

# South Georgia Association Newsletter

Number 50 May 2026

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*King Edward Point viewed from Grytviken – see history of KEP feature on p. 21 (Photo: Rhi Nichol)*

**This issue marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of King Edward Point Research Station and is the 50<sup>th</sup> Newsletter:**

SG Association Summer event, 10–11 July 2026; 50 issues of the Newsletter; Feature article - My time on SG as an 11-year old girl, 1962; Bob Burton Awards update; 6<sup>th</sup> GeoFIDS reunion at RSGS; Science in action at KEP and on South Georgia, 2025-26; Place names at Godthul; South Georgia organisations' news roundup; Feature article - History of KEP, up to the opening of the new station; Book review – Whaling at Stromness South Georgia.



*SG Association Summer Event  
Art and History of South Georgia (p. 2)*



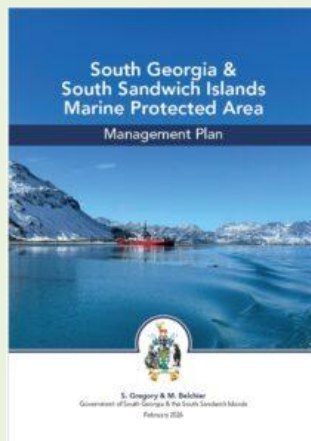
*11-year old girl on South  
Georgia, 1962 (p. 5)*



*Bob Burton Awards update (p. 9)*



*Science in Action on SG (p. 12)*



*SG organisations' news (p. 17)*



*History of KEP (p. 21)*

**South Georgia Association summer event:** *The Association is holding an in-person, two-day event 10-11 July 2026, with the theme of **History and Art of South Georgia**.* It will be hosted in Cambridge, and includes the Annual Members Meeting, Morag Husband Campbell Medal presentation and Presidential Dinner.

Full details are available on the SG Association website. **The booking deadline is 12 June 2026.**

## South Georgia Association Summer event

10-11 July 2026 at the British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge

*The South Georgia Association is holding an in-person, two-day event Friday 10 - Saturday 11 July 2026, with the theme of **History and Art of South Georgia**.*

*Join us at the British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge, for our summer meeting with two days of informative talks from leading experts and an event dinner at Homerton College. Grasp the opportunity to discuss aspects of the history, ships, and people who were there, and learn more about the art of South Georgia from contemporary artists. Whether you're a long-standing member, or a non-member of the South Georgia Association, or simply fascinated by the island and the Antarctic, this event combines history, science and art, making it perfect for everyone.*

The event is hosted by The South Georgia Association at the Aurora Innovation Centre, British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge.

The site is on the western side of Cambridge, and has good road access. There is blue-badge parking on site, and ample free parking within a few minutes' walk. Cambridge Railway Station is a bus or taxi ride away.

### Friday 10 July:

The first day will include the history of King Edward Cove, from the establishment of Grytviken in 1904 by C. A. Larsen, and the later building of the Discovery Investigations laboratory in 1924-25 by the UK at King Edward Point. After the cessation of whaling, scientific research continued until the 1982 conflict, and recommenced in 2001 after 19 years of military occupation. This year, the 70th anniversary of a ship inextricably linked with the military history of South Georgia, namely HMS *Endurance* (formerly *Anita Dan*), will be commemorated.

Reports from the South Georgia Heritage Trust and the Government of South Georgia will be followed by an Annual Members Meeting and presentation of the Morag Husband Campbell Medal, which will close the day.

On the Friday evening, there is the option to join us for a Drinks Reception and Event Dinner at Homerton College.

### Saturday 11 July:

The focus of the second day is the art of South Georgia from past to present. The artwork of Norwegian whalers will be described by speakers from "Øyas Venner" and the Sandefjord Whaling Museum. Presentations by contemporary artists about their contrasting styles and subjects will highlight how art provides a dynamic interpretation of the island, its wildlife, and surrounding seas. The new sculpture, recently installed on the whaling plan at Grytviken, will be introduced by its creator, and add another dimension to the island's art.

The 70th anniversary of RRS *John Biscoe*, another ship with strong connections to King Edward Point and Bird Island research stations, which landed field scientists around the island, and supported the Offshore Biological Programme, will also be celebrated. Finally, in recognition of BAS moving to Cambridge 50 years ago, some paintings by the late Dick Laws (Director at that time) will be exhibited alongside other South Georgia art from the BAS Collection.

*There will be plenty of breaks with free tea and coffee to catch up with old friends and meet new ones!*

**Tickets: Single day** £25 (SGA Member) £42.50 (non-Member); **Both days** £40/£57.50, and **Dinner** £90 for both Members and non-Members. **The booking deadline is 12 June 2026.**

Full details are available on the SG Association website: <https://southgeorgiaassociation.org/category/events/>



*Aurora Innovation Centre at British Antarctic Survey*



*Pre-dinner reception at last year's event, July 2025*

## King Edward Point – past and present

King Edward Point Research Station (KEP) opened in 2001 and is a centre for marine and fisheries research, owned by the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI) but operated by British Antarctic Survey (BAS). March 22, 2026 marked its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, celebrated by BAS, GSGSSI, and the SGA at events on 19 and 27 March.

King Edward Point was originally developed, from 1909, as an administrative centre to manage the whaling and sealing industries at Grytviken and elsewhere on South Georgia. After whaling ceased in the 1960s, the site passed to BAS in 1969.

The graphic below contrasts the layout at the end of whaling with the current station, reflecting the change in role of KEP from Administrative Centre to Research Station. *Note, some buildings have had different uses and names over time.*

See the feature article on p. 5 and ‘The History of KEP’ on p. 21 for further information on the evolution of the site and what life was like there in the 1960s. ‘Science in Action on SG’ (p. 12) gives details of recent research activities.



*KEP in 1973-74, shortly after the end of the whaling era and transfer to BAS.*

*The ship at the wharf is San Giuseppe Dua, the vessel for the Italian Antarctic Expedition 1974 (Photo: Andy Clarke)*



*Drone image mosaic of the modern Research Station, with new priorities such as dedicated biosecurity building (Image: BAS/Nathan Fenney)*

## 50 issues of the South Georgia Association newsletter

This is the 50<sup>th</sup> issue of the SGA newsletter! The first issue was in November 2001, shortly after the formation of the SGA, which is 25 years old this year. The November 2026 newsletter will include an article reflecting on the SGA's first 25 years. The editor of the first newsletter was Bob Burton, who remained until Issue 34 (April 2018). Martin Collins took over as editor from Issue 35 before working jointly with the current editor (Adrian Fox) for issues 43 and 44, handing over fully for Issue 45 onwards. **All issues are available** at: <https://southgeorgiaassociation.org/newsletters/>

# South Georgia Association Newsletter

Number 1 November 2001

## King Edward Point changes hands



*After 19 years' of military occupation, KEP has been returned to civilian administration after a major rebuild.*

The new Applied Fisheries Laboratory at King Edward Point was inaugurated at a ceremony on 22 March 2001 by the Commissioner, His Excellency Donald Lamont. Those present included the Director of the BAS, Professor Chris Rapley, Commander of British Forces, Falkland Islands, Air Commodore John Cliffe, and Dr Inigo Everson (BAS biologist after whom the accommodation block was named).

The ceremonies included the naming of the James Cook Laboratory and Everson House, a lunch with champagne air-dropped into Cumberland Bay, a service at the Whalers' Church and laying wreaths on the graves of Sir Ernest Shackleton and an Argentine sailor killed during the retaking of South Georgia in 1982.

BAS now has the principal responsibility to maintain the UK presence in South Georgia. The research station will be the centre for studies designed to provide scientific advice on sustainable management of fisheries around the island - the main source of income for South Georgia - and benefit the UK's input to the Antarctic Fisheries Commission (CCAMLR). Initial research will focus on five commercial species (Patagonian toothfish, icefish, Martialia squid, stone crabs and krill). Around 20 vessels, registered in a number of countries, including the Falkland Islands, Chile, Uruguay, Spain and South Africa, are licensed to fish within the 200 nautical mile management zone. This new fisheries science programme is a considerable step forward in managing valuable fish stocks in a way that sustains the populations of penguins, seals, whales and seabirds.

The extensive building programme resulted in some old buildings, including the post office and customs house, being destroyed but Discovery House and the old gaol remain. Shackleton House, dating from 1963 and housing BAS from 1969 and the garrison after 1982, is being demolished.

During the first winter under new management, KEP was occupied by eight BAS personnel, as well as the Marine Officer and Postal Officer.

After a BAS Press Release

### South Georgia Association: From pipe-dream to project

It was the Christmas cards that set me moving! When I first visited South Georgia 12 years ago, before my appointment as Commissioner, I was enthralled by the island, as are so many visitors. My affection for the place has endured and the idea of an association for South Georgia became a pipe-dream: the notion that South Georgia with its incredible natural environment and its short but eventful history needed, and could inspire, a grouping of those who knew it, wished to protect it and promote further study of it.

Two cards last Christmas bearing the KEP postmark offered strong encouragement from Tim and Pauline Carr and Pat and Sarah Lurcock. If they were in favour this was a real incitement to action. So as summer came I joined with Alexandra Shackleton and Bob Burton to form a Gang of Three to move things forward. We had encouragement from both Donald Lamont, the Commissioner for South Georgia, and from Alan Huckle, Head of the Overseas Territories Department of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

In September we summoned a Founding Meeting. This was an impressive gathering - explorers, scientists, journalists, three former commissioners - all of them sharing a deep knowledge of and affection for the Island. They were unanimous in supporting an association. An acting committee was set up, a constitution drafted and the first general meeting summoned. We soon found that there was also widespread support through the scattered community of 'South Georgians' - the ever-increasing numbers of people who have visited the Island over the years, for stays that have ranged from many years to a few days.

Which brings us to the present. What we in the Acting Committee look for are your endorsement of the objectives of the South Georgia Association, your views on what causes it should take up and your ideas for a programme for next year and the future.

David Tatham, Acting Chairman

## Other articles in the first issue include:

**Trouble with the neighbours** (*Sarah Lurcock*) – living with the noisy elephant seals at KEP.

**South Georgia website – Project Atlantis** (*David Nicholls*). An environmental website for SG planned to be launched at the end of 2002, developed by University of Dundee. It was eventually published as [www.sgisland.org](http://www.sgisland.org)

**Philatelic news** – highlighting the *Marine Life* series.

**Where did the reindeer come from?** (*Fiona Hatchell*). A description of work collecting DNA samples from the Busen and Barff reindeer populations to establish if they are genetically different and to trace the origin herds in Norway.

**Getting rid of rats** (*Sally Poncet*) - a trial project to eradicate rats on Grass Island in November 2000 with hand-cast bait and mention of preliminary work on the feasibility of a wider project (which eventually led to the rat eradication project).

**South Georgia visitors** (*Pat Lurcock* – marine officer) 36 cruise ship visits expected in 2001-02, Two yachts over-wintered and another eight were expected. An expedition 'Beyond Endurance' planned to climb and ski/snowboard down Mts Paget and Roots and do a Shackleton Crossing, but were thwarted by bad weather.

**South Georgia Coinage**, highlighting coins produced by Pobjoy Mint featuring the centenary of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother in 2000 and their 'Famous Explorers' series.

**Island Romance** – the marriage of Richard McKee (Marine Officer) and Miranda Cheek (Postal Officer). Miranda Cheek is the daughter of Jan Cheek and the third generation of Cheeks to have an association with SG.

