



Hillary's Hut Saved!

© Anthony Powell

On Friday 20 January 2017 the residents of New Zealand's Scott Base celebrated the base's 60 year anniversary by taking a tour through the recently restored Hillary's (TAE/IGY) Hut.

Antarctic Heritage Trust's team of 12 worked more than 5700 hours on the major conservation of the building over the summer season. The work started in November 2016 following a successful fundraising campaign to save the site, the legacy of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition (1956-1958).

The New Zealand Government and Antarctica New Zealand asked the Trust

to take on the care and conservation of the hut, including raising funds for its restoration and long term maintenance.

"It's an iconic slice both of polar and Kiwi history that could have been lost. Now, thanks to our many supporters from around the world it will be there to inspire future generations to explore and push their boundaries like Sir Ed did," says the Trust's Executive Director Nigel Watson.

Extensive planning and research was undertaken by the Trust in preparation for the conservation work. Originally designed to last only twenty years, after sixty years the building had a number of issues



The 'mess' was repainted in its original colours and artefacts conserved. © Jane Ussher



Conservator Sue Bassett carefully stripped back layers of paint to reveal some of the original stencilling used to identify the different panels of the pre-fabricated Scott Base. © AHT



Annika Andresen (Sir Peter Blake Antarctic Youth Ambassador) assisting with painting. © AHT

including deteriorating asbestos wall and ceiling linings, a leaking roof, snow ingress, and melt water under the foundations.

Care was taken to retain and reinstate original building materials after the asbestos was removed. Where new material was essential, modern material was chosen that was as close as possible to the original finish and appearance.

The 1980's pitched roof addition was removed and the original flat roof structure was reinstated. Exterior vents and flues were repaired and replaced. The Trust worked closely with Dulux New Zealand to match original TAE-era paint samples and colour swatches, before repainting the exterior and interior of the building in the bold shades of the 1950s.

Visit the website to view a photo gallery showcasing the restoration work, a time lapse video and a curated gallery of iconic artefacts.

Artefacts

Hillary's Hut houses almost 600 artefacts, some from the TAE era, and some from the formative years of the New Zealand Antarctic programme. All artefacts were individually catalogued, photographed, and where necessary given conservation treatment by a team of three conservators.

Chocolate provides a fast energy boost in the field and copes quite well with being frozen. This lacquered and unopened tin of 12 x 2oz chocolate bars was specially packed for the Trans-Antarctic Expedition 1956 by Andrew Lusk and Co, London.



Hand-held anemometer in a wooden carry case. The instrument's cups catch the wind and provide an output measurement of wind speed in miles per hour. It was used by Vivian Fuchs on the British Crossing Party during the Trans-Antarctic Expedition.

Inspiring Explorers' Antarctic Expedition

© William Pike



In February the Trust's Executive Director Nigel Watson led four young people on the adventure of a lifetime to attempt a guided ascent of Mt Scott on the Antarctic Peninsula.

The team for our second Inspiring Explorers' Expedition was selected from almost 100 applicants. Aside from the opportunity for young people to visit Antarctica, this programme was created to inspire people to explore.

It was a privilege to lead these inspiring young people to help them connect with the early polar explorers and Antarctica's rich history. All of them challenged themselves in the true spirit of exploration.

Through this expedition these young people both celebrated and, in their own way, embraced the thread of exploration

of the famous early polar explorers, including Robert Falcon Scott, for whom Mt Scott is named.

Given we care for Scott's legacy through the conservation of his bases at Hut Point and Cape Evans it was poignant for the team to reflect on explorers like Scott and the differences in travel, conditions and gear that his team faced.

It was satisfying to achieve our goal of an ascent of Mt Scott, particularly given the challenges at times of route finding. Thanks to our Kiwi guides Sean and Kevin and the partnership with One Ocean

Expeditions that made this so successful.

Each of our team is now delivering a comprehensive outreach programme. Their mission is to inspire people through sharing their adventure and encourage others to explore in a way that's meaningful for them.

Nigel Watson
Executive Director



Email us at info@nzaht.org if you are interested in any of the team speaking to your organisation.

William Pike

Director of William Pike Challenge Award (williampike.co.nz)

William Pike is a sought-after inspirational speaker who lost his leg during the 2007 Mt Ruapehu eruption. He is now the director of the William Pike Challenge Award, a youth development programme for years 7-9 students.

Highlights

Summitting Mt Scott was a definite highlight. The view was like flying across the Pacific Ocean, looking down and seeing nothing but cloud. We came down the slope in twilight and I'd never seen anything like it with the mountains lit up in gorgeous pink light.

Standing on top of Mt Scott I...

Reflected back to 10 years ago when I was lying on a hospital bed with my leg freshly amputated below the knee, and would never have imagined I could make it to the top of a mountain in Antarctica. I'm really



© Sylvie Admore

proud of myself for what I've achieved over the last 10 years, and grateful to the people around me who have helped me get to where I am.

I found it challenging...

Climbing as an amputee as it is not comfortable or easy. I had to constantly think about every step and how my (prosthetic) ankle was going to react, as it doesn't accommodate undulations in the ground as my natural ankle would. The silicone liner in the socket where my stump sits prevented blisters and rubbing but doesn't breathe, so sweating was another major concern. I had to stop and start several times during the climb to take my leg off.

I didn't expect to...

Be able to walk on my leg for 18 hours as the longest trip I had ever done was 10 hours. Achieving this has now opened up a world of possibilities for me. Camping out overnight fully dressed in harness and sleeping bag with icebergs cracking around us and floating by was unexpected. It was the perfect end to the perfect adventure and eating a bag of chips in the sleeping bag topped it off.

