



# AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2023

EDITED BY JACK WRIGHT



## SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE AWARD WINNERS ENCOUNTER PIRATES DURING EXPEDITION

Former Royal Marines fight off gun-wielding pirates using paddles - with one of the Brits shot twice in the brawl while travelling along the Amazon River.

John Bathgate and Ian Roberts were attempting a world first - to navigate 3186 miles of the Amazon River from its highest point, Volcán Chimborazo in Ecuador, across the South American continent to the Atlantic Ocean on the coast of Brazil. Their incredible 'Summit to Sea' adventure took a turn for the worse when, as they were approaching the Colombian border in their rowing boat, the former commandos were ambushed and held at gunpoint by two Peruvian pirates.

Facing down the barrel of a gun, and armed with only with their rowing oars, Bathgate and Roberts sprang into action, launching a desperate and fierce assault on their would-be captors. Bathgate sustained two gunshot wounds in the tussle, but despite being completely outgunned the brave Brits overwhelmed the bandits, disabling their craft and making a stunning break for safety.

Sharing an update on their progress on social media, Bathgate and Roberts explained how the terrifying ordeal unfolded.

*"Unfortunately, we've had to postpone Amazon Summit to Sea. Last week, in a remote part of the river, close to the Colombian border, we were attacked by two pirates. In a fight where we used paddles against pistols, we fought them, disarmed them, disabled their craft, and*

*then managed to get ourselves and our equipment to safety. Unfortunately, John sustained two gunshot wounds, but due to Ian's care and our bootneck attitude, he was comfortable and stable by the time the cavalry arrived. The Peruvian and Brazilian Navy and Marines arrived with an Armada of support and whisked us back to Iquitos, showing incredible care and professionalism.*

*The quick actions of friends in Iquitos, family in the UK, and Garmin emergency response meant that we received the highest of care, and the ordeal didn't develop into a life-threatening situation."*

Despite the attempt on their lives, Bathgate and Roberts are steadfast in their desire to return to complete the daring expedition within a year. "We are now on our way back to the UK. However, we intend to return within 12 months and finish what we started". They continued, "This minor hiccup certainly won't keep us from finishing, and the actions of two individuals do not define Peru, a country whose people we have grown to love. We're both fine and will be in the UK by Wednesday to plan our return and get it done".

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

My confidence in Michael Portillo's reportage took a knock the other day when watching the episode of Great British Railway Journeys which covered the very picture-square trip from Falkirk to Dundee. Usually such a well produced and historically accurate programme, the coverage of Dundee was definitely not up to snuff as it mentioned Dundee's claim to fame for the three J's ( Jam, Jute and Journalism) but not a single mention of Discovery Point or RRS Discovery let alone Scott. It seems that the V & A has now become the dominant feature of the riverside area so those of you who have visited Dundee with the Society on our two exploratory missions there would be similarly disappointed I suspect. We may have to return to put matters right.

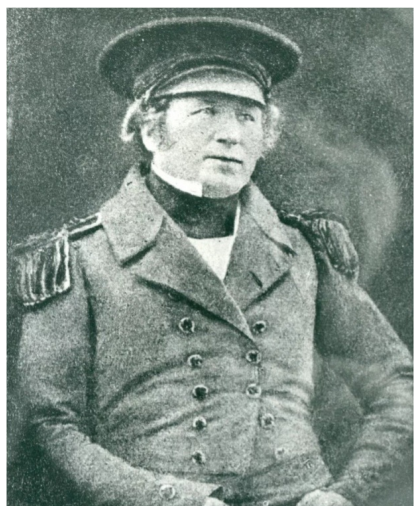
I hope that you have had a look at our shiny new website which Amy Salisbury has been labouring over in the past few months. It reflects Amy's creative instincts and is very user friendly. All events in future can be booked directly from the site and you'll have earlier notification from this source than waiting for the Newsletters and emails from me. Do please use it frequently and contact any of the committee with observations, articles or suggestions for improvement. As I've said previously, it's essential that we have your correct contact details so if you move or change any of your communication details please let us know. If you don't hear from us regularly it's because something is wrong!