**Cemetery Repairs** – report on work by Tim Carr, Museum Curator.

*It is interesting to see how themes such as tour ship visits (compare 36 ship visits in 2000-01 with 104 ships in 2025-26!) are still relevant today, and how projects heralded in the first issue such as 'getting rid of rats', and a South Georgia environmental website, have come to fruition or evolved 25 years later.*

Until ratified by election, the SGA's Acting Committee is:

<i>Chair</i>	David Tatham
<i>Secretary</i>	Fran Prince
<i>Treasurer</i>	Roger Huxley
<i>Membership Secretary</i>	Stephen Palmer
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Bob Burton
<i>Members</i>	Angus Erskine, Bob Headland, John Heap, Skip Novak, Trevor Potts, Dave Rootes, Alexandra Shackleton
<i>Corresponding Member</i>	Sarah Lurcock (South Georgia)

*The SGA Committee and first members*

## My Time in South Georgia as an Eleven-Year Old Girl in 1962 Jenny Clark

When I was eight in 1959, two memorable things happened. My parents, Henry (Harry) and Daphne Ruddy, my brother (six years older than me) and I moved from our Victorian house with no central heating to a brand-new home with all mod cons; and my father announced he had secured a job at the Colonial Office as the Customs and Administrative Officer in South Georgia (then a Falkland Islands Dependency). My mother, who was very excited by our house move, accepted my father's plan to be abroad for a 2-year assignment with equanimity – it was not that long since the War, where these events were frequent – so my father set off on his adventure and we settled down to house furnishing and establishing a garden.

Two and a half years later when my father reappeared in England, my mother, having experienced the frustration of only being able to communicate by letters (which arrived in great chunks every 2 to 3 months) and telegrams, and having to look after my brother and me and the house on her own, had completely changed her mind about my father renewing his contract, unless he took us with him. And so my adventure to South Georgia began in 1962...

My brother was starting his A-levels course (and more importantly to him was also the drummer in a local Brighton band) so he was not keen to join us and arrangements were made for him to stay in the UK. For my part I was very excited to not have to go to school for two years so happily participated in making the arrangements for our trip.

Firstly we needed warm clothes so we made a trip to Lillywhites in London where we secured some trousers (not commonly worn by girls then), a sheepskin jacket, an anorak and a woollen bonnet and gloves. Most exciting was the purchase of two cabin trunks (mine was very smart in dark navy and gold) to put everything in and some ski boots as we would need to use skis to get around in the winter. I already had wellington boots and suede zip up boots and warm underclothes and jumpers. Apart from the anorak and gloves, none of my clothes were waterproof, very different to today's cold weather standards!

Equally fun was shopping for the new summer clothing we needed as we were travelling to South Georgia on SS *Arlanza*, a cruise ship, which took three weeks to cross the Atlantic, stopping off at Boulogne, Vigo, Lisbon, Las Palmas, Rio de

Janeiro and Santos before arriving at Montevideo. Boat travel was the only option in those days and the Colonial Office paid for my father to travel first class. My father hadn't realised that my mother and I had been booked in second class and had to quickly upgrade us when we saw and complained about the difference in lifestyle!

After the pleasant haze of cruise travel with flying fish, porpoises and Crossing the Equator ceremonies, we arrived in a small hotel in Montevideo in the middle of winter with a wait of three weeks before RMS *Darwin*, the small mail boat which commuted regularly between Montevideo, Port Stanley and South Georgia, would arrive. Not speaking Spanish, we ended up in a lot of amusing situations in the hotel and the little restaurant where we had our meals.

Then onto *Darwin*, which seemed a very small ship after the *Arlanza*.

I managed to eat half a sausage before descending to my cabin for the rest of the trip! I stayed for a week in Port Stanley with the Colonial Secretary, David Manders and his family, as I had been so seasick, while my parents travelled round the islands on *Darwin*. I had a nice time with the Manders but I was rather a precocious child and particularly remember being very upset not to be included in my parents' invitation to cocktails with the Governor!

Then off to South Georgia! Once again, I was seasick as *Darwin* seemed to rock in every direction without much rhythm but eventually I made it up on deck to icy ropes and grey skies, then icebergs and growlers and eventually Cumberland Bay.

It was very exciting when my father pointed out our bungalow on King Edward Point and we arrived at the jetty where lots of people were waiting for the boat, including Mr Coleman (my father's boss) and his wife. They were about to go on leave, so we didn't spend any time with them before they left apart from a business handover from Mr Coleman to my father.



*The Ruddy's bungalow (Customs House), 1962.*

At this time whaling had stopped so there was only a skeleton crew at the whaling stations. My father said this was a good thing for us as the noise and smell could be overwhelming when whaling and sealing was in full swing. While we were there, however, the McAlpine builders arrived to build Shackleton House on the plateau behind us and that certainly disturbed our tranquillity although they were generally well behaved!

Our bungalow was away from the jetty next to the tennis court. It had two bedrooms, bathroom, dining room, living room and kitchen with the most enormous oil-fired boiler which kept the rooms very cosy. It also had a loft with windows and a proper staircase and this was a place where I played for many hours. In particular an old chest of drawers became a camel with various cushions and a Bedouin tent was fashioned out of old curtains where I whiled away the hours being a female Lawrence of Arabia! I also discovered some American magazines which had an article about 12-year-old girls wearing make-up and calling their friends by telephone for hours – I was both shocked and fascinated!

My father had arranged for us to take over some hens and their hen house from some people who were going home, so I spent a lot of time looking after them and watching them and learning the ways of hens. I was as proud as its broody mother when one of them hatched a chick! I still have my Hen Book with their names and descriptions and eggs laid. One issue was the rats who sometimes stole the eggs from the hen house. This was very frustrating as they didn't lay many and the alternative were dried eggs which I hated.

Having unpacked, we started to meet people who worked there. Danny Borley was the meteorologist who loved classical music. John Quigley looked after the power supplies, Norman Scott was the radio operator and Ted Fox was my father's number two for customs work and managing the post. Then there was Jimmy Shields who was a steward at Discovery House (single men's accommodation) but was suddenly assigned to cook and clean for us.

He made the most delicious casseroles and cheese soufflé and cup-cakes shaped like swans and I thought he was wonderful, but in our tiny home my mother was soon dragging her heels and Jimmy quickly returned to look after the 'single men' much to his disappointment.



*Jenny and her mother Daphne talking to Doris Scott out of the bungalow window.*

*This suburban image, when they are in the middle of nowhere, sums up the nature of life in South Georgia, both ordinary and extraordinary.*

Among the single men were biologists of various types, including two young Irish men with very strong Irish accents that quite delighted me, especially when we played tennis with them and they announced the score as tirty tirty!

A new doctor had also arrived, he was Scottish and very tall and liked to go out in his kilt in bad weather with a bottle of malt and sing to the wind. This rather affected his medical abilities and he didn't stay very long. He did diagnose my mother with pleurisy when she fell very ill for which we were eternally grateful, for being ill on the island was a serious thing.

The Biggs were an important family on the island, Basil was the chief handyman and policeman, reporting to my father but they had gone on leave before we arrived. One evening I found a black and white cat on the beach and my father said it was Elvis, the Biggs' cat, so we took him in until they returned, which gave me something else to look after.

There was snow on the ground when we arrived and one of the first things I saw in the natural world, looking out of our living room window, was a fight between two large elephant seals, their teeth ripping gashes in each other's neck with huge thwacking noises and blood was soon colouring the snow. I was tearful but my father explained how much blubber they had so their injuries looked worse than they were and how they never fought to kill. The pair soon finished their battle and floloped off to have a rest. I was always wary of bull elephant seals after that and gave them a wide berth.

It had been agreed that I would receive school books and work from the school in Port Stanley via *Darwin* and send it back to be marked on the next boat. Fortunately, I found the work easy and did it quickly which gave time for my other studies, primarily reading any book I could get my hands on, going for nature walks and home economics (cookery). We had a shortwave radio to listen to the BBC World Service but reception was very poor, especially when the weather was bad, when we needed something to listen to the most!

We also had a record player and my mother brought some 45 rpm records with her to play, one of which was Bird Song as she thought we would miss the sound of British birds and it was true that we enjoyed listening to them, although it made us homesick. We also had 'Let's Twist Again' by Chubby Checker and it soon became apparent that I was the only person on the island who knew how to twist, but my fame was short lived as the next boatload of people to arrive were experienced 'twisters'!

We enjoyed practising langlaufen (cross-country skiing) and bit of downhill on the Point but going uphill in skis with no ski lift was hard work! We also practised turning 180 degrees in one place, as if you skied to Grytviken and needed to turn back on the path, this was the only way to do so without falling into the sea! I was good at this but my mother wasn't so we ended up walking if it wasn't too snowy or going across in the boat if it was.

When the weather improved and the snow melted we enjoyed our nature walks, at first discovering the flora and fauna on the beach by the house and the large area of tussock grass up to the little dam and across to the path to Grytviken. This area was covered in mossy banks and little streams in the spring and summer and was a wonderful playground for me. My father made me a little wooden sword and I charged about being Robin Hood hiding in the tussock grass and jumping out at my imaginary enemies.

There was also an abandoned small boat with a little cabin which had been used for crossing to Grytviken before it was replaced and this was another fascinating play area for me. Being the only child on the island, it was a good

thing that I was used to being with older people and that I had such a vivid imagination or I would have been very bored!

In that first winter we stayed indoors a lot and did a lot of baking and cooking and hen care. My parents would put in a food order each week and it would be delivered from Grytviken by boat and sledge. The meat was frozen, the butter was in large tins and there was no fresh fruit and vegetables until a boat came in. The reindeer were still on the other side of the Bay so occasionally the Norwegians would go across to cull them and then we would have sweet fresh reindeer meat to



*A brave Jenny and a large young elephant seal*



*Jenny and Daphne trying out custom-fitted skis.  
The fence behind is the tennis court.*

eat. We also received a gift of a blue-eyed shag which we ate but I was less of a fan as it tasted a bit like duck but much oilier and fishier!

Another option for fresh food was catching fish from the jetty. You could put the silver hook into the very clear water and the fish would jump on. This led to an occasion of overfishing by me when I filled a complete bucket and was told off by my father since we couldn't eat all the fish I had caught. Of course, we found other willing fish eaters on the Point when I went round to the other houses and told them about my mistake! But it was a good lesson on species conservation...

We came across the Norwegian cheese *gjetost* which I loved as it was sweet and nutty and we also got a small metal cheese slicer for it, a new gadget to us, which I still have and use regularly. The other cheese was definitely vintage or even mousetrap in flavour and not my favourite unless it was toasted. We had a lot of packet or tinned soup and tinned fruit and vegetables.

Bread had to be home-made or bought from Grytviken. My mother's bread improved from her first attempts but I always preferred the more professional bread from Grytviken! We would walk over to the Manager's villa, where he would kindly offer us coffee and biscuits, and then pick up some bread. One day we were ushered into the kitchen to wait for the bread to come out of the oven and my eyes were drawn to the calendar with semi clad female models of pneumatic proportions! My mother had a difficult job explaining it to me on the way back and the order went out not to let me in the kitchen in future, which I felt was a shame as it was wonderfully warm and smelled lovely!

