South Georgia Archaeological Project: Investigating the History of Sealing
February 23 → March 24, 2019

Do you dream of visiting remote locations on South Georgia normally off-limits to visitors? Are you fascinated by history? Now is your chance to join a unique archaeological expedition to uncover the secrets of South Georgia’s 19th century sealing heritage!

What is the aim of the project?
This will be the first archaeological investigation focusing on the history of South Georgia’s occupation by 19th-century American and British sealers. The living conditions, equipment and techniques of the sealers, along with their early impact upon the island’s ecology, will be surveyed. The benefits will be twofold: (1) giving an insight into the hazardous lives of the first inhabitants and (2) providing a benchmark for future management of the island’s heritage conservation. There is urgency to this project because many of the sealing sites are, ironically, being damaged by the (very welcome!) resurgent populations of seals.

When will the expedition take place?
The vessel MV Hans Hansson will be chartered for 30 days, leaving Stanley, Falkland Islands, on February 23rd and returning March 24th, 2019. Upon reaching South Georgia, the team will spend three weeks at remote archaeological sites along both coasts.

Who is involved already?
Specialist archaeologists from the University of Cambridge, UK, comprise the core team. Dion Poncet, renowned for his leadership and his experience in sailing the Southern Ocean in both the South Georgia and Antarctic regions, will be the Expedition Leader.
How can I participate?
We are offering an opportunity for five supporters to join the team as 'citizen scientists' for this once-in-a-lifetime trip, in return for a donation of US $30,000 or GBP 22,000 per person.- to help cover the costs of the project. [If the donation is in GBP, UK donors will be eligible for Gift Aid.]

This adventure will be an extraordinary chance to experience South Georgia's wildlife, scenery and history by making extended visits to parts of the island that are never visited by cruise ships and rarely by anyone else. Within this generous timeframe, the photographic opportunities will be exceptional.

Throughout the expedition, the archaeologists and expedition staff will share their knowledge. If you so desire, you may assist the archaeologists as 'citizen scientists' while they survey sites, wrecks and remains of huts, seeking out and documenting artefacts such as cast-iron trypots, old bottles and fragments of china and clothing.

Additional information will be available on SGHT (www.sght.org) and FOSGI (www.fosgi.org) websites in due course, along with a full list of our science and expedition team.

If You Go: Saturday, February 23rd ➔ Sunday, March 24th, 2019
The expedition starts and finishes in the small town of Stanley in the Falkland Islands. There are currently two ways to fly into the Falklands: (1) each Saturday, LATAM (Oneworld partner) departs from either Santiago or Punta Arenas, Chile; (2) there are flights two days a week from Brize Norton, UK.

Flights and accommodation in Chile and the Falkland Islands are not included in the cost of the voyage. We can assist with both airline and hotel arrangements if needed.
Expedition Itinerary (this itinerary will be weather permitting and most likely will include additional sites)

**Day 1: Feb 23**  
*Hans Hansson* sails from Stanley.

**Days 2-3**  
Passage to South Georgia.  
The archaeologists and other experts give presentations on sealing history, archaeological techniques and other aspects of South Georgia.

**Day 4**  
*Hans Hansson* arrives at Grytviken, South Georgia.  
Visit the Museum, whaling station, Whalers' Church and Shackleton's grave.

**Days 5-25**  
Visit numerous sites along the South Georgia coastline starting at Elsehul, with a possible trek to Undine Harbour and Coal Harbour. This area is rich in archaeology and there are colonies of albatrosses and penguins. Other landings will include Right Whale Bay (home to a king penguin colony), Prince Olav Harbour and Tønsberg Point (the northern side of the island), and Nilse Hullet, Diaz Cove, Mouse Cove and Trollhul (the southern coast). We hope to go ashore daily. The exact day-to-day itinerary will depend on the weather and will be tweaked each day; time spent at each place will depend on its archaeological interest. The visit to Elsehul will last several days and other sites are likely to require two days' investigation. So there will be plenty of time to explore! Other favourite wildlife sites will be visited whenever possible. We will do our best to create the most brilliant itinerary we can, based on weather, wind and landing conditions.

**Day 26**  
*Hans Hansson* departs South Georgia.

**Days 27-29**  
Passage to Falkland Islands.
Wildlife possibilities:

Birds: 5 species of albatross (black-browed, wandering, royal (in transit), light-mantled and grey-headed); 4 species of penguins (king, gentoo, macaroni and chinstrap); numerous species of petrels, prions, terns, endemic South Georgia Pipit and South Georgia Pintail, and more.

Seals: fur seals, elephant seals, leopard seals and Weddell seals

Whales: southern right whale, humpback, blue whale, fin whale, minke, orca

Daily Activities:

At each site, the archaeologists will be photographing the area from a drone, carrying out an extensive ‘walkover’ to search for artefacts to create a ground plan. The site will then be investigated in detail. Artefacts will be retrieved and recorded. If appropriate, test pits and trenches will be dug to reveal the structure of the sites. Samples of soil will also be taken to be analysed in the UK to reveal details of the sealers’ activities.

As an expedition member, you will have an unprecedented amount of time ashore in areas that few visitors ever see, and you will be welcome to assist with the archaeological work.

There will be plenty of time to hike and photograph wildlife, plants, sealing sites, glacier and mountain scenery, and more.
What is included:

- Guided: 30 days voyage on board the vessel
- 3 meals and limited alcohol per day on board the ship
- Zodiac and landing excursions

Not included:

- Airfare to and from the Falkland Islands
- Travel and personal property insurance
- Hotel nights and excursions in Stanley
- Personal clothing

How do I find out more?
Contact: Alison Neil (South Georgia Heritage Trust) info@sght.org, phone +44 (0)1382 229792
Robert Burton (Project Manager, UK) rwburton@ntlworld.com
Denise Landau (FOSGI, USA) denise.landau@fosgi.org

Hans Hansson Information:

76 ft length; 23 ft beam. 230 tons displacement. Ice-strengthened steel hull, aluminium superstructure.
1: VIP cabins, twin berth with ensuite bathroom
2: Main passenger saloon
3: Central lobby
4: Captain’s cabin, twin berth with ensuite bathroom
5: Galley
6: Crew mess
7: Aft lobby & laundry
8: Crew cabins, single berth
9: Passenger cabins, twin berth
10: Bathrooms, shower, sink, toilet
11: Engineer's cabin, twin berth with ensuite bathroom

All cabins have carpeted floors, natural light from portholes, AC (240) power sockets and central heating.

space is limited - come join us!