



Josefin Bergmark-Jiménez discovered the Edward Wilson watercolour. © AHT

118 year old painting discovered in Antarctica

Antarctic Heritage Trust has discovered an almost perfectly preserved 118 year old watercolour painting among penguin-excrement, dust and mould covered papers found in an historic hut at Cape Adare, Antarctica.

The watercolour was painted by Dr Edward Wilson who, along with Captain Scott, Bowers, Oates and Evans, lost their lives on the return journey from the South Pole in 1912.

Antarctic Heritage Trust Conservator Josefin Bergmark-Jiménez found the painting. She was cleaning a paper portfolio collected from a bunk in one of two historic huts the Trust is to restore at Cape Adare.

"I opened it and there was this gorgeous painting... I got such a fright that I jumped and shut the portfolio again. I then took the painting out and couldn't stop looking at it... the colours, the vibrancy... it is such a beautiful piece of work. I couldn't believe it was there."

The painting is labelled '1899 Tree Creeper' and has the initial 'T' on it. It depicts a Tree Creeper bird specimen.

The Trust's Programme Manager - Artefacts, Lizzie Meek says it wasn't immediately clear who the artist was.

"The Cape Adare huts were built by Norwegian Carsten Borchgrevink's expedition in 1899 and later used by Captain Scott's party in 1911. We knew the artist was likely to be among the men on those expeditions."

As the Trust was working to identify the artist, Josefin attended a lecture at Canterbury University on Dr Wilson.

"The presenter showed some of Dr Wilson's artwork... as soon as I saw his distinctive handwriting, I knew he had painted the Tree Creeper. This made sense as there was also a 1911 newspaper article from the Lyttelton Times in the papers and Scott's party went to Antarctica via New Zealand."

Lizzie says Dr Wilson was a remarkable man.

"He was not only a talented painter, but a scientist and a medical doctor who was an integral member of both of Scott's expeditions to the Ice."

Josefin is not surprised the painting survived in such excellent condition.

"Watercolour paintings are particularly susceptible to light so the fact this work has spent more than a hundred years tightly packed between other sheets of paper in completely dark and cold conditions is actually an ideal way to store it."

Lizzie says how the painting came to be in the hut is still something of a mystery.

"It's likely that Wilson painted it while he was recovering from tuberculosis in Europe. Clearly, he could have taken the painting to Antarctica on either of Scott's expeditions but we think it's more likely the artwork travelled with him in 1911, and somehow made its way from Cape Evans to Cape Adare."

The permit the Trust was granted to collect the artefacts stipulates that all of the items must be returned to the site following conservation, in accordance with the site's status as an Antarctic Specially Protected Area (ASPA). This will happen once the huts themselves have been restored.

Executive Director Nigel Watson says the Trust has been overwhelmed with the positive response from around the world. "It's a poignant reminder of the inspiring legacy those early polar explorers left behind."



'Tree Creeper' March 1899. © AHT



View video and the artwork online at
nzaht.org

Antarctica: while you were sleeping

© Bob Zuur



Around 20,000 people visited the immersive exhibition.

The Trust hosted the 'Antarctica Zone' at the *Antarctica: while you were sleeping* event as part of Auckland Arts Festival.

Produced by New Zealand visual artist Joseph Michael the event saw the Museum's iconic building become the canvas for a full-scale 360-degree projection of a majestic Antarctic iceberg, named 'Ernest' after Ernest Shackleton.

Joseph Michael collaborated with composer Rhian Sheehan to create an immersive

multi-sensory installation that translates the scale and awe of Antarctica. Visitors listened to the ice crack and drop, creak and groan as colossal sections of the ice calved off, all set to a dramatic sound score.

This free, fully immersive visual and audio experience catering to an audience of all ages, was a New Zealand first, and was the largest project of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.

Around 20,000 attended the event and AHT staff enjoyed sharing their expertise and the Trust's work. A popular Antarctic competition got people learning about Antarctica's history of exploration, climate change, the Southern Ocean and its wildlife. The Inspiring Explorers' team were also present, sharing the story of their expedition to Mt Scott on the Antarctic Peninsula.

