

# South Georgia Association Newsletter

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*St Andrews Bay in 2016 – compare with the image from the 1981/82 Joint Services Expedition*

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*Fortieth anniversary of the Joint Services Expedition (p 2-3)*



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## Fortieth Anniversary of the Joint Services Expedition to South Georgia 1981-1982

The Expedition arrived at South Georgia on 12 December 1981 on board *HMS Endurance*. The team of 16 members, led by Bob Veal, included representatives from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Air Force and Army, and a civilian glaciologist/geomorphologist (Fig. 1). Base camp was established at Moltke Harbour in Royal Bay, and *Endurance's* Wasp helicopters established supply dumps of food and fuel on the Ross Glacier and at St Andrews Bay.



**Fig. 1.** Expedition members with Captain Nick Barker on board *HMS Endurance* before disembarking at South Georgia. Back (L to R): Danny Yarker (Royal Navy), Rod Godfrey (Army), Adrian Hughes (Royal Navy), Hamish Craig (Royal Navy), Captain Nick Barker (HMS Endurance), Paul Hutchings (Royal Marines), John Coull (Royal Air Force), Phil Davies (Royal Air Force), John Gordon (glaciologist/geomorphologist), Bob Veal (Royal Navy). Front (L to R): Richard Adderton (Army), Tom Scrimgeour (Army), Paul McKeown (Army), Tony Airey (Royal Marines), Martin Kelly (Royal Navy), Alan Esnouf (Army), Peter Langdon (Royal Navy).

The aims of the Expedition were to explore and climb in the Salvesen Range and to undertake a scientific programme in glaciology, ecology, ornithology and meteorology in collaboration with staff at the British Antarctic Survey and other bodies. Two southern inland journeys were completed (Fig. 2); the first, in January 1982, involved travelling up the Ross and Spenceley glaciers, across the upper Novosilski Glacier and onwards via Trollhul to the Philippi Glacier above Brandt Cove; the second, in February 1982, followed a similar initial route to the base of Mount Carse which it was hoped to climb. Weather conditions on the glaciers were typically hostile, with the teams being storm-bound in their tents for extended periods and preventing most planned ascents. A third team crossed the Ross, Hindle, Weddell and upper Bertrab glaciers in January 1982 to reach Iris Bay, but further southward progress was blocked by the heavily crevassed Twitcher Glacier; on their return, they explored the Cape Charlotte Peninsula. During a weather-window in early March 1982, Tony Airey and Adrian Hughes completed an ascent of Mount Brooker.

The principal focus of the glaciology and geomorphology programme was to monitor changes in the 'state of health' of a variety of different types of glacier, ranging from large tidewater glaciers, such as Ross, to small cirque glaciers,

such as Hodges. Detailed surveys of icefront positions and ice surface profiles were completed for Hodges, Glacier Col, Heaney, Cook, Nachtigal and Ross Glaciers. All had been surveyed by the British Antarctic Survey within the previous decade; some by the British South Georgia Expedition in 1955-56, and Ross Glacier by several expeditions at various times since the late 19th century, including the Combined Services Expedition in 1964-65. During brief visits to a number of other glaciers – Lyell, Nordenskjöld and glaciers at Paradise Beach, Husvik and Iris Bay – icefront positions were mapped and photographed.



**Fig. 2. A.** Camp and depot on Ross Glacier with Mount Brooker emerging from the clouds. **B.** View north-west from Spenceley Glacier. Mountains from the left are Mount Paget, Mount Roots, Nordenskjöld Peak and Mount Kling.

The results showed that cirque and small valley glaciers had continued to recede since a period of advance in the 1930s. However, the larger valley and tidewater glaciers were then at, or close to, their most advanced positions since the Little Ice Age of the 17-19th centuries, but beginning in the early 1970s they too had started to thin and recede, particularly following a climate warming trend from around 1950. Since 1981-82, glacier recession has accelerated across the island, with particularly dramatic recent changes at the Ross, Hindle, Neumayer and Bertrab Glaciers, while Hodges Glacier no longer exists (Figs 3 & 4).

Use of a Gemini inflatable facilitated the Marine zoology study. From a trammel net left overnight up to a kilometre offshore from Moltke Harbour beach, 46 fish from four families and eight species of Nototheniiformes were dissected and the second gill arch fixed for later electron microscope investigation at Plymouth Polytechnic Marine Laboratories, who were researching fish gill function. Fish were also collected for branchial circulation investigations by means of latex injection, and 21 were preserved in deep tins of formalin for later dissection at the Zoology laboratories of UCNW Bangor.

