



From left: Jane Ussher, Rt Hon Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, and Nigel Watson. © AHT

Prime Minister launches 'Hillary's Antarctica' book

The Trust was delighted that the New Zealand Prime Minister Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern officially launched *Hillary's Antarctica* at New Zealand's Parliament in late October.

Written by Trust Executive Director Nigel Watson and illustrated with photography by Jane Ussher, *Hillary's Antarctica* is the first book to fully document and celebrate the contribution Sir Edmund Hillary and the New Zealand team made to Antarctic history, and the legacy they left behind. Published by Allen and Unwin, the book also features historic images and never-before-seen ephemera and diary entries.

The Prime Minister spoke at the launch event of her passion for Antarctica and her personal admiration for polar explorers such as Shackleton and Hillary in inspiring future generations with their endeavours.

There was a real buzz in the room, with a number of supporters of the Trust present along with dignitaries and Members of Parliament. It was particularly special to have members of the Hillary family in attendance, along with some of New Zealand's first Antarcticans and

descendants of Trans-Antarctic Expedition members.


Hillary's Antarctica profiles exploration, science and discovery in the world's most extreme environment. Beyond the famed tractor journey Sir Edmund Hillary took to the South Pole, the book tells the great adventures the

New Zealand Trans-Antarctic Expedition and International Geophysical Year team undertook on the Ice in the late 1950s. The book also documents the subsequent efforts to conserve the legacy Hillary's team left behind.

The Trust recently finished conservation on Hillary's (TAE/IGY) Hut and are proud to care for it as part of the remarkable legacy of five historic explorer bases it manages through the Ross Sea Heritage Restoration Project.

Nigel is an authority on Antarctic history and is, along with Jane, the co-author of the acclaimed *Still Life: Inside the Historic Huts of Scott and Shackleton* which became an immersive museum exhibition, and a contributor to Assouline's *South Pole*. Jane Ussher is highly respected for her documentary work as a photographer and is regarded as one of New Zealand's foremost portrait photographers, with a number of published books as well as a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to photography.

Hillary's Antarctica is available for purchase in stores in New Zealand and online at Fishpond.co.nz.

 Visit nzaht.org for full story and photos.



TAE/IGY descendants with Nigel Watson and Jane Ussher. © AHT

Trip of a lifetime for school students



From left: Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate students Lana Kiddie-Vai and Mele Fetu'u. © AHT

As part of a new partnership with Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate, Auckland, New Zealand, Antarctic Heritage Trust is taking two Year 13 students kayaking in Antarctica with a Kiwi Olympian.

Mele Fetu'u and Lana Kiddie-Vai will be on the Trust's fourth Inspiring Explorers' Expedition in early 2019, along with five other young people aged between 18-30 who have been selected from hundreds of applications nationwide. The team will travel to the Antarctic Peninsula from South America aboard a One Ocean Expeditions vessel, with the opportunity for kayak excursions in Antarctic waters with New Zealand Olympian Mike Dawson and expert guides.

Trust Executive Director Nigel Watson, who will lead the expedition, says it will be an unforgettable experience.

"Antarctica has the power to change lives. As well as exploring that magnificent place and learning about the legacy we care for, our Inspiring Explorers will go kayaking under the mentoring of Olympian Mike Dawson and the One Ocean Expeditions' team. We are very excited for them."

The Antarctic Peninsula is the destination for the 2019 Inspiring Explorers' Expedition. © Sylvie Admore

Nigel says the Trust and Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate have a special connection.

"The school cares for Sir Edmund's former home in New Zealand (which is now a leadership centre on the Collegiate's grounds) and the Trust cares for his former home in Antarctica. We share a genuine sense of kaitiakitanga (guardianship) for Sir Edmund's legacy."

Nigel and Mike met the students for the first time, at an event held at Hillary House, to celebrate the partnership between the Trust and the Collegiate. Mike says it was a special moment meeting Mele and Lana.

"To get to meet these amazing young people and their families inside the study of Sir Ed's

old home, with members of the Hillary family there, felt pretty special."

Lana says the reality of going to Antarctica for the first time is already starting to set in for the two Collegiate students.

"I'm really excited but I'm also a bit nervous. It's going to be so cold! But that is all what makes it an adventure."

Through sponsorship provided by the Woolf Fisher Trust, the Trust is also bringing a young teacher from the Collegiate on the expedition. The teacher will be announced along with the rest of the expedition participants in early 2019.

Visit nzaht.org for the full story and photos/video.



From left: Trust Board Chair Mark Stewart, Lana Kiddie-Vai, Nigel Watson, Mele Fetu'u, and Olympic kayaker Mike Dawson. © AHT

Antarctic Conservation Update



Base A at Port Lockroy. © UKAHT

Antarctic Heritage Trust has a busy conservation season ahead working across Ross Island heritage sites, at Cape Adare and with UKAHT on the Antarctic Peninsula.

Port Lockroy

Trust Programme Manager Al Fastier joined the UKAHT Port Lockroy Conservation Team under the Trust's partnership to share its conservation knowledge and expertise developed during the Ross Sea Heritage Restoration Project. The team will spend five weeks at Port Lockroy and

will undertake emergency repairs, do a full architectural survey, install solar power and schedule future conservation work.

The historic Base A, also known as Bransfield House, was built at Port Lockroy in 1944 as part of Operation Tabarin, a secret war time operation to establish a permanently occupied British base in Antarctica. The base was first conserved in 1996 and is now a living museum, a post office and a shop selling Antarctic souvenirs, which helps to fund the conservation project.

