South Georgia Museum

Annual Report 2012/13
This report covers the period September 2012 to August 2013.

Introduction

A lot has been achieved at the South Georgia Museum this year by the four-person main summer team and two month-long volunteers. With nearly 6000 cruise ship passengers, visitor numbers were broadly similar to the previous season, but the season ahead will have a marked increase in numbers of cruise ship visits and visitors.

The curatorial internship is now extended and being developed to help the intern towards a career in the museum industry.

There were new exhibitions mounted on military history, reindeer and an area was created to display newly arrived artefacts. Work was also done to reorder, renew and improve existing displays, especially in the Fullerton Room.

An interpretive tour of the whaling station and a “museum highlights” tour are now routinely offered to visitors.

The museum collection attracted a very large number of new artefacts this year, the highlight of which was the almanac used to rescue the shipwrecked crew of Shackleton’s Endurance expedition.

Some solid work was achieved by the museum team to present and preserve better some of the artefacts on show outside the museum. One major project was to better conserve the mast of the Albatros.

The gift shop continues to be very popular with visitors and profits improved again this year.

Over £250,000 was raised for the South Georgia Heritage Trust (SGHT) Habitat Restoration Project by SGHT and the Friends of South Georgia Island (FOSGI) with the help of cruise ship operators, ship staff, and the visitors to the island.

The Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI) now gives the SGHT a fixed grant towards running costs of the Museum.

Staff

A core team of four staff operated the museum throughout the summer season, and several others assisted.

The SGHT Director (South Georgia) Sarah Lurcock manages the day to day running of the museum, working on-island for nine months of the year.

The curatorial intern this year was Thomas Kennedy. The core work of the curatorial intern is: to look after the museum collection; mount new displays; deal with historical enquires; lead guided tours and assist with fundraising. Out of season the SG Director deals as necessary with curation issues.
The museum assistants were Gemma French and Darren Blanche. Gemma had previously worked in the Falkland Islands as a Fisheries Observer. Her science background was very useful when promoting the SGHT Habitat Restoration Project. Darren runs his own handyman business in the UK; his skills were a boon for maintenance tasks and he used his specialist skills to build new display equipment.

Because of difficulties getting the core staff in to the island in time for the beginning of the tourist season, a couple of people were employed on an hourly basis to help get the museum ready for the early cruise ships. Will Whatley assisted with early season work in a part-paid, part-voluntary capacity. Paula O’Sullivan kindly changed her travel plans (having completed a contract working with the British Antarctic Survey as Boating Officer) so she could work for us at the start of the tourist season until the museum assistants arrived. Sam Moore worked as a volunteer for a month, arriving in January, and went on to join the Habitat Restoration team.

At the end of the season, with three staff having to leave earlier than ideal due to constraints on available passages out from the island, another volunteer, Patrick Lurcock helped out.

During the winter the museum was opened for visiting vessels (fishing, research, Navy, Fishery Patrol) by volunteers from the King Edward Point (KEP) base, and by the SG Director on her return to South Georgia in mid-July.

Former curator Elsa Davidson remains part of the team, mainly in an advisory role. Her employers, National Museums Scotland, allow her to give us back up as part of her role as Curator of Technology. She also assists with the recruitment and training of the curatorial interns.

Shop buyer Liz Adams works from her home in the UK.

**Visitors**

**Ship Visits**
Cruise ship visits and passenger numbers were very similar to last season, with 49 cruise ship visits bringing 5765 passengers. Various other types of ships visit as well, such as Royal Navy, research etc., so the bigger picture is that there were visits from 78 vessels in all. More yachts visited compared to the previous season, most of which were charter yachts; a total of 16 visits were made by 11 different yachts, bringing around 200 people.

The cruise ship season began on October 12th when the vessel Ushuaia visited Grytviken, and ended with the last cruise ship, Plancius, on April 7th. Cruise ship passengers from 57 different countries visited South Georgia. The majority of passengers came from English speaking countries (52%); 25% of all passengers came from the USA. Of the rest, Germans made up 20%, UK 11%, and Australia 10%. Following the global tourism trend, the percentage of Chinese visitors is growing (3%) – this increase is expected to continue, with an all-Chinese charter of one of the larger vessels booked for next season.

The busiest month for cruise ships was January with 14 visits. Tourism is expected to increase in the 2013/14 season, with around 58 cruise ship visits; an 11% increase. Passenger numbers are expected to be in the region of 7000; a 20% increase. Some larger ships are starting to visit once again. Two vessels with substantially more than 200 passengers are booked for the season ahead including the 450-passenger Seabourn Quest making its first ever visit to South Georgia just before the end of the year. Larger ships are only permitted by GSGSSI to land their passengers at Grytviken.

