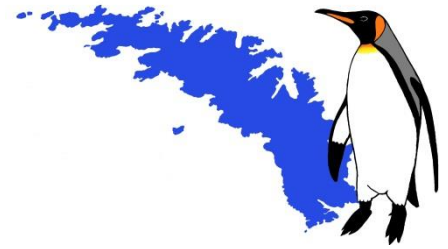


South Georgia Association Newsletter

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The Spring Meeting & AGM will be on April 20, 2018



The cemetery at Ocean Harbour showing recently replaced crosses (Photo by Pat Lurcock).

Editor's Note: At the suggestion of some members, the Newsletter has now been laid out in a single column, as in a book. It has been pointed out that text in two columns is more difficult to read on a PC screen because of the need to be continually scrolling down and up. I hope this will fit nicely on small screens!

The Sixteenth Annual General Meeting, 29 April 2017

Held at the Royal Over-Seas League, London.

The meeting was attended by 50 members, including the following members of the Committee: David Tatham (President), David Drewry (Chair), John Owen (Treasurer), John Mills (Membership Secretary), Robert Burton (Newsletter Editor), Paul Rodhouse (Events), Alexandra Shackleton, Bob Headland, David Rootes and Fran Prince (Secretary).

David Drewry welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially James Jansen, the Chief Executive Officer of GSGSSI; Philippa Foster Back, Chairman of SGHT; Alison Neil CEO SGHT, Kjell Tokstad from Øyas Venner; and two former Commissioners David Tatham and Richard Ralph.

Apologies for absence were received from 17 members, including committee members Sarah Greenwood, Bill Block, Ron Lewis-Smith. Apologies were also received from the Commissioner, Colin Roberts.

The minutes of the Fifteenth AGM held on 27 April 2016 were approved as a true record of the meeting (proposed by Jonathan Barker and seconded by John Mills) and were signed by the Chair. There were no matters arising that were not covered in other Agenda items.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman welcomed all SGA friends and colleagues to the Spring meeting and AGM.

SGA events over the last year include

a) An event at the Natural History Museum, with interesting talks, museum specimens made available, and afterwards dinner at Carluccios. Paul Rodhouse was thanked for organising the event.

b) SGA was co-sponsor of the Dick Laws Retrospective art exhibition that was on display at the Scott Polar Research Institute in March

c) The Legacy from Miss Morag Husband Campbell. The committee has deliberated on how to use this legacy and has decided to strike a SGA Morag Husband Campbell Medal to be awarded for significant contributions to South Georgia in all fields – scientific, artistic, administrative, media, adventurous travel. Worthy candidates may be proposed, and the medal will be awarded at the AGM. The Medal will jointly celebrate South Georgia and commemorate Morag Husband Campbell.

d) The GSGSSI Stakeholder meeting in September was



It's only water!

attended by Bob Headland and Bob Burton.

e) Biosecurity following the Habitat Restoration Project to sustain rat-free status. It is unclear what measures GSGSSI will take to maintain this status - how will shipping be patrolled, and vessels inspected going into Grytviken and King Edward Point? SGA had written a strong letter to the Commissioner and received a somewhat anodyne reply. The Chairman noted that an important role of the SGA is lobbying for important SG interests.

f) The April Newsletter has been issued, and thanks were given to Bob Burton for continuing this outstanding publication. Please send material to Bob for future editions.

Bob is not able to continue this task for much longer and the committee is looking for someone to work alongside Bob and to eventually take over the newsletter. If interested please contact Bob directly.

g) Initiative Funding - please go to website for information on applying

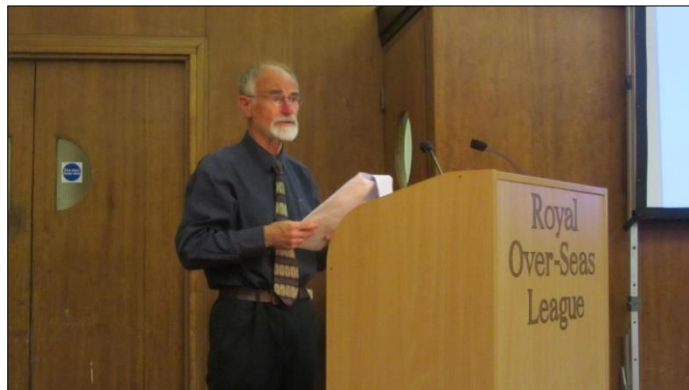
h) Communications - SGA has a website and Facebook page. The website is developing, courtesy of Andy Wood. A webmaster is needed and anyone with website experience interested in undertaking this please contact David Drewry directly.

i) Future Events:

1) A meeting is planned for 10 November 2017 at BAS. This is being organised by Paul Rodhouse, with 10 presentations given by young research scientists on new science. This will take place at the freshly commissioned 'Aurora' conference centre at British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge. There will be an art exhibition by Bruce Pearson, and photographic exhibition by David Tipling; drinks and supper at BAS. Information will be on the website, and members will be notified by email.

2) The Spring meeting 2018 will take place as usual.

