

# South Georgia Association Newsletter

Number 47 November 2024

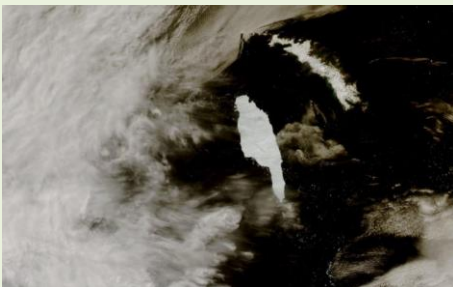
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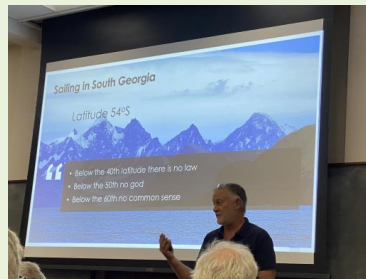


*Grytviiken – Dias, formerly named Viola, is at the right-hand edge, See p. 9. (Photo: A. Fox, 2022)*

**In this issue:** South Georgia and icebergs; SG Association and Friends of Scott Polar Research Institute event, July 2024, including Morag Husband Campbell Medal awards; SG&SSI emblem at Palace of Westminster; Reports on SG Association Bob Burton Awards; Captain James Cook, HMS *Resolution*, 17 January 1775; Place names at Stromness; South Georgia Government news; ‘Antarctic Whaling – a case study in near extinction’ book; SG Association news, including new Chair.



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*Bob Burton Awards (Initiative Funding) updates (p. 9-13)*



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**South Georgia anniversaries:** Planning is underway, in liaison with other organisations with an interest in South Georgia, for events celebrating 250 years since Captain Cook's arrival at South Georgia, and the centenary of the Discovery Investigations. **The first event is an online talk on the evening of 17 January by Dr Bruce Mair about Cook's landing on South Georgia in 1775, and geological fieldwork on the 200<sup>th</sup> and 202<sup>nd</sup> anniversaries.** More details are to follow by email and on the SG Association website.

## South Georgia and Icebergs

Andrew Fleming, British Antarctic Survey

*Recent visitors to South Georgia have remarked that there have been an unusual number of icebergs in the waters off South Georgia in the last few years. This article seeks to explain the origin, characteristics and eventual fate of icebergs around South Georgia.*

**Iceberg origins.** Large icebergs in the Southern Ocean, including those close to South Georgia, start their lives in the massive ice shelves and glaciers that fringe the Antarctic continent. These ice shelves are extensions of the continental ice sheet, floating on the ocean as thick layers of ice. Over time, they extend outward until sections break off in a natural process known as calving. Once an iceberg calves, it drifts away from the continent, carried over long distances by ocean currents and winds on a journey which can last many years.

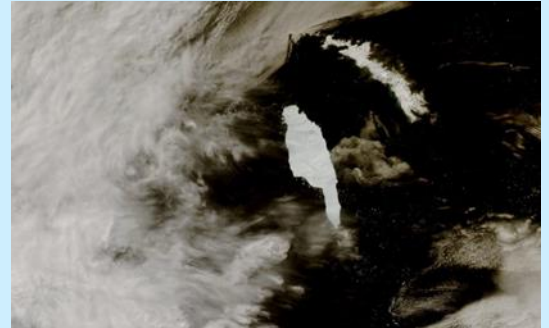
Smaller icebergs inshore to South Georgia result from calving of the island's numerous glaciers – floating ice can often be seen in front of large glaciers such as Neumayer and Nordenskjöld glaciers.

**Characteristics.** Icebergs occur in all shapes and sizes, but the most spectacular are the tabular icebergs which form when large sections of ice shelves break off. Tabular icebergs are large, flat-topped icebergs that resemble vast floating platforms. They are characterized by their steep, vertical sides and expansive, flat surfaces, which can span many kilometres in length and width. Tabular icebergs can be incredibly thick, often measuring hundreds of metres from top to bottom.

**Impact.** Tabular icebergs have a significant impact on both the environment and human activities. Due to their immense size the main risk is if one grounds and gets stuck and disrupts the local wildlife that forage in the ocean around South Georgia. A significant detour around a big iceberg, especially when pups and chicks are being reared, has real negative consequences. But icebergs also bring benefits, releasing large quantities of nutrients as they melt which fertilises the ocean plankton in the water and propagates up the food chain. If they do hit the continental shelf the impact of their keels causes direct damage to benthic marine ecosystems, leaving deep gouges in the sea floor which can persist for thousands of years.

Icebergs are a serious maritime hazard to vessels operating in the region. While the large icebergs are readily visible to ships, thousands of smaller pieces are shed as they slowly disintegrate. The resulting advanced armada of small icebergs, especially the so-called 'berg bits' and 'growlers' are often hard to spot amongst breaking waves and can cause significant damage to a ship's hull.

**Movement.** Icebergs that calve from the Antarctic ice shelves are often caught initially in the Antarctic Coastal Current, which flows westward close to the coast, moving icebergs in an anticlockwise direction around the Antarctic continent. They eventually escape and drift north into the Southern Ocean. Once there, the primary current responsible for moving icebergs around Antarctica is the Antarctic Circumpolar Current (ACC). This is the world's strongest ocean current, flowing eastward around the continent in a continuous loop, driven by the powerful westerly winds and unimpeded by any landmasses. The interplay between the coastal and circumpolar currents, along with the



*Satellite images shows A68a heading towards the sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia. Credit: MODIS from NASA Worldview.*



*The tourist ship MV Explorer which sank in the Antarctic during a cruise in 2007. It sank after hitting a growler amongst sea ice. All persons onboard were rescued.*



*The side of iceberg A-68 photographed soon after the calving in 2017. Credit: Ali Rose, BAS.*



Coriolis effect due to Earth's rotation, dictates the complex trajectories and rotations of icebergs as they drift through the Southern Ocean.

**Naming and tracking icebergs.** Antarctic icebergs are named based on the quadrant of Antarctica where they are first sighted. The U.S. National Ice Center is responsible for naming and tracking Antarctic icebergs, but only those larger than twenty square nautical miles get this level of attention. The naming convention assigns a letter corresponding to the quadrant and a sequential number. For example, an iceberg first sighted in the Weddell Sea would be named starting with "A," followed by a sequential number, such as A-23. If an iceberg calves from an already named iceberg, it receives a letter suffix, like A-23A.

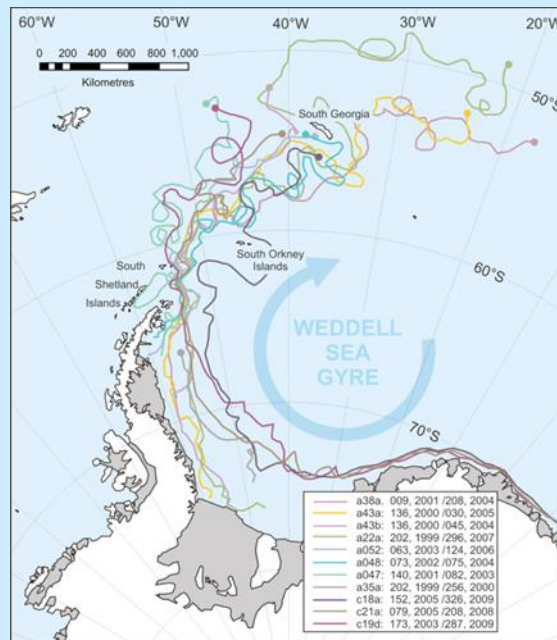
**Icebergs at South Georgia.** As shown in the maps opposite, icebergs which escape the Weddell Sea along 'iceberg alley' east of the Antarctic Peninsula, soon find themselves following the ACC in a north easterly direction. This puts them on a collision course with South Georgia and a lot of recent attention has been devoted to the potential consequences of such an event, focused on the potential impact to the abundant and spectacular wildlife at this important location.