Other Visitors
His Excellency the Commissioner for South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, Nigel Haywood visited in mid-January. The Chief Justice for South Georgia, C.J. Gardener visited in mid-December. Three of the SGHT Trustees and several of the SGHT staff visited South Georgia this season. Most were here assisting on the Habitat Restoration Project, including Chairman Howard Pearce, Vice-chair Elaine Shemilt, SGHT Chief Executive Officer Alison Neil and member of the fundraising team Kelly Hague. Trustee Michael Moore also visited as a staff member on one of the cruise ships.

Conservation architect Liz Smith of Purcell was here working on the GSGSSI Grytviken Maintenance Plan and other projects. Her visit enabled useful discussions on potential future museum projects, preservation of the historic features of the museum and other buildings, and options to improve the climatic environment within the museum.
Museum Displays

With the longer employment period for the curatorial intern (see below), a great deal was achieved mounting new displays and refreshing old ones this year.

Jarvis Room: The biggest new exhibition project this season covered the military on the island. Obviously this features the events of 1982, when Argentina invaded South Georgia, but also covers earlier military activity such as the whalers’ volunteer force that manned the lookouts and four-inch guns in Leith and Grytviken during World War 2. A rearrangement of the Jarvis Room was needed to make room for a much more extensive exhibition on the events of 1982. The displays now include several recently acquired and important artefacts such as annotated maps of the British defensive positions, the uniform worn by Royal Marine Bob Ashton during the defence of KEP, and the Argentine flag that flew over King Edward Point during the brief Argentine occupation. Also covered is the involvement and experiences of the BAS employees living and working on the island at the time. A new display cabinet was constructed for this exhibition by museum assistant Darren Blanche. The museum is expecting to receive several other artefacts that will eventually be incorporated into this display, including, with the kind co-operation of the British military garrison in the Falkland Islands, a Bren gun like the one used by RM Bob Ashton. At time of writing the gun has been deactivated in the Falklands and is now in the process of being certificated in the UK, before being delivered to South Georgia for display.

Bonner Room: A temporary exhibition has been mounted in the Bonner Room (museum entrance) to coincide with the 2-year long GSGSSI reindeer eradication programme. The exhibit explains how the deer are one of many animal species deliberately introduced to South Georgia by the whalers. Others include pigs, horses, rabbits, foxes, cows, monkeys, cats, dogs, poultry, trout, geese, pigeons and many more. Reindeer are the only deliberately introduced animals to have survived long-term. The whalers used them for sport and as a source of fresh meat. The first deer were introduced by Grytviken’s founder, Carl Anton Larsen and his brother in 1911. From a total of three small introductions in the Stromness and Barff
Peninsula areas (one group of which were wiped out in an avalanche at Leith Harbour), two geographically separate herds have built up to number more than 3000 animals. The environmental impact of reindeer in these areas is marked, with denuded and altered vegetation and changed ecosystems. The two herds are separated and confined by glaciers, but there were concerns that the receding glaciers would shortly allow the deer to expand into new areas.

A new wall display was also mounted in this entrance room to the museum to highlight the SGHT ‘Habitat Restoration Project’.

Another new display area was created in the Bonner Room to allow newly arrived artefacts to be put on show before they find a place in our permanent exhibitions or archives. The ‘New Acquisitions’ display is seen directly ahead of visitors as they enter the museum. This season’s display included a ‘Walker’s Cherub III’ ship’s log (unused), a Sestrel barometer; a flensing knife with wrapped blade, and a well-used sextant that had been found by ex-whaler Jimmy Smith in Leith whaling station after it had closed. Jimmy found the box containing the sextant hidden under a cupboard in the Carpenter’s Shop.

Carr Maritime Gallery: A new exhibit was added to the Carr Maritime Gallery featuring a large transfer basket that had been found at Grytviken. The basket is displayed as though it was suspended from the ceiling, and has been filled with likely cargo. Baskets like this were used to move both cargo and people between ships. The basket was hung from the ship’s crane or derrick and slung over the side of the ship onto the deck of a ship alongside. As the exhibit shows, similar basket arrangements are still used for the same purpose today.

A quickly formed temporary exhibit was also mounted in the Carr Maritime Gallery following the donation of a sizeable collection of artefacts from the recent ‘Shackleton Epic Expedition’ (see below). The many donated items were promptly set out on display, so the visitors on the several remaining cruise ships of the season could learn more about the expedition. The collection will be worked up into a permanent display helping to interpret the Endurance expedition next season.

