



Prime Minister Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern launches the VR experience. © AHT/AUT



Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate student explores Sir Ed's hut VR experience. © AHT/AUT



Gordon MacLeod Chief Executive Ryman Healthcare, Mark Stewart Chair AHT, Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, Trust Executive Director Nigel Watson. © AHT/AUT



Nigel Watson welcomes attendees to the VR launch. © AHT/AUT



Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate Senior School Principal, Kiri Turketo and Peter Hillary. © AHT/AUT

## Step Inside Sir Ed's Antarctic Hut

Antarctic Heritage Trust is delighted to officially launch a unique virtual reality (VR) experience of Sir Edmund Hillary's Antarctic hut. Developed in partnership with Auckland University of Technology (AUT) the VR was recently launched in person by New Zealand's Prime Minister Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, who described the experience as "deeply moving".

Donning a headset, people are invited to step inside Hillary's Hut and to explore the first building at what is now New Zealand's Scott Base. A fully immersive experience, which includes a guided tour through 'A' hut, it celebrates New Zealand's first presence in Antarctica as part of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition and International Geophysical Year.

During the 1955-58 Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition Sir Ed led the first overland journey to reach the South Pole since Captain Scott in 1912, and laid supply depots to support the efforts of British explorer Sir Vivian Fuchs who led the party that completed the first overland crossing

of the Antarctic continent. Both parties gathered useful scientific information, and completed important mapping work.

As part of our commitment to sharing the world's greatest polar exploration stories the Trust is utilising virtual reality. It is a powerful medium to allow people to access Antarctica's remarkable history of exploration and the legacy of the expedition bases, which the Trust cares for on behalf of the international community.

Trust General Manager Operations and Communications Francesca Eathorne, who oversaw the project development, hopes people around the world will take up the opportunity to explore the hut virtually and to learn what life 'on the Ice' was like for Hillary's 23 man team.

"Virtual reality allows people to visit these important sites without travelling there, which is expensive and difficult to do. This fully immersive experience will be the closest thing possible to exploring the expedition's base hut without actually going to the hut itself."



The Prime Minister with senior students from Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate. © AHT/AUT

It is a ground-breaking project in terms of its scale and approach with more than a dozen AUT students and staff contributing over 4000 hours to the project.

Associate Professor Barbara Bollard from AUT, who helped collect the data to build the virtual reality says: "This opportunity is unique in that it allows you to experience this special place without leaving a footprint. It opens up a long and rich history of Antarctic exploration to a wide audience who may never have the opportunity to visit in person.

"It's one thing to read about a place or see photos, but to interactively walk around and experience it as if you are there, really

cements the connection. It creates a greater awareness and appreciation of the importance and value of these places."

At the virtual reality launch, held at Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate in South Auckland, New Zealand, one of the first people to experience the VR was Sir Ed's grandson Alexander Hillary. Alexander visited the Antarctic Peninsula as part of the Trust's 2019 Inspiring Explorers™ Expedition, but has never visited Ross Island and his grandfather's hut.

Alexander says, "It's pretty cool to experience the hut in VR. It feels so lifelike and the details are incredible. It was nice to think about what it must have been like

for him down there, just to see a bit of his history and what he was doing down there with his expedition was really special to me."

People globally can download a version of the experience for free from Antarctic Heritage Trust's app or access the full version on gaming platform Steam. The Trust plans to tour the virtual reality experience around New Zealand schools and a number of public exhibitors will also host the experience.

### Thank You

The Trust would like to acknowledge project partner Auckland University of Technology, principal sponsor Ryman Healthcare, Antarctica New Zealand (logistics), and Staples VR for making this project possible.

### How to Access Hillary's Hut VR

- ▲ Download the Antarctic Heritage Trust VR app for free from the App Store or Google Play (best viewed with a cardboard headset).
- ▲ To experience the full version, download it for free from Steam and watch it on your HTC Vive headset.
- ▲ Visit Antarctic Heritage Trust's website to see who is hosting the full version around New Zealand.



Visit [nzaht.org](http://nzaht.org) for more information about science, exploration and life on the ice for Sir Ed's team.