3) A summer event in June 2018 is being planned, with a Reception and Dinner in London.



John Owen presents a healthy financial situation.

Treasurer's Report

John Owen, the Treasurer, summarised the SGA finances for the meeting: there is currently £20,000 in the account, plus the £10,000 legacy. Members' subscriptions cover the costs of the newsletter and the AGM; and costs of events tend to break even. No increase in subscription was suggested.

James Jansen read the message from the Commissioner:

Greetings to the South Georgia Association!

I am coming to the end of my time as Commissioner for SGSSI. It's been a great privilege to lead the Government of this extraordinary Territory for the past three years. I have been supported by a great team of committed and expert colleagues in Government and by our growing community of partners around the world. I have welcomed the engagement of the South Georgia Association and hope to participate in the Association's work when I'm back in the UK.

Thanks to all of you and best wishes for your AGM.

Colin Roberts, HM Commissioner, 28 April 2017

James Jansen also spoke about Biosecurity measures at SG:

There have been 257 updated biosecurity checks on freight to South Georgia. They have been working closely with BAS to develop biosecurity measures at KEP, and for the redevelopment of the wharf in 2020/21.

GSGSSI is working with SGHT on the rat monitoring programme. Rodent detector dogs will be used in February – April 2018. (see page 5)

There is a 5-year invasive plant eradication programme until 2020 to tackle weeds that were brought in by the whaling industry.

GSGSSI shares SGA's concern with biosecurity which is a priority for them.

Other developments include:

Regulating and monitoring the 9000 visitors to South Georgia.

A review of guidelines for medical care on cruise ships.

Heritage projects include a longer term Management Plan for Grytviken, which includes work on the church windows, restoration of the Nybrakka accommodation block, restoring safe access to cemeteries for visitors; and commissioning a team to review waste oil in the whaling stations.

The toothfish fishery has been recertified, and there are now observers on all fishing vessels.

The Marine Protected Area Review is being examined to assess its performance and determine what is needed to update it. The Legislative Review will include Customs Policy.

GSGSSI is in a strong financial position, with one year's funding in reserve.

Staff Changes - Richard McKee and Pat Lurcock will be leaving after long service (25 years in Pat's case). James gave them credit for all the work they have achieved for South Georgia.

James then took questions from the floor:

Question: What is the GSGSSI view on capping visitor numbers?

A: Visitor numbers are discussed with IAATO. They examine the impact at visitor landing sites, and look for possible environmental degradation. If there is no impact, then there is no suggestion of a limit. There is still a need to collect evidence.

Question (Tim Gunn): Any comparison with visitors at Svalbard? A: Yes, there is collaboration with the Norwegians on this subject.

Question (Paul Rodhouse): Any development with Frederick Paulsen's and SAERI's projected research station at Grytviken?

A: GSGSSI has yet to see details of proposal.

Question (David Drewry) When will this be made public? SG is not for private individuals. There is a worry that any infrastructure means more ship arrivals, increasing the possibility of rat re-introduction.

A: Government will do their best to ensure that legislation and practice are effective in dealing with this problem.

Question: What are the GSGSSI views on the movement of *Dias/Viola*?

A: Government has agreed in principle for her to be moved. A survey of the vessel is taking place in October, so awaiting results. Then fund-raising will be made with the aim of returning *Viola* to Hull for the centenary of the end of WWI.

James Jansen was thanked for bringing the Commissioner's message to the meeting and for the GSGSSI update. SGA values this contribution.

Reports from Øyas Venner and the South Georgia Heritage Trust

Kjell Tokstad, Chair of Øyas Venner since 2000, is now standing down but will remain as their international contact, particularly for the families of the 137 Norwegians buried on South Georgia. Øyas Venner takes care of whaling history and preserving cemeteries with Norwegian burials. The new chairman is Olav Helge.

A celebration cruise to South Georgia is planned with Hurtigruten in 2020.

Alison Neil, CEO of SGHT, described 'Life after Rats'. The eradication is now finished and SGHT will be monitoring phase 2 and 3 areas in spring 2018 from *Hans Hansson* and other boats. They will use sniffer dogs to check extensively for the presence of any rats. At present the project is looking successful with breeding populations of some birds increasing.

SGHT is concerned that there should be no return of rats and mice, and supports GSGSSI's plans for biosecurity.

In Phase 1 area (cleared in 2011) there is now concern about the new infrastructure required at KEP to prevent invasive species getting ashore when the new RRS *Sir David Attenborough* starts operation.

SGHT is encouraging other organisations around the world to undertake similar eradication projects and clear islands of rodents. The third Island Invasives Conference will take place in July in Dundee hosted by SGHT, with 200 delegates already booked. Tony Martin will be chairing the conference and is giving a free public lecture on Monday 10 July.

SGHT appreciates the partnership with SGA.

David Drewry thanked Alison and Kjell for their reports; and thanked all the committee for their work with SGA.

The sad death of Steve Norris was noted. Steve had been an electrician at Halley and Rothera and on *Bransfield*. He was a great supporter of SGA and had planned to be at the AGM tonight. Steve's son Chris Norris was welcomed to the meeting.