Grytviken also had a 'slops chest', or little shop. I liked it because you could only buy things in huge sizes, so enormous bars of chocolate or a whole box of chewing gum. This had to be rationed out to me when we got back to the bungalow. Otherwise everything was too big for me, so I wasn't too interested, but I remember wanting one of the lovely Norwegian jumpers.

When the weather was nice we would walk through Grytviken and on to the Gun Hut which was near Hestersletten, with a picnic to eat either by one of the tarns snuggled up on the hill or walking along the beach. It would depend on whether the elephant seals had hauled themselves up with harems (to be avoided) or for moulting (when they were too sorry for themselves to care about passers-by). I remember going for a stroll while my parents were still eating and suddenly being bombarded by two Antarctic terns as I had obviously got too near to their nest. As they pecked the top of my head and defecated on me, I learned a lesson to always watch where I was walking! And beware of Antarctic terns in nesting season!

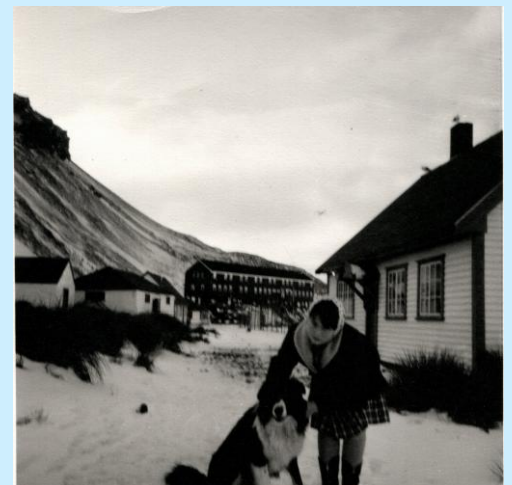
Other events were going to the Kino to watch films (I only remember watching 'Invaders from Mars' which made a lasting impression on me to this day!), playing Badminton in the Kino, going for occasional Services at the Church including the Christmas Service which was very beautiful. When Shackleton House was completed there was a buffet in the new dining room which we went to, but we always left any gatherings early before too much alcohol had been imbibed.

I learned so much while I was there, I was very content to watch the wildlife for long periods so understand some of the ways of seagulls, giant petrels and skuas to name a few (we used to throw our food waste into the sea every day so they would swarm around us as soon as they saw us coming out).

The seals were mainly elephant seals with an occasional sighting of a fur seal, as they had almost been hunted out of existence on the island, and occasionally a leopard seal would swim past. Gentoo and macaroni and



*Jenny and her mother (and father, Henry Ruddy taking the photo) out for a walk to the Gun Hut near Hestersletten, stopping for a picnic lunch.*



*Jenny by her bungalow on KEP with Ring, one of the dogs from Grytviken who regularly would trot round the cove to say hello (or sometimes come over by boat)*



*Jenny studying macaroni penguins, which were comparatively rare*

chinstrap penguins were around a lot and the occasional group of King penguins.

Apart from the arrival of Peter and Colleen Biggs on their school holidays (who also played in the boat on the tussock and claimed ownership - we called a truce and played together) and the appearance of Norman Scott's wife Doris and their little baby Ann, there was not a lot for me to do after the first excitement of each season and I started to be bored. Having to stay indoors in bad weather for days at a time was very frustrating (although when the sun shone it was a very different and enjoyable place) but sadly the bad weather was more frequent.

Fortunately for me, word came from England that my brother's drumming activities were overtaking his A-level studies and my mother decided we needed to leave early to correct the balance, so after a year's stay, in June 1963, she and I made the return trip via Darwin with three weeks in Port Stanley this time. We missed my father dreadfully and were horribly seasick on both legs of the journey.

While we were in Stanley we were invited to tea by Nap Bound's wife Joan as my father knew Nap who was the Assistant Colonial Secretary. While we were there, her son came in and she bemoaned that he would soon need to leave them to be schooled in England. Since the recent discovery of the *Endurance*, I finally put two and two together from old photos and realised that boy was Mensun Bound. I met him again last year when he was doing a talk and book signing in Oxford and he was as surprised as I was that I remembered him from 63 years earlier! It's actually a small world!

My father completed the tour and helped manage the transition from Norwegian to Japanese whaling. He got on well with the Japanese managers and I still have a teacup and tea drum and a picture of Mount Fuji which they gave him. He went out for a further tour before retiring in 1966. I have a lot of his letters which he wrote to my mother after we left that have a lot of interesting small details and his biography is in the Dictionary of Falklands Biographies at [falklandsbiographies.org](http://falklandsbiographies.org). He was a wonderful father and man.

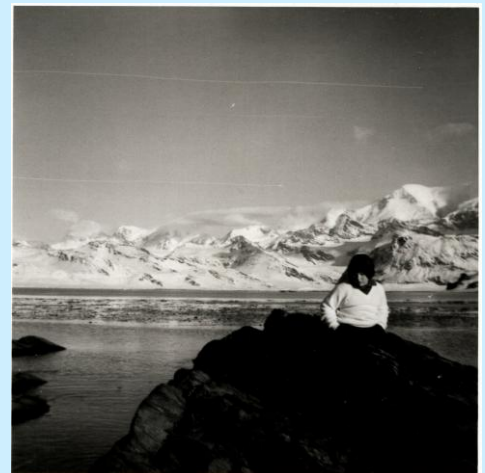
I often wish I could visit South Georgia again but I fear it would look very different to me as an adult rather than a child so I won't go back. I enjoy keeping up with what is going on via the South Georgia Association and their talks and various Zoom events with other similar organisations.

And, of course, reading the SGA Magazine!

*After marrying in 1972 and having a son and daughter, Jenny worked as a Personal Assistant at American Express. After a fast-track development programme, she held management roles in several multi-national IT and consulting companies. Finally, at Anglo-American, she was the HR Manager for IT and Shared Services in the UK, South Africa, South America and Australia until she retired in 2014. Jenny says she has been fortunate to travel around the world for thirty-five years for her work, so her wanderlust has mostly been assuaged.*



*Jenny talking to Ann Scott in her pram, the baby daughter of radio operator Norman Scott and wife Doris*



*Playing on rocks near Shackleton's Cross, enjoying a rare day of still weather*

## Updates on recent Bob Burton Awards:

### Virtual Viola Report from Bruce Mair

The steam trawler *Viola* (later renamed *Dias*) was built in Hull in 1906, and is known to many who have visited South Georgia as she is beached alongside the jetty at Grytviken, the former whaling station. The Viola Trust was set up in 2016 and one of its primary aims was to bring the ship back to its home port.

Despite extensive research and fund raising, this objective could not be realised, and in 2024 trustee David Drewry (past chairman of the South Georgia Association) contacted Paul Chapman, director of Emerging Technology at Glasgow School

of Art. A virtual recreation of the *Viola* using photographs, videos, and plans collected by survey teams and supporters has now been created.

The Viola Trust celebrated the completion of the project at Hull Trinity House on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2026 with a VIP launch of the film “*Virtual Viola*” narrated by TV presenter Paul Rose (a well-known polar figure and formerly Base Commander at BAS Rothera Research Station), along with a companion film entitled “*Viola – Part of the DNA of Hull*” made by local film maker Dave Lee. After the presentation, “*Virtual Viola*” was gifted to Hull City Council as part of its Maritime City project, for future posterity, and to maintain the heritage of this vessel.

Committee members Fran Prince and Bruce Mair attended the event on behalf of the South Georgia Association, and the South Georgia Heritage Trust was represented by Alison Neil as both organisations had supported the project. David Drewry was also there as a trustee of the Viola Trust.

The SGA was named as an Ambassador for the project, and presented with a plaque.

The South Georgia Association were given a fascinating talk including a preview of the “*Virtual Viola*” film on 20 November 2025 at 7.30 pm by Project Manager Norman Court in advance of the official launch.

The talk is available on the SGA website at:

<https://southgeorgiaassociation.org/sga-video-recordings/>

This project received a Bob Burton Award of £1,000.



Trinity House, Hull (Photo: B. Mair)



Ambassador plaque for SGA (Photo: F. Prince)

## 6<sup>th</sup> GeoFIDS Reunion at the RSGS – more social geography 19 November 2025, Edinburgh

South Georgia has figured prominently in the last four editions of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society (RSGS) journal *The Geographer* and was further celebrated by their *Festival of Shackleton* event with the Dundee Heritage Trust on 5 December 2025, and by their *South Georgia Discovery Day* at the Fair Maid’s House on 28 June 2025.

In addition, honorary fellowships were awarded to two individuals with strong connections to the island, namely the Hon. Alexandra Shackleton (*The Geographer*, Summer 2025, p. 2) and Professor John Gordon (*The Geographer*, Spring 2025, p. 4).

The RSGS *Inspiring People* programme for 2024-25 had already provided one opportunity for South Georgia veterans to come together earlier this year (*The Geographer*, Summer 2025, p. 42), and the programme for 2025-26 provided another. This second talk on 19 November was entitled *South Georgia: The Last Unclimbed Summits* and was given by Stephen Venables, which was advertised earlier by a centre spread of photographs that illustrated the beauty and mountaineering challenges of the island (*The Geographer*, Summer 2025, p. 22-23).

I often wonder if the geological principle of Uniformitarianism – the present is the key to the past – works the other way round when it comes to meeting up. Stephen’s recent lecture provided the catalyst for us to get together again some 50 years since we had worked on South Georgia. It’s worth reflecting that stepping back another 50 years before us, takes us to the final stage of the golden age of polar exploration which ended with the death of Ernest Shackleton aboard *Quest* on 5 January 1921 at Grytviken.

Below are the GeoFIDS with Stephen Venables after his lecture in Edinburgh, with the dates of their field seasons on South Georgia shown in brackets. Eric and Dog also worked further south on the Antarctic continent.



L-R Eric Lawther, Phil Stone, Roger Clayton, Tony Airey, Stephen Venables, Bruce Mair, Adrian Hughes, Dog Holden. Note: Rory Mortimore and David Sugden not in picture.

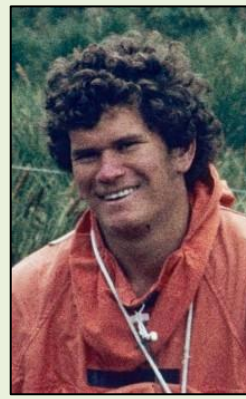
We're now in the present, so for fun, let's see how things were in the past.....



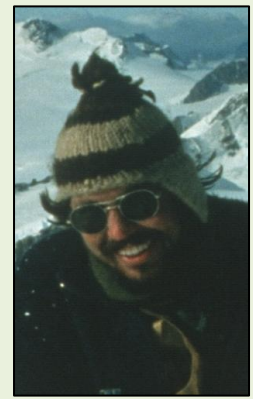
Eric Lawther (BAS General Assistant) 1971-72, 1972-73.



Phil Stone (BAS Geologist) 1970-71, 1971-72, 1973-74



Roger Clayton (BAS Geologist) 1972-73, 1973-74



Tony Airey (Royal Marines, Joint Services Expedition) 1981-1982



Stephen Venables (Mountaineer and Writer) 1989 onwards



Bruce Mair (BAS Geologist) 1974-75, 1976-77



Adrian Hughes (Royal Navy, Joint Services Expedition) 1981-1982



Dog Holden (BAS General Assistant)

There were two South Georgia GeoFIDS at the lecture who missed the photo opportunity. Professor David Sugden, glaciologist and glacial geomorphologist (and RSGS Vice President) first visited South Georgia in 1965-66 and returned for further field work in 1975 and 1985 while a lecturer at Aberdeen University.