## Antarctic Conservation Season Update

The COVID-19 global pandemic has impacted the Trust's Antarctic operations for the upcoming 2020-2021 season. This has meant work has either been deferred or programmes reduced.

### UKAHT Partnership

The Trust was due to support the United Kingdom Antarctic Heritage Trust (UKAHT) conservation team on the Antarctic Peninsula for a fourth season under the ongoing partnership between the two Trusts. In light of the pandemic, this season the expedition has been cancelled. The Trust's programme managers will continue to work with UKAHT remotely developing conservation and implementation plans and analysing the survey data collected to date.



Artefacts from Shackleton's Hut at Cape Royds. © AHT

### Ross Island

A reduced team will now travel to Ross Island this season to undertake the annual monitoring and maintenance programme for the historic huts as part of the Ross Sea Heritage Restoration Project. The team will quarantine in New Zealand for two weeks, along with other programme participants, before deploying to Antarctica. Antarctica New Zealand staff will then support our team to undertake essential work over a shortened period at Scott's, Shackleton's and Hillary's huts.



### Cape Adare

Over the past few seasons, the Trust's conservation team has worked hard to establish the camp at remote Cape Adare (the site of the first base established in Antarctica), to support their conservation efforts over successive work programmes. This season's focus was to conserve the stores hut, one of two small huts established by Borchgrevink. Due to logistical constraints caused by COVID-19, this work has been deferred until next season.



# Sharing Stories to Inspire

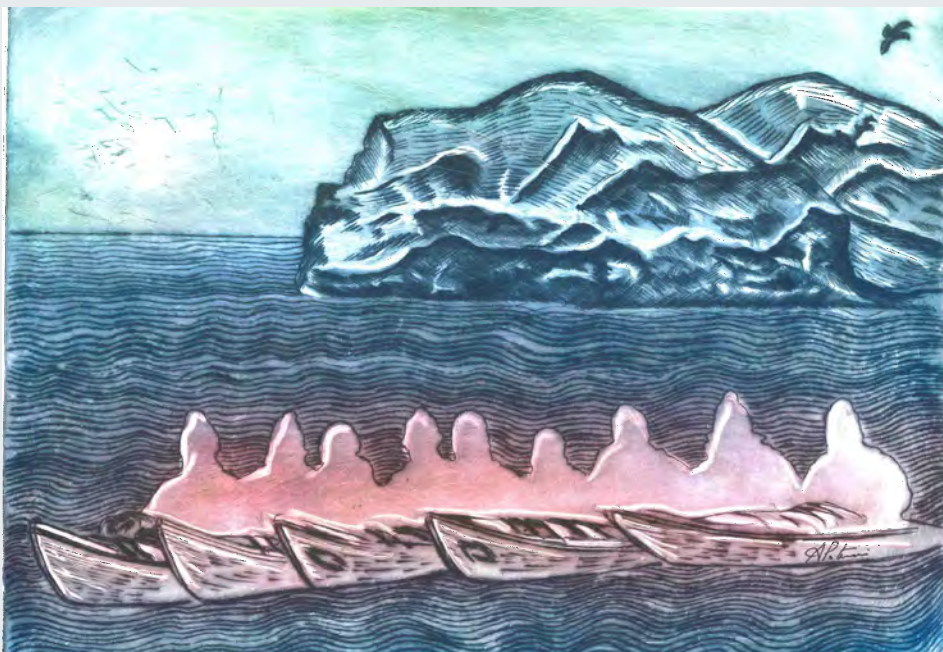
Supported by the Trust, our 2020 Inspiring Explorers™ are busy delivering their outreach programmes following their trip to Antarctica. Inspiring Explorers™ are interacting with school students around the world, developing educational and video content, designing virtual reality and augmented reality resources as well as creating artwork and music. All the Inspiring Explorers™ are committed to sharing their stories within their communities, giving presentations and inspiring others to explore.

## Antarctic Inspired Artwork



© AHT/Marcus Waters

A'aifou Potemani's experience as part of the 2020 Inspiring Explorers™ Expedition has led this Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate student to explore his time on the Antarctic Peninsula



A'aifou Potemani's Antarctic artwork.

during art class. His first Antarctic inspired artwork is made using printmaking techniques.

