



## Next Generation Step Inside Explorer Bases

**Antarctic scenery, wildlife, history, heritage and heroes were among highlights of the Trust's Inspiring Explorers Expedition™ to the Ross Sea in January 2025.**

The group marked the tenth anniversary of Antarctic Heritage Trust's Inspiring Explorers™ programme by learning more about Antarctic exploration thanks to expedition partner Heritage Expeditions and supporter Cheshire Architects.

This was the first time the Trust has taken young explorers to experience the legendary Antarctic explorers' bases and understand the Trust's conservation of them.

Thanks to favourable weather, sea-ice conditions and significant efforts by the polar vessel's crew, the group visited all four heroic-era huts the Trust cares for.

The Inspiring Explorers™ brought their interests and skills together to capture content for a podcast series about the expedition and the Trust's work to safeguard the continent's cultural heritage. They were accompanied by Al Fastier, who shared his extensive knowledge gained through leading the Trust's Ross Sea

Heritage Restoration Project for 18 years until his retirement last year.

The eight - Kitiona (Billy) Pelasio, Lucy Hayes-Stevenson, Maia Ingoo, Louise Pigginn, Calum Turner, Ngawai Clendon, Jake Bailey and Daniel Bornstein - say Al's explanations enhanced their visits.

Calum says "Something that really stuck with me from Al was what he called 'spirit of place'. When we were in these huts, we felt the spirit of where we were and the stories of what went on there, and connecting with that. There was a moment when he got us to be quiet in Scott's Cape Evans hut, to be there in silence, and just feel it. That was really special and something I will take with me to future places I know have historical significance."

Maia agrees. "Al taught me the importance of having history in context and how important it is for these historic huts to be in the same place as where it all happened, these isolated and extreme environments

The Inspiring Explorers™ team visit Borchgrevink's hut at Cape Adare. L-R: Calum Turner, Maia Ingoo, Louise Pigginn, Lucy Hayes-Stevenson, Daniel Bornstein, Ngawai Clendon, Kitiona Pelasio, and Jake Bailey, guided by Al Fastier.  
© AHT/Anna Clare

in Antarctica. His depth of knowledge, depth of caring for these places, and willingness to share that has been nothing short of inspirational."

Gathering audio for the podcast series the group will release was an interesting exercise for them. The group found themselves surrounded by a different kind of silence, among noisy penguins, out



Al Fastier (right) shows Calum Turner the stables in Scott's hut at Cape Evans. © AHT/Anna Clare





L-R: Jake Bailey, Maia Ingoo, Daniel Bornstein, and Louise Piggin visit Shackleton's hut. © AHT/Anna Clare

to sea, or fighting to stand up in strong winds, and say the experience heightened their senses.

Calum says "There's this brilliant opportunity to listen, whether it's penguins, leopard seals or the way waves lap under ocean ice, carving out little caves with icicles, something you wouldn't even really notice unless you can hear it."

The expedition bases of famous explorers each offered a different perspective for the Inspiring Explorers™ and have left a life-long impact on them. They visited:

- ▲ Cape Adare, home to Antarctica's largest Adélie penguin rookery (more than a million penguins!) and Carsten Borchgrevink's hut, the first building constructed in Antarctica and the only example left of humanity's first dwelling on a continent;
- ▲ Captain Robert Falcon Scott's *Terra Nova* hut at Cape Evans, the largest historic structure in the Ross Sea region and, thanks to seven years' work by 53 specialists from 12 different nations, home to almost 12,000 items left behind by the explorers;
- ▲ Sir Ernest Shackleton's *Nimrod* Hut at Cape Royds, the focus of six years of Trust conservation work on more than 6,100 artefacts; and
- ▲ Scott's *Discovery* Hut at Hut Point, today the most visited historic hut due to its proximity to the US and Kiwi Antarctic programmes.

The young explorers say actually standing inside the huts was a physical experience they can't forget.

In Shackleton's hut, Kitona "Billy" Pelasio said "As I stepped through the door, I got a nostalgic vibe, like they are still here, not visibly, but you can feel them."



Kitona Pelasio explores Scott's hut at Cape Evans © AHT/Anna Clare



Ngawai Clendon outside Borchgrevink's hut at Cape Adare. © AHT/Anna Clare

"I felt a lot of wairua in Te Reo Māori, in English that is spirit," said Ngawai Clendon. "The spirit of the ancestors who came before us. Shackleton showed bravery to go on such a journey."