In January 2025 Prof. Sugden presented an Honorary Fellowship to Professor John Gordon in conjunction with receiving the Geddes Environment Medal (The Geographer, Spring 2025, p. 4). John was a postdoc member of David's geomorphology group (supported by BAS) on South Georgia in 1975-1976.

He returned with the Joint Services Expedition in 1981-1982 (along with Adrian Hughes and Tony Airey mentioned above) and the RSGS *Scotia* Expedition in 2002-2003.

The other absentee was Rory Mortimore, BAS geologist on South Georgia in 1973-74, seen here demonstrating that we are all geographers at heart – where would we geologists be without a good map to start with?

The RSGS has provided two excellent talks about South Georgia in 2025, and both have been the focal point for the past to meet the present. They also highlight the friendships that were forged during our field seasons, and which have endured for half a century, and exemplify another meaning of the term social geography.



Photos: (Left) Prof. John Gordon (L), with Prof. David Sugden. (Right) Rory Mortimore, BAS geologist on South Georgia in 1973-74

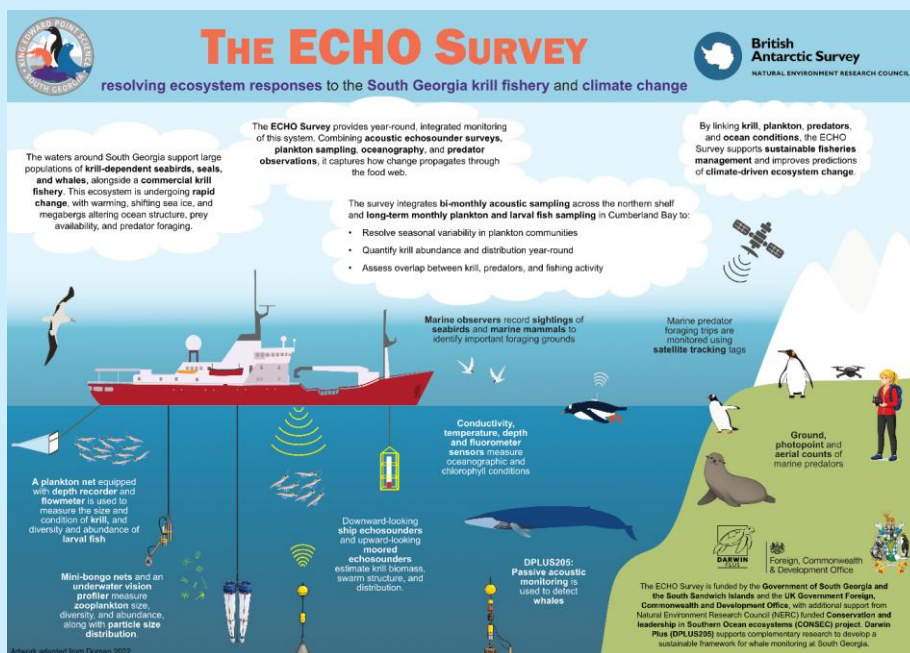
## Science in Action at King Edward Point and on South Georgia, 2025-26 Jaimie Cleeland

The King Edward Point (KEP) Research Station continues to deliver a dynamic science programme supporting the sustainable management of South Georgia’s marine ecosystem and its vast Marine Protected Area. This season sees a change in the Marine Biologist team, we say goodbye to Katie Wells after an impressive 2.5 years on the island, during which she played a central role in the fisheries and marine predator monitoring. Joining Rhi Nichol, is Camille de Pasquale, who brings valuable experience from a winter on the French subantarctic island of Crozet.

### Echoes of the Shelf: Tracking Krill and Whales Year-Round

Over the past year, Marine Biologists Katie, Rhi and Camille completed seven voyages from KEP aboard the FPV *Pharos SG*, continuing the ECHO Surveys to track seasonal changes in krill and their predators across the South Georgia shelf.

Named after the echo sounder used to detect krill swarms beneath the surface, the surveys combine continuous acoustic measurements with visual observations from the bridge, where the team records whales and seals following these dense prey patches. Each evening, sampling shifts below the surface, with fine-mesh trawl nets used to assess zooplankton diversity, density and size structure. This year, a new flowmeter has been added to improve standardisation of krill catch.



The surveys are revealing striking patterns. During January, the team recorded 110 whales in a single day, including fin and humpbacks, alongside a large iceberg hosting ~150 chinstrap penguins. In March, three blue whales were sighted, still a rare but encouraging presence in South Georgia waters.

## Monitoring South Georgia's top predators

The predator monitoring programme at King Edward Point, led by Rhi and Camille, continues to provide critical insight into South Georgia's changing ecosystems.

At Maiviken, the gentoo penguin colony reached a new record again this year, with 999 nests and 1,062 fledglings, while chick weights remained consistent with recent years, strengthening an already valuable long-term dataset.

Antarctic fur seals were monitored across four beaches (Poa, Burnet, Little and Tortula), with female counts peaking at 408 and male counts at a record low of 72, in December. Regular pup counts and weighing offered key indicators of population health, marine productivity, and krill availability.

Monitoring also included elephant seals, giant petrels, and wandering albatrosses. On Prion Island, 19 of 20 wandering albatross chicks fledged early in the season, although overall hatch success for the next cohort of birds remained low, with just 20 chicks from 29 eggs found in March. Elephant seal surveys at King Edward Cove recorded a notable decline in returning females, likely reflecting recent mortality linked to avian influenza.

During her trip this season, Science Manager, Jaimie Cleeland rolled out some new drone monitoring approaches including photogrammetry of elephant seals to assess body condition, and thermal surveys of macaroni penguins, expanding how predator populations are monitored across the island.



Early-season elephant seal counts - all weathers (Photo: John Dickens)

## Synchronised Swimming on the South Georgia Shelf

This season, the Synchronised Swimming project combined animal tracking and ship-based surveys to better understand how predators locate and exploit their prey. Led by Jaimie Cleeland and Kate Owen (Marine and Fisheries Scientist), breeding gentoo penguins at Maiviken were fitted with GPS and depth loggers, while the fisheries patrol vessel FPV *Pharos SG* conducted simultaneous ECHO surveys, using



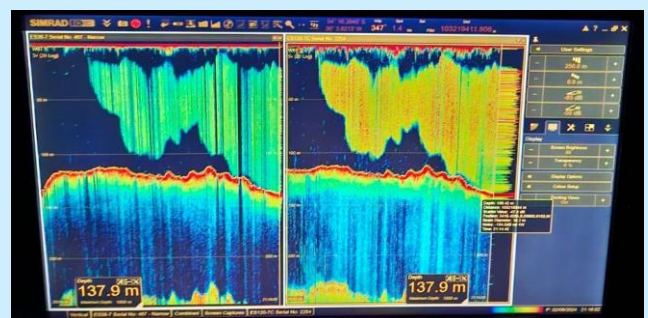
Left: Gentoo penguin and chick (Photo: Cami de Pasquale)  
Right: Giant petrel chick weighing (Photo: Jaimie Cleeland)



Nesting wandering albatross on Prion Island (Photo: Katie Wells)



Drones are a key tool for wildlife survey on SG (Photo: Katie Wells)



Echo-sounder profile of krill swarm (Photo: Jaimie Cleeland)

echo sounders to map krill distribution across the northern shelf.

Two dedicated surveys in November and January captured the location, density, and structure of krill swarms. Early results from recovered tags and data transmitted via a shore-based receiver showed that penguins consistently foraged in areas where krill were detected by the vessel.

The team's hard work paid off with 28 of 36 devices recovered, and the remainder falling off during the moulting period – with the team still hopeful to regain some tags, the metal detector has been employed to scan the colony!

This overlap in time and space provided a rare three-dimensional view of predator–prey interactions, linking penguin movement and diving behaviour directly to krill swarm dynamics. These findings improve understanding of ecosystem processes and support evidence-based management of the South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands Marine Protected Area.

### **Tracking the Impact of Avian Influenza in Antarctic Fur Seals**

Work led by Kate Owen is providing critical insight into the impact of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) on Antarctic fur seals at South Georgia. First detected on the island in October 2023, the virus spread rapidly across multiple species. A renewed outbreak in 2024/25 has had marked effects on fur seals, with pup mortality reaching up to 40% at sites such as Stromness.

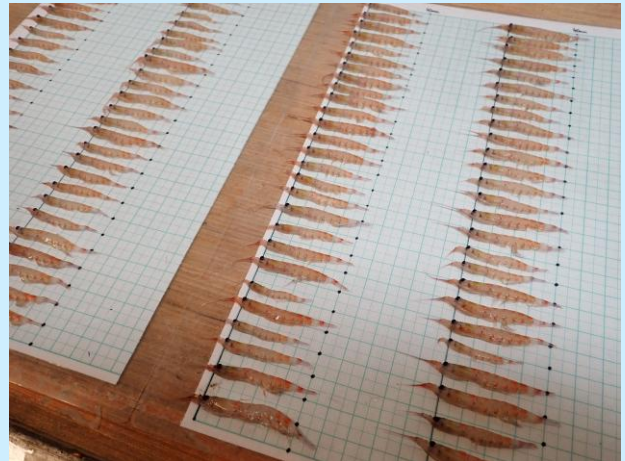
Antarctic fur seals are key indicators of ecosystem health, as their breeding success reflects krill availability, the foundation of the South Georgia food web.

This season, drone surveys were expanded to cover key breeding areas around Cumberland Bay and Stromness Bay, during peak breeding in December. The use of drones and thermal imaging improved seal detection and enabled more accurate population assessments across large, densely populated beaches. Early counts have shown a significant loss of male fur seals, which seem to be more vulnerable to the impacts of HPAI.

To complement these counts, blood samples collected are being analysed to assess seroprevalence, providing a powerful tool to determine prior exposure to HPAI and potential immunity within the population. Together, these approaches are helping to quantify both the immediate and longer-term impacts of disease on South Georgia's fur seals.

### **Mystery on the Shore: Unusual Kelp-Bivalve Mass Mortality at South Georgia**

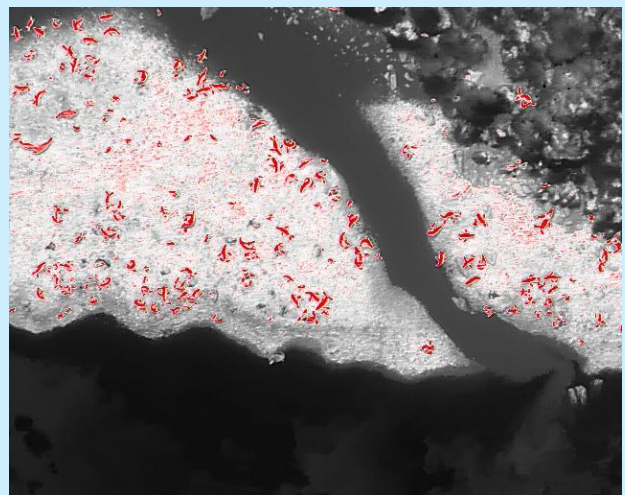
An unexpected mass wash-up of kelp-associated bivalves (*Gaimardia* spp.) was discovered by South Georgia Heritage Trust team member Will Wood, along a 300 m stretch of beach at the entrance to Moraine Fjord, Cumberland Bay East, an event not previously recorded by scientists at King Edward Point. These small molluscs, which live attached to giant kelp, play an important role in the ecosystem as a food source for fish and seabirds, including kelp gulls.



