



SPRING NEWSLETTER 2024

EDITED BY JACK WRIGHT



ANTARCTIC FIRE ANGELS COMPLETE THEIR EXTRAORDINARY EXPEDITION

Firefighters Rebecca Openshaw-Rowe from Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and Georgina Gilbert from South Wales Fire and Rescue Service have completed their extraordinary Antarctic expedition.

Rebecca and Georgina - otherwise known as the Antarctic Fire Angels - embarked on their expedition at the beginning of November 2023 and reached their final destination on January 12th 2024. They have walked and skied over 1,200km in 52 days, from the coast of Antarctica to the South Pole - the equivalent of 29 marathons.

The Antarctic Fire Angels are the first people ever to complete their chosen route and their expedition was entirely unguided and unassisted, whilst pulling their own supply and equipment sleds - each weighing over 100kg. In addition to covering this incredible distance, they have had to endure the extreme conditions of the coldest place on Earth - with temperatures reaching as low as -30°C and wind speeds of up to 60mph.

Their expedition took over four years of careful planning and training, and one of the principal aims was to challenge gender stereotypes and to inspire future generations of women.

Rebecca and Georgina are fantastic role models for women and girls to pursue a career in whichever field they choose and have provided advice and support to women undergoing the firefighter recruitment process.

The Antarctic Fire Angels have also been raising important funds for **The Fire Fighters Charity** - which provides lifelong support for serving and retired members of the UK's fire and rescue services - and their **JustGiving page** is still accepting donations.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

We said goodbye to 2023 with a very successful Christmas Lunch at the Penarth Masonic Hall so we look forward with some confidence to 2024, despite the current talk of recession and general uncertainty. We have the Spring Lunch shortly and then the Annual Dinner but in between we'd be interested to have your views on another excursion we're planning. Waverley, the last seagoing paddle steamer in the world will be offering day trips between Penarth and Ilfracombe between Thursday 30 May and Sunday 23 June and we had a wonderful time when we last went.

If you would be interested in joining us please let me know by email (julianrosser1@gmail.com) or telephone (07776 295456) so that we can gauge the level of interest. Fares haven't been set as yet but I anticipate around £38 and we'll have lunch in Ilfracombe, probably at the Smugglers Inn again. When you get in touch please let me have an idea of dates that suit you. If we do not hear from a sufficient number we won't proceed.

If this plan doesn't materialise, we will arrange an event to mark Scott's birthday in early June and I'll contact you by email to give further details. Don't forget to keep looking at our website which is now regularly updated with news, events and booking forms!

In closing, I'm sure that you will all want me to pass on best wishes to one of our stalwart members, Glyn Morris, who has been quite ill at UHW. I'm keeping in touch with him and hope to be able to report positive news soon.

Looking forward to seeing you all in the next few months.

Best wishes,

Julian Rossier

julianrosser1@gmail.com

IN SEARCH OF PERCE BLACKBOROW THE STOWAWAY WHO SAILED WITH SHACKLETON



On a recent visit to Newport to attend the opening of an art exhibition, I took the opportunity to pay homage to one of my favourite Antarctic explorers - the stowaway on Shackleton's Endurance adventure, Perce Blackborow.

For those unfamiliar with the story the young 19 year old managed to get aboard Shackleton's ship Endurance in Buenos Aires and eventually became a trusted member of the crew.

The journey started as expected, except a stowaway was found three days out of port after leaving South America for Antarctica.

It was too late for Shackleton to turn back and so he offered the stowaway, 19 year old Perce Blackborow, a position of steward with the condition "If anyone has to be eaten, then you will be the first!".

Blackborow accepted.



Stowaway Perce Blackborow with Mrs. Chippy, the ships cat

Perce's granddaughter Rachel Clague told me about her campaign to get some sort of recognition for her grandfather and she successfully managed to get a memorial tree and plaque installed in Belle Vue Park in 2022. I went along to the park and found the tree, a Southern Beech, in a beautiful spot. It was a fitting tribute to one of Newport's heroes.

The next day John Blackborow offered to take me to St Woolos cemetery to see his grandfather's grave.

We found the grave and it was a very emotional moment for me especially when I saw the photo of Perce with the carpenter's cat Mrs Chippy on his shoulder mounted on the back of the headstone.