Comparing visits, Lucy Hayes-Stevenson said "At Cape Adare, I felt the isolation and vulnerability, at Cape Evans I felt the loss, and at Cape Royds I felt a real sense of comfort and camaraderie and happiness."

The expedition has definitely left its mark on the young explorers.

Ngawai says she appreciates what she calls the significance of adopting the 'Explorer Mindset'. "It instills in me the understanding that with dedication, humility and focus, I am capable of achieving remarkable feats."

## Expedition Partners and Supporters

The Trust is grateful to the generous partners and supporters who made this expedition possible.

As the Trust marked its tenth year of the Inspiring Explorers™ programme, expedition partner Heritage Expeditions was marking 40 years as New Zealand's first and only expedition cruise company.

Commercial Director and Expedition Leader Aaron Ross says it was a pleasure to have the young explorers on board.

"The Inspiring Explorers™ certainly lived up to their name. Everyone on board witnessed the dedication and passion of the next generation of custodians and ambassadors, and agreed the future of the Ross Sea is in good hands.

"Sailing as far south as possible meant we were always going to be at the mercy of the elements, but our experience helped get the team to Hut Point to return an artefact. We look forward to following the explorers' future adventures and how they will help shape the world for the better."

Thanks also to donors to the Inspiring Explorers™ Fund, and supporter Cheshire Architects.



See more images from the expedition at [icyheritage.org](http://icyheritage.org)





# Historic Artefact Returns Home

The Inspiring Explorers™ team hold a case containing *The Count of Monte-Cristo* before returning it to Scott's hut at Hut Point. L-R: Kitiona Pelasio, Lucy Hayes-Stevenson, Louise Piggin, Daniel Bornstein, Calum Turner, Maia Ingoe, Ngawai Clendon, and Jake Bailey. © AHT/Anna Clare

Appreciating an artefact is one thing, but helping conserve and return one is quite another, as members of the 2025 Inspiring Explorers Expedition™ discovered.

The eight young explorers were tasked with returning a classic book to the icy continent and hoped conditions would permit them to get to the base where heroic era explorers had read it, Scott's *Discovery* hut at Hut Point on Ross Island.

The copy of "The Count of Monte-Cristo", written by Alexandre Dumas and published around 1844, was given to the Trust by a donor who received it as a school prize in 1965.

Before leaving New Zealand, the young explorers readied it for its next phase of life in icy conditions.

Inspiring Explorer Daniel Bornstein, a conservator at the National Museum of Australia, says the condition of the book highlights the hardships experienced by early Antarctic explorers. The book is missing its cover and a few pages, is well thumbed, covered in sooty fingerprints and smells strongly of the seal blubber that fuelled stoves and lamps.

"This was an intervention treatment. We repaired some little tears and stitched some pages that had separated from the book back into place. We humidified and flattened it - and made sure it was safe for the rest of time."

Returning the book wasn't plain sailing. Heritage Architect Lucy Hayes-Stevenson says the group almost didn't get to *Discovery* hut because of sea ice blocking their vessel's passage.

"On the first attempt to return the book, ice blocked our way and we had to turn back. Reality in Antarctica is dictated by the movement of the ice and it changes in a second. On the second to last day, the ice had fully cleared and we were finally able to return it to its home in Scott's hut. We were all so invested in its return, because we got to be a part of that story."

Daniel says "This was an incredible opportunity for someone in my profession. I had the privilege of working on this object associated with Antarctic exploration and take it back to where it can be most meaningful."



Daniel Bornstein and Louise Piggin prepare to place the book they helped return to Antarctica. © AHT/Anna Clare

Inspiring Explorer and Conservation Technician Louise Piggin describes the experience as very special. "You see the book and it feels like a very old piece of history that doesn't fit in with normal surroundings, but when we returned it to the hut, it fitted right in. It was home."

Each year the Trust is gifted artefacts from around the world that were originally from the historic huts. The Trust welcomes their return, and thanks to our donors, we are able to conserve these artefacts and return them back to the expedition bases in Antarctica.