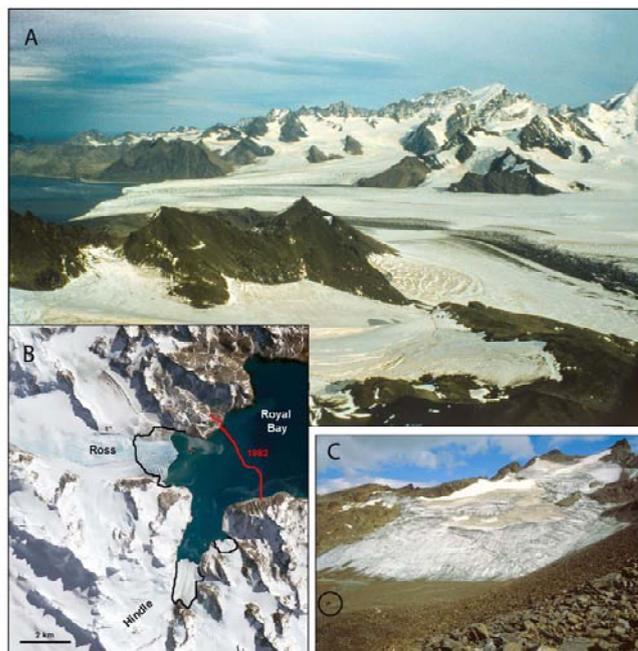
As part of an ornithology study, the expedition recorded all bird sightings on the journey from the Falkland Islands to South Georgia and back, carried out counts of all penguin colonies encountered from St Andrews Bay to Trollhul, recorded other bird species observed in these areas, and weighed light mantled sooty albatross (*Phoebetria palpebrata*) chicks for a British Antarctic Survey research project. A terrestrial ecology project also investigated the organisms associated with the breakdown of reindeer faeces.

Meteorological observations were recorded at base camp at Moltke Harbour and in the Salvesen Range. Comparisons made with those of the German International Polar Year Expedition in 1881-82, based ~3 km along the coast to the east, emphasised the storminess of the weather and indicated slightly higher temperatures than a century earlier.

The Expedition departed South Georgia on 15 March 1982 on board HMS Endurance en route to Montevideo via Stanley. However, on reaching the Falkland Islands, Endurance was re-directed back to South Georgia in view of the arrival of Argentine scrap-metal merchants at Leith Harbour, and hastily re-arranged travel plans saw the Expedition members fly back to the UK via Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro.

The Expedition Report is available through the Royal Geographical Society (<https://expeditions.rgs.org/ES.aspx?ID=972>). Several scientific papers on the glaciology, geomorphology and meteorology results were subsequently published.

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**Fig. 3.** **A.** The combined Ross and Hindle Glaciers in March 1982 viewed from the north-west. **B.** Changes in the icefront positions of Ross and Hindle Glaciers between 1982 (red line) and 2021 (black lines) plotted on a NASA Earth Observatory image from September 2016. Over this period, the Ross has retreated ~4 km, and the Hindle ~6 km; the two glaciers have separated, and a new fjord has opened in front of the Hindle. (See the blog by Mauri Pelto at: <https://blogs.agu.org/fromaglaciersperspective/>). **C.** Hodges Glacier in January 1982 has now melted completely. Hodges hut is circled for scale.



**Fig. 4.** Cook and Heaney Glaciers at St Andrews Bay, January 1982. Since then, the glaciers have receded and a large lake has formed in front of Cook Glacier.

## Obituary: Robert (Bob) Burton

It is with great sadness, that the South Georgia Association announces the passing of our wonderful colleague and friend, Bob Burton. He was a founding member of the SGA, serving on the committee for over 20 years from its inception until his death.

Bob was a generous, immensely knowledgeable person; full of vitality and ever ready to engage you in his activities involving the environment, heritage, wildlife, conservation and the South Atlantic region, to which he contributed in many diverse ways.

He first visited South Georgia in 1964, and in 1971-72, he was part of the team initiating a new programme of research on fur seals and albatrosses at Bird Island, where 'Burton Cove' is named after him.

Bob was involved in the South Georgia Museum at an early stage, becoming its Director in 1994. During his 4-year tenure, the Norwegian Church at Grytviken was fully restored. With little in the way of resources, his important work consolidated that started by others such as Nigel Bonner and Ian Hart.