Fullerton Room: There was a reorganisation of the Fullerton Room in which discovery of the island, early exploration, the German South Georgia International Polar Year Expedition (1882-83), the Discovery Expeditions and Shackleton, amongst other subjects, are covered. As part of this there was a major reworking of the display of camping and survey equipment used by Duncan Carse’s ‘South Georgia Surveys’. A platform was built into the corner of the room to house and protect these, and the artefacts were set out to better reflect the look of a field camp on a glacier. With Shackleton being of significant interest for many visitors to the Museum, the Shackleton exhibits and information now take a much more prominent
place in the Fullerton Room. Joining the very important Shackleton artefacts in the case is the almanac (see new acquisitions below).
The new displays benefited from the handyman skills of museum assistant Darren Blanche who was able to build the Carse Expedition platform and a new display cabinet for the military display.

The new platform built by museum assistant Darren Blanche helps protect the South Georgia Surveys artefacts and helps the exhibit better reflect a camp on a snowfield.

Whaling Station and Museum Tours

Two tours are now a well-established part of the service the museum offers to cruise ships; an interpretive tour of the whaling station, and a museum highlights tour.
The 20-minute long museum tour is run regularly throughout a ship visit and is led by the curatorial intern.
The whaling station tour was introduced as a regular part of the museum service last season. This 30-minute long tour tells the history of Grytviken whaling station and aims to bring the remains of the factory to life in the imagination of the participants, as well and telling them about the working and living conditions of the whalers. This tour is led either by the curatorial intern or the SG Director. The tour can be run a couple of times during a ship visit to enable the participation of all interested visitors. The Expedition Leaders on cruise ships
are contacted before they arrive to advise them what services the museum offers etc. This season the whaling station tour was requested for 85% of the cruise ship visits. Below are a couple of comments from Expedition Leaders about the tour:

“Thank you so much for doing the tour through the whaling station once again. Our guests loved it!”

“Thanks for everything in Grytviken!! We all had a great time ashore and really appreciate your tour around the station, it really adds a lot to the experience!”

Acquisitions, Gifts and Loans

The museum has had a rich year for attracting new artefacts, many of which were quickly put on display. Around 90 new objects have been entered into the museum collection, though many were donated in large groups of objects, such as the donations from the ‘Shackleton Epic Expedition’.

The most important new artefact was the almanac that was key to the survival and rescue of Shackleton’s shipwrecked crew of the Endurance.

The almanac

The highlight of the museum’s year was receiving into the collection the nautical almanac used to navigate the shipwrecked crew of Shackleton’s Endurance to safety, after the ship had been crushed in the ice. As the ice floes they had camped on for months broke up, the men escaped in three small open lifeboats to reach land at Elephant Island. From there the almanac was used to navigate the now decked-over lifeboat James Caird to South Georgia.

During these exposed boat journeys Frank Worsley carefully kept the navigational books as dry as he could, but in stormy conditions off South Georgia it was impossible and the books got waterlogged. James Caird sailed from Elephant Island on April 24th, and Worsley describes in his book ‘Shackleton’s Boat Journey’ how his navigating books were, “in a pitiable state – soaked through, stuck together, illegible and almost impossible to write in...it took me all my time to open them without completely destroying all chance of navigating to land.....the Nautical Almanac shed its pages so rapidly before the onslaught of the seas that it was a race whether or not the month of May would last to South Georgia. It just did, but April had vanished completely.”
After the successful rescue of the remaining crew from Elephant Island, Worsley gave the remains of the almanac to Reginald James, the young scientist aboard *Endurance*, as a reminder of the times they had worked together on the navigational positions while in the Weddell Sea.

James went on to become Professor of Physics at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. It was his son, David James, who arranged with the rest of his family that the almanac should return to South Georgia.

Staff aboard the cruise ship *Hanseatic*, which was calling at Cape Town before sailing to South Georgia, were asked to courier the almanac. The captain of the vessel, Thilo Natke, collected the well-packaged book and delivered to the Museum. The passengers aboard *Hanseatic* were aware of the precious cargo. On arrival they crowded into the Bonner Room to witness the handing over ceremony, and to get a look at the battered book after curatorial intern Thomas Kennedy had carefully unwrapped it. Cpt. Natke said he felt… “particularly honoured to be part of a special mission to bring the almanac and to hand it over to the museum. It was a historic moment as the almanac finally arrived in the place where Shackleton set out for his expedition in 1914, and where the epic voyage ended after almost two years in June 1916. It deserves to be displayed in a prominent place to remind future visitors to South Georgia of the historic open boat journey across the stormy Scotia Sea, which eventually led to the rescue of Shackleton’s men.”

The beaten-up appearance of the remains of the almanac (the front page of which is now June) speaks of the rough journey it went through. It was accompanied by a hand written note explaining why it was given to Reginald James. Both are now on display in the Shackleton artefacts case in the Fullerton Room.