The historic artefact at home beside the sleeping platform in Scott's hut. © AHT/Anna Clare



To find out more visit [nzaht.org/sustain/donate-an-artefact](https://nzaht.org/sustain/donate-an-artefact)





# Summer Conservation Season

Our 2024-25 conservation season saw teams working in three areas of Antarctica: Cape Adare, the site of Borchgrevink's 1899 expedition base and Scott's Northern Party hut; Ross Island, at the explorer bases of Scott, Shackleton and Hillary; and the Antarctic Peninsula with the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust.

The Trust's team began with conservation tasks in Hillary's TAE/IGY hut and conservation treatment of artefacts while at New Zealand's Scott Base, before deploying to Shackleton's hut at Cape Royds. Severe

winds and snow battered the team for a few days while they repaired storm damage there, treated artefacts, progressed monitoring work, archaeological surveying and assessed building conditions.

A break in the weather allowed a site inspection at Mt Cis, a supply depot established during Scott's *Terra Nova* expedition. The team had three different snowstorms in the first seven days, with winds in excess of 50 knots at times, requiring onerous manual clearance of large volumes of snow.

## Exploring Below the Surface

Archaeology was a major focus when the team moved to Scott's *Terra Nova* hut at Cape Evans. The team set up work tents to process and document their findings from assessment areas set out in 1m x 1m grids. String lines and select pits were dug to ascertain the contextual use of the site, stratigraphy of soils and how subsurface streams had moved material. The team sieved and sorted finds, took care of artefacts while they were temporarily out of the ground for analysis, and processed and documented findings.

Dr Emma St Pierre, Radarch's Principal Archaeologist, says "One of the most remarkable things about excavating at Cape Evans, was the amazing level of preservation of organic materials. I was regularly uncovering cans with food still in them, seeds, wood, burlap, leather and other fabrics, including hand-stitched pieces, paper with print still legible, as well as animal remains including a penguin steak with bone, flesh and feathers still intact. Every turn and scrape of the trowel revealed interesting and unexpected finds.

"Being able to refer to the brilliantly conserved collection of artefacts within the huts, allowed archaeologist Jeremy Moyle to immediately identify the function and provenance of many of the items observed in the field, which was a real treat.



Ross Island conservation team outside Shackleton's *Nimrod* Hut; L - R Conor Tulloch, Emma St Pierre, Zack Bennett, Jeremy Moyle and Johan Bergman © AHT/Zack Bennett



“As a first time Antarctic, I was blown away by the incredible work the Trust’s building and artefact conservators have done. Walking into the huts really is like stepping back in time, and a beautifully unique experience.”

This was the first time in many years that the Trust had brought archaeologists to site. Learning from the season, the Trust will now consider the strategy moving forward for ongoing management of archaeology at the sites.

The team also undertook significant treatments of mould within Scott’s hut, and, to keep the building weathertight, carried out repairs to the building and to the deflection dams which defer meltwater away from entering the hut. They also audited and assessed the condition of collections to inform future season planning for the artefacts programme, as well as returning artefacts conserved in the lab at Scott Base.

The shoreline was surveyed to add data to longstanding records monitoring coastal erosion. Assessment of the building condition and repairs to the wind vane and other small tasks were completed, including a trial of subsurface matting to combat dust issues in the stables.



Building Conservation Programme Manager Zack Bennett repairing a rigging anchor on the roof of Shackleton’s *Nimrod* Hut © AHT/Johan Bergman

## Monitoring Erosion

After five weeks in the field, the Trust’s team returned to Scott Base. They then worked at nearby Scott’s *Discovery* Hut, where work included making repairs to the entrance step and southern window.

On the Hut Point headland close to *Discovery* hut is a memorial cross erected in 1904 by Scott and his men for fellow expedition member George T. Vince. It is also the site of coastal erosion where the rate of loss has been slowly increasing, likely because of longer periods of open water and an increasing frequency of severe storms. These have raised concerns of the potential future risk to this historic memorial.

To gather more data, the Trust was fortunate to have support from Snowgrass Solution to provide a solar powered timelapse camera, United States Antarctic Program to assist with the installation location at McMurdo Station, and Antarctica New Zealand for assisting with the freight logistics, camera commissioning and ongoing operational checks.

The camera was installed at the beginning of January 2025 and will run until the sea ice reforms or darkness falls. The data capture will be analysed for reporting back to our international conservation advisors to develop the next steps on the care of this historic site.