We're currently putting the finishing touches to the planning of the Autumn Dinner and Christmas Lunch on which you'll find details and booking forms enclosed and we're looking at arranging an away day or weekend trip on which more anon. Some advance notice for your diary - our Spring Lunch which will be held on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at Llanishen Golf Club.

Looking forward to seeing you soon and with best wishes.

*Julian Rosser*  
[julianrosser1@gmail.com](mailto:julianrosser1@gmail.com)

# SOTHEBY'S AUCTION MISSING PORTRAIT OF CAPTAIN FRANCIS CROZIER



Capt Francis Crozier and 13 other senior officers were photographed in May of 1845. The complete set of 14 portraits will be auctioned by Sotheby's.

An original portrait photograph of a famous Arctic explorer, taken shortly before the doomed Franklin expedition, will be auctioned in London next month.

Two images in the set, including Crozier's, are missing from the only other original collection of these portraits known to exist.

Sir John Franklin's expedition to find a Northwest Passage through the Canadian Arctic became one of the best-known maritime mysteries of all time after the ships HMS Erebus and HMS Terror disappeared without a trace in the summer of 1845.

At the request of Sir John's wife Jane, Lady Franklin, at least two sets of 14 daguerreotypes, or early photographs, were taken on board HMS Erebus in the days before the ships' departure. The portraits were made by the Beard Studio, founded by pioneering photographer Richard Beard.

One of the sets is currently held by the Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI) in Cambridge, but it lacks images of Capt Crozier, commander of HMS Terror, and Robert Sargent, a mate on HMS Erebus.

To date, historians have only had access to copies of these two men's daguerreotypes.

Franklin researchers had long speculated as to whether the second, complete, set of original daguerreotypes survived.

The 14 portraits that have now emerged for auction were owned by Franklin's descendants.

The sale is estimated to fetch between £150,000 and £200,000.

All of the daguerreotypes will be exhibited in public together, for the first time ever, at Sotheby's this September.

"These images are absolutely astonishing, the clarity is wonderful," says Michael Smith, biographer of Captain Crozier. He notes that Capt Crozier was the only crew member from HMS Terror to be photographed and that this daguerreotype is the only known original photograph of him in existence.

## MEMBERS VISIT HMS SCOTT IN PLYMOUTH

Lieutenant Commander Gary McKenzie and four members of the Salisbury family (in ascending order of age; Sam, Christian, Julian and Matthew) represented the Captain Scott Society on board HMS SCOTT on a wet and windy Monday morning in Plymouth.



The Commanding Officer, Commander Tom Harrison had sent an invitation to the ship's affiliated organisations to join for a presentation on 31st July 2023 of the role of the ship. After welcoming



everyone on board he described the function of the ship, explained the importance of the ship's strategic work surveying the ocean beyond the continental shelf and introduced key members of his ship's company.

For the benefit of newer members and for the revision of the old, HMS SCOTT is the only ocean survey ship in the Royal Navy and provides the country with a

deep bathymetric surveying capability. She was commissioned in 1997. In 1998 the First Lieutenant of HMS SCOTT, Lieutenant Commander Jeff Faulkner attended our annual dinner and subsequently an invitation was issued for members of the Society to visit the ship in Swansea, her affiliated port. The Captain Scott Society has been in close contact ever since.

HMS SCOTT is 13,500 tons displacement and 131 metres in length. She is one of the largest ships in the Royal Navy but with a remarkably small complement of 78, of which 52 are embarked at any moment. With a turnover of manning this means that the ship can be operational for at least 307 days a year.