In recent years the journeys of many notably large tabular icebergs to the waters around South Georgia have received much scrutiny. The names of icebergs, including A-68 which calved from the Larsen Ice Shelf, were familiar in numerous articles, gripping the public's attention as they made their almost unimaginable and remote journeys tracked by increasingly capable satellites.

Most do not make it intact, often breaking up into multiple pieces prior to arrival. The tabular bergs and the biggest fragments often pass to the south of South Georgia, looping around the southern end of the island before spinning along the edge of the continental shelf and back off to the north west. Ultimately, increased wave action in the open ocean and warmer temperatures north of the polar front mean they deteriorate quickly. A few will reach lower latitudes and are occasionally seen north of the Falkland Islands, but most do not survive much further and are no longer tracked by the US Ice Center and are forgotten.

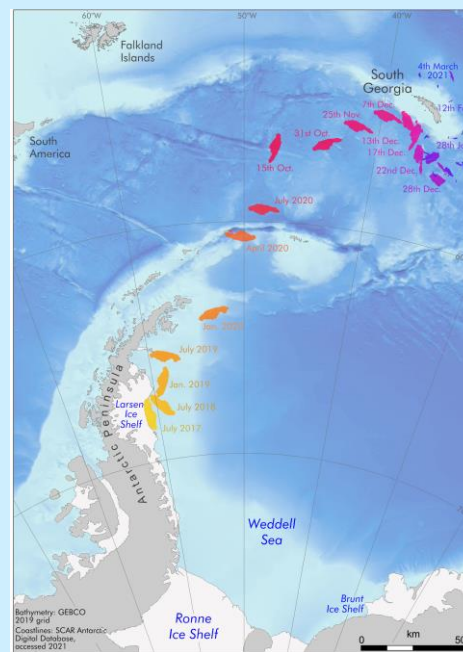
**A23-A – the reluctant iceberg.** The next tabular iceberg on its way to South Georgia is likely to be A-23A. Even by the standards of slow-moving icebergs, A-23 has taken an exceptionally long time to grow up and fledge to the open ocean. It calved from the Filchner-Ronne ice shelf in the southern Weddell Sea in 1986 and the largest remaining fragment, A23-A, grounded soon afterwards, remaining stuck to the sea floor until 2020. But even after escaping the Weddell Sea ice in late 2023, it has recently paused again about 200 km north of the South Orkney Islands to spend several months spinning in the same location in a rotating ocean current called a Taylor column.

But even this reluctant and elderly Antarctic offspring will soon be ushered on towards South Georgia. In the coming weeks and months, we will see the path of this latest giant as it navigates the last part of its journey in the South Atlantic. Perhaps it knows its fate and will pull one last trick to keep our attention for a while longer.



*Graphic showing tracks of selected large icebergs moving from the Weddell Sea and then the north-easterly track towards South Georgia.*

*Credit: BAS Mapping and Geographic Information Centre.*



*Graphic shows the A-68 iceberg's journey since calving from the Larsen C iceshelf in 2017.*

*Credit: Laura Gerrish, BAS Mapping and Geographic Information Centre.*

## South Georgia and Friends of SPRI joint event – July 2024

On 20 July 2024 the South Georgia Association held a joint one-day event with the Friends of the Scott Polar Research Institute at SPRI in Cambridge.

The successful and well-attended day included a series of talks relevant to South Georgia and Antarctica, followed by presentations of the 2024 and 2022 Morag Husband Campbell Medals, and concluding with dinner at Jesus College, Cambridge. There was plenty of time over lunch and coffee breaks to catch up with old friends and meet new ones. The Scott Polar Research Institute has a large lecture theatre as well as a fascinating polar museum and provided an ideal venue for the meeting.

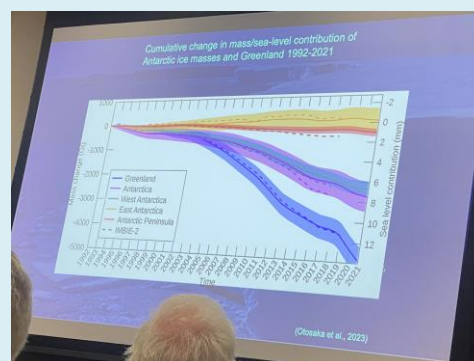
Prior to the main event the SG Association held a short Annual General Meeting for members.

The compère for the day was Pat Lurcock and his welcome and introduction were followed by a programme of five informative and entertaining lectures by prominent experts in their fields. The talks are summarised below by the editor from notes made at the meeting:

### **Ice and Environmental Change:** Julian Dowdeswell

*Julian started his career and association with Cambridge and the Scott Polar Research Institute as an undergraduate at Jesus College in 1977, finishing as Professor of Physical Geography and Director of SPRI from 2002 to 2021.*

In this overview he explained that the cryosphere includes land ice, (ice caps and glaciers), sea ice and also permafrost, and gave a short description of how glacier ice forms. The talk then emphasised the importance of the polar regions, through their global impacts on heat exchange and sea level change, and also their role in geo-politics. After a look at how scientific work is carried out in the polar regions and the importance of remote sensing, the talk discussed the modern changing climatic context for the Arctic and Antarctica, especially how the Arctic is one of the most sensitive parts of the global climate system and the potential impacts of dramatic changes in Arctic sea ice. The talk concluded with a sobering assessment of the future outlook for the cryosphere and its important contribution to global environmental change.



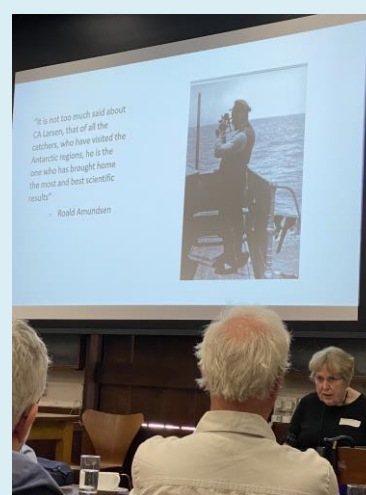
*Julian Dowdeswell explained the importance of the polar ice caps for global sea-level change (Photo S. Greenwood)*

### **Captain C.A. Larsen (1860-1924) A pioneer of the heroic age:** Eva-Marie Widmark, supported by daughter Linda.

*Eve Marie Widmark is the great-granddaughter of C. A. Larsen. Her mother Nora spent part of her childhood living on South Georgia at Grytviiken.*

The talk gave an overview of C. A. Larsen's career, including the 1902-03 Swedish Antarctic Expedition and the epic story of survival and rescue at Hope Bay, Snow Hill Island and Paulet Island. Through unique family anecdotes and insights, the audience also gained a flavour of what Larsen was like as a man. The talk highlighted his care for his men, and his focus on science and exploration as well as being a whaling pioneer, explaining why he was such an outstanding Captain and has left such an enduring legacy. The talk was illustrated by superb and fascinating photographs from the Larsen family collection. Eva-Marie had too much material for the time available, and it is hoped to organise a follow-on talk online.

*See also Eva-Marie's article in Newsletter 46.*



*Eva-Marie's talk included fascinating photographs from the Larsen family collection (Photo S. Greenwood)*

## Sailing a 100 year-old herring drifter below 50 degrees South – demanding and enchanting in equal measure:

Andy Beharrell.

This entertaining talk described Andy's 2022 voyage and adventures in the converted two-masted dutch herring drifter *Tecla*.

The ship was built in 1915 and was a working fishing vessel until 1975, and she was converted for polar voyages with paying guests in 1986. Andy joined the ship in Tenerife and sailed to the Falkland Islands, South Georgia, South Orkney Islands and South Shetland Islands, finishing at Puerto Williams, Chile.

*(Photo S. Greenwood)*



## 120 years of management and mismanagement of Antarctic marine living resources: John Dudeney, John Sheail, Paul Rodhouse and Mark Belchier.

The talk was split into three sections with a different presenter for each.

