



## Special Visitors to Historic Huts

The Trust was delighted to host two sets of special guests this season in Antarctica. The Trust's Patron-in-chief and Governor-General of New Zealand, Her Excellency The Rt Hon Dame Cindy Kiro, and His Excellency Dr Richard Davies met New Zealanders at Scott Base working on a range of environmental and conservation projects on the ice while being hosted by Antarctica New Zealand. During their visit, Their Excellencies had the opportunity to visit Scott's and Shackleton's huts and the TAE/IGY hut at Scott Base.

Her Excellency said, "I appreciate how much highly skilled and time-intensive work goes into conserving our important Antarctic heritage on the ice. I was pleased to visit these historic sites with the Trust's expert

team, who shared both the extraordinary history of the early polar explorers, and the Trust's journey to preserve these precious windows into our past."

Dame Cindy is the first Governor-General and Governor of the Ross Dependency to visit while in office since Dame Sylvia Cartwright in 2003.

The Trust was also pleased to host the Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage Hon Paul Goldsmith who joined the Trust's Invited Visitor's programme. As part of his trip, the Minister spent two days camping out with Executive Director Francesca Eathorne and Trust staff Lizzie Meek (Heritage Manager) and Shannah Rhynard-Geil (Artefacts

L-R: Hon Paul Goldsmith, Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, The Governor-General Her Excellency The Rt Hon Dame Cindy Kiro, Jordy Hendrikx, CEO Antarctica New Zealand, His Excellency Dr Richard Davies, Francesca Eathorne, Executive Director Antarctic Heritage Trust. Programme Co-ordinator) at Cape Evans - home to Scott's Terra Nova hut.

The Minister also visited Cape Crozier to see the remains of the stone igloo left behind by early polar explorers Apsley Cherry-Garrard, Birdie Bowers and Dr Edward Wilson.

The Trust conducted a heritage condition assessment on the igloo during the visit as it had been some years since they had the opportunity to do so. The site is protected under the Antarctic Treaty as an Historic Site and Monument (HSM 21).

Minister Goldsmith shared, "The huts of Shackleton and Scott remain as testaments to the spirit of adventurism and indomitable will shown by the explorers and scientists who lived in them. It's sobering to see the beds of Scott, Oates and the others who were doomed to lose their lives in horrific circumstances. But the huts are also testament to the love and care shown by many heritage specialists who have dedicated themselves to preserving these remarkable pieces of history. They have triumphed."

The Trust acknowledges Antarctica New Zealand for their support of the Invited Visitor's programme.

## On-Ice Conservation Updates

### Cape Adare

Three of the Trust's conservation team arrived at Cape Adare in November to undertake crucial data gathering at Carsten Borchgrevink's British Antarctic *Southern Cross* Expedition (1898-1900) base. This work will inform future conservation planning. Borchgrevink's hut is the only Antarctic explorer base yet to receive major conservation work, in part due to its extremely remote location. Reaching the site requires complex logistics and significant international collaboration. We're hugely grateful to Antarctica New Zealand, the Italian Antarctic Program, and the United States Antarctic Program for their support to get

our teams safely to and from Cape Adare this season.

In the 2024-25 season, our team worked with Antarctica New Zealand and the New Zealand Defence Force to support the investigation of historic ordnance at the site. No ordnance was discovered that would put the Trust's conservation teams at risk while working at site, allowing us to return this season to continue our work.

### Ross Island

For the remainder of the season, our six-person conservation team will work across the Ross Island explorer bases of Scott, Shackleton and Hillary. Activities include archaeological surveys continuing from



Gord Macdonald surveying Borchgrevink's stores hut.  
© AHT/Lucy Hayes-Stevenson.

last season, essential maintenance, and emergency storm damage repairs. Two artefact conservators will also conduct treatments in a conservation lab at Scott Base.



Follow the Trust's social channels for regular updates throughout the season.



Meet the team at  
[nzaht.org.](http://www.nzaht.org.)