John Blackborow is trying to get a statue of Perce erected in Newport but in the meantime he has just had a macquette made of it in bronze and hopes to produce a limited edition of these.

Cathy Cooper

ENDURANCE DELIVERED FROM UKRAINE WAR ZONE

A model ship of Sir Ernest Shackleton's famous ship, Endurance, has been handed to a museum in Cornwall, after it was rescued from the front line of Ukraine's war with Russia and brought back by a Plymouth businessman.



Andy Evangelou (left) and Maksym Litvinov delivered the ship to Lynne Raubenheimer at the museum after transporting it from Ukraine.

The scale replica was built by retired rocket engineer Vitaliy Vrubel, who was commissioned to build it by the Cornwall Shipwreck Treasure Museum in Charlestown, near St Austell.

It became stuck in a 'hot zone' near the front line in Ukraine, after Russia's invasion and the recent destruction of a dam which flooded the Dnipro region in which Mr Vrubel lived.

While its maker was evacuated to Poland, the model itself was left in storage in

Dnipro, much to the dismay of the museum, which had plans to use it in an exhibition about the explorer's famous Antarctic expeditions.

However, it has now been retrieved and handed over thanks to an effort coordinated by Plymouth man Andreas Evangelou, who personally delivered the artefact together with Maksym Litvinov, a Ukrainian now living in Plymouth.

Mr Evangelou was taking tonnes of aid into Ukraine after a fundraiser backed by Plymouth veterinarian Edmund Shillabeer, who provided medicines and food for animals affected by flooding in Kherson, Ukraine.

REPORTS OF PAST EVENTS

CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2023

The annual Christmas lunch was celebrated this year on Friday 22nd December at the Plymouth Rooms, Penarth.

Following the success of last year's festive lunch tickets were snapped up for places and nine tables accommodated 73 members and guests.

We were introduced to Alex our barmaid for the day; who in very short order mixed the "blue cocktail" and prepared four large jugs that ensured no one was left standing empty handed.

A lively reception was underway by 12.45 fuelled by Antarctic Blue and Prosecco.

As there was no top table the chairman ensured he stood in a jacket that can only be called a subtle shade of salmon pink.

The chairman welcomed one and all and described the usual running order in his inimitable way.

An excellent three course meal was once again delivered by chef and waiters. The chairman presented the appreciation collection to chef Tim and thanked the staff for their efforts.

A toast to the society and its guests brought the afternoon to a close.

AUTUMN GALA DINNER

AND CAPTAIN FRANCIS CROZIER PRESENTATION

Penarth Masonic Hall was the chosen venue for our Autumn event.

Members and guests enjoyed a sparkling wine reception and mingling with our guest speaker prior to sitting down to an excellent three course dinner.

Guest speaker Michael Smith had previously presented on Tom Crean and Sir Ernest Shackleton and the committee wanted to go back to an earlier "hero".

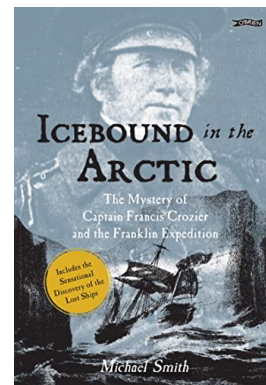
Michael had suggested Captain Francis Crozier and his rise from midshipman to Captain, his successful association with James Clark Ross and finally his role in the fatal Franklin Northwest Passage expedition of 1845.

The story included some of the lesser known elements associated with a peacetime Royal Navy and the way admiralty expeditions were

Also the unrequited love Crozier had for Sophy Cracroft touched the romantic feelings felt by all but the stone hearted. Michael spoke for the best part of 45 minutes and the enjoyment was most

p a l p a b l e when signed copies of his book "Ice Bound in the Arctic" were sold out in very short time.

The chairman presented an appreciation collection to the catering staff, called for toasts to the society, guests and speaker, bringing a splendid night to a close.



SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE AWARD WINNER 2023 WILL BE GUEST SPEAKER AT THE SPRING LUNCH ON 12TH APRIL 2024.



Our previous update reported on John and team mate Ian Roberts encounter with Peruvian pirates that forced them to return to the U.K.

We are pleased to announce John Bathgate is on the road to recovery and planning a return to the Amazon in 2024 to complete the Summit to Sea Expedition.