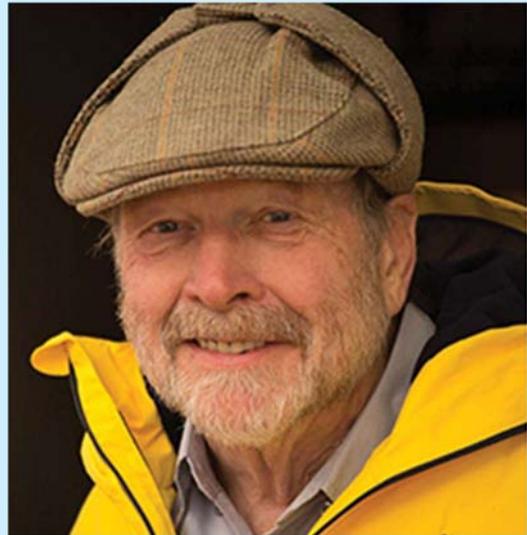
He had a wonderful gift of communication: As a writer, he edited and wrote extensively about South Georgia, including the South Georgia Government booklet for visitors, and 'A Field Guide to the Wildlife of South Georgia'. He contributed several essays to the 'Dictionary of Falklands Biography', including the one on Sir Ernest Shackleton, about whom he was an expert. And of course, he wrote, collated and edited the SGA's own newsletter for many years.

As a presenter, he would capture your attention with his stories, anecdotes, and vast knowledge. He was a regular expedition leader and lecturer on cruise ships, and during the pandemic, he was one of the main contributors to the SGA's online talks helping us reach out to a global audience. More recently, he was passionately involved in the archaeological investigations in South Georgia and the continuing conservation of its heritage.

In 1996, Bob was awarded the Polar Medal for services as Meteorologist, Biological Assistant and Museum Curator. In 2018, Bob was awarded the SGA's Morag Husband Campbell Medal 'for outstanding contributions to the study and conservation of wildlife and the heritage of South Georgia'. He said of the award: "I am lucky to have been one of many people involved with South Georgia - putting it on the map, so to speak – in recent years. When I first visited the island in 1964, it was Terra Incognita to most people. Nowadays, it has become familiar through television programmes about its spectacular and profuse wildlife, and through the interest in the explorer Ernest Shackleton. Now, its importance in global ecology is being recognised."

South Georgia has lost a wonderful advocate, and we have lost a kind, enthusiastic, passionate friend. We will miss him.

A commemoration and celebration of Bob's life was held at British Antarctic Survey HQ in Cambridge on April 9<sup>th</sup>. The event was attended by over 70 of Bob's family and friends (right) and included tributes to the many different aspects of Bob's life, from childhood to his very busy and active retirement.



*Bob Burton*



## Obituary: John Owen

The South Georgia Association is saddened to announce the unexpected passing of our Treasurer, John Owen, who passed away peacefully in his sleep Thursday 20th January.

John was a lovely, kind man, who joined the Association committee in 2011. He'd recently visited South Georgia on Skip Novak's yacht, and like many of us, had become enchanted with the island.

He took on the key role of Treasurer performing it with diligence and enthusiasm for over a decade, steering the SGA into the twenty-first century with the introduction of Direct Debit payments and PayPal. John was always keen for the SGA to provide more support through its Initiative Fund, which makes grants to projects that stimulate awareness of, and interest in South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. He was a key proponent in increasing the value of the award and widening its access. One recent grant he backed has helped raise awareness in Japan of the by-catch mortality of South Georgia's seabirds in their tuna fisheries, another supported an archaeological project investigating the history of sealing at selected sites on South Georgia.

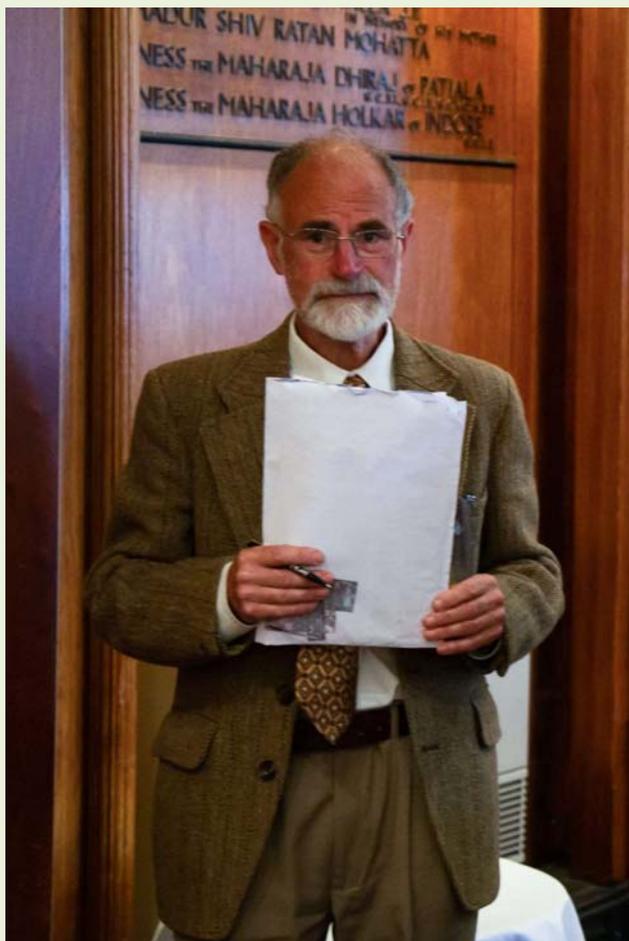
Away from South Georgia, John had a wide variety of interests: As a young man, he spent many a long hour indulging his love of early jazz at regular gigs. He was a multi-instrumentalist who played the tuba, banjo, and guitar in various bands. His favourite music was jazz, blues, and rock and roll.