Sylvie Admore

Officer of the Royal New Zealand Airforce

Highlights

Summiting Mt Scott! The view from the peak, with huge glaciers and mountains stretching out to the horizon, was beyond compare.

One challenge I faced was...

The access to the mountain proved initially challenging to navigate due to the steep snow slope rising out of the water. We were also grateful our guides could lead us safely through the heavily crevassed terrain especially with little to no visibility.

It was surreal...

Wiping the residue of a humpback's exhalation off my camera lens. The whale spent about half an hour weaving and diving within inches of our Zodiac. I was knelt down at the bow, looking into the water when the whale surged upward from the deep and rolled its great head to the side, gazing at me curiously with one of its dark aquatic eyes before flicking a fluke and gliding away.

One thing I learned about myself is...

How much I normally have going on in my head when I'm mountaineering. I have led trips into wilderness areas and teach alpine skills courses so am used to making the final decisions. The Antarctica trip was



Sylvie tying an alpine butterfly knot above the steep snow pitch from the Zodiac.

unusually relaxed for me as there were guides with a lot more experience than me making those calls.

I've been inspired to...

Reinforce my commitment to the continued conservation of Antarctica. It is definitely something to be conserved and preserved, and I feel strongly it should be protected and kept for future generations.

I expected Antarctica to be...

A cold, barren, bleak wilderness, combined with a David Attenborough type picture of amazing wildlife. To see

these two images collide as we walked through a penguin colony while looking up at a maze of crevasses, or standing on an exposed snow slope with wildlife cruising below us, was incredible.

"Climbing in Antarctica involves tearing your eyes away from the incredible abundance of wildlife and sometimes that can be close to impossible." SYLVIE ADMORE

Simon Lucas

Zoologist and filmmaker

Highlights

Reaching the summit of Mt Scott was definitely the highlight. It was pretty much a full white out when we started so we didn't know if we would see the mountain or even get a viewpoint. It was an incredible feeling and huge relief when the clouds peeled back to reveal a perfectly blue sky with the sun shining on the mountains.

I've spent the last three years showcasing my adventures and trying to get others excited about exploring the wilderness. This expedition has cemented the value of doing that.

One of the challenges I faced was...

Capturing the whole experience as the sole videographer was challenging, especially in an area that was heavily crevassed and required a lot of attention to tread safely. My feet found several crevasses, which brought home the reality of how quickly things can go wrong. Our guides were fantastic and steered us through these high consequences areas.

Advice I would give about exploring is...

Get outside! People don't have to go to Antarctica to have an adventure. The whole trip we were buzzing about how incredible it was to be outside, away from modern day life, with no cell phone reception or internet. We were completely focused on what we were doing.

I admire the early polar explorers because...

When we went to Whalers Bay, we got to see all the old structures and get a glimpse of what it was like back in the day. I can't imagine how hard it must have been for the early polar explorers to navigate the constantly moving icebergs in their wooden boats. To traverse the terrain with no maps or any way of knowing what lay ahead must have been incredibly daunting. It was definitely humbling for me.



Visit nzaht.org to view Simon's video.



Isobel Ewing

Journalist at Newshub

Highlights

When we were about 12 hours out from Antarctica I was on the bow of the ship by myself and caught the first glimpse of the mountains. They looked like huge hunks of ice poking out of the cloud across the ocean. I imagined what that sight must have been like for the first explorers. That was a pretty rapturous feeling. I also found it magical to step onto the continent for the first time and start climbing Mt Scott.

Standing on top of Mt Scott...

I was overwhelmed. I'd summited my first mountain in the last great wilderness on Earth, and yet there wasn't a breath of wind and the sun was shining. It was such a tranquil moment in an incredibly harsh place. I think it was pretty emotional for everyone, the culmination of all that apprehension about whether we'd be able to do it. I managed to grab the satellite phone and do a live cross back to the Your Sunday show on Radio Live, which was totally surreal and a huge career highlight.

I discovered...

How resilient I am. I used to be terrified

"Antarctica has so much mystery and is the pinnacle of exploration."

ISOBEL EWING



© Simon Lucas

Luckily Isobel had done crevasse training as part of her preparation.

of heights and mountaineering made me nervous because of the technical side. To have overcome that initial terror on the first morning and made it to the top of the mountain makes me feel proud.

Compared to the early polar explorers...

We were lucky! I'd read books and seen photos of the early explorers but have a new appreciation of what it must have been like for them in such an inhospitable environment with wooden ships, no

showers and no way of communicating with people back home. After this trip I now understand why Antarctica has fuelled so much writing and art over the years, and why people are fascinated by it.

The team travelled via Ushuaia in South America and on their return trip also visited Deception Bay and other points of interest on the Peninsula.



Visit nzaht.org to watch videos and view photo galleries of the whole expedition.

Cape Adare Artefacts

Work continues on the conservation of artefacts from Cape Adare. Our team of four conservators, Sue, Ciarán, Josefin and Nicola, have treated more than 1200 objects to date and made some wonderful discoveries along the way.



A Jaeger felt and leather boot from Cape Adare, Northern Party before and after treatment.



Some of the textiles from Cape Adare, including the only remaining Union Jack to remain on ice from the 500 taken south.



A selection of medical bottles from Borchgrevink's hut at Cape Adare.



Conservator Sue Bassett removes corrosion from iron dog chains.



An iron alloy dog chain, before (left) covered in guano and corrosion product, and after (right) with iron treated and stabilised.

Thank You

We welcome the following new members:

Silver

William Scott (CA)

Bronze

Dale Jacobsen (AU)

Dr Laura Brambilla (FR)

Jennifer Bourke (NZ)

Leonie Rouse (NZ)

Juli and Andrew Wright (US)

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