*Krill sampled from FPV Pharos (Photo: Rhi Nichol)*



*First pup of the season at Maiviken (Photo: Kate Owen)*



*Thermal drone image of fur seals at Maiviken (Image: Kate Owen)*

The cause of this mortality remains unknown, but potential drivers include environmental stressors such as marine heatwaves, toxic phytoplankton blooms, or freshwater influx from glacial melt introducing contaminants or pathogens. Notably, many individuals appeared pink rather than their typical green, suggesting possible physiological stress.

A rapid, coordinated response followed. BAS scientists and operations staff, supported by the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands, quickly mobilised to capture perishable data.

Drone surveys mapped the extent of the wash-up, while physical samples of bivalves, water, and sediments were collected for laboratory analysis in the UK.



*Collecting samples of the kelp-bivalves (Photo: Cami de Pasquale)*

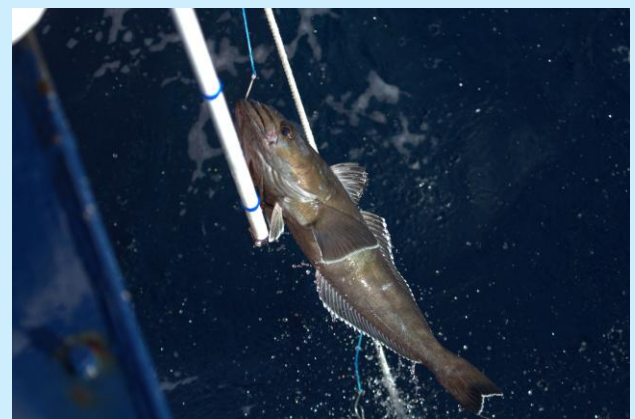
With the RRS *Sir David Attenborough* in the region, additional support was deployed, including an ROV survey to assess whether bivalves remained attached to kelp offshore. Analysis of these samples will help determine the cause of this unusual event and what it may reveal about environmental change in the Southern Ocean.

### **A Toothfish Time Capsule: Unlocking Clues from the Past**

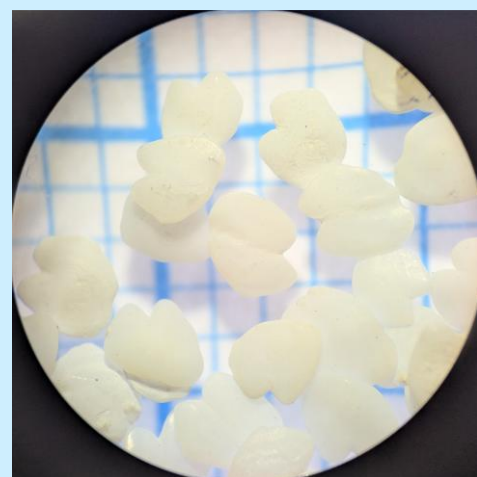
More than 20 years ago, scientists (including Dr. Mark Belchier, current Director of Fisheries at the Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands) working in the waters around South Georgia tagged thousands of Patagonian toothfish, marking some with chemical “time stamps” which later become visible in their ear bones, known as otoliths. These marks were designed to reveal how fast the fish grow, but until recently, many of these samples remained hidden in archives.

This season, the KEP Science team has begun unlocking that time capsule and significant progress has already been made. Historic otolith samples have been rediscovered, prepared, and imaged by the KEP team and Cerys Condran from Bangor University. Some have been analysed using advanced techniques in Laser Ablation Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry at the Natural History Museum, allowing scientists to detect the original chemical marks laid down decades ago.

These early results are a promising step toward validating how toothfish age is estimated, critical information for managing one of the Southern Ocean’s most valuable and carefully regulated fisheries.



*Patagonian toothfish catch (Photo: Jaimie Cleeland)*



*Toothfish Otoliths (Photo: Katie Wells)*

## Place names at Godthul, 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. This article is the seventh in a series highlighting the place names of landmarks at the more frequently visited areas of South Georgia.*

**Godthul** lies on the eastern shore of Barff Peninsula and is the site of a whaling station that operated between 1908-29. The shore infrastructure was very basic with the station's main role being to support factory ships. Cruise ship passengers now regularly visit the site of the station, which is ruined but safe for landings.

The name **Godthul** comes from usage by Norwegian whalers operating in the area from 1905, 'Good Hole' or 'Good Hollow' (ie a good harbour) and appears on a chart drawn by C. A. Larsen in 1909.

It is bounded on the SE by **Cape George**, one of the earliest names on South Georgia, named by Cook in 1775 for King George III. The entrance to Godthul is guarded by **The Sentinels** – three breaking rocks that are a hazard to shipping.

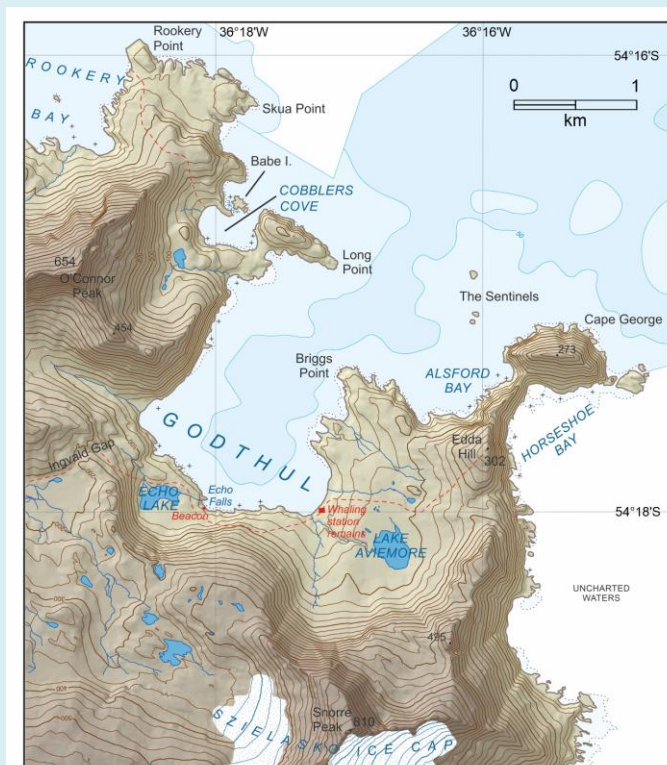
**Alsford Bay** is a subsidiary bay on the SE side of Godthul, west of Cape George, was charted by the Discovery Investigations (DI) in 1928-30 and named after Stoker W. B. Alsford, RN, of *Discovery*, a member of the DI survey party, and its western point is **Briggs Point** named after another member of the survey party, Able Seaman A. C. Briggs. Unusually, he also has **Briggs Glacier** further west on South Georgia, west of **The Trident**.

The prominent **Edda Hill** (302 m) is the eastern end of a ridge enclosing Godthul, and is named in association with the local theme of early South Georgia whaling vessels, after the whale catcher *Edda*, one of the first vessels to operate out of Godthul and one of three whale catchers. The highest point on the ridge is the conical **Snorre Peak**, rising to 810 m, named after *Snorre*, another of the whale catchers, 1909.

**Lake Aviemore** lies between the two and about 500 m from the whaling station, and is named after SV *Aviemore*, the earliest of the whale catcher trio, operating from 1908.

**Echo Lake** is at the SW end of Godthul and is named after the echo that can be heard from the steep cliffs on its SW side. **Echo Falls** are a 25 m high waterfall below the lake. To the NW of the lake is **Ingvald Gap** a pass at about 175 m altitude between Godthul and **Reindeer Valley** on the western side of Barff Peninsula. It is named for Ingvald Bryde who established whaling operations at Godthul in 1908.

Ingvald Gap and Echo Falls were named in 2014 following publication of the detailed 1:25,000 scale map *Barff Peninsula, South Georgia, BAS 25 Series, Sheet 6a*, most of the other names in the area date from gazetting of names already in use from the whaling era and Discovery Investigations by the Antarctic Place-names Committee in the early 1950s.



Based on an extract from: *Barff Peninsula, South Georgia, 2014. 1:25,000 scale map. BAS 25 Series, Sheet 6a.*



*Godthul, looking across the bay towards the whaling station location from Ingvald Gap. Echo Lake is to the right. (Photo: Camille de Pasquale)*

The highest point on the NW side of the ridge enclosing Godthul is **O'Connor Peak** (654 m). This feature has a complex naming history; it was first charted by the Norwegian Antarctic Expedition (NAE) 1927-28 and called Mount Bryde from Bryde and Dahl (the Norwegian company running the whaling station). It was re-charted by DI in 1929 and named O'Connor Peak after Midshipman W. P. O'Connor of the *Discovery*. It was later called Mount McGill by G. V. Douglas, of the Shackleton-Rowett Antarctic Expedition 1921-22, who was a graduate of McGill University, Montreal, but the APC accepted the name O'Connor Peak in 1953.

Finally, **Long Point** the NW entrance point of Godthul, was charted by the NAE but re-charted and named by DI in 1929. Despite its long shape, it was named after Walter Hume Long, 1st Viscount Long of Wraxall (1854-1924); Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1916-18; First Lord of the Admiralty, 1919-21, following a tradition established by Cook of naming features for important naval and other national figures.

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/>

## South Georgia Government news *Compiled by the Editor, mainly based on the GSGSSI website*

### New Darwin Plus Funding Round

Darwin Plus is a UK government grants scheme that helps deliver long-term strategic outcomes for the unique biodiversity, the natural environment, and improving resilience to climate change within the UK Overseas Territories.

There is a new round of Darwin Plus funding following a recent pause in the programme, and GSGSSI welcome applications aligned to the broader aims of the Government to promote and encourage science that contributes to developing and upholding best-practice environmental management and that supports the active management and good governance of the Territory.

There have been 37 previous Darwin Plus funded projects on South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands since 2013. Currently active projects are: *Using satellite technology to monitor seabird populations at South Georgia* (2023-27), and *Creating a sustainable framework for monitoring whales at South Georgia* (2024-27), both held by BAS.

A wide range of other organisations have previously led Darwin Plus awards including: UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology; Oxford Brookes University; Queens University Belfast; Durham University; Joint Nature Conservation Committee; Natural History Museum; British Geological Survey; University of Essex; Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew; Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute; South Georgia Heritage Trust, and Oxford University. The deadline for applications to GSGSSI is 8 June 2026.



### Marine Protected Areas Management Plan

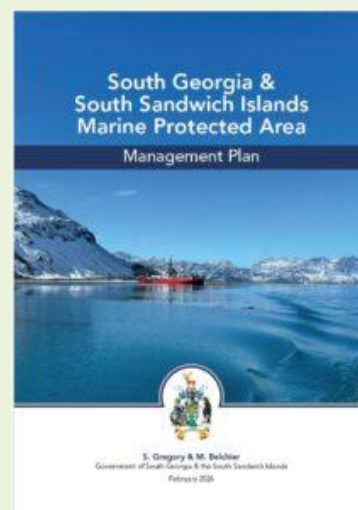
The new South Georgia & South Sandwich Islands Marine Protected Area (SGSSI MPA) Management Plan was published in February 2026.

The South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands Marine Protected Area (SGSSI MPA) is one of the largest and most ecologically important marine conservation zones in the world.