## Canterbury Museum Collaboration

Team members were joined over Christmas and New Year by Adele Jackson, Canterbury Museum’s Curator Human History, who was hosted by Antarctica New Zealand.

Adele says the visit to the historic huts has had a lasting impact on her and the experience and knowledge shared by the Trust team deepened her understanding of historic Antarctic exploration.

“It means I understand the stories and expeditions associated with the Museum’s collection in a much richer context”, she says. “I understand more vividly how the heroic age expeditions relate to each other. I have a much more visual and spatial understanding of the huts, the landscapes and the landmarks of Ross Island. This is already proving to be enormously valuable at work and has helped my research into Antarctic objects in the Museum collection.”



Lead Conservator Conor Tulloch treating artefacts at Shackleton’s Hut © AHT/Zack Bennett



Adele Jackson in Scott’s hut at Cape Evans. © Canterbury Museum/Adele Jackson



# Blaiklock Island

Blaiklock Island Refuge. © UKAHT/Lizzie Meek

Our colleagues at the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust have completed one of their most ambitious conservation projects yet, at Blaiklock Island Refuge – a hut frozen in time in Marguerite Bay on the Antarctic Peninsula. The wild rocky site is one of the most remote places on earth and notoriously difficult to access.

Established in 1957, Blaiklock Island Refuge was built and used by early pioneers who created the first maps of the region. It is a rare example of an early sledging refuge which offered brave men a place to shelter and rest with their dogs. The site is brimming with artefacts which once supported basic

survival making the museum in miniature a time capsule of Antarctic life.

The glacier which once surrounded the refuge is now open sea, and warmer conditions are causing faster degradation of wood and metal. The team has completed urgent repairs to the site, which included re-felting the refuge and strengthening the timber structure, as well as cataloguing artefacts and capturing digital footage.

Our Trust Heritage Manager Lizzie Meek travelled from Christchurch to Antarctica to lead the project. She says the team's long and challenging journey to reach Blaiklock

Island highlighted the impressive journeys made in the 1950s -70s.

“Those journeys were made using sleds and dog teams to cross miles of sea ice just to reach Blaiklock — before they traversed glaciers and climbed mountains to chart them.

“Our work to ensure Blaiklock Refuge is weathertight, rigged, fully condition assessed and catalogued has been rewarding. We were surprised and relieved to find the hut drier than expected, given its condition and location on the coast. I've enjoyed finding artefacts with connection to the sledging teams, including a stove box labelled 'Vikings', the name of one of the dog teams that travelled from Stonington Island to Blaiklock.”



Lizzie Meek inside Blaiklock Island Refuge. © UKAHT/Lizzie Meek

## Antarctic Honours

Al Fastier considers his 18 years conserving Antarctica's historic explorer bases for future generations his greatest reward, but another one came his way in January.

Al's work to save the historic huts was acknowledged in the New Year Honours list, when he and polar photographer Colin Monteath were each awarded the New Zealand Antarctic Medal. The medal recognises those who've made an outstanding contribution to, or in support of, New Zealand's objectives or operations in the Antarctic region.

Widely considered a world-class leader in cold-climate heritage conservation, Al was the Trust's Programme Manager for the Ross Sea Heritage Restoration Project since 2006.

He retired last September and says he has passed the baton to a very capable conservation team.

“The success of the project has always been a team effort,” he says. “I believe I received the medal for everyone who's been involved. The work was often all consuming and challenging, but also exciting and rewarding.”

Making the bases structurally sound and weathertight and conserving more than 20,000 artefacts often took years of preparation, ahead of painstaking work in difficult conditions. Colleagues say Al strove for excellence and led from the front, with a hands-on approach, huge work ethic and sense of humour.



Al Fastier inside Scott's hut at Cape Evans, accompanying the Trust's Inspiring Explorers™ in January 2025. © AHT/Daniel Bornstein

He did much more along the way, including mentoring more than 80 global heritage experts, hosting VIPs and dignitaries, raising awareness and funds to conserve Hillary's hut, and even led exciting projects like excavating whisky from under Shackleton's hut.

He continues to share his stories and expertise with conservators following his footsteps in Antarctica, the continent he says he fell in love with.



In April and May 2025, the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust and the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust (UKAHT) will be touring their cutting-edge virtual reality (VR) experiences around the United Kingdom, bringing the continent's remarkable historic sites to life, and using this state-of-the-art technology to transform the way future generations learn about and experience Antarctica.