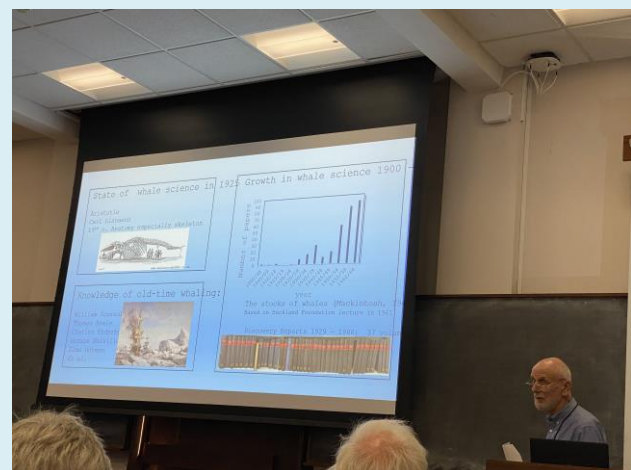
John Dudeney covered the origins of onshore whaling on South Georgia, following the realisation by Larsen in 1902 that there was great potential for whaling in South Georgia waters. Whaling needed land and water for onshore stations so the UK had control through the Falkland Islands Dependencies. Building a whaling station is a huge investment and needs long-term confidence and so there was a symbiosis between the UK and Norway and Larsen's Argentinian brokers Pesca, with long-term leases to operate at South Georgia.

It was realised early on that whaling needed managing if a repeat of the over-exploitation of seals in the early C19 was to be avoided. The talk explained how attempts by the UK government and through the League of Nations to regulate and manage whaling sustainably were ineffective in themselves against open ocean whaling from factory ships, but led to the Discovery Investigations (1925-51) and ultimately the International Whaling Convention and Commission, from 1946.

Paul Rodhouse described how the Discovery Investigations, operating initially from RRS Discovery and later Discovery II, but also whaling vessels and other ships, with a laboratory at King Edward Point, carried out more than 25 years of applied whaling research. The objective was to establish sustainable levels of yield for exploited species of whales, and to understand the Southern Ocean ecosystem that supports whale production.



*John Dudeney started off the lecture (Photo S. Greenwood)*



*Paul Rodhouse on the evolution of whale science and role of the Discovery Investigations (Photo S. Greenwood)*



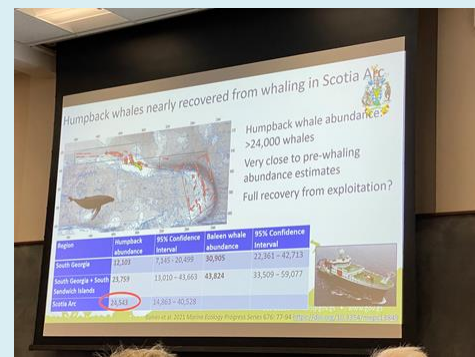
Key achievements included understanding phenology and life cycles of baleen whales; data on annual migrations of whales, and establishing that northern and southern hemisphere whale populations are separate with no inter-breeding. They also recorded how population structure under exploitation changed over time with large mature whales being increasingly replaced by smaller younger whales in the catch. However, the Investigations were unable to establish a sustainable annual catch; humpback whales were already severely depleted by the 1920s and blue whales by the 1930s. The science of population dynamics was not fully mature until the late 1950s by which time stocks were heavily overexploited. Pelagic whaling was outside any regulation and the whaling industry was characterised by a drive for short-term profits which inevitably led to near extinction of slow-reproducing species.

Mark Belchier covered ‘managing an ecosystem in recovery’ and told a more positive story. Interest in krill fishing developed in the 1970s, but there was realisation that over-exploitation of krill in the same way as seals, whales, icefish and rock cod previously would lead to ecosystem collapse. This led to the Convention on Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), from 1982. The scientific work of CCAMLR looks at the role of krill in the Southern Ocean ecosystem and indirectly includes whales and seals as key consumers of krill. It covers the area south of the polar front and thus includes South Georgia.

The South Georgia Government is able to control activity through licences in the 200 nautical mile maritime zone around the islands and has established strong regulation through Marine Protected Areas with no-take zones and a ban on bottom trawling. The krill fishery at South Georgia is much smaller than the quota allowable by CCAMLR.

There is now evidence that species are recovering; humpbacks are estimated to be at about 95% of the pre-whaling era population and blue whales are observed to be making a comeback. However, recovery of whales is likely to reduce krill which could impact on seal populations through competition for food resources. The recovery of a damaged ecosystem is complex and presents challenges for management

These talks link to the recently published book: *Antarctic whaling: a case study in near extinction* by John Sheail, Paul Rodhouse and John Dudeney (see p.15).



The lecture finished with more encouraging evidence for humpback whale recovery (Photos S. Greenwood)

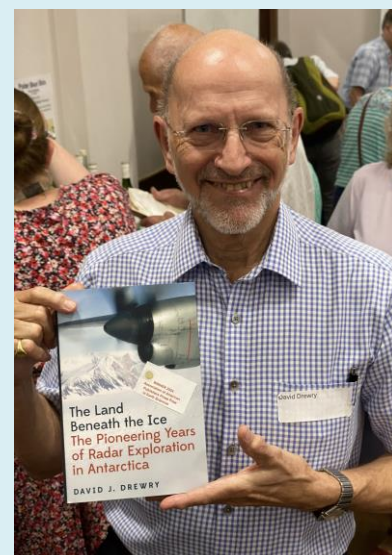
**The land beneath the ice:** David Drewry

David started with key questions about the Antarctic Ice Sheet – How big is it? How thick? Where is the deepest ice? What lies beneath the ice? How fast does it move? Is it growing or shrinking? Is climate change having an impact?

Radar exploration of the continent has been key to answering these questions.

The talk gave an overview of the science of radio-echo-sounding - explaining how it penetrates the ice, revealing structures within the ice and the character of the bed as well as the ice thickness. Details, anecdotes and fascinating photos gave an insight into David’s pioneering work with the Scott Polar Research Institute, Danish Technical University and US Antarctic Program logistics in the 1980s. This included 100s of hours of flying into the interior in US C130 aircraft from McMurdo, Siple, Byrd, Halley and Vostok stations – often with rocket assisted take-offs!

This scientific work led to the publication of the SPRI Antarctica Glaciological and Geophysical Folio, 1983, a summary of the best available data for Antarctica at the time, and laying the foundations for the current Antarctic community BEDMAP project from 2001.



The early radar work revealed amazing structures under the ice such as the Gamburtsev Mountains and subglacial lakes with liquid water; it's now known there are 100s of such lakes, including the largest, Lake Vostok. It identified the Ice Domes of deep, static ice which are the best sites for ice-core drilling allowing access to an 800,000 year climate record. Their flights over Pine Island and Thwaites glaciers allow comparison with current data for these key areas of ice loss and glacier acceleration.

The talk links to David's book: *The Land Beneath the Ice: The Pioneering Years of Radar Exploration in Antarctica*  
Drewry, David J. ISBN 9780691237916 Published by Princeton University Press, 2023

## Presentation of Morag Husband Campbell medals.

The medals were presented by David Tatham CMG, president of the SG Association, with a citation for each recipient.

The 2024 Medal was awarded to Ian Hart, for *'his significant contributions to the history, heritage and knowledge of South Georgia'*. (See full details in newsletter 46).

The 2022 Medal was awarded to 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.'* (See full details in newsletter 42)

Tony had been unavailable at previous opportunities to present the medal – hence the delay since 2022.

See page 19 for more details about the Medal and how to nominate someone for consideration.



*David Tatham (President) presented the Morag Husband Campbell Medal for 2024 to Ian Hart (left) and 2022 to Tony Martin (right).*

## Dinner at Jesus College

The event at SPRI was followed by a dinner in the grand setting of Jesus College, Cambridge. Fortunately the weather was kind and guests were able to have pre-dinner drinks in the college gardens.



*Photos: Sarah Greenwood*



At the dinner Linda Widmark presented a sailor's tally (cap ribbon) from HMS *Sappho*, from the Larsen family collection to Alison Neil, Chief Executive of the South Georgia Heritage Trust, for display in the Grytviken museum. HMS *Sappho* visited Grytviken in 1906 to assert British authority and monitor the activities of the newly established whaling station there.