Cape Adare artefacts

Since May 2016, a team of four conservators have been working in the Canterbury Museum lab on the conservation of Antarctic artefacts. The majority of those artefacts are from the Cape Adare site, with a smaller number from caches found at Butter Point and Inexpressible Island.

Our conservators Sue, Ciarán, Josefin and Nicola recently passed a very significant milestone, 1500 artefacts conserved! Huge congratulations to the team who have worked with undiminished energy from the very outset, and achieved such fantastic improvements in the condition of these objects.

The Trust's team continue their planning for the conservation of the huts at Cape Adare.



The Trust employs a team of specialist conservators from around the world to assist on conservation projects. Left to right: Josefin Bergmark-Jiménez, Sue Bassett, Nicola Dunn-Stewart and Ciarán Larvelle.



For more information on artefacts read the Antarctic blog at nzaht.org



Randal Heke working at Scott Base.

© Antarctica New Zealand

New Zealand Antarctic Medal

Congratulations to Mr Randal Heke for receiving the New Zealand Antarctic Medal for services to New Zealand interests in Antarctica and historic preservation as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Mr Heke was Chief Building Superintendent with the Ministry of Works and Development and oversaw the construction of a base headquarters (Scott Base) at Ross Island to facilitate the 1957 Trans-Antarctic Expedition, the New Zealand government's first physical involvement on the Ice.

The original buildings for Scott Base were pre-fabricated in Wellington, before being dismantled and shipped to Antarctica for assembly. The project was completed in seven weeks under Mr Heke's leadership. His superior knowledge of construction requirements and his initiative and endurance under harsh sub-zero conditions was evident. He was instrumental in arranging for the retrieval of the flag pole from Captain Scott's hut at Hut Point and its erection for Scott Base's official opening. He assisted with the construction of further buildings in Antarctica in 1959 and 1960 and remained involved with Scott Base as an adviser until the mid-1980s.

Mr Heke held positions with the New Zealand Antarctic Society, including Chairman of the Wellington Branch, four years as President of the Canterbury Branch, National Vice President and President in the late 1970s, and is a Life Member.



Seven types of jams were found under a bed in the Cape Adare hut. © AHT

'Can' conservation

Earlier this year Lizzie Meek (Programme Manager – Artefacts) attended a workshop organised and hosted by the CANS project (Conservation of cAns in collectionNS). This project was funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation, and based at the Haute Ecole Arc Conservation-Restauration in Neuchatel, Switzerland.

A group of research partners and other Museum professionals gathered to present research findings, share information and discuss future research directions. The goal of the research is to develop greater understanding of how and why canned food products in particular are so prone to degradation; to investigate methods of slowing or treating the degradation, and

to assist collection managers with decision making around ideal storage and treatment methods.

The Antarctic expedition bases under the Trust's care have the largest single can collection in the world, with at least 8000 cans, many of which still hold contents. Lizzie presented an overview of the Trust's work at a public lecture in Neuchatel. She gave two further presentations on the specific Antarctic environmental conditions, the range and condition of the canned collection, and the various conservation treatments the Trust has developed over a decade of working on the Ross Sea Heritage Restoration Project.



Filmmaker and zoologist Simon Lucas inspiring others with his story.

© Bob Zuur

Inspiring Explorers' film premiere

Inspiring Explorer Simon Lucas is premiering his short film 'Mt Scott' at the New Zealand Mountain Film and Book Festival in Wanaka on 1 July. The film shares the story of the Trust's recent expedition to the Antarctic Peninsula where Simon, along with Isobel Ewing, William Pike and Sylvie Admore, joined Nigel Watson (AHT Executive Director) and trust partner One Ocean Expeditions on a journey to climb Mt Scott.

'Mt Scott' explores the members' individual reasons for joining the expedition and the challenges they each face as they attempt the climb. Simon hopes to showcase the film at a number of festivals around the world.

