret that I report on the passing of Peter William Geoffrey (Geoff) Tanner earlier this year. He played a significant role in completing the geological mapping of South Georgia in the 1970s.

Geoff was a graduate of Sheffield University in the 1960s and moved to Imperial College London to work on his doctorate. His thesis, entitled "Structural and Metamorphic history of the Kinloch Hourn area, Inverness-shire" was submitted in 1965, and established his specialisation in structural geology. Thereafter, at the University of Leeds, he worked on the Precambrian of Connemara, and in the early 1970s on the structural setting of ore bodies in the Rwenzori of Uganda. Complex geology in complex field areas!



*Geoff Tanner (photo, Telix Tanner, The Geological Society website)*

He joined the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) in 1973 as a Principal Scientific Officer (PSO) with the Earth Sciences Unit (Birmingham University) and in 1976 transferred to Earth Science Division (BAS Cambridge). He was responsible for coordinating the final geological mapping programmes of South Georgia, and management of BAS geologists tasked previously to do so, both in the United Kingdom and in the field.

He conducted field work from King Edward Point (Base M), and along the southwestern coastline during the 1973-74 and 1975-76 austral summers respectively. His team of geologists included Roger Clayton, David Macdonald, Bruce Mair, Rory Mortimore, Tim Pettigrew, Phil Stone and Bryan Storey. Under Geoff's leadership, their field work and research, was published in a series of BAS Scientific Reports, BAS Bulletins and external geological publications. Geoff and his team finally completed the first comprehensive geological mapping of South Georgia, established the ages of the various stratigraphic and lithological units, and placed South Georgia in its regional context within the Scotia Arc and in relationship to the Antarctic Peninsula and the Southern Andes.

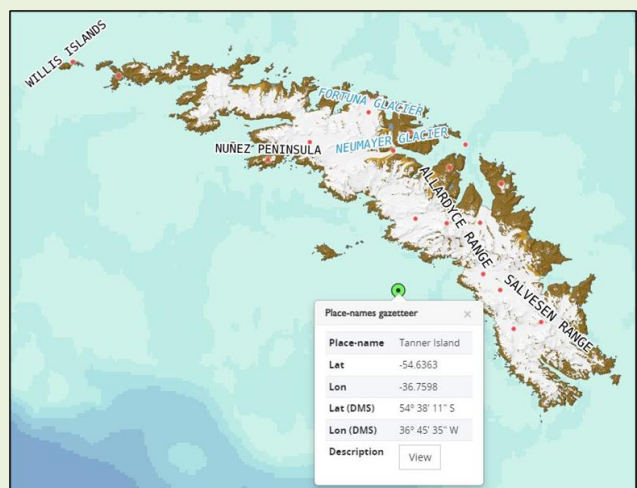
Geoff left BAS in 1979 and joined the Geology Department of Glasgow University, and subsequently became an Honorary Research Fellow in 1990. He suffered from Parkinson's Disease in later life but nevertheless maintained his formidable reputation as an authority on the structural geology of the Scottish Highlands. In recognition, he was awarded the Clough Medal by the Edinburgh Geological Society in 2008. Geoff leaves his wife, Judith, a daughter and a son.

*Dr Bruce F Mair, 28 September 2023.*

*(With input from Alexandra Tataran, Archivist and Records Officer, British Antarctic Survey)*



*Geoff abseiling in the peak district on pre-deployment crevasse rescue training with BAS*



*Geoff is commemorated on South Georgia by **Tanner Island**. The APC Gazetteer states "It is the largest and westernmost of Pickersgill Islands, rising to 145 m, [and] was named after Peter William Geoffrey Tanner (b. 1938), BAS geologist, who worked on the island, 1975-76 (APC, 1979, p. 3).*

## **Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) confirmed on Bird Island, South Georgia**

On 23 October 2023, GSGSSI confirmed the presence of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in brown skua populations on Bird Island, South Georgia. These are the first confirmed cases of HPAI in the Antarctic region.

The primary means of spread of HPAI is through natural pathways and it is likely from birds returning from their migration to the South American continent where the disease is widespread. On South Georgia, GSGSSI has a tiered response in place to monitor and manage the outbreak (see Update on Biosecurity Handbook, p.6).

GSGSSI and BAS continue to work together to monitor the spread of the disease and its impact on the Territory's wildlife. More details are available on the GSGSSI website.

**Editor's Note:** Thanks to the contributors to this edition, notably: Bob Headland, Jayne Pierce, Dag Ingemar Børresen, Nathan Fenney, Jamie Coleman, Bonnie Pickard, Elena Field, Juliet Warner, Bill Block, Fran Prince and Bruce Mair.

The South Georgia Association newsletter is produced twice a year, in April and November. Contributions should be submitted, at least one month before publication, to the editor: Adrian Fox ([ajfo@exchange.nerc.ac.uk](mailto:ajfo@exchange.nerc.ac.uk))