Before coming to South Georgia the almanac had been stored in a bank vault. David James wrote, “I’m very pleased that the almanac has finally come home. I’m sure that the Boss, Worsley and my Dad will approve!...I think it would have been a real sin to have let this heirloom fade away or to be sold to some collector. I look forward to seeing it in the museum one of these days.”

To keep the almanac in optimal conditions, SGHT is hoping that museum supporters who receive this report might like to contribute towards the cost of a climate-controlled display case to conserve this fragile book in optimum conditions, along with several other precious and unique Shackleton artefacts in the museum collection. A suitable case will cost several thousands of pounds. Please see more on how to donate below.

**Shackleton Epic Expedition Collection**

The museum was given an impressive and well-researched collection of clothing and equipment used on the ‘Shackleton Epic Expedition’. This expedition is the first to
successfully recreate both the James Caird lifeboat journey from Elephant Island to South Georgia, and the land crossing from King Haakon Bay to Stromness. The sea crossing was done in 12 days; the six men aboard wearing clothing contemporary with that of Shackleton and his men, and using similar equipment. Only one of the core expedition members completed the land crossing, but that too was in contemporary clothing.

Several other attempts have been made over the years to make the boat crossing, and sometimes the land crossing as well. The nearest previous recreation of both elements of this journey was the ‘In Shackleton’s Wake’ expedition led by Aved Fuchs in 2000. On this expedition four men using modern gear made the crossing in their lifeboat replica, but on approach to King Haakon Bay they had to accept a tow from their support vessel due to bad weather.

The ‘Shackleton Epic Expedition’ was successfully completed on February 10th 2013 when the expedition leader Tim Jarvis walked into Stromness. The expedition’s replica lifeboat Alexandra Shackleton was then towed to Grytviken by the support yacht Australis. The expedition patron, Shackleton’s granddaughter Alexandra Shackleton, arrived the next day aboard a cruise ship. The lifeboat was picked up a month later by a cruise ship.

Amongst the many items from the expedition donated to the museum collection were an entire set of clothing including: boots that had been specially made to replicate as closely as possible those that Shackleton and his men would have had, complete with screws in the sole for the land crossing; a Boys Brigade belt like the one worn by Blackborow the Endurance steward and stowaway (in the famous Hurley photograph with Mrs Chippy the ship’s cat on his shoulder); woollen underwear; mittens and a manila harness. The collection was immediately put on temporary display in the Carr Maritime Gallery.

Other new acquisitions include several items that relate to the three whaling/sealing vessels that remain at Grytviken (Petrel, Albatros and Dias). Many of these will be incorporated into the Carr Maritime Gallery displays next season. These include: the blueprint of Petrel which arrived ready for display after being repaired by a paper conservator; a Sestrel ship’s clock that had been found in 1983 in a drawer on the ship Albatros (it was wrapped in a newspaper dated 1953, and the ship’s name is scratched on the back of the clock); a brass clock from the vessel Petrel which also has the ship’s name scratched on the back; and a very handsome gimbaled compass associated with the Dias.
A Royal Marine uniform, worn by RM Bob Ashton when defending King Edward Point in 1982 during the Argentine invasion, now forms part of the new military exhibition. This exhibition also includes three illustrations from the comic ‘Warlord’ that depict: the defence of KEP; the crashing of British helicopters on the Fortuna glacier; and the role of HMS Endurance. ‘Warlord’ was published by the famous comic publishers D.C. Thomson of Dundee which is very near to the SGHT headquarters.

Two chairs that had been found in a sealed room in the Manager’s Villa at Stromness in 1990 may form part of a planned new exhibit recreating a manager’s living area circa 1915-50.

Two excellent examples of whalers’ craftwork were also donated: an ashtray fashioned as a ship’s wheel had been presented to the Whaling Station Manager Kenneth Campion and is inscribed “Leith Harbour South Georgia Winter 1958”; a model whale klaw (a device used to grab whales by the tail and haul them up the ramp of a floating factory) would either have been cast in the whaling station workshops or on one of the floating factories.

Several other interesting artefacts have recently arrived or are being investigated for future acquisition. These include a full set of clothing worn by Whaling Inspector Sidney Brown.

**Curatorial Internship**

A curatorial intern is employed each summer season from the St. Andrews University Museum and Gallery Studies Course. The internship is a valuable opportunity for someone embarking on a career in museums to gain wide-ranging experience in all facets of museum work. The period that the curatorial intern spends at the museum has been extended and they now stay in post for the whole summer season.

This season’s intern was Thomas Kennedy who was here for five months, during which time he dealt with all aspects of the curatorial work; from leading the annual deep-clean of the displays and artefacts and leading tours, to setting up new exhibitions and answering
historical queries. It was an especially busy year for new acquisitions, so there was a lot of documentation to be done. He also achieved a vast amount of work on the museum displays (see above) and reorganised the library. Though not their main task, the curatorial intern also has to be prepared to be involved in all other aspects of the museum work including cleaning, operating the shop, and assisting with fundraising.