Students exploring Scott's *Discovery Hut* VR Experience. © AHT/Anna Clare

## Virtual Visits to Antarctica

Both organisations care for important cultural heritage sites in Antarctica, one of the most remote places on the planet, and have become leaders in the engagement space by using immersive digital technology to educate, inspire, and create equity of access to these hard-to-reach places.

The Trust's sister organisation UKAHT is a charity dedicated to preserving British Antarctic history and inspiring people to connect with, and protect, this remarkable continent. In Antarctica, it conserves six British heritage sites and lead on the conservation management of Shackleton's *Endurance*. These sites, which are protected under the Antarctic Treaty, were once home to pioneering teams of scientists.

Two unique virtual reality experiences will be on tour, and participants will be transported to Antarctica by donning a VR headset. They will step inside historic huts, come face to face with penguins, ride on a sledge towed by huskies, meet early explorers, and hear incredible tales of resilience, teamwork and innovation on the Ice.

On the tour, we will be showcasing our new virtual reality experience of Scott's *Discovery Hut*, the first expedition base built on Antarctica's Ross Island. Scott led the National Antarctic Expedition of 1901-1904 and the hut was built in 1902, making it over 121 years old.

UKAHT will feature the Immersive Antarctica VR experience *A Frozen Night*. UKAHT CEO Camilla Nichol explains those taking part will be among the first to engage with Antarctic heritage sites in this new and unique way.

"*A Frozen Night* is UKAHT's first virtual reality experience based on a true story from the archives and narrated by those who lived and worked in our southernmost base, Stonington Island. One of the earliest British sites, established in 1948 and a key dog sledging base, Stonington Island enabled teams to travel far inland into the Antarctic Peninsula. Now, for the first time, *A Frozen Night* allows people to virtually travel into Stonington's past to experience the wonders and risks of Antarctic life and field work. It's an exciting moment for UKAHT and we are delighted to make the

Antarctic experience accessible to this and future generations."

The Trust's Executive Director Francesca Eathorne hopes Britons will take up the opportunity to explore the Scott's hut.

"We're excited to bring the hut to people virtually, making it accessible to those who may not have the opportunity to visit these historic sites in person. It gives great insight into the everyday items the explorers had with them and how they used the hut to support the important science and exploration they undertook.

"The conservation work our teams undertake is world-leading and sharing it through VR helps us to educate people around the importance of saving this cultural heritage for future generations," says Eathorne.

The Trusts have a long history of successful partnership, helping each other to undertake cold-climate heritage conservation work in one of the world's most extreme environments.

Since 2017, we have collaborated in numerous areas including project planning and development off-Ice, and surveying, repair, and conservation work on-Ice. We look forward to expanding that partnership and collaboration as we embark on this exciting joint tour.

Those in the UK keen to take a virtual visit to Antarctica are invited to check the Trust's and the UKAHT websites for details. The tour will also visit schools and Antarctic related organisations, and host a special event attended by UKAHT Patron HRH The Princess Royal.



Scott's *Discovery Hut* Virtual Reality Experience. © AHT



Geomagnetic huts G and H at Scott Base. © AHT/Gordon Macdonald

# Expanded Protection for New Zealand's First Buildings in Antarctica

Two more original buildings at New Zealand's Scott Base have gained the highest level of protection and will be cared for by the Trust.

Known as Huts G and H, they were built at Scott Base alongside Hut A (often known as TAE/IGY or Hillary's hut) in the late 1950s. Their construction was to enable New Zealand's participation in the International Geophysical Year (IGY), a collaborative project involving 67 countries, and at that time, the largest and most important international scientific effort ever undertaken. They were built to house geomagnetic instruments used to measure the Earth's magnetic field, and became known as the geomagnetic huts.

The huts now fall under the Historic Site and/or Monument (HSM) HSM75 Hut A designation for nearby Hillary's TAE/IGY Hut.

The process to gain protection for the huts began with a proposal submitted to the 46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting held in India in 2024, and the presentation of a paper by New Zealand, including contributions from the Trust.

HSM status recognises the value of the huts and protects them under the Antarctic Treaty System, so they cannot be damaged, removed or destroyed.

The huts did not receive HSM status when it was given to Hut A, because

they were considered part of Antarctica New Zealand's working base then with magnetic observations being conducted from the buildings continuously from 1957 to 2023.