Election of committee members and officers

The Committee stood aside for the President of the Association, David Tatham, to take the Chair. David thanked members for attending and thanked David Drewry for being a dynamic and forward-looking Chairman, and the committee for their work on behalf of the SGA over the past year. The re-election of the committee was proposed by Martin Collins and seconded by Keith Holmes. The meeting voted in favour of all to be re-elected.

Chairman: David Drewry

Secretary: Fran Prince

Treasurer: John Owen

Membership Secretary: John Mills

Newsletter Editor: Bob Burton

Members: Bob Headland, Sarah Greenwood, Dave Fletcher, David Rootes, Alexandra Shackleton, Ron Lewis-Smith, Bill Block, Paul Rodhouse

Corresponding Members: Jan Cheek (Stanley), Sarah Lurcock (KEP)

Any other business

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 7.50pm and was followed by a lecture by Dr David Vaughan OBE. *Recent science highlights from British Antarctic Survey - Antarctica, sub-Antarctic, polar and beyond.*

Fran Prince, Secretary, 8 May 2017

Nigel Phillips, the New Commissioner

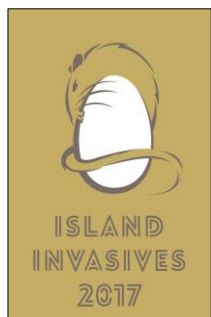
Nigel Phillips CBE has succeeded Colin Roberts as Commissioner. Mr Phillips served in the RAF, rising to Air Commodore, and recently was Deputy Military Representative at the UK Permanent Representation to the European Union in Brussels.

In his first address in the Falkland Islands, Mr Phillips said: *Speaking of beautiful places, it is appropriate that I record what a privilege it will be to be appointed Her Majesty's Commissioner for South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands. Encompassing as it does the final resting place of one of our greatest explorers and leaders, Sir Ernest Shackleton, it is a region of significant historical interest. It is also hugely important scientifically. I am proud as a British citizen that the region is recognised as being managed in accordance with the highest possible standards. I look forward to working with the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands in continuing this noble legacy.*



Mr Phillips is sworn in as Commissioner.

Island Invasives Conference, Dundee. 2017



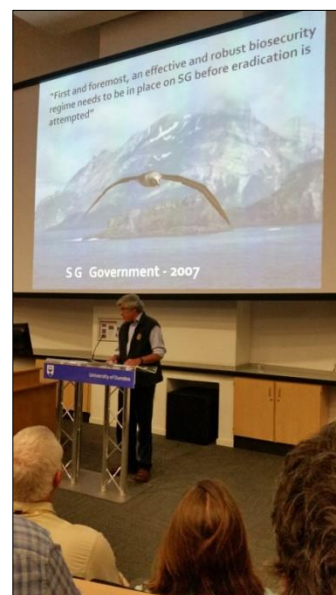
Having conducted the world's largest rodent eradication, the South Georgia Heritage Trust wanted to encourage others around the world to tackle their own problems of introduced species on islands. One way was to co-host the Island Invasives Conference with the University of Dundee. This was the third such conference and the first in the northern hemisphere. The previous two were held in Auckland, New Zealand in 2001 and 2010.

The week-long conference attracted nearly 300 delegates from 44 nations and got off to a good start at the Sunday night Icebreaker event at the Discovery Centre, hosted by the Lord Provost of Dundee Ian Borthwick. Here links started to be forged between the many and diverse participants, links that may be key to the success of eradications elsewhere.

The conference was officially opened on Monday July 10th by HRH The Princess Royal, Patron of the South Georgia Heritage Trust. The following five days saw 15 minute presentations given in 19 different sessions, often using two lecture halls simultaneously. As well as 96 talks, there were also workshops and 90 posters through which delegates shared information about techniques, challenges, successes and failures of eradication, and about invasive species from goats to plants and insects. South Georgia rodent and plant eradications were covered in various talks, as were eradication attempts in the Falkland Islands. There were several well-known faces from South Georgia, including Sally Poncet, Ken Passfield, Brad Myer (Indigena), Peter Garden (helicopter pilot), Keith Springer (who is now working on mouse eradication on Gough Island) and Patrick Lurcock.

Lord Gardiner, Under Secretary of State for Rural Affairs and Biosecurity, attended the first day and spoke before the public lecture by Project Leader Tony Martin on eradication of invasive rodents on South Georgia. Lord Gardiner said, 'We are helping our overseas territories protect their precious plants and wildlife and the UK will keep investing and working with the international community and other partners to defend biodiversity at home and abroad.'

The middle day, Wednesday, offered attendees an opportunity to enjoy the Dundee area on guided tours, but many delegates eschewed that in favour of more meetings and workshops. That evening though, the highlight was a superbly hosted event at Glamis Castle. A piper welcomed the guests who were then able to wander around the castle, including the roof, which had never before been opened to the public, to enjoy the evening sky. This was followed by a ceilidh which helped work off a delicious dinner.



Mike Richardson spoke about lessons that need to be learned about South Georgia biosecurity after the rat eradication.