In his internship report Thomas Kennedy summed up what different experiences the internship had given him:

- Multitasking different tasks at the same time
- Working in a museum setting for an extended time
- Looking after the welfare of an entire museum collection
- Conducting tours to a wide variety of people from the cruise ships
- Learning to efficiently document a great amount of artefacts over the course of my time in South Georgia
- Experience with the practical side of installing new displays
- Fostering friendships with residents on South Georgia and visitors to the island.
- The chance to work in a beautiful environment with a wonderful museum collection.

A formal review procedure for the curatorial interns will be introduced in the coming season which will help to guide them in their work, and strengthen their professional skills for their future careers.

The curatorial intern for the coming season will be Suzanne Paterson.

Since leaving us, Thomas has taken a job working for the British Red Cross compiling information about their involvement in WWI.

**Events and Other Projects**

The museum team is busy most of the time with the day to day running of the museum and shop; fundraising for the HR Project; production of ‘SG Island Crafts’, maintenance of the museum collection; keeping the museum display areas looking good and undertaking small maintenance tasks in and around the museum buildings, but each year a few more major projects can be undertaken.

**The Albatros Mast**

A decision was taken to change the management/maintenance of the *Albatros* mast, which is on display in front of the museum. The mast was originally painted and has been maintained this way since, but extensive wood rot had set in beneath the paint which was trapping moisture inside the wood. Having taken advice from the National Maritime Museum (Cornwall), and two wooden boat specialists, we set about one of the larger projects this season to strip, clean, preserve and oil it. An oiled finish will help conserve it for the future and will make future maintenance easier. The work was undertaken over several months and only just completed in time before the end of the season.
V Tipper Truck
One of several V tipper trucks remaining at Grytviken was assembled and mounted on the rails that run along the vast floor of the Guano Shed foundations. Volunteer Sam Moore cleared a section of rails and positioned the truck so it is back in context with its function, which was to move products and stores around the extensive network of rails that ran round the whaling station. The trucks were pushed by hand.

External Artefact Signs
New signs were designed and ordered for the artefacts displayed in front of the museum and were in place for the beginning of the season. The signs are etched stainless steel plates with applied paint and are a big improvement on the variety of handmade signs that had been used before.

Louise Survey
Despite good intentions, and several planned attempts to obtain underwater footage of the wreck of the *Louise*, little headway was made on this this year mainly due to poor water clarity or poor weather when there were suitable tide conditions.
Some more items, including a deadeye with cable, were recovered from around the vessel and stored.
The wreck was noticeably depleted, with loss of topside timbers, following one particularly vigorous easterly storm. SG historian Robert Burton continues to work towards getting a qualified surveyor to South Georgia to survey the remains of the wreck before it completely disintegrates.

Habitat Restoration
With the return of 'Team Rat’ to carry out Phase 2 of the SGHT Habitat Restoration (rodent eradication) project, the museum team were happy to assist in various ways. This included testing equipment, conducting an inventory of stored equipment, hosting some of the project personnel needing a bed overnight at the Drukken Villa, and providing food and
drinks to engineers, pilots and others from the project working at Grytviken. Volunteer Sam Moore undertook a lot of this work as he would be joining 'Team Rat' when the project got underway.

**Whaling and History Conference, Sandefjord**
The SG Director Sarah Lurcock attended the two-day 'Symposium on Whaling and History' at Sandefjord, Norway in June. A surprising variety of subjects, including architecture, oral history and a Japanese tourist town based on whales and whaling, were covered in around 18 papers presented at the event.
Part of the symposium programme was a trip down the fjord on the old whale catcher *Southern Actor*; a catcher which had worked out of Leith Whaling Station.
The occasion was an opportunity to build relationships with people within the whaling history community, and to make new contacts in museums and other organisations, and was a useful and enjoyable occasion.
The visit was funded by SGHT UK and SGHT Norway, with a contribution from Øyas Venner so the SGHT Director SG could stay an extra day and attend a meeting with them about their forthcoming visit to Grytviken to celebrate the centenary of the church and other matters of mutual interest.

**Gift shop**
The shop sells a wide range of gifts including clothing, artwork, books, jewellery and much more. Shop Buyer Liz Adams works from the UK to design, develop, or source new items, and reorder popular lines, and attends several major trade shows each year. Her success is reflected in the continued improvement in the ‘spend per head’ and substantially increased profits this year.
Several new lines of stock were introduced this season, for instance wooden whale sculptures, whisky gift sets (miniature bottle of whisky and etched dram glass), new T shirt designs, fabulous penguin and whale cufflink designs, and an extended range of the gorgeous and popular Pachamama woollen goods.
The shop was mainly staffed and operated by the museum assistants, Gemma French and Darren Blanche, who introduced some new flair to the way the shop is laid out and goods displayed. Thomas also had experience in retail and had some good suggestions for improvements.