Trust Building Conservation Programme Manager Zack Bennett is thrilled with the addition.

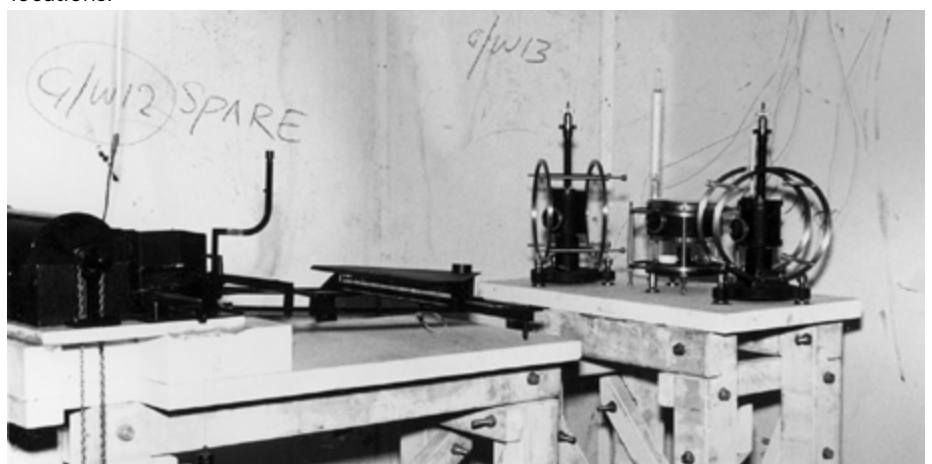
"The heritage significance of these huts is derived from three things - their rich history, their unique physical attributes, and the ground-breaking science conducted within their walls being crucial to our understanding of the Earth's magnetism," he says.

The two huts have endured decades of harsh Antarctic conditions, but are structurally unaltered and in their original locations.

Trust Executive Director Francesca Eathorne says the small detached huts provide an authentic glimpse into research on the icy continent.

"The inclusion of these huts in the HSM75 designation highlights their significance in historic Antarctic exploration and scientific research," she says. "We are pleased to have played a part in ensuring their protection and will take over their conservation alongside our management of Hillary's hut."

The official list of Historic Sites and Monuments in Antarctica was established in 1972 and now includes around 90 HSMs, each designated and protected according to guidelines adopted in 2009.



Early instruments used to measure the Earth's magnetic field inside the geomagnetic huts. © Antarctica New Zealand Pictorial Collection





La Cour magnetograph sensors donated to the Trust by GNS Science. © GNS Science



Buzz Burrows using the Balance Magnetique Zero.  
© Antarctica New Zealand Pictorial Collection

## Historic Instruments Donated

Historic geomagnetic instruments which began to measure the Earth's magnetic field from Antarctica in the 1950s have been donated to the Trust by GNS Science.

The instruments were installed in Huts G and H, near Hillary's Hut at Scott Base, in 1957-8.

Detailed measurement of the Earth's magnetic field, and its variation with time, by Vern Gerrard and Buzz Burrows, was part of globally important work by the New Zealand International Geophysical Year party under the leadership of Dr Trevor Hatherton. Dr Fred Davey NZAM

FRSNZ, former Emeritus Scientist at GNS, who first suggested conservation of the huts, says "Their sometimes overlooked work has contributed to understanding the Antarctic region and the Earth system."

The magnetic observatory programme within the huts ran continuously from 1957 to 2023, with newer instruments added in latter years. Decades of work and gathered data make the huts the world's second longest continuously running geomagnetic observatory.

After the huts have been conserved by the Trust, in line with their recent inclusion in

the Antarctic Treaty System list of Historic Sites and Monuments, the instruments will be returned to them.

The donated instruments include two La Cour magnetographs (one wide range and one fast run) which were in Variometer Hut G, and the Quartz Horizontal Magnetometer and the Balance Magnetique Zero from Absolutes Hut H.

The Trust is grateful for the work and advocacy Dr Fred Davey has given to this project and for his help in GNS donating the original instruments.