After the week's punishing schedule, tired attendees dispersed to all the corners of the world, but not before delegates from Mexico, Canada and the USA had offered to host the next Island Invasives conference in 4-5 years' time. Many agreed that it was impressive that such a tiny NGO as the SGHT could host such a professional and impressive event, the result of which will have been a galvanising of efforts to confront the serious problem of invasive animals and plants.

South Georgia Rat Monitoring Survey

A monitoring survey is taking place on South Georgia, led by SGHT Project Director Dickie Hall, to find out if the Habitat Restoration project has achieved its goal of eradicating rodents from the island. The SGHT team employed to answer this question will include some new members of the canine variety. Three terrier dogs Will, Wai and Ahu and their expert handlers, Miriam Ritchie and Jane Tansell, hail from New Zealand. They are hugely experienced in seeking out elusive rodents, having searched Macquarie Island and many other locations to monitor eradication attempts. 'Team Dog' will travel south on the *MV Pharos SG*, courtesy of GSGSSI, to join a veteran group of South Georgia field workers, supported by GSGSSI staff. With back-up assistance from Thies Matzen and Kicki Ericson, aided by Pat Lurcock, on their yacht *Wanderer III*, their task will be to track down any pockets of rodents that might remain.



A peanut-flavoured wax tag.

The Habitat Restoration project's baiting work to eradicate rodents was carried out by the SGHT in early 2011, 2013 and 2015. International guidelines suggest that at least two years should elapse after baiting without signs of rodents before an area can be considered clear. As the survey work will begin in November 2017 it will be close to three years since even the most recent bait application. So the results will be robust – although in an area the size of South Georgia it is never possible to say definitively that no rodents remain.

The 2017-18 monitoring work will revisit a large sample of the areas baited by helicopter in Phases 2 and 3 of the Habitat Restoration project. (Phase 1 covered KEP and Grytviken and so has a year-round onsite team of rodent detectors in the form of BAS scientists and Government officers.) *MV Pharos SG* and *Hans Hansson* will transport some of the team to the remote sites treated in 2013 and 2015, with backup from the yacht *Wanderer III*, while the more accessible areas are surveyed on foot. Once at the sites, a combination of inert detection devices such as wax tags, stakes and camera traps will be used alongside the sniffer dogs to provide a 'belt and braces' approach to detection. Devices are not infallible – they can be washed away or displaced by passing wildlife and some rodents are wary of chewing a stick, even if soaked in peanut oil or other tasty treat. Using dogs avoids these limitations and a far wider area can be surveyed.



Sniffer dogs.

At the conclusion of the monitoring survey in April it will finally be possible to say if the eradication has succeeded and South Georgia is once again free of the rodent invaders that blighted its indigenous seabirds for two centuries.

Geology unveiled at Gold Harbour. Can you help? An appeal by Phil Stone



Gold Harbour and the Bertrab Glacier in 1972.

Back in 1972 I was lucky enough to be working around Gold Harbour on the South Georgia geological survey. At that time, the Bertrab Glacier tumbled over a spectacular ice fall and extended to the sea, culminating in a 20 foot, wave-washed wall of ice. Things are very different now. The lower part of the glacier has vanished, the ice fall has gone, and only the top section of the Bertrab Glacier remains. As a result, large areas of clean, ice-smoothed rock, previously concealed, are now exposed.

From recent photographs, I have noticed that on the south side of the glacier one such fresh surface shows a tight and asymmetric fold structure that I wish I had been able to take a closer look at in 1972. The fold appears to run out along the rock face that previously backed the ice fall but the photographs that I have seen are inconclusive. Has anyone got any pictures of Gold Harbour that show this structure in more detail? I'd love to put together an interpretation that brings the record up to date. So, if you have any images that might help, please get in touch: pst0@bgs.ac.uk.



The remains of the Bertrab Glacier at Gold Harbour. The fold structure is on the extreme left-hand side of what was the ice fall but should be traceable across the full width of the picture in views from a different angle.



A close-up showing the fold structure.

© Extreme Ice Survey/Matthew Kennedy.

The Ocean Harbour Cemetery Refurbishment 2016

During the years spent living and working on South Georgia since 1992, I was luckily placed to take part in a number of interesting 'extra-curricular' activities on top of the government work that I was paid to do. One such project was a three-month refurbishment of the neglected cemeteries in the whaling stations in Stromness Bay that Sarah and I undertook over the summer of 1998-99. It was during this project that I developed an interest in the cemeteries and burial sites, particularly in response to an emotional visit to Leith by some ex-whalers and families while we were there. This made me feel strongly that it was important to maintain the island's burial sites in the absence of many opportunities for families to do so. It also prompted me to develop a website (<http://cems.wildisland.gs>) to document the island's burial sites, primarily as a way for families to at least see some pictures even if they are unable to physically visit their departed relatives.

Other than the well-known cemeteries at Grytviken and the Stromness Bay whaling stations (Leith, Stromness, Husvik) there are other burial sites around South Georgia that have not been maintained for a long time. This is the story of how one of these was recently refurbished.