The visitors were treated to a gunnery demonstration and on the bridge the navigator explained the intricacies of the various controls, alarms, navigation aids and electronic charts which were present in baffling complexity. Baffling to the Society's secretary that is, who well remembered fixing a ship's position by taking bearings of landmarks instead of getting Latitude and Longitude by just pushing a button.

Later in the morning members of the ship's company gave a demonstration of mariner overboard procedures and fire-fighting techniques.

The Catering department provided a splendid buffet lunch after which Sam Salisbury was delegated to present the Captain with copies of *The History of HMS CAMBRIA*, edited by the secretary, in which there is significant mention of HMS SCOTT and the part the ship played

in the Centenary Celebrations of the TERRA NOVA leaving Cardiff in 1910.

The good news is that HMS SCOTT will remain in commission for a further ten years, the importance of her unique capability being well recognised. The



captain wished that the warm association of the Captain Scott Society and his ship would endure for many years to come and wished to be kept informed of dinners, celebrations etc the Society might arrange.

*Thanks to Secretary Matthew Salisbury for this report.*

# REPORTS OF PAST EVENTS

## ANNUAL ADVENTURE AWARDS ADJUDICATION

Amy Salisbury our newly appointed webmaster and committee member joined the adjudication team, to select the winners of the Fuchs Youth Award and the Spirit of Adventure Award.



## ANNUAL FAREWELL DINNER

The annual farewell dinner was celebrated this year on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June at the Cardiff and County Club. Members and guests (totalling 51) enjoyed a sparkling wine reception in the club bar whilst the Lovell Jones music ensemble tuned up in the dining room. The party moved to the dining room just after 7.00pm to enjoy the traditional seven course dinner that replicates the Farewell Dinner thrown for Captain Scott and his officers and Scientists in June 1910.



*Expedition Secretary Jack Wright presenting cheque to David Bathgate*

The evening proceeded elegantly with the various courses served swiftly whilst the musicians played tunes from the era such as The Hero of the South, Farewell of the Gladiators, Hearts of Oak and more up to date gems from Queen. Deputy Master of Protocol called for stoppers to be removed from decanters, port was passed and the loyal toast was given to the King followed by toasts to the society and guests. The Expedition Secretary gave a brief description of the Summit to Sea

Expedition this years Spirit of Adventure award winner. The cheque was received by David Bathgate on behalf of his son John the team leader. David then read extracts from his diary written in 1968 whilst participating in the British Andean Expedition to climb Huandoy and travel the Amazon.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 39<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting was convened in the United Services Mess on Thursday the 11<sup>th</sup> May at 12 noon. Once again our Vice President Sir Norman Lloyd Edwards kindly consented to act as chairman.

Reports on activities over the last year were delivered by the Chairman, Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Expedition Secretary.

Sir Norman commended the committee on running a tight ship and questions were taken from the floor regarding funds which the treasurer was more than happy to respond to.

With business complete Sir Norman declared the meeting closed and those attending proceeded to The Windsor Room to enjoy the buffet and wine provided.

## SPRING LUNCH & SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE PRESENTATION

Members and guests braved the elements on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April to attend our first event of the year.

Whilst rain swept across the course a sparkling wine reception in the lounge bar of Llanishen Golf Club enabled the attendees to forget the weather and meet guest speaker Jack Hampton and his expedition partner Imogen Barnett.

An excellent three course lunch was thoroughly enjoyed and whilst coffee was served the audience moved to a presentation area arranged quite expertly by Imogen and a few volunteers.

Jack then proceeded to deliver an excellent description of the award winning Paddling the Margins Expedition that included footage of the documentary film that is being completed for film festivals.



*Imogen and Jack share a toast with the Chairman*

A lively Q and A session brought the afternoon to a close and those attending expressed their appreciation with warm applause.

## CAPTAIN SCOTT BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

A large party of members, partners and guests gathered at the Scott 100 Memorial in Cardiff Bay on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> June to celebrate Robert Falcon Scott's 155<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Lt Cdr Julian Salisbury read the society's prayer and a passage from Alfred Lord Tennyson's "Ulysses", concluding with "to strive, to seek, to find and not to yield" which seemed perfectly appropriate as the party then moved on to a fine lunch at Cote Brassiere in Mermaid Quay.