John was extremely active: He was a keen runner, who at the time of his passing was in training for another springtime marathon, indeed, he had been running the night before he passed. He was an active member of the Barnet & District Athletics Club, of which he was President for a number of years. Against a fellow SGA committee member, he enjoyed some spirited competition in the local 10km races.

He was interested in sailing, and was involved in a trust to restore a Thames barge. Both he and his wife, Jane, were members of the Ramblers, heading off for regular, long walks during the pandemic. An avid reader, he noted recently,

*"I have been reading again Alec Trendall's book about Duncan Carse and the mapping of South Georgia in the 1950s. The massive physical effort is the thing that hits me - the freezing cold, sleeping bags soaking wet, hauling sledges, dangerous climbing to trig points to make measurements, and all in our lifetime, not back in a different 'heroic age'. And of course, they made a map that was used for 40 years."*

John's passing is a sad loss to the South Georgia Association which will miss this kind, committed, thoughtful man.



## South Georgia News

### Centenary of the death of Sir Ernest Shackleton

January 5<sup>th</sup> marked the centenary of the death of Sir Ernest Shackleton. Shackleton led three major expeditions during what is now known as the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration. His first journey south was in 1901, on the Antarctic expedition ship *Discovery*. Led by Robert Scott, Shackleton and Edward Wilson trekked towards the South Pole in extremely difficult conditions, getting closer than anyone previously. In 1908, Shackleton returned to the Antarctic as the leader of his own expedition, on the ship *Nimrod*. The expedition made many important scientific and geographical discoveries and set a new record by getting even closer to the South Pole. He was knighted on his return to Britain.



Following Amundsen's success in reaching the pole, Shackleton set out on the *Endurance* Expedition in 1914, with the aim of crossing the Antarctic continent. When the *Endurance* became trapped in ice and sank, Shackleton succeeded in getting all his men back to safety, a journey that involved a passage to South Georgia in the small lifeboat, *James Caird*, and then a trek across the island to Stromness, with Tom Crean and Frank Worsely.

In 1921, Shackleton returned to South Georgia on the *Quest* Expedition, with eight shipmates from the *Endurance*. In the early hours of January 5<sup>th</sup>, with the ship at anchor in King Edward Cove, Shackleton died unexpectedly at the age of 47. Shackleton was buried on March 5<sup>th</sup> at the whaling station, Grytviken, a ceremony attended by the managers of the five stations on South Georgia and a hundred whalers and seamen. A memorial cross was erected at Hope Point by Shackleton's colleagues on *Quest*. GSGSSI has released a commemorative set of stamps to mark the occasion (above).

### RRS *Sir David Attenborough* inaugural visit to South Georgia

The British Antarctic Survey's new royal research ship, *RRS Sir David Attenborough* paid its first visit to South Georgia in March 2022 (right, photo Kate Owen). The wharf at King Edward Point was extended in 2020 to accommodate the new ship, which is considerably larger than its predecessors. The *RRS Sir David Attenborough* will return to the UK in June 2022 at the end of the Antarctic season. The ship will spend several weeks in refit to rectify the issues identified during ice trials, and to finish commissioning science equipment, which was delayed due to Covid-19.



### Seabird tracking at South Georgia

This season was the first of a two-year Darwin Plus-funded satellite tracking study looking at spatial segregation of seabirds around South Georgia. Project Leader Vicky Warwick-Evans and PhD student Lizzie Pearmain were based on the *MV Pharos SG* from late December until mid-January, to deploy tracking devices at different locations around South Georgia. Devices were deployed on wandering albatrosses (right) and white-chinned petrels on Prion Island and Cooper Island respectively, with both species are being tracked simultaneously from Bird Island.



The rate of decline of many albatross and petrel species varies among the different populations breeding at South Georgia, which may reflect differences in foraging areas and therefore breeding success, or relative interaction with different fishing fleets on the High Seas or the Patagonian Shelf (as seabird bycatch rates are negligible in South Georgia fisheries). Until now, the only tracking of flying seabirds around South Georgia has been at Bird Island. The results will identify any differences in habitat use and if particular fisheries represent a higher risk to the populations breeding at different sites, which might explain the spatial variation in population trends. The tracking devices provide location data from each individual, and the real-time results from the satellite transmitters can be seen at <https://www.bas.ac.uk/project/spatial-segregation-of-seabirds-at-south-georgia/#about>.