Ocean Harbour, on the Barff Peninsula, is home to a simple row of eight graves dating back over the past couple of hundred years (*see* panorama on page 1). A whaling station operated in the harbour from 1909 to 1920 and the site deteriorated significantly over the following decades, with no known records or evidence of any maintenance since then. By 2014 there were only a couple of broken stumps and two intact crosses still standing. With the forthcoming reindeer eradication likely to lead to increased vegetation growth there was a possibility that the short stumps could become overgrown and impossible to find. This added some urgency to something I had felt needed addressing for a while, and new crosses were subsequently designed and built at Grytviken. In 2015 they were delivered to the site, and they were finally placed in position in 2016. The slow pace was due to the project being undertaken in spare time and using boat trips that were happening anyway in support of other tasks.



Re-levelling the cross on Carl Edvardsen's grave.

Only one grave was still marked with a nameplate but government records and the history books give us the names of those who lie there. Recent research has identified a name for a second grave.

Historic photographs were used to calculate the dimensions of those crosses that were still reasonably intact. There were three main designs and a selection of each was made. Where possible, crosses were replaced with ones of the original design.

The GSGSSI building team based at Grytviken used some greenheart oak left over from the refurbishment of the Tijuca Jetty at Grytviken a few years ago, and made the crosses in their spare time, mainly when rain and wind prevented outdoor construction work. Quite a common occurrence!

Once made and painted, the crosses were loaded onto the GSGSSI Fishery Patrol Ship *Pharos SG* when she delivered a project team of scientists, and members of the reindeer eradication team, to Ocean Harbour in 2015. The crosses were stacked in the single remaining building, the bathhouse, that still stands on the site of the whaling station. Most other buildings had been moved to Stromness when the station closed.

During an extended boat journey to familiarise KEP boating staff with the coast in 2016, we stopped at Ocean Harbour for a couple of hours. The new crosses were put in place, with the older crosses and stumps being removed and put behind the bathhouse. It was only possible to identify seven graves, and rather than guess at the eighth, unmarked, grave, which could have been in one of two places, a final cross is held at KEP in the hope that further research might reveal a useful photograph or other evidence. Ground penetrating radar? Vertical photography? Any more photographs from last century out there anyone?

A little research revealed a couple of old photographs of one of the graves. The older one, in the Sandefjord Whaling Museum collection, showed the name and dates painted on it, and another taken by Ron Lewis-Smith in 1978 shows the same cross but with paint peeled off to reveal a distinctive wood grain pattern. This, along with measured proportional dimensions of the cross, allowed it to once more be identified with an individual – Kristian Sorensen, who died in 1914.



Kristian Sorensen's grave (right) in 1914. (Sandefjord Whaling Museum)



His cross in 2013, only one of two still standing.

The Register of Deaths and the Grytviken Church Book give us the names of the other men buried there, with the exception of one man. His body was found when the station was being built in 1909. He appeared to have a bullet wound.

The eighth cross was still reasonably intact, though leaning over. It was uprooted and inspected – the buried part being in excellent condition - and replaced upright.

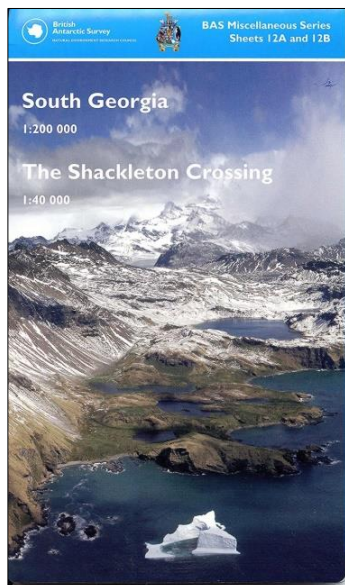
There is more to be discovered yet, I am sure. There must be more photographs out there showing the cemetery in better condition, which might help reveal the location of the grave we were unable to find and mark. They might show the correct cross pattern for those stumps we guessed at, and maybe even allow us to put names to more graves. It would be nice to make a nameplate to put on the newly-identified grave, and perhaps a separate memorial to name all eight.

Pat Lurcock



Pat at work.