Established in 2012, the MPA encompasses the entire Maritime Zone of the Territory — covering more than 1.24 million square kilometres, an area roughly five times the size of the United Kingdom. As of 2026, it contributes approximately 5.2% of global implemented marine protected area coverage, underscoring its importance to international ocean conservation efforts.

The SGSSI MPA operates under a robust legal and science-led management framework. Comprehensive reviews are undertaken every five years to ensure measures remain effective and responsive to emerging scientific evidence and environmental change.

The most recent review concluded in 2025 and resulted in a strengthened suite of management measures. These were formally enacted through the Marine Protected Areas Order 2025, and are now supported operationally through the publication of this new Management Plan. It can be downloaded from the GSGSSI website.

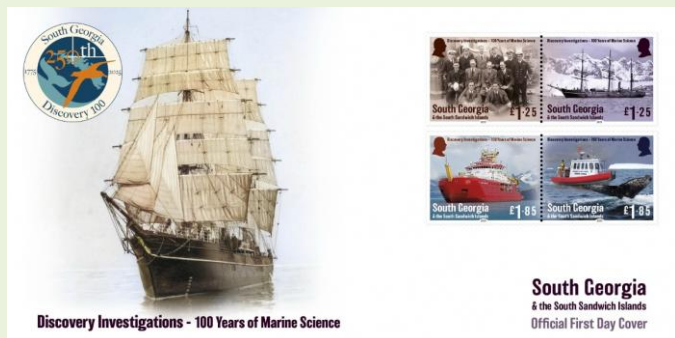


## Recent stamps

### Discovery Investigations – 100 Years Of Marine Science Stamp Release

The Discovery Investigations were a long-running programme (1925-51) investigating the ecology of the Southern Ocean. The origins lay in concerns about over-exploitation of whales and the need to understand whale biology to manage a sustainable industry, but grew into wider research into the Southern Ocean ecosystem. Through extensive research cruises throughout the Southern Ocean by RRS *Discovery*, RRS *Discovery II* and RRS *William Scoresby*, together with onshore laboratory work, the Discovery Investigations made fundamental contributions to the understanding of the great whales, the role of krill, Antarctic oceanography, and did a great deal of hydrographic charting. The results were published from 1929 in a series of 37 reports, concluding in 1980.

GSGSSI released a stamp set to commemorate the centenary of the Discovery Investigations on 18 December 2025.



*SGS 139 Discovery Investigations – Official First Day Cover*



*SGS 139 Discovery Investigations – Sets*

**100th Anniversary of the Birth of Queen Elizabeth II Stamp Release:** The 21 April, 2026 marked the centenary of the birth of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and in that week the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI) released a stamp set to commemorate this special anniversary. These South Georgia stamps are part of a series (that includes Ascension Island, Bahamas, Falkland Islands and Tristan da Cunha) celebrating the birth of this much loved and respected monarch.

All of the portraits are by one of the most influential British photographers of the early twentieth century, Marcus Adams, who is himself best remembered for his intimate and humane portraits of the British Royal Family.

More information about stamp sets is available at: <https://www.falklandstamps.com/>



*SGS140 100th Anniversary of the Birth of Queen Elizabeth II Sets*



*SGS140 100th Anniversary of the Birth of Queen Elizabeth II – Official First Day Cover*



*SGS140 100th Anniversary of the Birth of Queen Elizabeth II £1.85 Stamp*

## South Georgia Heritage Trust update Jodie Price, SGHT

What a season it has been! The South Georgia Museum team welcomed a total of 104 ships and 14 yachts over the 25/26 season. During that time, they gave 158 whaling station tours, 51 presentations and (we hope!) inspired 16,216 visitors. It was a landmark few months for South Georgia, with the completion of the Stromness Manager's Villa stabilisation and the installation of the Whale Memorial.

The original Stromness Manager's Villa has now been saved from collapse. The Villa is one of the most globally important pieces of heritage relating to the survival of crew of the *Endurance* and the leadership of Sir Ernest Shackleton. This culturally significant building is where Sir Ernest Shackleton, Frank Worsley and Tom Crean found help on 20 May 1916, after their epic journey crossing South Georgia, following the sinking two years earlier of their ship, the *Endurance*, in Antarctica.

The work to save the Villa was funded and undertaken by South Georgia Heritage Trust and Friends of South Georgia Island, with permission from the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands.

Our Saving Shackleton Heritage team spent four months at Stromness undertaking the painstaking work to save this incredibly dilapidated building. This process started with preparing the area and making the work site safe. A team of professionals then carefully removed asbestos-containing materials from the Villa, allowing the skilled team of builders and carpenters to undertake the detailed structural work to stabilise the building - saving it for future generations.

With the physical stabilisation complete, the project now moves into its next exciting phase. Our team of digital specialists have been using photogrammetry, LiDAR scanning and drone imagery to create a high-resolution 3D digital replica of the Villa. This virtual model will then allow people anywhere in the world to explore this historic building inside and out and experience one of the many key moments from the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration. This digital version will focus on how the Villa would have appeared in 1916, the year that Shackleton and his men arrived seeking rescue.

We will be sharing more of this wonderful conservation story in the months to come, along with the results of the digital work, so watch this space for the next chapter of the story! You can support the digitisation work at: <https://sght.org/donate-now/>

Another incredible achievement this season is that Part 1 of the Whale Memorial, the Key Table, now stands at the heart of South Georgia's first whaling station in Grytviken. This is where 175,250 whales were caught and processed during the whaling industry between 1904 and 1965. The memorial, designed by artist Michael Visocchi, remembers the whales pushed to the edge of extinction and celebrates that their populations are now in recovery within one of the world's largest Marine Protected Areas. Reminiscent of the huge oil tanks that are still standing at Grytviken, the Key Table features a Nightingale chart using reclaimed original rivets from South Georgia's whaling stations to show the meticulously recorded numbers of whales slaughtered.

The six Spirit Tables of the memorial which are still to be made will be punctuated by approximately 17,000 stainless steel rivets in various mesmerising patterns inspired by the natural histories of each species, with each rivet symbolising a live whale or the spirit of a live whale. The artist's design will allow light to bounce off each one, illuminating the space and conveying a feeling of hope that is reflected in the growing numbers of whales in the waters around South Georgia. However, each Spirit Table has a stark cut-out piece, indicating the absence of the whales slaughtered during the years of industrial whaling.



*The Saving Shackleton's Heritage Team (Photo: Art Levry)*



*Part 1 of the Whale Memorial in situ (Photo: Stewart Garden)*



*Location of the Whale Memorial at Grytviken (Photo: Rachel Davies)*

The Spirit Tables represent the six different whale species that were hunted and processed at Grytviken: Blue whale, Fin whale, Southern Right whale, Sei whale, Sperm whale and Humpback whale. You can learn more about the project and sponsor a rivet to support its creation here: <https://whalememorial.org/support-the-project/>

Our newest project is **South Georgia WildCounts**, which SGHT and FOSGI are urgently raising funds for. WildCounts aims to greatly increase the accuracy of wildlife population estimates on and around the island of South Georgia, helping those who manage the environment to monitor changes and react faster to threats like avian flu and climate change (see the report of the workshop held in September 2025 in Cambridge in Newsletter 49, p18).

South Georgia's wildlife populations are undergoing significant changes following the successful eradication of invasive rats and mice as well as the removal of reindeer, the impacts of climate change, the recent outbreak of avian influenza, and the recovery of whale populations following the end of commercial whaling in the region in the mid-1960s. Many of the population estimates of flying birds are more than 40 years old, so it is crucial to update this baseline information.



*King penguins on South Georgia, one of the key species in the WildCounts monitoring programme (Photo: Tony Martin)*

If you'd like to support this vital project, please donate to South Georgia WildCounts via SGHT or FOSGI. Together with our incredible partners and supporters, including all of our friends within the SGA membership, we have achieved so much this season and we still have a lot to look forward to! You can keep up to date with all our work via our emails and social media.

## South Georgia Association News

### SGA events in 2026

- **Summer event:** Friday 10 – Saturday 11 July 2026. The Association is holding an in-person, two-day event, with the theme of '**History and Art of South Georgia**'. It is being hosted in Cambridge, and includes the Annual Members Meeting and Presidential Dinner. See Page 2 for full details.
- Friday 25 September 2026, **70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Launch of RRS *John Biscoe* and HMS *Endurance (Anita Dan)***. This online talk will be live on the day and recorded for the website.

### Morag Husband Campbell Medal 2026

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, 60 mm in diameter.

The name of the recipient and the year is 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.

*The award for 2026, to be conferred at the July gathering, is to Professor Bjørn Basberg, about whom more details will follow.*



*Morag Husband Campbell Medal*

**Treasurer: The Committee continues to seek a new Treasurer.** If interested please contact the Secretary in the first instance. The role involves: 1) Financial control for the Association by: Operation of the Association's bank accounts, 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.

## Partnership with the ReQuest Foundation

The South Georgia Association is delighted to now be listed as a partner organisation with the ReQuest Foundation. The ReQuest Foundation was recently set up to work with young people in the UK aged 16-24 to help fund and support polar projects. The two organisations are now exploring ways we can work together to raise awareness of the island of South Georgia amongst younger people. <https://www.requestfoundation.org.uk/>

## A history of King Edward Point

King Edward Point Research Station (KEP), at King Edward Cove on South Georgia is a centre for marine and fisheries research. The station is owned by the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI) and is operated by British Antarctic Survey (BAS).

The current Research Station was re-opened in 2001 following the withdrawal of UK military forces from South Georgia, but the recorded history of activity at King Edward Cove goes back to May 1902 with the visit to the cove by J.G. Andersson of Otto Nordenskjöld's Swedish Antarctic Expedition, walking from Maiviken, and the realisation by C. A. Larsen that it would make an ideal location for a whaling station.

There has been a lot of attention focussed on the last 25 years of activity at KEP for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on 22 March 2026, especially the SGA's '25th Anniversary of KEP Research Station Opening' online event on 19 March, and the 'KEP at 25' event held at BAS on 27 March 2026. Recordings of the talks at these events are available through the SGA website. For balance, this article sets out some of the key events in the history of King Edward Point and its immediate locale in the period before the opening of the current station in March 2001.

**1775: Cook and HMS *Resolution*:** Cook sailed past, named and roughly charted the entrance to Cumberland Bay on 17 January 1775 as part of his navigation 15-24 January, but didn't venture inside to note King Edward Cove. Shortly after its discovery sealers visited the island and the site of Grytviken.

**1902: Visit to King Edward Cove** by Nordenskjöld's Swedish Antarctic Expedition.

On 1 May 1902 geologist and archaeologist J.G. Andersson, cartographer S.A. Duse and botanist C.J.F Skottsberg landed at Maiviken and spent several days exploring and making scientific observations. In the course of exploration, Andersson walked over the pass (now Lewis Pass) into Bore Valley. He applied the name Grytviken 'pot bay' to the whole bay area including the site of the future whaling station and King Edward Point after he found seven sealers' 'try-pots' (cauldrons used for boiling blubber), graves, a boat, and other sealers' relics.