## Fixed-wing UAV surveys South Georgia's wildlife

A team of BAS researchers recently completed the first field season of a Darwin Plus project - *Initiating monitoring support for the SGSSI-MPA Research and Monitoring Plan*. 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; right). 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. Nathan Fenney and Adrian Fox, from the BAS Mapping Team, joined the *MV Pharos SG* in early December to travel to South Georgia where they were supported by Jamie Coleman and Jerry Gillham at King Edward Point (KEP).



*Adrian Fox launching the fixed wing platform to survey, king penguins at Right Whale Bay whilst the Pharos SG waits just offshore. (Photo: Jamie Coleman).*

Over the next 6 weeks, with logistic support from the *Pharos SG* and KEP boats, the team surveyed 13 sites representing four important species: Antarctic fur seals, gentoo penguins, king penguins and wandering albatross. Due to the technologically advanced RPAS and the experience of the team, permission was granted to fly beyond visual line of sight – a first for both South Georgia and BAS. This meant that the impact from the surveys was minimal as animal populations could be accessed remotely from up to 3 km away. The data from these surveys is currently being analysed to provide a report to GSGSSI along with a scientific publication.

## Scientific echosounder fitted to the *Pharos SG*

As part of a Darwin Plus funded project to investigate krill populations during winter, a state-of-the-art scientific echosounder system was fitted to the *MV Pharos SG* during dry docking in March 2022. Funds for the echosounders were provided by UK Govt. Blue Belt Programme to support the project. The *Pharos SG* will conduct krill surveys in May, July and September 2022 and 2023. In parallel with the krill surveys, at-sea observations of seabirds and cetaceans will provide novel data on krill dependent predators during winter. Further details about the project are available at: <https://www.bas.ac.uk/project/winter-krill-at-south-georgia/>



*The echosounder transducers fitted to the Pharos SG's hull.*

## Novel Sailbuoy deployed to survey krill

The Ecosystems team of the British Antarctic Survey deployed an autonomous surface vehicle, a Sailbuoy, to undertake a survey of the marine ecosystem to the northwest of South Georgia. Deployed from the *RRS Sir David Attenborough* on the 24<sup>th</sup> March, the Sailbuoy travelled nearly 2000 km back and forth along a 72 km long transect before being recovered by the *Pharos SG* just after Easter. The Sailbuoy is a small (2m long) unmanned vehicle that uses wind for propulsion and is equipped with solar panels to power sensor collecting oceanographic measurements and information on Antarctic Krill distribution. It navigates between pre-set locations using satellite positioning. The Sailbuoy forms part of the BAS commitment to reduce carbon emissions, while collecting data we need to understand change in the Southern Ocean.



*The Sailbuoy deployed from the RRS Sir David Attenborough*

## Morag Husband Campbell Medal Awarded to Tony Martin

The South Georgia Association is delighted to announce the award for the fifth year of the Morag Husband Campbell medal for 2022 to Professor Tony Martin, *“in recognition of his outstanding and dedicated contributions to South Georgia in particular his pivotal role in the South Georgia Heritage Trust Habitat Restoration Programme of the Island and as a consequence promoting a wider appreciation of these islands”*.

Professor Martin, on secondment to the South Georgia Heritage Trust, led their Habitat Restoration Project, that successfully reversed the devastation caused by rats that threatened South Georgia’s globally important seabird populations. This was the world’s largest rodent eradication operation.



*Tony on South Georgia*



*The Morag Husband Campbell Medal*

Following three seasons of baiting the Island by helicopter, a comprehensive survey at the end of 2017 failed to detect a single rodent. Native bird numbers are recovering and the song of the endemic South Georgia pipit, previously under threat of extinction due to rodent predation, is now heard everywhere on the island.

In recognition of his exceptional leadership Professor Tony Martin was named as Conservationist of the Year in 2016 by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL).

Prior to the Habitat Restoration Project, Professor Martin spent many years as a cetacean biologist with the Sea Mammal Research Unit at St. Andrews, before transferring to the British Antarctic Survey in a broader role, leading investigations of the Southern Ocean foodwebs. He joined the University of Dundee in 2010 and has also been a UK delegate to the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission since 1979. Tony Martin is a keen seabird biologist and passionate about conservation.

### **Nominations Invited for Sixth Morag Husband Campbell Medal**

The South Georgia Association is inviting nominations for the award of the Morag Husband Campbell medal for the sixth year. The Medal has been made possible by a generous bequest from a long-standing and enthusiastic supporter of the Association, Miss Morag Husband Campbell. It comprises a Sterling silver relief medallion, 60mm in diameter. The name of the recipient and the year will be inscribed on the reverse. It is intended to award the Medal every year or every other year depending upon nominations.