The new map of South Georgia

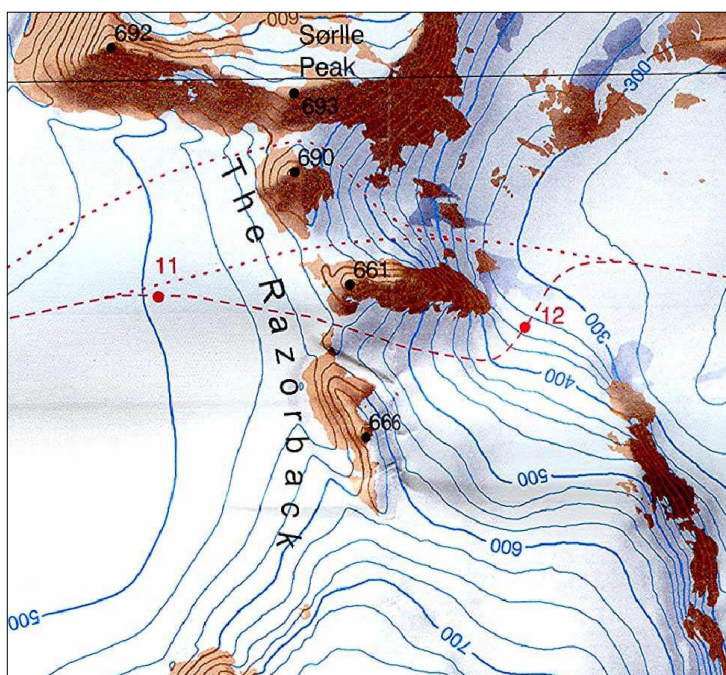


The British Antarctic Survey has updated its 1:200,000 map of South Georgia. Last updated in 2004, the new version is more accurate and the BAS team has used stereo pairs of very high-resolution satellite images to map the elevations. The rapid retreat of the glaciers can be seen by comparing the 2004 and 2017 versions. Extra place-names have been coined for the new lakes, bays and promontories that have been revealed.

The 'B side' of the map is devoted to The Shackleton Crossing which is attempted by the more intrepid visitors. The entire route is covered at 1:40,000 and there are insets at 1:25,000 of the three most difficult stages: the Shackleton Gap (between King Haakon Bay and Possession Bay), the Razorback (where Shackleton & Co slid down the steep slope) and Breakwind Gap (dropping into Fortuna Bay).

Skip Novak, who has made several Shackleton Crossings, comments: 'With the large map of the Shackleton Crossing, together details of the Shackleton Gap, Razorback and Breakwind Gap, that were distilled from information from crossing veterans, there is now no excuse to get lost! This is a good collaboration between Adrian Fox at BAS and the members of the South Georgia Expedition Panel, among others. I think we can now be confident that the route as marked is the actual route that Shackleton, Worsley and Crean took. The bail-out options shown on the map are also useful when the weather packs in or in case of injury. (However, there is still the matter of where that Primus stove is!)

Having said all this, now that the Shackleton Route has been de-mystified to a great extent, I can assure would-be adventurers there is still plenty of scope on the rest of the island to get your teeth stuck into a bit of the unknown.'



Three possible routes across The Razorback. Shackleton chose the northernmost.

The map can be obtained from the UKAHT: <http://www.ukaht.org/products/sheets-12a-and-12b-south-georgia> or viewed at <http://www.sggis.gov.gs/>.

When is a tiger a leopard?

In 1800 the crew of the American sealing vessel *Pacific* spent a season at South Georgia. On a visit to Bird Island they killed a 'sea tiger'. Its skull and skin were brought home and a detailed description of its appearance and behaviour was published in a book *Voyages & Discoveries in The South Seas 1792-1832* written by Edmund Fanning, another American sealer. He wrote: 'The number of teeth is thirty-two, four of which are tusks; the largest of these is an inch and a quarter in length, and one in circumference at the base; in each jaw were ten grinders; these immediately after emerging from their sockets, are divided into three distinct conical portions, less than half an inch long, and the other two the fourth of an inch, all terminating with

sharp points ... the animal moves with surprising velocity in the water, and in that element all its motions are indicative of great strength; their chief food consists of penguins ... The tiger possesses undaunted courage and shrewdness; they frequently chased the crew of the Pacific while cruising in their boats.'

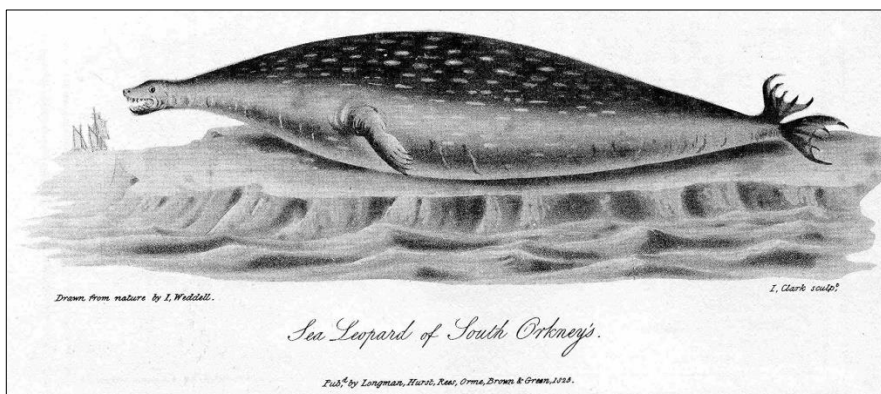
This animal is clearly a leopard seal (*Hydrurga leptonyx*) and this is the first biological record from Bird Island where there is now a programme of observing the leopard seals that visit the island mainly in winter (see Newsletters 16 and 32).



Leopard seal skull showing the four 'tusks' (canines), and 20 3-pointed 'grinders'.

Accounts by early sealers and explorers often mention 'sea leopards' and these are generally perceived as leopard seals. However, the descriptions and illustrations do not fit the leopard seal with its large reptilian head. They are, in fact, Weddell seals.