## Inspiring Explorers Expedition™ Antarctic Peninsula 2026 Team Announced

The Trust is delighted to introduce the eight young Kiwi explorers who will join our next Inspiring Explorers Expedition™. Together they will be active participants, sailing the historic tall ship *Bark EUROPA* across the Drake Passage from Ushuaia, Argentina to the Antarctic Peninsula in January 2026, alongside expedition mentor and world-record-breaking sailor Lisa Blair OAM.

The team includes Margot Martin-Babin (28), Precious Tupou (18), and Eliza McCracken (23) from Auckland. They are joined by Josiah Tualamalii (30) and Sam Dunlay (28) from Christchurch, Matthew Lynch (26) and Meleki Schuster (21) from Wellington, and Libby Manning (24) from Dunedin.

Precious Tupou is currently finishing her last year of high school at Tangaroa College, and will be the first in her family to attend university when she begins her studies to become a nurse. Precious says she is always seeking opportunities to push beyond her comfort zone.

"I see this expedition as an opportunity to grow, and to continue developing my

leadership skills. This expedition is just the beginning. Every step I take is rooted in gratitude for where I've come from, and excitement for where I'm going next."

Libby Manning, a guide and educator who advocates for historical and ecological conservation, sees the expedition as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to put herself in the shoes of early Antarctic explorers.

"We will be sailing to unknown locations while completely immersed in the raw, natural world. I hope to use this experience to further my advocacy and inspire future conservationists."

Meleki Schuster, a passionate musician originally from Rotorua, is working towards a degree in Global Studies in Wellington. He

The Inspiring Explorers Expedition™ team who will be heading to the Antarctic Peninsula. L-R: Josiah, Meleki, Eliza, Margot, Sam, Libby, Matthew, and Precious. © AHT/ Brittany Fox

believes that his most meaningful learning has come from experiences outside the classroom.

"During this expedition, I will be fascinated to see how challenges can uncover who people really are and how pressure can turn moments of uncertainty into something brave and meaningful."

Spirit of Adventure alumna, and crew member, Eliza McCracken, brings her passion for exploration and the environment as well as her sailing experience to the team in a new partnership the Trust has formed with Spirit of Adventure Trust. Eliza is excited to sail the path of early Antarctic explorers.

"I'm looking forward to sharing my experiences and those of my fellow explorers with rangatahi (youth) onboard *Spirit of New Zealand*, inspiring others to stay curious and explore the amazing world around them."

The team recently gathered in Christchurch for a weekend of team building, where they learned about the Trust's work and the significant legacy it cares for. As part of the weekend, they took to the water with the Naval Point Club Lyttelton, getting hands-on sailing experience as preparation for the expedition.

As they sail aboard the *Bark EUROPA*, the team will draw connections between the tall ships of the heroic era of Antarctic exploration and today's expeditions, sharing these insights as part of their outreach project.



Follow the Trust's social channels to join them on their journey.

## Record-Breaking Solo-Sailor Lisa Blair to Join Expedition.



World-record-breaking solo sailor and environmental advocate Lisa Blair OAM will join the expedition in a mentorship role.

The holder of eight world records, including being the fastest person to sail solo, non-stop, and unassisted around Antarctica, Lisa brings a wealth of experience in resilience, exploration, and science-at-sea to the next generation of explorers.

Her achievements in endurance, survival, and scientific discovery connect the legacy of past explorers to the spirit of exploration today. Just as the ships of Scott and Shackleton were central to the heroic era of Antarctic exploration, supporting vital scientific work and witnessing extraordinary tales of survival, Lisa's voyages continue

this tradition of pushing boundaries in the pursuit of discovery and exploration.

"I am a big believer that people don't protect what they aren't connected to, which is why I am proud to be joining this expedition as a mentor for these young explorers. They will face discomfort and challenging conditions, and I look forward to guiding them as they build resilience, strengthen teamwork, and deepen their connection to Antarctica's extraordinary environment. I am excited to see them take their experiences home to their communities, sharing their passion for the polar regions and inspiring others to protect them," says Lisa.