*The South Georgia Association would like to thank the organisers, the Scott Polar Research Institute for hosting the event, and all those involved with delivery of such a successful and enjoyable day!*



*Linda Widmark presented a sailor's cap tally from HMS Sappho to Alison Neil of SGHT for the Grytviken museum*



## South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands featured in a stained-glass window at the Speaker's House, New Palace of Westminster

The British Overseas Territories and the Crown Dependencies, including South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, have had their place in UK Parliamentary democracy immortalised – with a depiction of each of their heraldic shields embedded in stained glass.

All 16 overseas territories (OTs) and the three Crown Dependencies are represented in two windows within the entrance hall of the Speaker's House at the New Palace of Westminster.

The Speaker's House epitomises the status of the Speaker. It has always been the grandest residence in the New Palace of Westminster and is the only one to survive in anything like its original form. The House occupies the twin-towered pavilion which projects at the northernmost end of the River Front, with one side parallel to Westminster Bridge. It is approached from New Palace Yard through the courtyard, called the Speaker's Court. When it was first completed in 1859, it was a grand Victorian town house, with servants in the basement and on the ground floor, the State Apartments on the Principal Floor and the bedrooms on the first and second floors. The Speaker now has a private flat on the second floor, but the impressive formal State Apartments remain on the Principal Floor and are used for official business.



*Entrance hall of the Speaker's House. The arrow shows the location of the SG&SSI roundel (below) (Photo: copyright @ House of Commons)*

The original windows dated from 1858 and possibly contained the arms of Speaker Denison who oversaw the completion of the Speakers House in its current form in 1850s. However, those windows have long since been removed and were replaced by plain, plate glass.

The new windows were commissioned by the current Commons Speaker, Sir Lindsay Hoyle. At the unveiling, on 9 May 2023, he said the works of art "would be a permanent and tangible reminder of the strong and close links between the UK and its wider family" and "From now on, every single person coming into Speaker's House will be reminded of how closely we are connected."

The new design, created by John Reyntiens Glass Studio - the same London-based stained-glass window specialists who recently reglazed the Big Ben clock dials – is sympathetic to the original Pugin-inspired windows and décor at the entrance to Speaker's House.



*South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands window panel (Photo: John Mills)*

It is possible to take a tour of the Speaker's House, bookable at <https://www.parliament.uk/visiting/visiting-and-tours/>  
*Thanks to Committee Member John Mills who visited the Speaker's House in August 2024 and highlighted the existence of the windows.*

Based on: UK Parliament website: <https://www.parliament.uk/business/commons/the-speaker/history-and-traditions-of-the-speakership/speakers-house-and-its-state-rooms/>



## Update on Initiative funding activities

*The SGA will be calling all future awards of Initiative Funding for South Georgia related projects 'Bob Burton Awards'. The new award title recognises the huge contribution Robert (Bob) Burton made to South Georgia over his lifetime and a generous bequest he left to the SGA.*

*Bob's first encounter with South Georgia was as a bird researcher in 1964. In subsequent years he had many roles to do with the island including as Director of the South Georgia Museum, as an author of several books and pamphlets on the natural and human history of the island, as a renowned lecturer on expedition cruise ships, as an advisor to the island's Government on heritage matters, and in instigating heritage projects including refurbishment of the cemeteries and a study of sealing archaeology.*

*Bob's generous legacy to the SGA has been set aside towards Initiative Funding for South Georgia related projects, therefore it is very fitting that future awards will be known as Bob Burton Awards. All SGA members and those with an interest in South Georgia can apply for Initiative Funding for projects relating to the island.*

*You can find out more about how to apply at [www.southgeorgiaassociation.org/initiative-fund/](http://www.southgeorgiaassociation.org/initiative-fund/)*

*Recent awards from the scheme have included the following:*

### **Virtual Viola Norman Court, Project Manager to The Viola Trust**

*The Virtual Viola project recently received an award of £1000 towards creating a virtual reality film of the vessel Dias/Viola and her history.*

After several years of working towards the physical repatriation of the steam trawler *Viola* (also known as *Dias*) from her berth at Grytvikken back to her home port of Hull, the Covid pandemic and the subsequent complications springing from it caused the Viola Trust to have a major re-think.

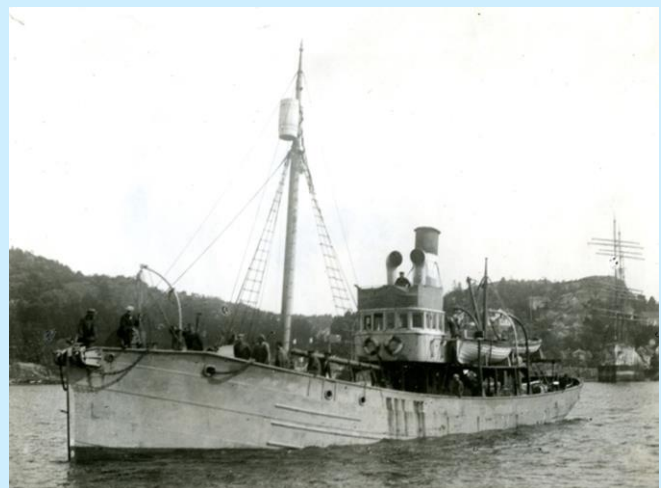
Not only had world-wide capacity of heavy lift vessels reduced dramatically, but associated costs shot through the roof adding more than £1 million to the funding required for repatriation, whilst simultaneously attitudes towards withdrawing her from South Georgia also seemed to be hardening.

It was following discussions with the Royal Navy Museum people that we came to learn how they were using laser imaging and photogrammetry in the preservation of such craft as HMS *Victory*. The pinpoint accuracy, down to fractions of a millimetre meant that laser imaging taken at intervals from a fixed point could show up even the slightest of movements both internally and externally - a godsend to their maintenance assessments.

Extending from those discussions came the idea of bringing *Viola* home in a 'virtual', as opposed to physical sense.

The decision made, a major search began for as much visual records and materials as could be found to show the old girl from her youth and onwards. Robb Robinson, a trustee of the Viola Trust and joint author/biographer of *Viola* in his published book, set about major maritime research. This meant not only seeking out photographs of her and her sister ships built at the same time, but finding internal and external shots, war department illustrations of her armaments, even Lloyds register blueprints of her construction.

Add to this a trawl (no pun intended) of old newsreel footage and commentary showing the operation of boxing fleets, together with historical research over ultrasonic pre-sonar hydrophone equipment and early depth charge knowledge with which she was eventually fitted, plus technical illustration of how her triple expansion steam engines operated, all had to be established.



*Viola as Dias fitted in Sandefjord for whaling  
(All images courtesy Viola Trust)*

Running logs were checked out showing several incidents with which *Viola* was involved both during her wartime service and beyond.

Professor Paul Chapman of Glasgow School of Art, a part of the University, who had previously worked with David Drewry during his time as Vice Chancellor of the University of Hull was contacted as the head of his specialist technical unit in Virtual Reality. His earlier time in Hull and familiarity with *Viola* gave additional impetus as he demonstrated how she could be made to 'sail' again, across flowing seas with animation of various activities of the crew during her lifetime.

Working initially to a 2-dimensional storyboard (animations can only be added at the end of the creative process) took us to iteration version 8 of the presentation and narrative before we were happy with the accuracy and relevance of the overall treatment.

At time of writing, the presentation is with Glasgow School of Art who are making those final animated adjustments to bring it all to Virtual Reality and after which it will be released and available to view, with a copy provided to the South Georgia Association.

Hundreds of unpaid hours of work have gone into the production which has still cost in excess of £40,000 to bring to completion (about £4 million less than the physical repatriation would have meant). The VR film itself runs to about 10 minutes duration and will be shown in the South Georgia Museum at Grytviken, on cruise ships visiting the area, in Hull and Northern England museums, parts of Scotland, Scandinavia where she had connections, in RN linked venues and, of course, in the City of Hull's major maritime development as Yorkshire's maritime City. It seeks to enhance awareness of South Georgia and concludes by drawing a parallel with the grave of Ernest Shackleton and the link with Hull through those of his crewmen who sailed with him to the end.