The Weddell seal was first set on record by James Weddell in 1825, although earlier sealers must have been acquainted with the species. He wrote 'This creature resembles the quadruped of the same name.' It is illustrated in Weddell's book *A Voyage towards the South Pole* and labelled 'Sea Leopard'. Six skins were deposited in the Edinburgh Museum (where they can still be found) and described by Professor Jameson as a 'Leopardine seal, the neck long and tapering; the head small'. So they were not true leopard seals. Later, when naturalists became more familiar with Antarctic seals, the species became known as Weddell's sea leopard or the false sea leopard. The confusion between leopard seal and Weddell seal came from both species having spotted coats.



Weddell's sea leopard from his book 'A Voyage towards the South Pole'.

In the Middle Ages it was believed that all land animals had their marine equivalents but I have found only one other mention of a sea tiger which was in an old French book *Mémoires du Capitaine Péron sur ses voyages* published in 1824. So the sea tiger can now take its place alongside the sea bear or sea wolf (fur seal), sea lion and sea elephant (obvious), sea horse (walrus), sea pig (porpoise), sea cow (dugong), sea dog (Popeye and Bluto) and sea cat (naval missile and catamaran ferry), but I have not found any mention of a sea sheep. If it exists, it's probably a native of the Falkland Islands.



Capitaine Péron's 'Tigre de mer'.

Bob Burton

Erlend Mooney: Shackleton's 'other' Scout

Sir Ernest Shackleton's appointment of James Marr ('Scout Marr') as Cabin Boy on the Shackleton-Rowett ("Quest") Expedition has been well documented, notably by Marr himself (*Into the Frozen South*) and by Frank Wild (*Shackleton's Last Expedition. The Story of the "Quest"*). However, little has been written about Shackleton's 'other' Scout Norman Erlend Mooney because, as is well known, his involvement in the expedition was curtailed through sea-sickness.

Shackleton had a great admiration for Sir Robert Baden-Powell and the Boy Scout organisation that he founded in 1907. He sought B-P's advice about appointing a scout as a Cabin Boy on his expedition, and B-P was very much in favour of the idea and of bestowing such an honour on a member of what had rapidly become a world-wide youth organisation. Such a lad should have proved himself in outdoor pursuits and have the potential to lead others – a sort of apprenticeship which would stand in good stead for his future career.

Originally, six Scouts were to be called to interview but, as the quality of the applicants was so high, Shackleton decided to increase this to ten. These ten interviewees were selected from about 1,700 applicants by B-P himself.

After much deliberation Shackleton chose two Scouts as their credentials were so exceptional that he could not separate them. One was Patrol Leader James William Slessor Marr of the 1st Aberdeen Grammar School Scout Troop (of which this author happened also to be a member!) and the other was Patrol Leader Norman Erlend Mooney from the 2nd Orkneys Scout Troop in Kirkwall. I recently had the pleasure of meeting Erlend's son, Alec Mooney, now living in Alloway, Ayrshire, who showed me some fascinating correspondence relating to his father's selection for the Expedition and permitted me to reproduce some of the letters. The following from Shackleton gives an insight into his care and consideration for the youngster, aged only 16½, almost two years younger than Marr. This was the first time Erlend had ventured outside Orkney.



The 10 Boy Scouts interviewed by Shackleton and two Scout officials.



Erlend Mooney and James Marr with Shackleton.

On 28 August 1921 Shackleton provided Erlend, in a letter to his mother, with the following information regarding his personal requirements and allowances for the expedition. He dictated the content to his wife, Emily Shackleton, whose handwriting, incidentally, poses a challenge to transcribe!

Dear Mrs Mooney,

This is the first opportunity I have had, since I appointed your son, as one of the scouts on the expedition, to write to you.

I hope and trust, indeed I feel that he will uphold the honour of the Island, and the traditions of that great movement to which he belongs, and also be a credit to the expedition.

You can well realize how difficult it was for me to make a choice amongst so many boys of good qualifications. It will interest both his father and you to know that the deciding factor in his favour was a certain modesty and reticence, combined with what appeared to me a nature capable of assimilating experience, and "growing big, in the bigness of the whole".

Your son will not merely be a cabin boy. He will steer and stoke, and do sailor work, like all the other members of the expedition. He will live with the other officers, and assist particular scientific officers in their work, in whatever direction I find most suited to his capabilities.

As there is a good general library on board, his education will be furthered during the time he is with the expedition. I would like you to understand that his job will not be a mere "fetch and carry" one!

Regarding clothing, as far as I can see he will wear his scout uniform until we reach cold weather.

All his cold-weather equipment and clothing (including underclothing) I am providing for.

Pyjamas, light underclothing, cotton shirts and any old civilian clothing can be taken; there is no "dressing up" on the ship. He should have one good scout uniform and kit, for going ashore at Madeira, Cape Town, New Zealand, Australia, and South America, he naturally brings his own tooth brushes, washing gear, and 2 or 3 towels – soap is provided.