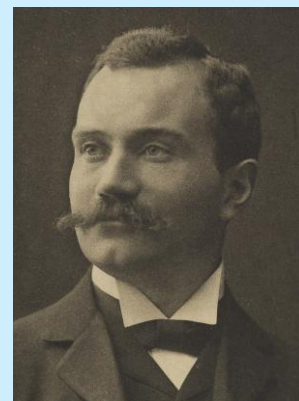
**1904: C.A. Larsen and the beginning of whaling.** Larsen arrived at Grytviken on 16 November 1904 with about 60 Norwegians on three ships, *Louise*, *Rolf*, and *Fortuna*, and founded the Grytviken Whaling Station. The first whale oil was produced on 24 December 1904.

**1906: King Edward Cove was charted by HMS *Sappho*,** Commander M. H. Hodges, RN. The bay was renamed King Edward Cove, by Hodges for Edward VII (1841-1910), and Edwards Point (later King Edward Point) in association with the cove. For more information on KEP place names see Newsletter 44 – many of the key figures in the history of the area are commemorated in the toponymy.

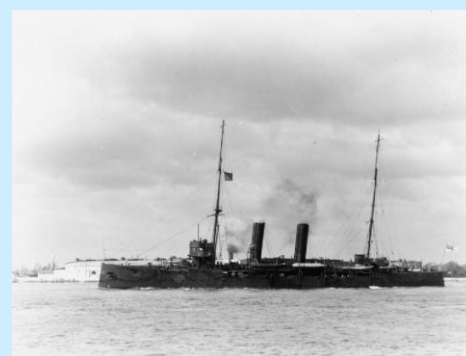
**1907: Larsen established a meteorological observatory** on King Edward Point which continues operating to the present.

**1908: Antarctic territorial claims.** New British Letters Patent consolidated earlier territorial claims. They included South Georgia, the South Sandwich Islands and Graham Land, as well as the S. Shetland and S. Orkney islands as parts of the Falkland Island Dependencies and were governed from Stanley, Falkland Islands.

**1909: UK administrative centre established at King Edward Point** to monitor and administer the whaling on South Georgia. James Innes Wilson was



*Johan Gunnar Andersson – the KEP story begins with his visit to King Edward Cove in 1902 (Photo: Public domain/National Library of Norway)*



*HMS Sappho visited KEP in 1906 to check on the whaling activity and chart the area (Photo: Imperial War Museums/Public domain)*

appointed first Magistrate of South Georgia, and a post office opened. By December 1909 there were 720 people on South Georgia, of whom 93% were Scandinavian.

**1912: a residence for the Magistrate** was built at King Edward Point.

**1914: Gaol and customs warehouse built** – the former is now the oldest remaining building at KEP (now used as storage).

**1914: *Endurance*, with Sir Ernest Shackleton and 27 men arrived at Grytviken on 5 November.** Due to bad weather they spent a month at South Georgia before continuing on the ill-fated Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition.

**1920: King Edward Cove further charted** by HMS *Dartmouth*.

**1922: Shackleton-Rowett Expedition.** While at anchor at Grytviken, Sir Ernest Shackleton died on board *Quest* and was buried at in the Grytviken cemetery. The expedition members built a memorial cross at Hope Point, near KEP.

**1925-51: The Discovery Investigations.** A long-running programme investigating the ecology of the Southern Ocean. The origins lay in concerns about over-exploitation of whales and the need to understand whale biology to manage a sustainable industry, but grew into wider research into the Southern Ocean ecosystem. Through extensive research cruises throughout the Southern Ocean by RRS *Discovery*, RRS *Discovery II* and RRS *William Scoresby*, together with onshore laboratory work, the Discovery Investigations made fundamental contributions to understanding of the great whales, the role of krill, Antarctic oceanography, and did a great deal of hydrographic charting. The results were published from 1929 in a series of 37 reports, concluding in 1980.

**Discovery House** was built at King Edward Point in 1925 as the Marine Biology laboratory and in addition to laboratory space included accommodation, a workshop, and living areas including a kitchen, dining room and six bedrooms. It was separate from the Government buildings and the windows faced towards the Allardyce Range for the view. It acted as a hub for the various survey and science activities. It has had many alterations over the years, but is still standing. See graphic on p. 3.

**1926-30: Charting of King Edward Cove** and large areas of SG by DI, led by Lt Cdr J. M. Chaplin, from RRS *Discovery*, RRS *William Scoresby* and motor launch *Alert* for close-in work. They used KEP as an HQ for this extensive survey campaign. It resulted in a series of 22 plans on 3 charts based on 370 days of survey work, 580 km of coastline, 172 survey stations and more than 13,000 soundings. This was a vast improvement on safety of navigation around SG.

**1928-29:** The German South Georgia Expedition, led by Ludwig Kohl-Larsen between November 1928 and April 1929 explored parts of the interior carrying out geology, glaciology, meteorology and biological studies and produced the first detailed mapping of any part of the interior of SG. They operated out of Grytviken between 7 and 27 February 1929, studying the lakes and ponds in the Maiviken and KEP area.

**1951-56: South Georgia Survey Expeditions** led by Duncan Carse. This series of survey expeditions, based at KEP pioneered a mix of Alpine mountaineering-style travel and survey penetrating the little-explored interior of South Georgia. It resulted in the DOS 610 1:200,000 scale map, 1958. This was the first accurate map of the whole island, and was vital for management and administration. It remained in use in various forms until the early 2000s.



*Early years of whaling underway at Grytviken, photo from Shackleton's Trans-Antarctic Expedition 1914 (Photo: Public domain)*



*Shackleton Memorial Cross at Hope Point (Photo: H.G Wilkins/ courtesy State Library of New South Wales)*



*RRS Discovery in Cumberland Bay (Photo: Public domain)*



*Discovery House in winter (Photo: Andy Clarke)*

**1962/63: Shackleton House built by Falkland Islands Dependencies Government.** It was three storeys and on stilts in case of avalanches from nearby Mt Duse. It had science labs, dining room, kitchen and lounges on the first floor and the sleeping accommodation and washrooms on top. The original water supply was unreliable, so a dam at Bore Valley that had been built for the whaling station at Grytviken, but had fallen into disrepair, was renovated and a new plastic pipe laid to provide running water for KEP.



*Shackleton House (Photo: Andy Clarke)*

**1966: Grytviken whaling station closed** with two caretakers left on site. The land-based whaling industry ended on South Georgia. A total of 175,250 whales had been taken in the waters around South Georgia since 1904.

**1960s: Throughout the 1960s there was sporadic science at, or from, KEP.** As well as long-running meteorological observations, this science included:

David Sugden 1965/66 (Geomorphology); Chalmers Clapperton, 1968 (Geomorphology of Cumberland Bay); Mike Skidmore, 1966 and 1969, Geology (Stromness Bay, Prince Olav Harbour).



*Geomorphology maps from 1960s science work out of KEP*

Incidental botanical observations from passing FIDs included: Bill Sladen (1949 -1951), Jeremy Smith (1956 – 1958) and also by Nigel Bonner, who was the Government sealing inspector (1955 – 1961).

Supported by the Royal Society and BAS Director Sir Vivian Fuchs, Stanley Greene (University of Birmingham) visited South Georgia in 1960/61 season to map plant distributions and collect herbarium specimens. Again in 1966 and with the encouragement of Fuchs, Stanley Greene initiated a botanical programme at South Georgia to complement that already underway at Signy. An important aspect was to contribute to the Bipolar Project of the International Biological Programme.

BAS botanical work at SG began in 1967, combining experimental work at KEP with annual botanical landings, mostly from RRS *John Biscoe*, until 1974, under leadership of Ron Lewis-Smith.

**1969: The arrival of BAS:** The official handover from Falkland Islands Dependencies Government to BAS took place on 13 November 1969. Ricky Chinn was the first Base Commander.

Shackleton House was renovated with materials from the whaling station over the winter of 1972. By 1970 the whaling station had been abandoned and was being looted by ships. A copper surface to the bar, made from material ‘salvaged’ from the whaling station, is still in use at KEP. In addition, a massive single dining room table was built *in situ*.

BAS marine biology used the old DI laboratory in Discovery House for the first year (1970/71), and the old coal store in Discovery House was used as a temporary aquarium. Science moved into Shackleton House in 1971 once the BAS carpenters had finished building new labs there.

There was a small clinker-built boat with an inboard engine, named *Kumbaya*, that came from the whaling station and could be used to access Moraine Fjord. A small whale tug-boat was also inherited from Grytiken and was called *Lillecarl/Lille Karl/Lille Carl* (the spelling varies depending on source), and this boat was used either for biological work in the cove (occasionally, as *Kumbaya* was a far better working platform)



*Socialising in the Shackleton bar - note the copper top, still in use today (Photo: Andy Clarke)*

*Personnel, as far as AC can identify, are: From Left: Dick Waller (builder), Jerry Tallwin (botanist) both standing behind the bar, Geoff (Abdul) Smith (electrician), Ricky Chinn (BC) and Alan (Dad) Eitchells, 3 unknowns sitting, Howard Platt (marine biologist, grey waistcoat, sitting), Terry (Scobie) Pye (carpenter/ builder), Neil Tappin (terrestrial biology assistant, standing), unknown right in front.*

or for trips to the Barff Peninsula. The original *Lille Carl*, a whale catcher, later converted to a sealer, left SG in 1960.

BAS staff used to use the 'Kino', the cinema, at Grytviken for indoor sports. The whaling station was still in a reasonable state of repair at this time – *Petrel*, *Albatros* and *Dias* were still afloat. The station had a football team and would occasionally play crews from Russian and other visiting vessels.

**1970s Scientific research as the main focus of activity on South Georgia:** BAS taking over KEP in 1969 marked the transition from the era of exploration and resource exploitation to the era of science. Sir Vivian Fuchs, Director of BAS 1958-73 was clear that 'The purpose is science' – as indicated by a chapter title in his book *Of Ice and Men*, 1982 (p. 330). Throughout the 1970s BAS-led, wide-ranging scientific research and fieldwork was underway, including marine biology, sea mammal and bird research, terrestrial and freshwater ecology, meteorology and atmospheric studies, glaciology, geology and geomorphology. (see Bruce Mair's account of fieldwork in the mid-1970s in Newsletter 49).

**1970-71: Bird Island Research Station opened**, focussing on seabird and seal ecology. Initially a summer-only station, when wintering started (1982) it became the only other year-round inhabited place on South Georgia.

**1980: Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources:** The FID Government acceded to the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR). Its focus is on developing science-led conservation strategies and its adoption is crucial to the preservation of fish stocks.

**1982: Falklands Conflict and the role of KEP.** An Argentine vessel, *Bahia Buen Suceso*, was found illegally at Leith Harbour in March 1982 by a BAS field party from KEP. This was the incident at the beginning of the Argentine military invasion of the Falkland Islands and South Georgia. It was ostensibly a contracted salvage operation by Constantino Davidoff of materials in the abandoned whaling stations owned by Christian Salvesen.

An Argentine flag was being flown and military personnel were ashore. In response HMS *Endurance* was dispatched to the island. BAS had observed and reported Argentine activities until this was taken over by Royal Marines.

The situation changed rapidly, a detachment of Royal Marines were left at KEP under the command of Lieutenant Keith Mills as HMS *Endurance* began a return to Stanley. Before her arrival the Argentines, on 2 April, had invaded the Falkland Islands and intended to seize King Edward Point. Very severe weather prevented activity on South Georgia until 3 April by when the Royal Marines, with assistance by BAS men, had made preparations.

**The invasion of South Georgia**, also known as *The Battle of Grytviken*, took place on 3 April 1982. Argentine forces from the warships *Bahia Paraiso* and *Guerrico* landed at Grytviken proceeded to King Edward Point and captured the platoon of 22 Royal Marines, and 13 BAS personnel who remained at Grytviken.