Challenges include living on a small 3 square acre island, working within a Gentoo penguin colony, snow and, at times, rain.

Al said it is a fantastic location to work, with this historic hut being surrounded by snow-capped mountains rising steeply from the sea. The hut is rich in artefacts, giving the site a real spirit of place and a strong connection to the past.

Cape Adare

Al Fastier (Programme Manager) will then travel with Trust contractor John Taylor to Cape Adare in early 2019 to finish the installation of a field camp at the historic site. Conservation materials and supplies for the team for future seasons will be dropped off ahead of conservation work that is scheduled to begin on the huts next season, logistics pending.

Ross Island

A team of four travelled to Ross Island this season to implement the annual monitoring and maintenance programme for the heroic-era huts. Joining the Trust's Programme Manager (Artefacts) Lizzie Meek and 2018 Conservation Ambassador Mike Gillies are two returning stalwarts Martin Wenzel (heritage carpenter) and Nicola Stewart (conservator). Alongside the monitoring and maintenance programme for Shackleton's and Scott's huts, the team will conserve heroic-era artefacts from cache sites at Inexpressible Island and Butter Point.

While the team is at Scott Base they will also undertake an inspection and some minor maintenance at Hillary's (TAE/IGY) Hut, and they will install a 'duckboard' walkway through the porch of the hut.

Conservation Ambassador

Congratulations to Mike Gillies, who has been selected as the Antarctic Heritage Trust's Conservation Ambassador for the 2018-2019 season.

A keen heritage carpentry hobbyist, Mike is a Recreation/Historic Ranger for the Department of Conservation in Murchison, where he regularly works in remote locations in the Nelson Lakes National Park.

As Conservation Ambassador, Mike will work alongside the Trust's experts in Antarctica to implement the ongoing maintenance and monitoring programme for Hillary's, Shackleton's and Scott's huts on Ross Island as part of the Ross Sea Heritage Restoration Project.

Heritage conservation is both a profession and passion for Mike, who has a fascination

for traditional building techniques, particularly historic hut building in New Zealand.

Upon landing in Antarctica Mike said, "Maybe I was ready for the weather, but what I wasn't prepared for was the Antarctic's onslaught on my senses. I was instantly overwhelmed...that first breath of Antarctic air is unlike anything imaginable. Extremely cold and dry, but the most pure air ever. Then the overwhelming visuals... vast ice fields as far as the eye can see; mountains which seem so close you could touch them but are miles away; Mt Erebus puffing away in the background."

Conservation Ambassador Mike Gillies in the field. © AHT/Mike Gillies.



Read about the team's conservation efforts at nzaht.org.



Antarctic Virtual Reality Announced



Hillary's (TAE/IGY) Hut 2018. © Jonny Harrison



the hut, it celebrates New Zealand's first presence in Antarctica as part of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition and International Geophysical Year.

The Trust recently finished conservation on the hut and is pleased to be able to share this iconic piece of Antarctic history. Stories of Hillary's 23 man team and their mission to further science and exploration in the world's most extreme environment will feature within the experience and through accompanying material.

Gregory Bennett (Head of Digital Design and Visual Arts at the School of Art & Design at AUT) says, "This is an exciting

opportunity for AUT students and researchers to work on a real world project that is also at the cutting edge of how new technologies such as VR can bring important heritage sites and their stories alive for the public."

The virtual reality experience will be freely available at selected institutions around New Zealand, as well as being available online for international audiences.

The Trust gratefully acknowledges Ryman Healthcare for their major sponsorship of this project and Antarctica New Zealand for their logistics support.

The Trust is thrilled to announce it has partnered with Auckland University of Technology (AUT) to create a groundbreaking virtual reality experience of Sir Edmund Hillary's Antarctic hut. Launching in 2019, people will be invited to step inside Hillary's (TAE/IGY) Hut and to explore the first building at what is now New Zealand's Scott Base. A fully immersive experience, which includes a guided tour through

Alumni News

Ciarán Lavelle (Conservator) recently presented on his work with the Trust in Antarctica at the 'Conservation Activities in Ireland & Conservation Science' conference.

Congratulations to **Annika Andresen** who has completed her Masters Architecture (Professional) with her thesis on '*Architecture in a Space of Flux*'. Annika was the 2016 Antarctic Youth Ambassador, a partnership between the Trust, Antarctica New Zealand and the Sir Peter Blake Trust.

Simon Lucas (Inspiring Explorer 2017) is captaining a boat *Grey Wolf* that will be available for charters to Antarctica. Simon was part of the team that climbed Mt Scott with the Trust in 2017.

A Fond Farewell

Baden Norris QSO NZAM, one of the world's foremost Antarctic historians and a close friend of the Trust, passed away on 8 August this year. Baden was involved with caretaking of the historic huts in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, and provided conservation advice to the Antarctic Heritage Trust Trustees as part of its Conservation Advisory Group for many years. His contribution to supporting education and knowledge about Antarctica and preservation of the legacy of early Antarctic exploration was outstanding. He will be dearly missed.



Baden Norris standing against west wall of Discovery Hut, 1964. © Baden Norris

Thank You

We welcome the following new members:

Bronze Kerry Chuck (NZ)
Josie Debenham (NZ)
Jan Fullarton (NZ)
Jan Heine (NZ)
Bill McKay (NZ)
Sir David Skegg (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