Grateful thanks for their support and help must go to South Georgia Association, University of Hull Maritime History Trust, South Georgia Heritage Trust, Hull and East Yorkshire Community Trust, the Royal Navy museum, a host of master mariners who 'looked in' on *Viola* when visiting South Georgia, British Antarctic Survey input, relatives and interested parties who made donations and whose enthusiasm helped to keep this process alive.

*Viola: The life and times of a Hull steam trawler. Robb Robinson and Ian Hart. Publisher: Lodestar Books, 2014. ISBN: 978190720627*

## **Shackleton, Beyond Endurance Sarah Lurcock**

The play 'Shackleton, Beyond Endurance' is now being marketed to theatres for further development thanks to support from South Georgia Association Initiative Funding.

Funding was sought by playwright James Burke specifically to develop the marketing materials necessary to approach theatres to attract the interest necessary to enable them to take the play's production to the next stage; the final development of the play and staged performances.

The play covers the events of Shackleton's Endurance Expedition, from getting stuck and then sunk by the ice of the Weddell Sea, through the boat journey and to the crossing the wind-battered peaks of South Georgia.

Development of the play so far included a successful research and development week at the Tron theatre, Glasgow, funded by Creative Scotland. This gave the group a clear vision for how the play can be staged, putting the focus on imagination and evocation rather than photorealistic design.

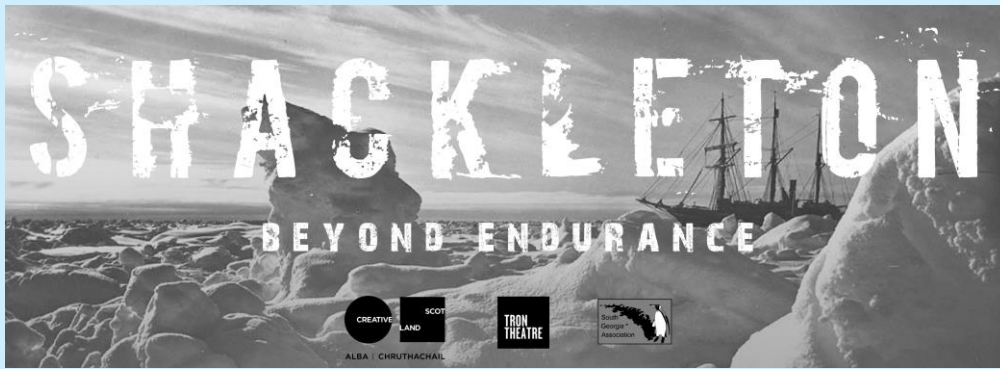


*Viola at Grytviken about 10 years ago, when she was still fully afloat. At this time the interior of the vessel was cleaned out.*



*One of the virtual-reality images, the final product will be animated with movement, smoke stack flow and wave action.*





They wrote: “The landscapes that we want can be conjured beautifully with a minimal set, bolstered by music and lighting. The scale of the characters’ physical battle can be suggested effectively by the quality of their movement, while multi-roling of parts allows us to move from place to place or storyline to storyline with ease.



*Staging concept for the play (Image: James Burke)*

Sound has become the lifeblood of the piece. By using a live musician, we can respond to the events on stage organically, creating a fluid whole. The text now includes diary extracts from the crew; this helps to ensure that, no matter how incredible the events on stage seem, the play remains grounded in fact - this is a real event that happened to real people.”



James Burke said, “We owe a great debt to the South Georgia Association as your support was important to garner further support of the earlier phase of the project...the impact of your contribution could not be overstated.”



*Scenes from the development week at the Tron theatre (Photos: James Burke)*

What is next for this project? They need to gain the interest of theatres to stage the play and to raise further funds to fully develop the play. This marketing is supported by the ‘Pitch Packet’ developed using the SGA funding. Part of this package is a teaser trailer filmed during the development week. You can watch it at the link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gsiuQcH9DVw&t=5s>

James Burke was awarded £1000 of Initiative Funding and we wish him and the rest of the group all success as they take the project forwards. They hope to launch the play in Scotland followed by a tour of the UK. We hope very much that in a future edition of the newsletter we will be able to bring you further news of the progress of 'Shackleton, Beyond Endurance'.

## Historic Shackleton Memorial Cross on display in Dundee, City of Discovery

*Text adapted by the Editor from Dundee Heritage Trust website and press release.*

*In collaboration with South Georgia Heritage Trust, the original Hope Cross from Ernest Shackleton's memorial cairn in Grytviken, South Georgia, is now on display at Discovery Point; home of the Royal Research Ship Discovery.*

Following Shackleton's untimely passing on 5 January 1922 at Grytviken, his Quest crew members built a memorial cairn in tribute to their Expedition leader at Hope Point, overlooking Grytviken whaling station. The Hope Cross, crafted from wood salvaged from an old whaling station, was erected atop the cairn.

*"No one grudged the labour and time spent, for it was the last job we should do for the Boss" (Frank Wild).*

After almost 100 years of weathering the elements, the Cross was replaced in 2018 with a replica in order to preserve this poignant artefact. Now, the original Cross is on display and being cared for at Discovery Point, after being transported to the UK by the British Antarctic Survey, as part of a collaboration between Dundee Heritage Trust, South Georgia Heritage Trust and the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI).

The Cross was unveiled to the public on 15 October. David Henry, Chair of Dundee Heritage Trust said:

*"The Royal Research Ship Discovery attracts thousands of visitors each year to Dundee from all around the world. It is a privilege to have this important piece of Antarctic heritage within our care. Shackleton's star seems to shine ever more brightly as the years roll by. Now many more people will be able to pay their respects to this inspirational figure who had strong associations with the city of Discovery."*

The exhibition alongside the cross includes some of the earliest photography of the Hope Cross, kindly provided to Dundee Heritage Trust by Jan Chojecki, whose grandfather John Quiller Rowett - a school friend of Ernest Shackleton - funded the Shackleton-Rowett Expedition of 1921. (see Jan Chojecki's article about the expedition in Newsletter 46, May 2024).

The South Georgia Association have contributed £1000 from the Initiative Funding (now Bob Burton Award) towards the exhibition in Dundee:

*"The South Georgia Association are delighted to be able to substantially support the DHT to display the important historical object, Shackleton's Hope Cross. Having the cross on display in Dundee will help to share the story of Polar Explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton with new audiences and help explain why he is such an important figure in the history of the sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia".*

Prior to the public opening, the Hope Cross was rededicated at a private ceremony at Discovery Point with Shackleton's granddaughter Alexandra in attendance, bringing together guests from all over the world, whose ancestors sailed aboard *Quest* with Sir Ernest Shackleton on his final journey. Susanna Ferrar, descendant of Hartley T. Ferrar (geologist on RRS *Discovery's* 1901 Expedition), played Howard Goodall's *Shackleton's Cross* as part of the private ceremony.



*The Hope Point Cross on South Georgia  
(Photo: Jan Chojecki archive)*



*The Hope Point Cross in the exhibition in Dundee  
(Photo: Courtesy and © Dundee Heritage Trust)*



## Captain James Cook, HMS *Resolution*, 17 January 1775 Robert Headland

Indications of land, in the approximate position of South Georgia, had appeared on charts for almost a century before Captain Cook's voyage between 1772 and 1775 aboard HMS *Resolution*. From this ship, on 14 January 1775, Thomas Willis *a wild and drinking midshipman* sighted an outlier of South Georgia off to port on which Cook bestowed his name. Cook changed course to pass between Willis Island and Bird Island (which was named *because of the number on it*) then continued eastbound along the northern coast of South Georgia surveying and describing the island. He noted it formed *several bays or inlets with huge masses of snow or ice at the bottoms of them*. (All quotations from Beaglehole 1961.)