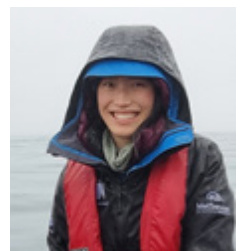


Watch the short film at [nzaht.org](http://nzaht.org)

Inspiring Explorer Te Aroha Devon (left) films her teammates as they approach South Georgia.  
© AHT/Anna Clare



Sam West © AHT/Sasha Cheng



Jenny Sahng.  
© MetService/Peter Fisher

## Travel Across the Atlantic

A short film documenting the Trust's Inspiring Explorers Expedition™ to the remote South Georgia Island lays bare the challenging area.

*Across the Atlantic* is directed by Te Aroha Devon, one of 22 young explorers on the expedition with climber Sam West and data scientist Jenny Sahng, who are featured in the film.

The expedition honoured the centenary of Sir Ernest Shackleton's final expedition, the *Quest*, which journeyed to South Georgia and marked the end of the heroic-era of Antarctic exploration.

Sam is a young mountaineer. His grandfather's diaries, written while on New Zealand's TAE/IGY Expedition to Antarctica in the 1950s inspired Sam to join the first Kiwi team to attempt a climb of South Georgia's Mount Worsley.

Jenny wanted to expand her climate change and climate action focus. She says the island is on the front lines of climate change so wanted to measure and understand its ecosystem.

Jenny was part of the Trust's science outreach team, and recorded water temperature profiles in multiple locations,

with sensors and training provided by the Trust's expedition partner MetService.

Sam was conscious the weather would be the deciding factor for what the climbing team wanted to achieve.

"South Georgia Island is very exposed and we knew it would be tough," he says, "but we were cautiously optimistic, because the weather can change quickly and be really unpredictable."

Follow Sam and Jenny's journey as they grow their 'Explorer Mindset' by watching *Across the Atlantic* on the Trust's website.



YOU CAN INSPIRE  
THE NEXT GENERATION OF  
EXPLORERS

# INSPIRING EXPLORERS

2025 ANNUAL APPEAL

Thanks to supporters like you, we are celebrating 10 years of the Inspiring Explorers™ programme.

From the classroom to polar expeditions, over 15,000 young people have directly participated in this programme. They've grown their 'Explorer Mindset' and stepped out of their comfort zone. Through outreach initiatives they have created a ripple effect in their communities, connecting with hundreds of thousands of people to share their experiences and the stories of the Antarctic explorers you admire. We need your help to fund the next five years of this programme.

**A donation of \$50, \$500, or even \$1000 or more will provide opportunities for the next generation of explorers.**

**Give today to our annual appeal and help bring this programme to thousands more young people across New Zealand and the world!**



# Staff Updates

The Trust is delighted to announce three new staff appointments.

Longstanding staff member **Lizzie Meek** has moved into the new role of Heritage Manager, which includes contributing her specialist expertise to the team’s heritage work. As well as leading, promoting and advocating for heritage values and effective heritage management, Lizzie will support teams delivering the world-leading conservation solutions the Trust is known for.

Communications Advisor **Brittany Fox** has joined the team. Brittany’s communications background is within the not-for-profit sector, most recently in primary health care. She focused there on social media to tell stories and create engagement. In her spare time, she enjoys painting watercolours and children’s books.

**Shannah Rhynard-Geil** joins the Trust on a fixed term contract, taking on the role of Artefact Programme Coordinator. She joined us from Otago Museum, where she was the Conservation Manager, and before that worked in the UK, conserving



Trust Heritage Manager Lizzie Meek. © AHT

objects from private clients, museums and archaeological units. Shannah was also a member of the Trust’s 2022 Winter on-Ice Conservation team, which carried out re-treatment and treatment of approximately 1000 objects from the huts of Scott and Shackleton while wintering over at New Zealand’s Scott Base.



New Communications Advisor Brittany Fox. © Brittany Fox

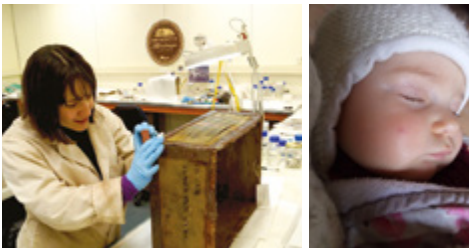


Shannah Rhynard-Geil works in the Trust’s conservation laboratory at Scott Base. © Fly on the Wall Images/Stuart Shaw

# Alumni News



**Dr David Harrowfield** (Trust Inaugural Executive Officer) has completed more than 400 pages on the development of physical geography at the University of Canterbury. The laborious process of indexing is now underway and when complete, the final work will be donated to the Macmillan Brown Library. David is also close to completing a part on science in *Terra Nova* Bay and has resumed research on key supporters for Sir Ernest Shackleton’s 1907-09, 1914-16 and 1921-22 (Shackleton-Rowett) expeditions.