The afternoon concluded with a number of hearty stalwarts toasting the good Captain in the Packet Hotel, a public house that might well have seen members of the Terra Nova crew enjoying a pint in June 1910.



# SOCIETY REPORTS

## EXPEDITION SECRETARY'S REPORT

**OUR 2022 AWARD WINNERS BOTH SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THEIR EXPEDITIONS.**

### 2023 Spirit of Adventure Award

Our adjudication panel met on April 4<sup>th</sup> to consider the six finalists selected from a total of 36 applications.

After careful consideration this year's award went to:

John Bathgate and his **Summit to Sea Expedition** which entails travelling from the source of the Amazon in Ecuador to Bellam in Brazil where it crashes out into the Atlantic.

### 2023 Sir Vivian Fuchs Youth Award

We had 59 enquiries for the Youth award and this yielded around 20 applications that could be considered for adjudication.

This year's award went to 18-year-old Katie Grieve for her Marine Survey Expedition to the Red Sea, Egypt.

Katie is the youngest member of the Glasgow University Exploration Society research expedition that will dive and survey the marine life found in the reefs of El Quseir and the impact pleasure diving, plastics, and climate change is having on the reefs.

*Jack Wright*  
hazejon@talktalk.net

## TREASURER'S REPORT

The "Sources and Application of Funds" situation reported at the AGM confirmed that the cost of the Annual Dinner remained a significant threat to the Society's cash flow. This was a compelling motive behind the Committee's decision to change the venue. The change together with a welcome donation from the Association of Royal Naval Officer's resulted in a small event surplus.

Further economies are being considered. For the time being therefore, annual subscriptions will be held at £25.

The loss of members through Covid and age taking its inevitable toll means however that the Society will continue to welcome applications for membership. Membership subscriptions are, it should be remembered, the main source of funding for the Society's adventure awards.

*Julian Salisbury*  
jdosalisbury@hotmail.co.uk

## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Society is pleased to welcome:

Mr Anthony Ernest  
Mr Owain Griffiths  
Mrs Jami Baksh  
Mr Jason Bartlett  
Dr Paul Nutley  
Ms Amy Salisbury

The Society is increasingly using e-mails to provide quick communication in between the publication of the Newsletters but it is a constant challenge to keep an up to date list of addresses.

Could you please ensure that you advise me of any changes so that we can ensure that you are kept fully informed of news and events.

*Peter F Coleman*  
peter.f.coleman@btinternet.com

## FUTURE EVENTS

**AUTUMN GALA DINNER**  
**THURSDAY 5th OCTOBER**  
**PLYMOUTH ROOMS, PENARTH.**  
18.30

**GUEST SPEAKER**  
**MICHAEL SMITH**  
**PRESENTS**

### ICE BOUND IN THE ARCTIC

THE MYSTERY OF  
CAPTAIN FRANCIS CROZIER  
AND THE  
FRANKLIN EXPEDITION

## FUTURE EVENTS

**CHRISTMAS LUNCH**  
**FRIDAY 22nd DECEMBER**  
**PLYMOUTH ROOMS, PENARTH.**  
12.30

**FURTHER DETAILS OF EVENTS AND BOOKING FORMS CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE:**  
<https://captainscottsociety.com/events/>

Contributions are welcome from members of the Society and should be addressed to Jack Wright - hazejon@talktalk.net

**BOOKINGS TO BE MADE WITH ALLAN JONES**  
**9 ST MARK'S ROAD, PENARTH, CF64 3PF**  
**allan.jones35@googlemail.com**

If paying by BACs, it is essential that you also complete and return the booking form  
The Captain Scott Society | Sortcode: 16-15-23 | Account No: 11619408