'Mt Scott' will be available on the Trust's channels later this year. Look out for the announcement for applications for the 2018 Inspiring Explorers' Expedition online at nzaht.org.

Hillary's Hut wins award

© Tim McPhee



The Trust was delighted to receive the award for the International category at the 31st Dulux Colour Awards. The Dulux Colour Awards are Australasia's premier showcase of inspirational colour application in built environments.

This special project was entered to celebrate the Trust's major conservation of Hillary's/TAE Hut and to honour the legacy of this iconic building and its purpose in supporting science and exploration in Antarctica.

Today, in amongst the almost exclusively modern, green-painted buildings of Scott

Base, the retro colours of Hillary's Hut immediately draw attention to it as a unique and very special part of the base's history.



Congratulations to Jo Scott (Great Scott! Communications) and Yvonne Densem (Christchurch International Airport) for receiving a Highly Commended award at the Public Relations Institute of New Zealand national awards for their campaign Expedition South, which raised brand awareness and funds for the conservation of Hillary's Hut.
© Getty

Paintings evoke heroic era

New Zealand artist Sean Garwood is exhibiting his new series of paintings from 6–8 October in Christchurch. The 16 paintings capture the historic Antarctic huts of Sir Ernest Shackleton and Captain Robert Falcon Scott evoking a strong sense of the heroic era of polar exploration.

"My long-held ambition to visit the historic Antarctica huts of Sir Ernest Shackleton and Robert Falcon Scott came to fruition in November 2015. This was made possible after a successful proposal to Antarctica New Zealand's Community Engagement Programme. The main focus of the exhibition is to showcase the huts themselves and the artefacts they house," says Sean.

"Upon entering each hut, I felt a sense of deep reverence. I stood there, very still and soaked it in. Alone in the cradle of a significant part of modern world exploration history. The light was muted with a slight

declination of the sun and so very silent. I could hear the eerie wind funnelling around the huts, with slight creaking of timbers and doors. The men seemed very close indeed. A deep chill ran all the way down my spine. I find it very difficult to describe in words the feeling but it's like no other and certainly a feeling I will never forget."

Sean's time at the huts involved sketching and photographing. This was hampered by the layers of clothing that is necessary to alleviate the sub-zero temperatures. The photographs were taken for reference as every painting is meticulously drawn out first and then transferred to the canvas where each oil painting can take four to six weeks to complete.

Sean says he is delighted that New Zealand Post have decided to use six of his paintings for the 'Historic Huts of the Ross Dependency' 2017 stamp issue, which will be available from early October 2017.

Governance

We welcome Andrew Coleman (CEO Heritage New Zealand) to the Trust's Board. At the last Board meeting we farewelled Rt Hon Paul East CNZM QC who stepped down as Chair in September 2016. Again, we acknowledged Paul's significant contribution to the Board as an Independent Trustee from 2002 and as Chair from 2005.

Gone but not forgotten

We remember our dear friends of the Trust.

William (Bill) Cranfield

William Cranfield, RNZAF, Wing Commander (retired) was a member of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition. During TAE, Bill flew 273 hours in route finding and depot-laying for Fuchs' crossing party and in direct support of Hillary's tractor party and three separate field survey parties. Bill spent 28 years in various command, staff and flying positions, flying fixed and rotary wing aircraft to Antarctica in the early 1960s.

Robert (Bob) McMillan

Bob was a long time supporter of the Trust's work and an Antarctic Club Gold member.



Shackleton's Hut – oil on canvas.



Sean setting up in Shackleton's Hut.

Visit nzaht.org for details of the exhibition and to read the full story.

Thank You

We welcome the following new members:

Bronze

Sylvie Admore (NZ)
Isobel Ewing (NZ)
Pat Lindner (USA)
William Pike (NZ)
Simon Lucas (NZ)

If you would like to support our work, we would welcome your donation or support as an Antarctic Explorer Club member.

More information on how to support the Trust can be found on our website.
nzaht.org