The Association has agreed that the Medal should be awarded to individuals who have contributed significantly to the understanding, appreciation and promotion of South Georgia. This would encompass i) scientific studies as well as in the arts and humanities including culture, history, heritage, artistic endeavour etc., ii) adventurous travel and "exploration", iii) activities which enhance the wider appreciation of South Georgia (e.g. in the media or through administrative functions).

Nominations (self-nominations are not permitted) should be made on an official Nomination Form available on the website and from the Secretary of the Association to whom they should be sent no later than 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022. The award would be made the following year at the Annual General Meeting of the Association.

Professor David J Drewry  
Chair SGA

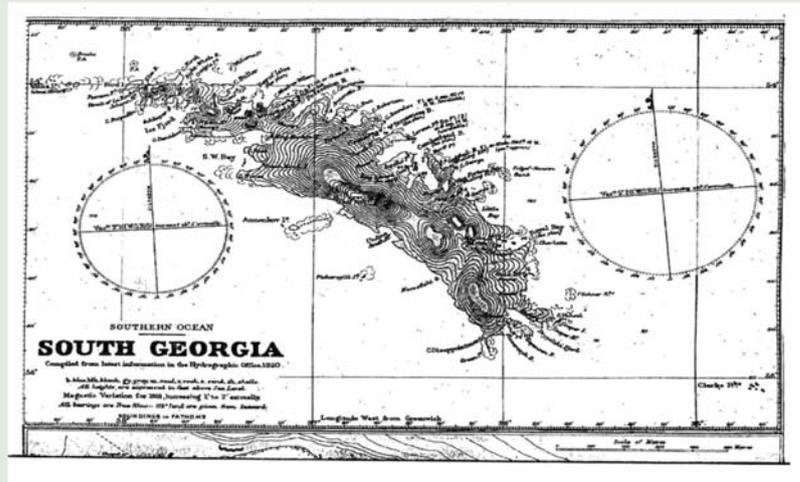
# The Defunct Lights of South Georgia

by Robert Faulconbridge

In January 1906, the Government of the Falkland Islands issued a licence and a land lease agreement to the Compañía Argentina de Pesca to operate in the Southern Ocean. The Company therefore established its base at Grytviken in Cumberland East Bay. Translated into English the name means Argentine Fishing Company, but the Company only fished for whales and seals. One of the conditions contained in the land-lease was that the Company establish and maintain various lights, beacons and other aids to navigation around South Georgia. In 1906, the Norwegian Captain C A Larsen (Technical Leader and Whaling Manager) erected two Wigham's Automatic leading beacon lights. One was at Right Whale Rocks at the entrance to Cumberland Bay, an area of land which the Company also leased, the other at the entrance channel to King Edward Cove. Larsen later erected two further lights, one on Larsen Island at the north-west entrance to the Bay and the other at Sappho Point.

The light on Right Whale Rocks, situated on the NW end of the Western Rock, at an elevation of 90 feet (27.4 metres) was housed in a white corrugated iron hut, with a red roof.

The light at King Edward Point was exhibited at an elevation of 12 feet (3.7 metres) from a black iron framework structure 11 feet (3.4 metres) in height (Antarctic Pilot 1948). Leading lights were exhibited from two wooden posts situated at the southern side of the Cove (Antarctic Pilot 1948).



A scan of a chart (above, Hydrographic Office 1920) with "lighthouses" marked shows from West to East:

1. Cape Crew, at the entrance to Prince Olav Harbour, an early whaling station.
2. Cape Saunders, at the entrance to Stromness Bay.
3. Larsen Island, at the entrance to Cumberland Bay.
4. Sappho Point, Cumberland Bay.
5. King Edward Point.
6. Godthul Bay, a small whaling station.

It is interesting to note that there are no light details given for the Right Whale Rocks Light on the 1920 Chart, however a note in the Antarctic Pilot 1948 states, "a light is periodically exhibited from this 90-foot rock". New Fortuna Bay, now known as Ocean Harbour, also had a beacon, however the light details are not shown in this 1920 chart, presumably because the whaling station had closed down by then. In 1914, Wordie recorded that the light at Ocean Harbour was not more than a hurricane lantern!!

Many of these structures / lights remain today, but no longer function. On display in the excellent South Georgia Museum is an Acetylene Gas Regulator marked Gas Accumulator Co. U.K, Lighthouse Engineers, Beacon Works, Brentford. Also the bronze and glass casing for the light from Cape Crew (Prince Olav Harbour).