# Spirit of Antarctica Sets Sail

A new partnership between Antarctic Heritage Trust and Spirit of Adventure Trust has given South Auckland (NZ) students a journey of discovery combining virtual Antarctic exploration with hands-on learning aboard a three masted tall ship.

Through the Spirit of Antarctica programme, 150 students from 10 South Auckland schools in the AIMHI network (Achievement in Multi-Cultural High Schools) learned about Antarctica at Hillary House Leadership Centre, Sir Edmund Hillary's former homestead on the

grounds of Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate school. Students used VR technology, learned about Antarctica's history of exploration, and developed leadership and teamwork skills with our Inspiring Explorers Education™ team.

The Trust has a long term partnership with the AIMHI network, to deliver New Zealand based education and exploration programmes for a range of age groups.

From the students who took part, 15 were selected for a ten-day sailing voyage with Spirit of Adventure Trust where they became working crew members, learning to set sails, take the helm, climb the mast, and navigate as they voyaged from Auckland around Waiheke Island, the Coromandel Peninsula, and Aotea (Great Barrier Island).

Students developed their 'Explorer Mindset' and these qualities were put to the test during the final two days when trainers stepped back allowing the students to put everything they'd learned into practice.

For Rosehill College student Seth, the experience has been transformative. "It's



Students from Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate exploring Scott's Discovery hut through virtual reality. © AHT/Anna Clare



Moses Faingamoevalu Puniani (left) and Rita Kirisome-Mahe (right) from Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate aboard the *Spirit of Adventure* tall ship. © AHT/Anna Clare

been really good to step outside of my comfort zone and spend time in nature. I've learned a lot about myself, and I hope these experiences will help me step up as head boy next year," he says.

Thanks to our Inspiring Explorers™ Fund donors and a new partnership with Spirit of Adventure Trust, the programme is free for students.



Watch an overview of the Spirit of Antarctica programme at [nzaht.org/south-auckland-students-set-sail-with-spirit-of-antarctica/](http://nzaht.org/south-auckland-students-set-sail-with-spirit-of-antarctica/)

## Taking Antarctic Education to the World

Young people around the world can discover Antarctica's rich history of exploration and cultural heritage through the global gaming phenomenon, Minecraft.

The Trust has launched a new Minecraft world of Scott's *Discovery* hut. Thanks to our donors, our Inspiring Explorers Education™ team will deliver it for free in classrooms across New Zealand, alongside our virtual reality experience of the same hut. It will be available worldwide through the Minecraft Education platform.

To create the world, the Trust partnered with WDekkers Digital and 12 students from

Te Oraka Shirley Intermediate School in Christchurch (NZ), who helped build the initial version of *Discovery* hut as part of the Greater Christchurch Schools Network Kāhui Ako Digital Project.

These students were among the first to try it out in November. One of the student developers, Shaker, described the experience as a proud moment, "This is a big achievement because everyone around the world will use it, and we're the ones who made it."

Working in groups, students begin their journey aboard the RRS *Discovery*, before going ashore to meet polar explorers and learn about life on the ice. They complete tasks including searching for artefacts inside the hut, building kennels for the expedition's huskies, and designing their own Antarctic hut.

The Trust acknowledges the generous support of the Greater Christchurch Schools Network, WDekkers Digital, and donors to the Inspiring Explorers™ Fund.

Visit [nzaht.org](http://nzaht.org) to book a visit to your NZ school or find out how to access the Minecraft world online.



L-R: Quorra, Freelance, Shaker and Vince who were part of the initial build of Scott's *Discovery* Hut in Minecraft. © AHT/Brittany Fox

## Hillary's Hut Virtual Reality Reaches the Chatham Islands

In October, the Trust took its VR experience of Hillary's Hut to the remote community of Chatham Islands, approximately 850km east of mainland New Zealand, marking an exciting milestone as one of the final two regions of New Zealand we were still to visit with our Inspiring Explorers Education™ programme.