FUTURE EVENTS

Prior to the team's return to the Amazon John has confirmed he will be travelling to Cardiff from Scotland to deliver his report on the expeditions achievements to date. This event is bound to be well subscribed so early booking is advised. Event details and booking forms included in CSS website.

CAPTAIN SCOTT'S BIRTHDAY TO BE CELEBRATED ABOARD THE PADDLE STEAMER WAVERLEY

PS Waverley is the last seagoing passenger-carrying paddle steamer in the world. Built in 1946, she sailed from Craigendoran on the Firth of Clyde to Arrochar on Loch Long until 1973. Bought by the Paddle Steamer Preservation Society (PSPS), she has been restored to her 1947 appearance and now operates passenger excursions around the British coast.

Since 2003, Waverley has been listed in the National Historic Fleet by National Historic Ships UK as "a vessel of pre-eminent national importance"

The chairman invites you to join him for a sailing adventure departing from Penarth Pier to sail along the north Somerset coast to Ilfracombe. Lunch will be taken in the Smugglers Inn famous



WAVERLEY
SEE BRITAIN'S COASTLINE BY PADDLE STEAMER

THE WORLD'S LAST SEAGOING PADDLE STEAMER WAVERLEYCRUISES.CO.UK DAY, AFTERNOON AND EVENING CRUISES

for its seafood. There are other pubs and restaurants to enjoy as well, just be sure to be back on board by 1600 hours for return trip. Further details will be added to our website as soon as the Bristol Channel cruise programme is declared by Waverley PS.

SOCIETY REPORTS

EXPEDITION SECRETARY'S REPORT

Applications for the Society awards have been received and are being assessed for adjudication in early April.

Last year's Fuchs award winner Katie Grieve issued an excellent expedition report last September and this can be read in the news section of the website.

Our Spirit of Adventure award winner John Bathgate was front page news in our Autumn newsletter following the disruption to his Amazon expedition by Peruvian pirates.



John and team mate Ian Roberts returned to the UK last September and have spent the last six months recuperating and planning their return to the Amazon later in this year to complete their Summit to Sea Expedition.

John has confirmed he will be attending our Spring Lunch to deliver his report to the society. This is sure to be well received as the team have already conquered the mountain that is Chimborazo and paddled large parts of the Amazon.

A steady flow of submissions for this year's awards are being logged and adjudication of the short list will take place on the 2nd April.

Quite a number of senior award submissions have been received from abroad which is encouraging in terms of society recognition, but frustrating in terms being able to make an award with the winner attending the later presentation requirement in Cardiff.

Jack Wright
hazejon@talktalk.net

TREASURER'S REPORT

I am pleased to report that most membership subscriptions are paid via Standing Order - not to be confused with Direct Debit. The Society has no facility for Direct Debit nor does it particularly wish to have one!

With regard to BACs payments for subs and events, I take this opportunity to make a special plea. If you are using a business account to make a payment, please remember to refer to the event and add the name of the person for whom the payment is being made, particularly if the payment is for someone else.

Details of the Society's finances will be revealed at the AGM in May.

Julian Salisbury
jdosalisbury@hotmail.co.uk

FUTURE EVENTS

**SPRING LUNCH
&
Spirit of Adventure Presentation
FRIDAY 12th APRIL**
Llanishen Golf Club
Drinks reception 12.30

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
THURSDAY 9th MAY**
United Services Mess, Cardiff
12.00

**SCOTT BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
with Waverley Excursion
MAY/JUNE 2024**
Details TBC

**ANNUAL DINNER
with Guest Speaker Dr David Wilson
FRIDAY 14th JUNE**
Cardiff & County Club
18.30

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Society is delighted to welcome new member David Wheeler, which brings the total number of members to 164

One of outcomes of the recent upgrade to the website by Amy Salisbury seems to be an increased number of membership enquiries both from within the UK and from Europe. While it remains to be seen how many actual new applications will be received it shows that the profile of the Society is improving.

The Membership Secretary holds a secure file which contains details of members e-mail and postal addresses; e-mails to send out notices and postal address to send out newsletters. Please can members ensure that the Society is made aware of any changes of these details so as to ensure that you are kept informed on news, events and related articles.

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



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

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

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