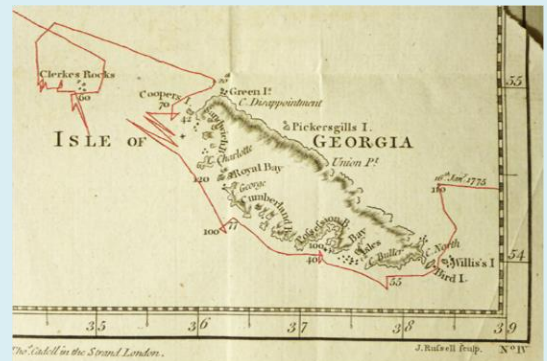
On 17 January 1775 three landings were made from *Resolution* where Cook bestowed the name Possession Bay. He recorded *The head of the bay, as well as two places on each side, was terminated by a huge Mass of Snow and ice of vast extent, it shewed a perpendicular cliff of considerable height, just like the side or face of an ice isle*. Several falls of ice were seen, and heard (*noise like cannon*) during the visit. Cook continued *I landed in three different places, displayed our Colours and took possession of the Country in his Majesty's name under a discharge of small Arms*.

After an inlet was seen at 07:00 a boat was *Hoisted out to make a landing*. Then the landing party, of Cook with three scientists and a midshipman, *got on board a little after 12 o'clock* thus the landings, claim and collections were made during five hours. Botanical, zoological, and geological items were collected, and *Flocks of penguins, the largest I ever saw, ... weighed from 29 to 38 pds [13.2 – 17.3 kg]* were described which were probably King penguins. Cook also reported abundant seals, which instigated the later arrival of sealers.

The question of where these landings were made has been pondered, especially on the approach of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the event. I have had opportunities to make several visits to Possession Bay and Prince Olav Harbour at its northern extent, and have examined published charts, views, descriptions etc (David 1992).



*A woodcut image of Possession Bay appears in Cook's published work.*



*Image right: Extract from: James Cook, Chart of the Discoveries made in the South Atlantic Ocean, in His Majesty's Ship Resolution, under the Command of Captain Cook, in January 1775, W. Strahan and T. Cadel, London, 1777. (Public domain). Note: South at the top!*

Considering Cook was on South Georgia around the maximum of the Little Ice Age and looking at the shores of Possession Bay it appears unlikely that he was able to penetrate far within it, indeed the glacial front may have resembled the recent form of the Fortuna Glacier which extends to the sea. Comparing Cook's 1775 image with what may be seen from a ship, and even with a considerate captain doing some manoeuvring, I have been unable to get a good reconciliation (perhaps the artist, or the engraver, 'sharpened' some peaks.). In the image a prominent glacier appears with, to the west, somewhat like the coasts near Sheep Point from what seems to be Black Head. Modern charts show the bay extending farther inland than others at the time but the area now, coincidentally, named Cook Bay might account for this. On the image the eastern side looks too precipitous for an easy landing.

Thus, from the literature and visits I think a likely place for Cook's landings would have been close to the entrance to Possession Bay and clear of the extended glacier. These places, west of Black Head and along the beaches near Sheep Point, where a skeletal lighthouse stands, and close to the entrance to Elephant Lagoon, seem probable candidates. This is west of the likely extent of the main glacier, without any large glaciers farther to its west, and reasonably within the bay boundaries. There are several beaches along this vicinity which could have provided convenient landings. The largest is at the low-lying isthmus of the lagoon. Regarding the glaciers, as with so many on the island, they cause me astonishment to see them now when I recall them as recently as 1977.

Beaglehole, J. C. 1961. *The Journals of Captain James Cook on his Voyage of Discovery*, Vol 2 *The voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-75*. London; Hakluyt Society, Extra Series 33.

David, A. (editor) *The Charts and Coastal Views of Captain Cook's Voyages: The voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775*. London; Hakluyt Society, Extra Series 44.

## Place names at Stromness, South Georgia

Adrian Fox, and Elena Field (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 fourth in a series highlighting the place names of landmarks at the more frequently visited areas of South Georgia.

**Stromness Bay, Harbour and whaling station:** The wider Stromness Bay, between Cape Saunders and Busen Point and including Leith Harbour, Stromness Harbour and Husvik Harbour, was probably first sighted by Cook in 1775. The Stromness features are named from usage of sealers and whalers [strømness = stream point]. The Stromness site was leased to Sandefjord Whaling Company by the Falkland Islands Government in 1908 and the name was in use from that date.



Based on an extract from British Antarctic Survey, 2013. Busen Region, South Georgia, 1:25 000 scale map, BAS 25 series, Sheet 5.

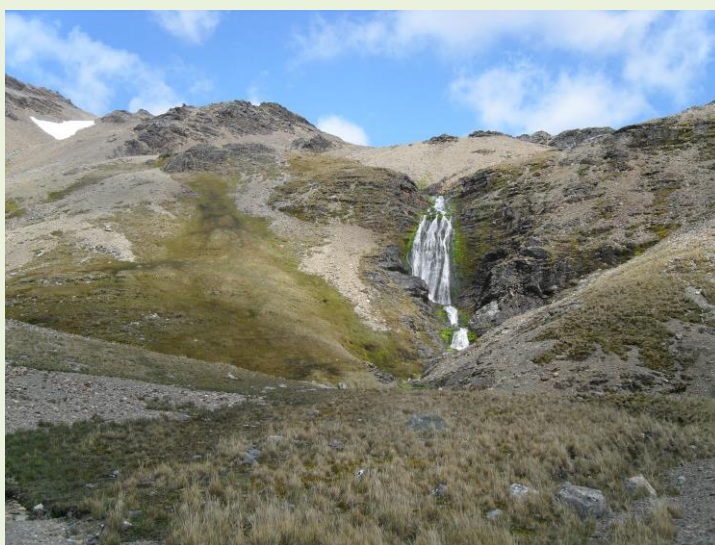
Shackleton and his companions Worsley and Crean staggered into Stromness in May 1916 after their epic crossing of South Georgia and there are several names in the area associated with this event: **Shackleton Valley** was named in 1991 after Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton (1874-1922), leader of the British Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition (BITAE) 1914-16. **Shackleton Falls**, about 3 km west of Stromness and the site of a difficult descent by Shackleton's party, and **Crean Lake**, named for Thomas Crean (1877-1938), Second Officer of *Endurance* on the BITAE, 1914-16, who plunged through snow into the lake on the crossing, were named in 2013 in anticipation of the centenary of the BITAE.

**Pintail Peninsula**, at the south side of Stromness Harbour is an expanse of tussac covered hillocks with several small lakes and was named in 2009 for the large breeding population of South Georgia Pintail ducks found there.

The remaining names are either derived from or commemorate the whaling activity in the area:

**Tønsberg Point**, between Stromness Harbour and Husvik Harbour to the South was named after the Tønsberg Hvalfangeri, Norwegian Whaling Company at Husvik. To the north of Stromness Harbour, **Harbour Point** was in use by the whalers for this navigational landmark. **Watering Cove** was named descriptively in 2013, it is an historic site used for the collection of fresh water by whalers. Remnants of a dam and stone walls remain on the beach.

**Berntsen Ridge**, the ridge between Stromness and Husvik is named for Capt. Søren Berntsen (1880-1940),



*Shackleton Falls, looking west towards the col between Shackleton Valley and Fortuna Bay. The site of a difficult last hurdle for Shackleton, Worsley and Crean before reaching safety at Stromness. (Photo: A. Fox)*



who established Husvik whaling station for Tønsberg Hvalfangeri and became its first Manager in 1910. At its western end, the ridge meets the prominent triangular **Samson Peak** (595 m), named following the local theme of historic South Georgia ships, after the whale catcher *Samson*, which was sent from Stromness to rescue Shackleton's men (McNeish, Vincent and McCarthy) from Peggotty Bluff in May 1916.

To the north, separating Stromness from Leith Harbour, lies **Bratelli Ridge**, named for Trygve Bratelli (1910-1984) who started his working life in the guano shed at Leith (1926-27) (guano in whaling is a valuable residue left after the processing of meat and bone). In a remarkable career trajectory, went on to become Norwegian Prime Minister (1971-1972 and 1973-1976)!