The museum staff continue to make the popular ‘SG Island Crafts’ range of magnets and figurines. We hope to develop some new items in this range in the coming season.

The shop works in three currencies: Sterling; US Dollars and Euros, but increasingly customers use credit cards to pay for their purchases.

A range of goods including books, clothing, gifts and artwork can also be bought from the SGHT website, including some exclusive to the site at www.sght.org

Grytviken Church and Cemetery

In the season ahead the church at Grytviken will celebrate the centenary of its opening. The church was prefabricated in Strommen, Norway, and erected at Grytviken in 1913. It was consecrated on Christmas Day. The centenary will be marked with a special exhibition on the history of the church, and new Christmas decoration display has been designed and ordered by museum buyer and former florist Liz Adams. A large party of Øyas Venner, the Norwegian “Friends of the Island” organisation, will be here to help celebrate the centenary. The GSGSSI building team has continued maintenance work on the church, with a little more work planned in late 2013, including installing new lighting. It will be looking very good for its centenary year. GSGSSI Handyman Hugh Marsden continues to do an excellent job keeping the Grytviken cemetery in good order.

The museum team undertakes the day to day management of the church and cemetery; for instance cleaning, checking the buildings are secure after visits, managing memorials left in the cemetery.
The church was well used not only over the Christmas period, but at other times during the summer season, for services, celebrations and concerts. Occasionally a visiting naval chaplain will hold a service in the church for the ship’s crew and locals. The museum staff room is generally used after these services to offer refreshments. Multiple kettles are pressed into action and tins full of home baking produced; it is surprising the number of people who can squeeze into this little room to enjoy the local hospitality.

The Museum Online

Three websites make the South Georgia Museum available to many more people than can visit the island in a season.

Most of the museum collection is hosted on eHive. All newly accessioned items are entered on the database, along with information about the objects and photographs. You can view the collection at [http://ehive.com/account/3408](http://ehive.com/account/3408)

One of our listed objects, a South Georgia parcel tag, was chosen as a ‘Featured Object’ and displayed on the eHive homepage. The featured object photographs rotate with other featured objects, and are different each time you log on. Clicking on the photograph leads people to the object page so they can read about the item; this will have guided many people to further investigate our museum collection.

The museum website at [www.sgmuseum.gs](http://www.sgmuseum.gs) gets regular updates through the summer season too, with the job of writing the monthly blog falling to a different member of staff each month. [http://sgmuseum.gs/index.php/Latest_News](http://sgmuseum.gs/index.php/Latest_News)

The museum blog is also posted on the [SGHT Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/SGHT) page

The SGHT website is also a useful source of information [www.sght.org](http://www.sght.org)

Data collection for the whale sightings database continues at the museum, and the records can be viewed on a chart on the [SGHT Website](http://www.sght.org/). The html page can be found at: [http://www.sght.org/sites/default/files/South%20Georgia.html](http://www.sght.org/sites/default/files/South%20Georgia.html)
Fundraising

Fundraising for the SGHT Habitat Restoration Project continues, mainly through giving presentations aboard cruise ships and promoting the ‘Sponsor a Hectare’ scheme. People signing up for this can pay for one or more hectares of rodent infested land to be cleared at £90 (US$145). The SG Director Sarah Lurcock gave the presentation on two thirds of the visiting cruise ships (32). In excess of £250,000 was raised from on-island fund raising efforts this season by SGHT and FOSGI. Whilst all the museum staff played a part supporting these efforts, curatorial intern Thomas Kennedy was Sarah’s main backup this season.

There is an exciting new story to tell visitors in the coming season. Phase 2 of this project was only completed in the nick of time after experiencing protracted and foul weather conditions, and involved heroic feats from the whole field team, but especially the pilots who flew on to complete the baiting despite frozen aircraft blades.

A very important part of the fundraising this year has been the on-board auctions, which alone raised in excess of £50,000. To achieve this impressive result involved the hard work and enthusiasm of a lot of people, from artists, craftsmen and the museum staff making exclusive or limited edition items, to the on-board staff who organise and hold the auctions, and the bidders who take part. The museum provides a range of exclusive items to be auctioned, including: signed books; artwork; Habitat Restoration clothing; and sometimes obscure one-offs such as the old flag that flew from the museum flagpole (raised £960). Auction items are accompanied by a helpful auction package including certificates to show how much land successful bidders will help clear.