He may take an ordinary size cabin trunk – or small tin trunk, in addition to his kit bag – whichever you like – of course there will be room for any little personal things you like to give him, as there is a locker by his bunk. Lady Shackleton suggests you should pack a pillow, no larger than 22 in. by 18 in., a- and 2 pillow cases (marked!).

Money – He will require no money, excepting his fare to London, for he will be paid, at the rate of £1 a week whilst on the expedition, and if he requires when ashore and [in] a foreign port, any money for a specific object I will advance it, subject to having satisfied with the object for which he deserves it.

Your boy should hold himself in readiness to leave home at 24 hours notice, after the 4th September. Mr Rowett has very kindly arranged for both the scouts to stay at his agent's house – at Ely Place, Frant, Sussex. They will come up to their work daily, and return in the evening to the country.

I do not expect to sail till the 11th or 12th September, but I think it advisable that the boys should get used to the ship before starting. Lady Shackleton (who is writing this for me) says she knows of course how much you will miss your boy, but I have assured her that if my rationale of his nature is correct he is certain to have a good time. For your further information, you will be kept advised throughout the expedition as to his progress.

With kind regards to Mr Mooney and yourself. I am, Yours very truly,
E.H. Shackleton [his signature]

Unfortunately, all the way from England Mooney and the young expedition photographer Bee Mason suffered from sea sickness and were often unable to undertake their duties. The *Quest* called at Lisbon for engine repairs and to take on provisions, and here Alec Macklin, the expedition doctor and surgeon, discussed the lad's condition with Shackleton. They decided that, for their own good, the pair should not continue beyond Madeira if there was no marked improvement in their health. At Funchal Macklin wrote an official note to Shackleton on expedition notepaper:

QUEST. R.Y.S.

Madeira
October 17th 1921

To Sir Ernest Shackleton
Sir,

Norman E. Mooney has suffered severely from sea-sickness which has produced great depression & inability to work. I do not consider him fit for the condition likely to be met with on this Expedition, as a prolonged spell of bad weather with consequent sea-sickness is likely to produce exhaustion, & liability to more severe illness.

I am Sir Your obed^t Servant

A.H. Macklin Surgeon to the Expedition

And so, Erlend (and Bee Mason) returned home from Madeira six weeks after the expedition left London, a sad end to what had promised to be such a wonderful character- and career-building experience. Shortly after his return he enrolled as a student engineer at the Royal College of Science and Technology in Glasgow and, after graduating, secured a position as land surveyor with the Ordnance Survey in Southampton. He married Lillias Keith in 1932 and had two sons and a daughter. Erlend spent most of his short life working for the Colonial Office in Nigeria and was tragically killed, at the age of 40, in a rock fall near Jos, where he is buried.

Ron Lewis-Smith



Mooney and Marr made good publicity for the 'Quest' expedition.

A ship called *Discovery* returns to South Georgia

(from a BAS press release)

The royal research ship *Discovery* sailed from Southampton on 22 September for an ambitious science expedition to the ocean around South Georgia. This expedition will take place almost 100 years after scientists onboard the original RRS *Discovery*, first used by Captain Robert Falcon Scott, began a series of investigations in the same area that laid the foundations of modern biological oceanography. These were the *Discovery* Investigations, whose cruises of *Discovery*, soon replaced by the steam ship *Discovery II*, and *William Scoresby* continued from 1925 to 1951.

The current expedition will be the basis of dramatically improving our understanding of how the climate is affected by life in the 'twilight' zone, the part of the ocean 100-1000 metres deep, where only a small amount of sunlight reaches. Small creatures in the twilight zone catch and intercept organic material (such as dead planktonic animals and plants) sinking from the upper levels. So the carbon in this material is stored in the ocean rather than released into the atmosphere. The science programme, called the COMICS project (Controls over Ocean Mesopelagic Interior Carbon Storage), will involve catching the sinking material as well as investigating the tiny plants and animals that capture it and store carbon in the ocean. The region around South Georgia contains some of the largest and most intense blooms of ocean life found anywhere in the world. This means the programme will be sampling a real global hotspot of ocean biological carbon storage.



Lantern fish of the 'twilight' zone have large eyes and rows of light-producing organs.

It is already known that the efficiency of transporting carbon from the atmosphere to the twilight zone is important for regulating carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. However, the processes that control the efficiency of biological storage of carbon in the deep ocean are not well known. This is an obstacle to predicting how they may change. By investigating carbon dynamics in the ocean interior, COMICS will help to improve predictions of future global climate change.

Zooplankton ecologist Professor Geraint Tarling from British Antarctic Survey says: "The *Discovery* Investigations laid the foundations to modern day biological oceanography and the data and samples they collected 100 years ago remain crucial to understanding how our oceans are changing.' Many of these samples are available for study because they have been preserved in the Natural History Museum in London.



The new RRS Discovery steams under Tower Bridge.



RRS Discovery II in King Edward Cove in the 1920s.

Stop Press: On 10 November the Autumn Meeting was held at the British Antarctic Survey headquarters in Cambridge. Over 60 people attended 10 presentations on the theme of **New and future science from South Georgia and the surrounding seas** which were followed by a drinks reception and supper. Details will be reported in the next Newsletter.

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:

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