*Stromness Harbour, with Grass Island in the foreground and Leith Harbour to the right (north). (Photo: Tony Martin)*

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/>

## Antarctic whaling – a case study in near extinction

A new book: *Antarctic whaling: a case study in near extinction* by John Sheail, Paul Rodhouse and John Dudeney was published in July by CABI Publishing. It explores how British whalers came to claim so large a share of the whales taken from the Southern Ocean in the first half of the twentieth century, and, more particularly, where, when, how and why the British Government came to play so large a part in whaling history through its endeavour to regulate the whaling grounds. It explains the scientific findings of the Discovery Investigations and why they did not save the whales.

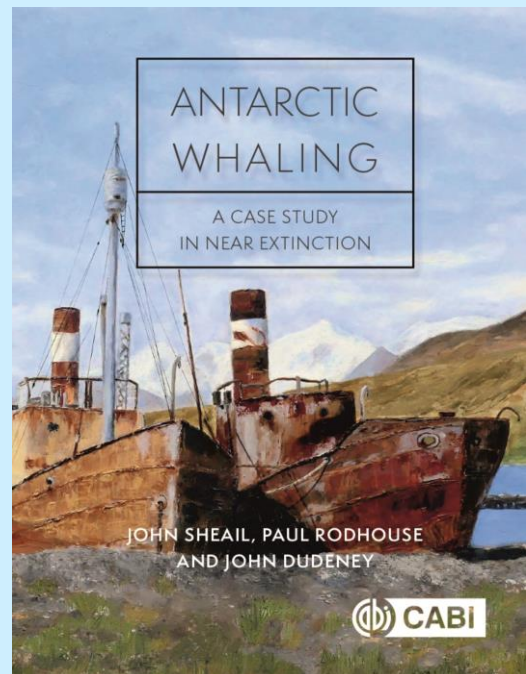
The publishers preview can be accessed at the link below, and the book is available from bookshops and Amazon.

<https://www.cabidigitallibrary.org/doi/10.1079/9781800628946.000>

ISBN : 978-1-78918-241-5 (hardback) 350 pages.

The front cover is a detail from a painting by Paul Rodhouse of the hulks of two whaler's vessels, *Albatross* and *Dias* ashore at Grytviken, South Georgia.

*John Dudeney and Paul Rodhouse, with Mark Belchier, gave a lecture on this topic at the SG Association and Friends of SPRI one-day event in July – see report on p 5.*



## **South Georgia Government news**

*Compiled by the editor based on a statement provided by Government of SG&SSI for the SGA AGM and the GSGSSI website.*

### **From the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office**

Over the past year, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's (FCDO) Polar Regions Department has continued to support the work of the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI) to manage this incredible UK Overseas Territory sustainably and protect its unique environment. The FCDO supports GSGSSI's work to implement the 'Protect, Sustain, Inspire' strategy, which provides the framework through which GSGSSI encourages environmental recovery and resilience through world-leading, evidence-based sustainable management. We want to see South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (SGSSI) recognised as one of the best-managed remote islands in the world, with good governance, sound financial management and thriving biodiversity.

Polar Regions Department has continued to defend and promote British sovereignty of SGSSI in international fora, such as the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) and at the United Nations, as well as represent SGSSI's interests internationally. Polar Regions Department supported GSGSSI's second 5-year review of the Marine Protected Area (MPA) and welcomed the outcome, which resulted in increased protection ensuring that the SGSSI MPA remains one of the largest and most protected areas of ocean globally.

Polar Regions Department provided its annual £500,000 contribution to the British Antarctic Survey for the management of the King Edward Point research station. The UK Government's Blue Belt Programme has supported science, monitoring and surveillance of the SGSSI MPA throughout the year.

### **Bird Flu (HPAI)**

In October 2023 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) was confirmed in brown skua on Bird Island, South Georgia and since then has been detected at numerous other sites around the Territory and in a range of species including elephant seals, fur seals, wandering albatross, gentoo penguins and king penguins.

As the 2024/25 season approaches GSGSSI continues to monitor the situation in partnership with the British Antarctic Survey, Animal and Plant Health Agency and the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators. In the 2024/25 season we are moving from site-based to activity-based response measures. Updated guidance on HPAI risk and response in the Territory is available in Section 9 of the Biosecurity Handbook.

Enhanced biosecurity procedures remain key to all response measures. All visitors and staff are required to maintain strict separation from wildlife and apply extra caution when cleaning clothing and equipment that has been used in other wildlife areas where HPAI has been confirmed or suspected. In addition, GSGSSI requires that an expert guide or researcher familiar with bird behaviour performs an assessment prior to each landing and remains vigilant for signs of the disease. Visitors must not kneel, crouch, lie or sit on the ground and must remain at least 5 m from wildlife and carcasses. If it is not possible to meet these conditions, landings will be aborted.

### **South Georgia stakeholder meeting**

On the 9 July 2024, GSGSSI welcomed friends and colleagues to Fitzwilliam College in Cambridge for the annual South Georgia Stakeholder Meeting. Owing to global events, this was the first in-person stakeholder meeting since 2019 and it reinforced just how important it is for us to spend time together, catching up on recent achievements, ongoing workplans and future aspirations.

During the morning session GSGSSI shared many operational updates alongside information on policy and strategy developments and SGSSI laws and legislation. One of our Government Officers gave a unique perspective on living and working at King Edward Point, and a tourism presentation highlighted the challenges of recent seasons and updates to visitor management plans.

Following a splendid lunch which allowed participants to catch up with old friends and network with new contacts, the afternoon session had more of an environmental focus. A summary of the recently concluded 5-year MPA Review was followed by updates from two highly successful Darwin Plus funded projects on terrestrial invasive species and whale recovery that have been carried out at SGSSI.



The impacts of avian influenza at South Georgia and management measures for the 2024/25 visitor season were also explained, and South Georgia Heritage Trust gave a very informative presentation on work being done at the museum at Grytviken and the Whalers Memory Bank Project in Scotland. The day concluded with an update on Government finances and a lively question and answer session where stakeholders could quiz GSGSSI on any issues of interest.

### Unusually cold weather around South Georgia

The South Georgia area experienced unusually cold weather in early August 2024 with temperatures dropping to -10 °C at King Edward Point, resulting in formation of sea ice in King Edward Cove and a very frozen FPV Pharos SG! For comparison, mean daily maximum and minimum temperatures for August (winter) at KEP are +2.4 and -3.7 °C with a record low of -13°C (2006-2020) (Source: Meteomanz.com).



*Sea ice at KEP and an iced up FPV Pharos SG (Photos: GSGSSI/Karen Wolstenholme)*

### South Georgia Heritage Trust and museum

With the generous help of supporters including SGA members, the South Georgia Heritage Trust and Friends of South Georgia Island continue to help fund, support and deliver priority environmental projects at South Georgia, including:

- Planning monitoring surveys and using citizen science to find out the size of South Georgia’s wildlife populations, so that the effects of unprecedented factors like climate change and avian flu on birds, seals and whales can be understood.
- Working with British Antarctic Survey (BAS) to create a whale gallery in the museum at Grytviken, where visitors can listen to the whale songs in the seas around South Georgia and find out how to support whale research.
- Supporting “Hungry Humpbacks: a large-scale research project led by BAS to understand the resilience of returning whales’ food sources (i.e. krill) by measuring seasonal foraging intensity at South Georgia”.
- Supporting the “Albatrosses: Seabirds at Risk” conservation project which aims to reduce the high mortality rate of several species of albatrosses. It’s delivered by BAS, BirdLife International and GSGSSI.
- The ongoing protection of South Georgia’s native birds through the GSGSSI biosecurity dog team which checks vessels *en route* to the island for invasive species.