The invention of the Wigham Automatic Lights is due to the work of John Richardson Wigham 1829-1906. John was born of Quaker parents in Edinburgh. He was educated there to the age of 15 when he was sent to Ireland as an apprentice to his brother-in-law, Joshua Edmundson's business in Chapel Street, Dublin. Four years after he started his apprenticeship, Joshua died, and John Wigham took over the family firm, which continued to prosper.

In 1865, he was given a grant to develop lights for lighthouses. He went on to design more powerful lights (according to weather conditions). Exact details of how the Wigham Lights / Tower Lanterns installed on South Georgia functioned are currently still elusive.

## South Georgia Government News

### New Commissioner Appointed

Ms Alison Blake CMG has been appointed Governor of the Falkland Islands and Her Majesty's Commissioner for South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands in succession to Mr Nigel Phillips CBE. Ms Blake, who will be the first female in this prestigious post, will take up her appointment in July 2022. Her previous roles included ambassador in Kabul (2019-2021) and High Commissioner in Dhaka (adapted from FCO website).



### New South Georgia Government Appointments

GSGSSI have recently appointed Steve Winn (right) as Director of Operations. Steve replaces Steve Brown, who is moving to a new role in Stanley. Steve Winn was previously with the Falkland Islands Maritime Authority and has also worked as a commercial yachting captain.



Allison Kean has been appointed as Visitor Management Officer, taking over from Ross James. Alison was born and raised in Northern Ontario (Canada) and her career has taken her around the world as a tour guide, managing programmes for non-profits in South and Central America and, most recently, overseeing logistics and sustainability for a Polar Expedition operator (adapted from GSGSSI website).

### South Georgia Museum Stamps

GSGSSI have released a set of stamps to commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the South Georgia Museum in Grytviken. The museum occupies the "Manager's Villa" which was renovated during the 1990/91 clean-up of the whaling stations. Nigel Bonner and Ian Hart installed the first exhibits in 1991/92 and the South Georgia Whaling Museum, as it was then known, opened to visitors in January 1992. In 2006, the museum was renamed the South Georgia Museum and management passed to the SGHT, who have managed the museum since.



The museum stamps (reproduced with permission of GSGSSI).

### 40th Anniversary of South Georgia Liberation Stamps

In April 1982, South Georgia experienced the only armed conflict in its history. Forty years on, GSGSSI has issued stamps to commemorate the conflict. The conflict on South Georgia was precipitated on 19<sup>th</sup> March when military personnel posing as scrap metal workers landed at Leith Harbour and raised the Argentine flag. HMS *Endurance* with detachment of 22 Royal Marines was dispatched to the Territory shortly afterwards. In response Argentina dispatched two corvettes along with the survey ship ARA *Bahia Paraiso*. Over the next few weeks, a series of diplomatic efforts were made by both sides, concluding with the invasion of the Falkland Islands. Matters on South Georgia came to a head when an Argentine corvette ARA *Guerrico* arrived in the Territory.



On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Argentina demanded the British surrender and, after a short battle, the invading forces took control of Grytviken. The British swiftly put in place plans to liberate South Georgia, using the code name 'Operation Paraquet'. The task group consisted of Royal Marines, SAS and SBS troops embarked on HMS *Plymouth*, HMS *Antrim* and RFA *Tidespring*. Early on April 25<sup>th</sup> Argentine submarine ARA *Santa Fe* landed reinforcements at Grytviken. The submarine departed King Edward Cove on the surface and was engaged with depth charges by *Antrim's* Wessex helicopter. With *Santa Fe* disabled, Major Guy Sheridan pulled together a scratch force of 75 servicemen from *Antrim* and planned a landing with naval gunfire support. Sheridan proceeded to KEP and formally accepted the surrender of 137 Argentines from the commander of the Argentine forces. The garrison at Leith Harbour, under the command of Lieutenant Commander Alfredo Astiz, surrendered the following day. More information on the stamps can be found at [www.pobjoystamps.com](http://www.pobjoystamps.com) , or <https://www.falklandstamps.com> (adapted from GSGSSI website).

## *Pesca* – 2021 edition – review by Stephen Palmer

Ian Hart is a well-known and respected historian who specialises in researching and recording the history of South Georgia and its whaling industry. He is the acknowledged authority on the whaling that took place at Grytviken and of its associated whaling company - Compañía Argentina de Pesca – the pioneer of modern Antarctic whaling. Over twenty years Hart has published seven books on various whaling subjects, beginning in 2001 with a ground-breaking history of the Pesca company. In addition to his published books, Hart is a major contributor to the *Falklands Dictionary of Biography (including South Georgia)* – having written fourteen biographical entries.