Fundraising and its administration takes up a good deal of museum staff time, but the staff are so enthusiastic to support this important project that it is all very willingly done. It is important to point out that no fundraising could be achieved without similarly enthusiastic support from the cruise ship operators and staff, some of whom go to great lengths to raise as much as possible; for instance the Expedition Leader on one vessel said that the “…museum staff’s enthusiasm is contagious. I’ve got Liz and Sappho talking about dressing up as rats for the auction!!! It should put people in the mood for the auction.” - They raised over £1,300 at the auction on that trip.
Other

Communications and Data Management
Following the installation of a wireless internet link late last season, communications from the museum to KEP and the internet is now much improved. Communications do still regularly drop out, especially in snowy conditions, but this has been manageable. Telephone and internet access (increasingly important for things like processing credit card payments, sharing data within SGHT and curatorial research) is severely restricted for all at South Georgia due to a restricted satellite link.
With the assistance of Patrick Lurcock, further improvements have been made to the internal computer network. There is now an internal network for the museum with regular backups. Work is on-going to reorganise the computer files, and in future a new electronic data filing system needs to be developed for historical information and images.

Recycling
The museum further improved its waste handling and recycling last season. Only small amounts of paper are burnt (mainly credit card slips for security reasons). Other rubbish is sorted, processed and then recycled with the waste from the KEP station. We reuse as much packaging material as possible; given the option of new or recycled, few of our gift shop customers mind a recycled bag for their shopping, or they buy an SGHT ‘bag for life’.

Future Plans
During the season ahead we plan to mount an exhibition on the history of the church for its centenary year. We also plan a reworking of the Carr Maritime Gallery to fit in many new artefacts and highlight those associated with the three remaining whaling/sealing vessels at Grytviken.
We will also be working towards exhibitions for the 2014/15 season and the following years as the centenaries of the Shackleton expeditions arise.
There will be an Artist in Residence during the 2013/14 season. Anthony Smith, a young but already renowned sculptor/painter/photographer, will work at the museum for around two months. He will assist in general museum work at busy times, and help fund raising efforts for the Habitat Restoration Project; including bringing one of his bronze albatross sculptures to be auctioned. He will also develop new items to be made in the South Georgia Island Craft Range which are made by the museum staff.
To comply with GSSSI requirements, and ensure continuing industry standard practice at the museum, there are plans for a curatorial review visit by a qualified curator from the Sandefjord Museum in the 2014/15 season. During her recent visit to Sandefjord the SG Director met Dag Borresen, the curator proposed by the Sandefjord Museum to undertake the review. Dag has a special interest in African workers in the whaling industry, including the many hundreds of African workers in the South Georgia whaling industry. We plan to mount a temporary display on this during his visit.

How to Support Our Work
Artefacts
We are always excited to hear about prospective new artefacts for the museum collection. Do please get in touch if you think you may have something that would be of interest to us. We are currently actively seeking artefacts that would help us portray the way the whaling station managers and their families lived in the villas. We need items like lanterns, or lights, fabric, wall coverings, ornaments and other household items or furniture. Do you have any ideas to help us mount displays for the coming Shackleton centenaries? Do you have any items that were made with whale products? An old bar of Sunlight soap in its original packaging, whale oil candles or cosmetic made with whale oil for instance?

Help protect the Endurance Expedition almanac
A climate controlled case to keep the Shackleton Endurance expedition almanac in optimal conditions, and help protect the other precious Shackleton artefacts, will cost upwards of £3000. You can help towards the costs of preserving these precious items by filling in the enclosed form (if you received a printed copy of the report) or visiting the link http://www.sght.org/south-georgia-museum-appeal-2013

Donate
Please support the South Georgia Museum and/or the work of the SGHT to protect the heritage and natural history of South Georgia by making a donation.

Online donations can be made through the Trust’s website at http://www.sght.org/make-donation

US citizens can make tax deductible gifts via Friends of South Georgia Island http://www.fosgi.org

Alternatively, donations may be sent by post to the South Georgia Heritage Trust, Verdant Works, West Henderson’s Wynd, Dundee, DD1 5BT, UK. Cheques payable to “South Georgia Heritage Trust” can be sent in Sterling, US Dollars or Norwegian Kroner.

Contact Us

Do please keep us up to date if your contact details have changed recently.

SG Museum Postal Address: South Georgia Museum, Grytviken, South Georgia, S1QQ 1ZZ, via Falkland Islands, South Atlantic.
Email: museum@sght.org or sghtdirectorsg@sght.org

SGHT HQ Postal Address: South Georgia Heritage Trust, Verdant Works, West Henderson’s Wynd, Dundee, DD1 5BT, UK.
Email: info@sght.org
Last year we started distributing this report to many of the regular recipients by email. We contacted everyone for whom we had email addresses to ask their preference for an electronic or paper copy. Since then all new recipients with email addresses have automatically been added to the list of those to receive an electronic version. This obviously saves us money, but is also popular with many recipients. If you received a hard-copy but would prefer to get it electronically, or know of anybody who would like to receive the report by email in future, please forward details to us or suggest they get in touch with us.