Though outnumbered, the Royal Marines shot down a helicopter, damaged another and hit the Argentine corvette *Guerrico* with rifle fire and several rockets before being forced to surrender. The battle lasted about two hours with the loss of several Argentine personnel and one Royal Marine injured.



Kumbaya in Moraine Fjord, Winter 1971 (Photo: Andy Clarke)



The Tumbleweeds (house folk band); L to R: Bob Hayward (glaciologist), Ian Hogg (glaciologist), Terry (Scobie) Pye (carpenter/builder), John Kilroy (met/physics), Andrew Jamieson (glaciologist) (Photo: Andy Clarke)



KEP by night in winter, 1971, from Orca Peak (Photo: Andy Clarke)

The BAS staff had taken refuge in the whalers' church. They, with the RM detachment were taken onboard the Argentine vessel *Babia Paradiso* which proceeded to Puerto Belgrano where they were imprisoned ashore. The prisoners were eventually flown to Uruguay and released. There was no time to properly close the KEP Research Station, with the result that much scientific data and equipment were lost. A BAS party, including Bob Headland, was back for a week in August 1982 to recover what was left as far as practicable.



*'Mills' Marauders' the Royal Marines at King Edward Point 1982. Lt. Keith Mills, standing 2<sup>nd</sup> from left (Photo: Royal Marines History.com)*

Other BAS staff were working at field huts at Schlieper Bay, Lyell Glacier, St. Andrews Bay and Bird Island. With the loss

of one helicopter and damage to another the Argentines were unable to remove all the British as planned and those who remained carried on as best they could with limited radio comms between Signy station and BAS in Cambridge. The Lyell Glacier group were able to relay information about activity at KEP by observing from a peak on Thatcher Peninsula. SAS and SBS troops were covertly landed and also provided reconnaissance information, for example confirming there was no Argentine presence at Stromness.

KEP and South Georgia were retaken on 25 April after bombardment of the Grytviken area from HMS *Antrim* and HMS *Plymouth* before landing of Royal Marines at Hestlesletten. A total of 156 Argentine troops and 39 civilians (the salvage crew at Leith) were taken prisoner.

### Post conflict period 1982-

A garrison remained on SG at KEP to emphasise British commitment to the island. South Georgia was used as a training area for mountain travel, with boating and specialist staff. The Commanding Officer had responsibility for ship-related administration such as issuing fishing licences and landing permits. It was not a popular military posting, with poor communications, limited entertainment and isolated from family and friends.

*Photo right: Helicopters from HMS Avenger at KEP, winter 1985 – Lynx airborne, Alouette 3 behind. Shackleton House visible to left (Photo: Stephen Palmer/South Georgia Museum)*



**1985: British Overseas Territory:** In October, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands became a separate British Overseas Territory, instead of being designated as 'The Falkland Island Dependencies'. They were administered by the Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands (SGSSI) based in Stanley.



*The flag of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands. Motto is: Leo Terram Propriam Protegat (Let the lion protect its own land)*

**1990: Marine Officer at KEP.** The maritime work was becoming a burden for the CO of the garrison. The SGSSI appointed a Marine Officer to be stationed at KEP to take this on and ship inspections. Marine Biologist (and well-known mountaineer) Caradoc (Crag) Jones was the first appointee, at KEP from November 1990. Pat Lurcock continued from 1992, on a 4-month rotation, the beginning of his long career as Government Officer until 2017 and continuing association with South Georgia.

**1990-1993: Marine Zones around South Georgia.** In 1990 GSGSSI established a 12-nautical mile Territorial Sea around SG. In 1993 a 200-nm Maritime Zone was declared, with fishing permitted only by permit and the first krill vessels were licensed. It was regularly patrolled to prevent illegal fishing.



*A krill trawler in Cumberland Bay (Photo: GSGSSI)*

These zones, with legislation and regulations, allowed both generation of revenue, and control and conservation aligned with CCAMLR. They have since been further reinforced, including with no-catch zones, so that the waters around SG are some of the best managed in the world.

**Late 1990s:** By the mid-1990s the threat from Argentina had clearly diminished, and with funding cuts to the UK military and increasing difficulty in maintaining the Garrison at KEP the idea of ‘Re-civilianisation’ of South Georgia emerged. By the late 1990s negotiations were underway for BAS to return to South Georgia.

After a visit by senior BAS staff Frank Curry and Don Taylor to Stromness, now ruined after abandonment in the 1960s, and to KEP where Shackleton House was now in a poor state after more than a decade of military occupation, it was resolved to build a new station between the old KEP buildings and the jetty. Funding the construction required careful negotiation between GSGSSI, the MoD and the Natural Environment Research Council – the parent body of BAS.

**2000: Construction of the new Research Station.** Work on a new 100 m long main building comprising The Cook Laboratory and Everson House (living areas) began in October 2000 by Morrison PLC with rapid progress. The foundations and concrete slab were laid by early November and the steel frame was up by mid-December.

In an amazing effort, the whole building was essentially constructed in just six summer months. The new build also included a food store, combined workshops/boatshed/generator shed, fuel farm, comms tower, and HF antennas.

In later phases, Shackleton House was demolished (December 2001), asbestos removed from Discovery House, and Quigley’s (old generator shed) demolished. Carse House was built as accommodation for a second Government Officer and VIP hosting (2004) and in 2007/08 the Gull Lake dam was refurbished and a hydro-electric station built at Grytviken. A dedicated Biosecurity Building was built in 2009. Lastly, a new wharf, dolphin and slipway were completed in May 2020.

**March 2001: The new King Edward Point Research Station was officially opened** on 22 March 2001 by Professor Chris Rapley (Director of BAS), His Excellency Donald Lamont (Governor of the Falkland Islands and Commissioner for South Georgia 1999-2002), and Air Commodore John Cliffe (Commander of British Forces, Falkland Islands).

As well as comfortable living accommodation, the new facility included state-of-the-art science laboratories with new equipment, an aquarium and controlled environment facility, boatshed and a workboat *Quest*, a Scarborough inshore trawler to support marine science and local travel.

The scene was set for the next 25 years, and a new era of science and discovery on South Georgia.....

For information on recent science programmes at KEP see p. 12 and newsletter 48, May 2025.

*Compiled for the SGA newsletter by Dr Adrian Fox. Based on: Notes on talks by Prof. Andy Clarke, Pat Lurcock and Steve Brown at the two KEP-themed events on 19 and 27 March, and their further comments.*

*Other sources, especially information from Bob Headland, and his book: Headland, R.H. The Island of South Georgia, 1984. Cambridge University Press, 293 pp. ISBN 0 521 25274 1.*

*Many thanks to Andy Clarke for the use of his evocative photos.*



*Inside part of the Cook Laboratory – possibly the best view from any lab window? (Photo: BAS/Jamie Coleman)*



*A room in Everson House – living areas (Photo: BAS)*



*Arriving at KEP wharf – boatshed at the rear and the mooring dolphin to the right (Photo: A. Fox)*



*RRS Sir David Attenborough at King Edward Point (Photo: BAS)*



*King Edward Cove: KEP Research Station below Mount Duse. Hope Point and the Shackleton Memorial to the right. Grytviken to the left, with Bore Valley and Lewis Pass leading to Maiviken. Gull Lake and the hydro dam are in the foreground (Photo: Rhi Nichol)*

## BOOK REVIEW: 'Whaling at Stromness South Georgia' by Odd Galteland, edited by Bjørn L. Basberg

'Whaling at Stromness South Georgia' is a detailed history of the establishment and running of the whaling station at Stromness. The book covers the period from the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when industrial whaling first became established in the Southern Hemisphere, to 1961 when Stromness ceased operating in any capacity.

During that period we read about the nascence and growth of the station at Stromness, the effect of the WW1 on operations, and the many changes and struggles of the Norwegian parent companies. The station had its most productive period in the 1920's, but by the 1930's had ceased operating as a whaling factory and become a repair and maintenance facility for neighbouring Leith Station operator Salvesen, a role that continued until 1961 when all whaling from shore stations on the island was ceasing.

'Whaling at Stromness South Georgia' is an English translation of the book first published in Norwegian in 2009. This version has been translated and abridged to concentrate on Norwegian-British relations and policy issues that determined how the highly competitive whaling industry developed at South Georgia.

The text includes quotes from original correspondence from managers and companies and other written sources. There are plenty of photographs and illustrations throughout the text, mainly in black and white.

For those interested in industrial history, or general history of South Georgia, there is much to enjoy in this book, from highlighting the struggles of operating in such a remote location, to both the cooperation and cut-throat actions of other whaling operators in the area. *Review by Sarah Lurcock*

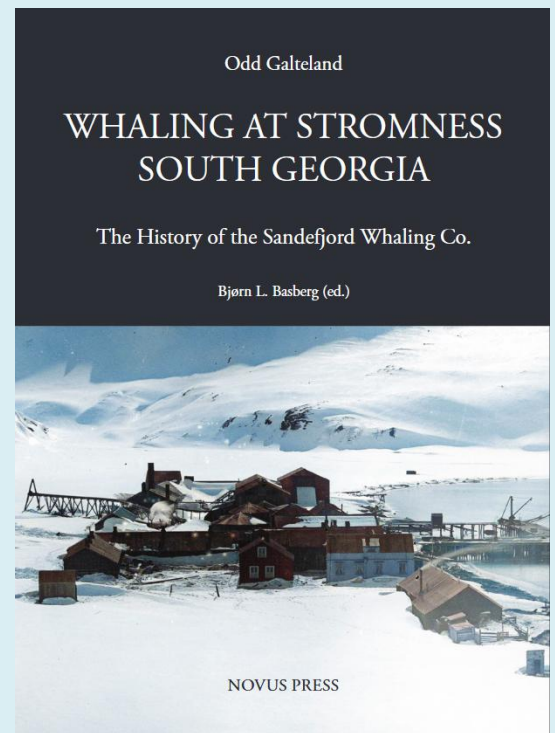
The book includes detailed appendices and useful indexing for researchers.

The translation and publication of the English version of 'Whaling at Stromness South Georgia' was made possible with funding from the South Georgia Heritage Trust (SGHT).

The book can be purchased from the SGHT online shop at this link:

<https://www.sghtonline.gs/new-whaling-at-stromness-south-georgia-1175-p.asp>

ISBN 978-82-8390-181-8, 316 pp, paperback, format: 17x24 cm, weight 0,7 kg, Published 2025 in English.



**Editor's note:** Thank you to all the contributors, and proof readers at the SGA. The SG Association newsletter is produced twice a year, in May and November. Contributions are welcomed by the Editor: Adrian Fox ([ajfo@exchange.nerc.ac.uk](mailto:ajfo@exchange.nerc.ac.uk))

### More photos related to this issue's articles:



p. 5. Jenny Clark with father Harry Ruddy and Ted Fox outside the KEP Post Office, 1962



p. 12. CTD (Conductivity, Temperature and Depth) instrument deployment from FPNV Pharos SG (Photo: Jaimie Cleeland)



p. 21. A Sunday walk in the hills, 1971: L to R: Andrew Jamieson (glaciologist), Inigo Everson (marine biologist), Ron Lewis Smith (botanist), and Andrew Ferguson (met/physics) – back to camera (Photo: Andy Clarke)