**Marie-Amande Coignard** (Conservator winter 2013) completed her work as a teacher conservator at the new Grand Egyptian Museum, which opened last October. The museum contains the world’s largest and most complex collection of ancient treasures and artefacts. Now home in France, Marie-Amande’s focus is caring for her baby daughter Alicia.

**Destiny Martin** (Inspiring Explorer™ 2023) continues her outreach work and recently gave a presentation to a local Rotary Club. She spoke



about the Trust’s expedition to South Georgia, including walking in Sir Ernest Shackleton’s footsteps and getting a sense of his resilience and determination.



**Kelsey Waghorn** (Inspiring Explorer™ 2023) has completed the first New Zealand-based Expedition Guide Academy Comprehensive Guide Course in Akaroa on Banks Peninsula. She describes the course as stunning, with lots of new information, honing skills and confidence building and hopes it will help get her back on a ship headed south.



Natalie in Shackleton's hut. © Natalie Hewit

## A Supporter Story by Natalie Hewit - *Endurance* film maker

Growing up in the UK, the myth of Sir Ernest Shackleton had always loomed large in the national imagination, but it wasn't until I was asked to go to Antarctica to shoot a film for the BBC in 2016 that I really began to dig deep into his story. I was lucky enough to share dinner with his granddaughter, Alexandra Shackleton, before I set off, and hearing her talk about her grandfather was both fascinating and deeply moving. It somehow brought the man to life for me in a new way, in all of his complexity.

Just a few weeks later, I headed into the great white unknown for the first time and my fascination with Shackleton and his incredible spirit of exploration was solidified. Little did I know that in 2021 I would be invited to return to Antarctica, to document the search for his infamous ship *Endurance* for a feature documentary for National Geographic. Obviously, I jumped at the chance and once more set off South.

The mission to locate *Endurance* was long, cold and very, very challenging. It is probably one of the hardest film shoots I have ever undertaken, but it was also one of the most inspiring. As an expedition team, we faced huge challenges and many disappointing setbacks. But the team spirit, collaboration and problem-solving was outstanding and each day I witnessed the beauty of how humankind can achieve even that which seems impossible when we work

together. I believe Shackleton would have been so proud of each and every one of the team members on that expedition, and I know his spirit of adventure and endurance was an inspiration to all of us.

I think the only way I can accurately describe my trip to Shackleton's Cape Royds hut in January 2025 is that it was a total dream. Walking into the hut was like stepping back in time to visit the home of an old friend. It was as though Shackleton and his men had just popped out for a walk along the coast, or to inspect the penguin rookery which lies a short distance away. I marvelled at how normal and homely the hut felt, despite being perched on a rock at the end of the world – it is a strangely common feeling for me when I spend time in Antarctica. To see the food they ate, the mugs they drank from, their socks still hanging on the line and boots by the stove was truly profound to me. In many ways it reminded me of the moment I saw the wreck of *Endurance* for the first time, lying silently 3000m below the surface of the Weddell Sea. It felt like the story of what Shackleton and his men achieved was no longer a myth, but suddenly felt real and visceral in a new and important way.

I truly believe the work of the Antarctic Heritage Trust in the preservation of these historic huts is essential for protecting the legacy of humankind's journey of

View the *National Geographic* documentary 'Endurance' co-directed by Natalie on Disney+

self-discovery. But more than that, as a storyteller, I believe protecting these places help us to better share the stories of discovery and perseverance, which can inspire us all to work together for the greater good. This feels needed now more than, in the face of the mounting challenges we see in the world today. The huts serve as a testament to what we can achieve when we reach out into the unknown, and try to push the boundaries on behalf of the global community. And that is something well worth looking after.

## Thank You

to our new Antarctic Explorer Members:

**Gold** Andrew Barnes & Charlotte Lockhart (NZ)

**Bronze** Brian Howard (NO)  
Brendan Wade (NZ)  
Noel Orams (AU)

If you love the Trust's work and want to make a gift to continue the legacy of exploration visit [nzaht.org](https://nzaht.org).