Acknowledgments

The South Georgia Museum could not operate without the help and support of many different people and organisations, far too many to mention all by name but especial thanks are due to:

GSGSSI who provide the logistics and infrastructure that enables us to operate on the island. They maintain the museum buildings and provide a grant to cover the running costs of the museum.

Thank you to HMS Clyde and the tour ship operators Polar Latitudes (including Ian Shaw, Mr Ting and Alex McNeil) for their assistance getting the museum staff in at the beginning of the season; and other cruise operators who were prepared to help.

The GSGSSI Building Supervisor David Peck and the GSGSSI building team who do the major maintenance of the museum buildings, and GSGSSI Handyman Hugh Marsden for help with some the jobs around the museum.

The Government Officers Patrick Lurcock, Keiron Fraser, and Jo Cox and the BAS employees at the KEP Station for all the various help, not only support during the summer season, but also for opening the museum for visitors through the winter months when the SG Director was absent; and thank you to Patrick for the technical support.

BAS Logistics Coordinator Les Whittamore, for always being helpful.

BAS staff at Cambridge who assist us by shipping artefacts on their vessels, and who are always helpful with our research.

Our grateful thanks to former SG Museum Curator Elsa Davidson for her continued advice and support, and to her current employers, National Museums Scotland, who allow Elsa to support us as part of her role with them as Curator of Technology.

Thank you to everyone who has donated artefacts, loaned items, given books, or sent photographs, papers etc. Recent donors and those who assisted us to obtain items for the museum collection include: Mary Loftus; John Wright; Lyle Craigie-Halkett; Edwin Mickleburgh; Bob Ashton; David James and family; Jimmy Smith; Tony Keville; Cathy Corbishley; Phil Stone, R Clunas; Dr. Stephen Mackereth; John Moore; Robert Burton;
Walter Nurse; Michael Buchanan; Tim Jarvis and the members of the ‘Shackleton Epic’ expedition including Barry Grey and Seb Coulthard; Bev Verwoert and Pearl McLeod; Helen Brown; Sir Gerald Elliott; Lance Tickell; Albert-Friedrich Gruene; Angie Butler; John Abrahamsen; John Moore; Richard Williams; Dr Stephen Palmer; Marie Foucard; Kenn Back; Alastair Salvesen; Arthur Dinsdale; Stephen Percy; Stephen Dibbern; Jeff Rubin; Roger Barker; Øyas Venner; Anthony Dickinson; and many others.

John Alexander continues to find ways to support the museum and our fundraising efforts in various ways using his historic photographs.

Thank you to the Expedition Leaders, staff and crew on all the cruise vessels for working with us to enable fundraising on board the vessels, and for all the welcome invites on board for delicious meals. An especial thank you to those on Plancius, including EL Brent Houston, for taking two of the museum staff out for a two-day trip around the island.

Thank you to Øyas Venner for their support. They hosted the SGHT Director SG for part of a visit to Sandefjord and continue to donate copies of their attractive calendar to help us raise funds to support the work of the museum.

Thanks to the various pursers aboard the cruise ships who assist by exchanging marked dollars notes (which the bank won’t accept) and keeping us in small change - because the nearest bank is 400 miles away!

Thanks to Robert Burton for collecting artefacts at his home in the UK to ship down on the BAS ships. This is a great assistance, especially to get larger and heavier items here.

Various people have helped staffing the museum, or with museum-related tasks, when we were short staffed, including Paula O’Sullivan, Jo Cox, Will Whatley, Patrick Lurcock, and Sue Gregory.

Steve Massam, who trains the staff to make the SG Island Craft range, and advises us on a range of subjects.

Joe Corner who refurbished two metal tributes from the grave of William Barlas.

Cpt. Natke and Sylvia Stevens on Hanseatic for assistance bringing Shackleton’s almanac from Cape Town.

Thank you to all those who worked with us as translators on the tours and presentations, especially Gudrun and Stefan Kredel on the Hapag Lloyd vessel Bremen for translating the fundraising presentation into German.

Ali Liddle, staff member on Plancius, helped develop the auction pack and was tirelessly enthusiastic to help raise funds for the Habitat Restoration Project.
Bill Dawson and the military at MPA, Falklands, for their support and assistance, not least for the work on-going to arrange for a gun from their armoury to be decommissioned for the new military display.

And a very big thank you to the many other people who gave donations and assistance to the museum this season, it is very much appreciated.