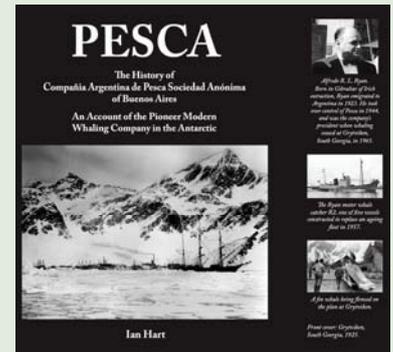
The first edition (2001) of the Pesca book added greatly to the knowledge of Grytviken and its associated whaling and sealing industries, but it had several flaws – the book size (A5) and font used sometimes made it a difficult book to read, and the illustrations and many of the photographs were too small and indistinct.

In the twenty years since the first edition of the Pesca book was published, Ian Hart has continued to research the subject, and the result of this is a 2021 edition of the Pesca history. The new edition can only be described as a radical transformation. It is a remarkable achievement and well worth reading and buying. The original 2001 edition cost £45, but the 2021 second edition costs £40.

The second edition has been greatly expanded from the first edition: The format of the book has been enlarged to A4, and the text uses a larger font and is easily readable. The whole text of the book has been edited, revised and corrected based on new information, primarily from Scandinavia, and there are additional Maps and Appendices. There are now 26 Tables (compared with 22 in original version), 31 Appendices (compared with 28) and 25 chapters (compared with 21). There are many new historic images to supplement those in the first edition and all these have been professionally reproduced. Ian Hart has close connections with the family of the man who founded the Pesca company, Carl Anton Larsen, and as a result of this there are many images in this new edition that have not been published before. The reproduced photographs alone make this book a worthwhile purchase.

It is particularly pleasing to see that one of the last photographs reproduced in the book is that of the three original members of the team that established the Museum on South Georgia – Bob Kluzniack (a Falkland islander) Nigel Bonner, former Head of Life Sciences at BAS and Ian Hart outside the former Manager’s Villa at Grytviken, where the Museum is located.

By any measure, this is a monumental and worthy book, and Ian Hart is to be congratulated for his assiduous research, careful scholarship, and dogged pursuit of the complete story of the pioneering whaling company of South Georgia, and of an industry that had such an impact on the natural history of the Southern Ocean.



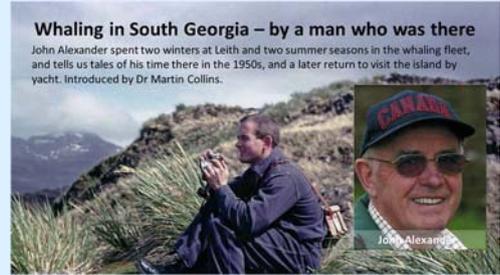
*Pesca: The history of Compañía Argentina de Pesca Sociedad of Buenos Aires; An account of the pioneering whaling company in the Antarctic by Ian Hart. Published 2021; pp 673; (ISBN 978 0 9552924 4 6)*



## South Georgia Association News

### SGA Online Meetings

The SGA have continued to hold a series of on-line talks. In November John Alexander gave an illustrated talk entitled *Whaling in South Georgia – by a man who was there*. John spent two winters at Leith and two summer seasons in the whaling fleet and was an excellent photographer. The talk was attended by over 400 people, with other watching the recording, which is still available via the SGA website: <https://southgeorgiaassociation.org/whaling-talk-is-online/>



To mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the retaking of South Georgia on 25 April, the SGA held an online event on Friday 22 April: *Then and now*. Bob Headland talked about life at King Edward Point in 1982 generally and particularly in relation to the invasion by Argentina and the short period of occupation. Pat Lurcock followed with an account of the early years following the establishment of the SGSSI Maritime Zone when he held the position of Harbour Master, which incorporated the role of Fishery Officer. This period spanned the last days of the military garrison and the opening of the new, SGSSI commissioned, Applied Fishery Laboratory operated by BAS which replaced the garrison. The third presentation, covering the present, was given by Jamie Coleman who has recently returned from KEP. His illustrated talk covered the scientific work on the station, social life on base and local recreational travel. He closed the event with images of the RRS *Sir David Attenborough's* first call at KEP illustrating what one aspect of life on the station will look like into the future.

Further online events will be announced on the SGA website.

### SGA Spring Meeting Cancelled and AGM plans.

The proposed spring meeting on *HQS Wellington* on 6 May has not had sufficient interest to go ahead so, sadly, we have had to cancel. The SGA plan to hold another event later in the year. The SGA AGM is likely to be held on Zoom, but no date has yet been fixed.

### Editor's Note

Thanks to the contributors to this edition, notably John Gordon, Robert Faulconbridge, Vicky Warwick-Evans, Stephen Palmer, Sophie Fielding, Phil Hollyman and Sarah Greenwood. Thanks to Sarah Greenwood & Fran Prince for their proof-reading and fact checking. 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: Martin Collins (e-mail: [only1martincollins2@gmail.com](mailto:only1martincollins2@gmail.com)).