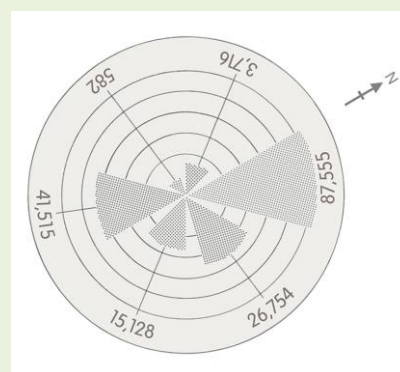
*Photo: Biosecurity dog ‘Sammy’ at work (Photo: SGHT)*

The Trust is also seeking funding for a range of projects to preserve the rich cultural heritage at South Georgia for future generations. **These projects collectively make up the Whaling Station Initiative:**

- Preserving Shackleton’s heritage – we plan to stabilize and conserve the famous Stromness Manager’s Villa, allowing people around the world to experience it digitally. This project was inspired by SGA’s Bob Burton and we are delivering it in his memory, with the greatest affection and thanks.
- Whale Memorial - in Grytviken, near to the South Georgia Museum, we will be installing a memorial *Commensalis*, by sculptor Michael Visocchi, to the thousands of whales that were killed during the first half of the 20th century, when South Georgia was at the centre of the Antarctic whaling industry. The first part of the installation, the Key Table which incorporates original rivets from Stromness Whaling Station, is being created right now and will be on display from 26-29 June at a weekend of South Georgia events named ‘Whale of a Weekend’ in Dundee.
- Creating a Whalers’ Memory Bank, a living, growing digital time capsule where veterans of the whaling industry, their families and communities can come together to contribute and share their stories with a wider audience.
- Supporting and carrying out environmental work to reduce the oil, asbestos and waste left from the whaling industry.



*The vision for Commensalis, by Michael Visocchi  
(Image: SGHT)*



*The 175,250 whales processed at South Georgia between 1904 and 1966 are represented, by species, by 2,411 original whaling station rivets (SGHT website).*

*Thanks to Alison Neil, South Georgia Heritage Trust*

## 1775 and 1925 anniversaries

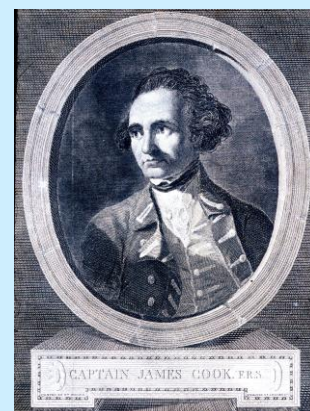
*2025 marks the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cook’s arrival and first exploration of the uninhabited island of South Georgia on 17 January 1775. The Discovery Investigations into whaling and the Southern Ocean ecosystem began in 1925.*

There will be several events during 2025 organised by the SG Association, and other organisations with an interest in South Georgia, celebrating both these anniversaries.

The first SG Association event will be an **online talk on the evening of Friday 17 January by Dr Bruce Mair, about Cook’s landing on South Georgia in 1775, and geological fieldwork on the 200<sup>th</sup> and 202<sup>nd</sup> anniversaries.** (*Joining details to follow*).

At the time of writing further plans are under active development but there are, as yet, no firm details. Please look out for an email to Members, and keep an eye on the SG Association website for more details as plans for events develop.

*Right: Portrait of Cook, in his book: A Voyage Towards the South Pole, and Round the World, performed in His Majesty’s Ships the Resolution and Adventure, In the Years 1772,1773,1774, and 1775.*



The Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands have a series of stamps in development to mark the 250<sup>th</sup> year as well as the date of Possession Day. The stamps will kick off with a Captain Cook First Day Cover, and then other FDCs throughout the year celebrating 250 years on various themes such as: science, heritage, conservation, exploration, etc. The GSGSSI also hope to have a commemorative coin minted that will bear the date of 2025.



# South Georgia Association News

## New Chair for South Georgia Association

The Committee of the South Georgia Association has appointed Mrs Philippa Foster Back CBE to be its new Chair in succession to Professor David Drewry, who is retiring.

Mrs Foster Back has a distinguished career in finance and business and numerous Polar connections. She is currently Chairman of the UK Antarctic Place-names Committee and has formerly chaired the Friends of the Scott Polar Research Institute (FoSPRI), the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust and the South Georgia Heritage Trust. From 2001 to 2020 she was Director of the Institute of Business Ethics.

The President of the SGA, David Tatham, said: "We are delighted that Mrs Foster Back has agreed to become our new Chairman. She has a distinguished career in business and finance and many Antarctic connections. At the same time we are deeply grateful to Professor Drewry who has been our Chairman for fourteen years during which the activities of the Association have expanded considerably. He also saw us through the Covid years when our meetings and lectures had to go on-line."

The handover took place at a Committee meeting on 9 October at Falklands House, London. On behalf of the Members, the Committee presented Professor Drewry with a framed and inscribed print of a rare almost cloud-free satellite image of South Georgia.



*New Chair Mrs Philippa Foster-Back CBE*



*Professor David Drewry was presented with a framed and inscribed print in thanks for his 14-year tenure as Chair*

## Morag Husband Campbell Medal 2025

The South Georgia Association is inviting nominations for the Eighth award of the Morag Husband Campbell medal.

**The Medal** has been made possible by a generous bequest from a long-standing and enthusiastic supporter of the Association, Miss Morag Husband Campbell. The Medal comprises a Sterling silver relief medallion, 60 mm 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).



*The Morag Husband Campbell medal – the graphic is Cook's HMS Resolution at Possession Bay, 1775.*

Nominations (self-nominations are not permitted) should be made on an official Nomination Form, available on the SG Association website and from the Secretary, to whom they should be sent no later than 28th February 2025. The award would be made at the Annual General Meeting of the Association.

*Mrs Philippa Foster-Back, CBE, Chair SGA*

## South Georgia Association Treasurer role

The South Georgia Association is seeking someone to join the Committee as Treasurer. For further details and to express interest please contact the Secretary, Fran Prince. This is a voluntary role.

Details of the existing Committee Members are available on the SG Association website.

The role involves 1) Financial control for the Association by: Operation of the Associations' bank account, book-keeping, budgeting and preparation of financial reports to the Committee, and 2) The preparation of annual accounts and liaison with the Society's auditor.

The Treasurer would also be expected to contribute to the Society as a Committee Member – attending Committee meetings twice yearly, the AGM and other events, and being an advocate for the Society.

## Painting of South Georgia in art exhibition

An oil painting: *Drygalski Fjord, sub-Antarctic Island South Georgia* by SG Association Committee member Paul Rodhouse has recently been selected from over 450 entries for showing in the American Society of Marine Artists Awards Online Exhibition:

<https://www.americansocietyofmarineartists.com/>  
Paul served as President of the Cambridge Drawing Society between 2021 and 2024 and more examples of his work can be seen here:

<https://www.cambridgedrawingsociety.org/project/paul-rodhouse/> and on the cover of the book *Antarctic whaling – a case study in near extinction* (p. 15).

*Drygalski Fjord, sub-Antarctic Island of South Georgia,*  
(Photo Paul Rodhouse)



## 'Endurance' film available for streaming

The Film 'Endurance' from National Geographic Documentary Films had its Premiere at the BFI London Film festival on 12 October and had showings at selected regional cinemas during October. It is now available for viewing on Disney+ and National Geographic streaming services.

The film merges the story of Shackleton's 1914-16 British Imperial TransAntarctic Expedition, and the epic of survival after the sinking of the *Endurance*, with the 2022 Falklands Maritime Heritage Trust expedition 'Endurance22' to locate, investigate and laser-scan the wreck with a Remotely Operated Vehicle working from the SA *Agulhas II*. The film was directed by Chai Vasarhelyi, Jimmy Chin and Natalie Hewit, who previously directed the award-winning films 'Free Solo' and 'Nyad'. It extensively features Expedition Leader John Shears, who will be well known to many SGA Association Members, and Director of Exploration maritime archaeologist Mensun Bound, who was born in Stanley, Falkland Islands.



*Laser scan of the wreck of Endurance. (Image: courtesy Falklands Maritime Heritage Trust)*

**Editor's Note:** Thanks to the contributors, notably: Andrew Fleming, Sarah Lurcock, Bob Headland, Paul Rodhouse, Sarah Greenwood and Alison Neil. The SG Association newsletter is produced twice a year, in May and November.

Contributions should be submitted, at least one month in advance to the editor: Adrian Fox ([ajfo@exchange.nerc.ac.uk](mailto:ajfo@exchange.nerc.ac.uk))