Education Programme Lead Adelma Matthews guided 120 students and local residents through a VR visit to New Zealand's first Antarctic base, and helped them to explore 3D artefacts using our Augmented Reality App.

"Children from one family spent the evening searching for a five-dollar note, which features Sir Edmund Hillary, so they could tell their parents more about Sir Ed's Antarctic journey, showing that our visit certainly left a lasting spark of curiosity," said Adelma.

Education Programme Lead Adelma Matthews, with school children at the Chatham Islands Museum. © AHT/ Adelma Matthews



# Alumni News



**Kaitlyn Martin** (Inspiring Explorer™ 2023) received a 50 Days of Service award as part of the volunteer crew aboard the Spirit of New Zealand.

Kaitlyn was inspired to volunteer with Spirit of Adventure Trust on return from the Inspiring Explorers Expedition™ to South Georgia and has loved seeing the connections build between the two trusts.

## Cole Martin (Yeoman)

(Inspiring Explorer™ 2023) is a multimedia journalist, and has just returned to Aotearoa New Zealand from six months living in a refugee camp in the occupied West Bank. Now he's back, Cole will be undertaking a speaking tour of New Zealand throughout November and December sharing firsthand stories, footage, and insights.



**Ngawai Clendon** (Inspiring Explorer™ 2025) was selected to join the Aspiring Leaders' Forum in Wellington (NZ).

The annual four-day gathering brings

together a diverse group of young adults from across Aotearoa New Zealand who have been nominated for their potential to make a difference in their communities. Through discussions and reflections on servant leadership, faith, and values, participants are encouraged to grow as leaders and to use their influence for good in their chosen fields.

## Give the Gift of Antarctic Heritage

This work is only made possible thanks to our donors and supporters like you.

Continue the legacy of Antarctic Heritage with a holiday gift!

Become an Antarctic Explorer member or make a year-end gift today by visiting [nzaht.org/donate](https://nzaht.org/donate) or email [info@nzaht.org](mailto:info@nzaht.org) for overseas giving options.

Image on right: The Trust's On-Ice 2024-25 Conservation team in front of Scott's Terra Nova Hut. © AHT/Johan Bergman.

## Governance Updates

The Trust acknowledges recent changes to our Board. We farewell and thank representatives Brent Clothier (Royal Society Te Apārangī), Rex Hendry (New Zealand Antarctic Society), Andrew Coleman (Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga) and Independent Trustee Georgina Archibald for their dedicated service.

We welcome and look forward to working with the following new representatives, Dame Jane Harding (President – Royal Society Te Apārangī), and Hubertien Wichers (President – New Zealand Antarctic Society).

## Staff Updates

### Georgia Airey

Digital Communications Coordinator Georgia has joined the team. Georgia is a recent University of Canterbury graduate with a Bachelor of Communications and is now working towards her Postgraduate Certificate in Digital Marketing. Her previous experience includes working as a Communications Intern at AgResearch. She has a passion for social media, connecting with diverse audiences, and sharing impactful stories. In her spare time, she enjoys exploring Christchurch's city and countryside on her road bike.



### Nicola Buisman

Supporter Engagement Advisor Nicola joins the Trust with a background in national not-for-profit work, most recently in the healthcare sector with a focus on fundraising with individuals through digital engagement. She is a passionate environmentalist with a love for being outdoors. Her sport of choice is whitewater kayaking, and she'll take any excuse to be on the river. For the past four years, Nicola has volunteered on the Whitewater NZ Board. She has been following the Trust for quite some time now and is excited to be working with supporters in this new role.



**Congratulations** to the following alumni who have moved into new roles recently: Jake Bailey (Inspiring Explorer™ 2025) as GM of the Inspire Foundation and Gemma Wyllie (Inspiring Explorer™ 2023) as Clinical Nurse Specialist Paediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease at Auckland DHB.



Jake Bailey



Gemma Wyllie

## Thank You

to our new Antarctic Explorer Members:

### BRONZE

Liza Sparrow (NZ)

Sam Dyer (NZ)

Anne Manchester (NZ)



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).



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