A'aifou says the piece was created as an artwork of remembrance, the act of making the postcard reminding him of his time away in such an astonishing and beautiful place. The artwork is based on a photo of the team in Antarctica in their kayaks.

"I thought it would be really awesome to include the icebergs in the background to show how big they are in contrast to a silhouette of our team that went down to Antarctica," says A'aifou.

An important aspect was to show the beauty and colours of the Antarctic environment; mesmerising iceberg blues and the green, yellow and red of the sky. A'aifou is now working on a second artwork.

## Environmental Education



© AHT/Marcus Waters

Owain John's desire to share his Antarctic experiences is expressed through his social enterprise, Squawk Squad. Squawk Squad's vision is to inspire a generation of tamariki (children) to become

kaitiaki (guardians) of Aotearoa-New Zealand through education and action by building a world-class environmental education platform and running digital

programmes that empower collective action.

With footage shot during the expedition, Owain has created an eight week environmental adventure to Antarctica where New Zealand school children learn about climate change and Antarctica's relevance to the world. One topic focuses on the early explorers to Antarctica and connects students with the Trust's work and the spirit of exploration. Teachers signed up to the programme receive curriculum-linked lesson plans focused on Antarctica with climate change causes and solutions. More



Owain John in the classroom. © Owain John

than 200 teachers and 4000 students aged five to twelve are taking part in Squawk Squad's programme.



See more at [education.squawksquad.co.nz](https://education.squawksquad.co.nz)

## 'On Satin Waters'



© AHT/Marcus Waters

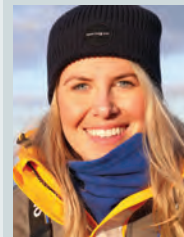
Ihlara McIndoe, a music and law student at the University of Otago, has had the first of three classical music pieces she is composing performed at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery as part of her community engagement programme.

"*On Satin Waters* is inspired by our final day kayaking in Antarctica, when it was particularly dark and foggy and the water

was like a giant black sheet of satin, so still and reflective that the bright blue of the looming icebergs were mirrored in it. It was surreal and overwhelming."

*On Satin Waters* was composed for violin, viola and pre-recorded electronics (composed of water and ice recordings taken during the expedition), and was performed by Nathaniel Otley and Mark Menzies as part of the *Explorations* concert series of environmentally inspired works.

## Inspiring Lecture



© AHT/Marcus Waters

Laurette Siemonek, a senior policy analyst for the Ministry for the Environment, recently gave a lecture on her experiences to the Antarctic Peninsula to Dr Cliff Atkins' students from the

School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences, Victoria University of Wellington. The lecture forms part of the Trust's ongoing association with the University.

# Governance

As part of the Trust's ongoing commitment to encourage young people to gain experience in governance roles, this year we welcome 2019 Inspiring Explorer™ Georgina Archibald to the Trust Board as a new governance intern.

"The internship is providing me with an opportunity to engage more deeply with the Trust, where I can add insight to discussions from my own experiences with the Trust and beyond. Growing my governance experience will also help me to make meaningful impact across my communities."

Since travelling on the 2019 Inspiring Explorers™ Expedition, Georgina has been involved in the Trust's Young Inspiring Explorers™ Summit, selection process for the 2020 expedition and mentoring some of the Trust's younger Inspiring Explorers™.



Georgina Archibald in Antarctica 2019. © AHT/Alexander Hillary

She is the Learning Advisor Pasifika and works in Learning Services at the Ara Institute of Canterbury, New Zealand. Georgina has a law degree (LLB), a

Master's degree in English Literature and is a Fulbright Award winner.

## Alumni News



© Rob Stimpson

**James Blake** (2015 Inspiring Explorer™) who crossed South Georgia as part of the Trust's inaugural Inspiring Explorers™ Expedition, welcomed a baby boy, Rufus Peter Blake last October. James is

currently working on The Ocean Kite Project, developing a boat powered by kite to be able to cross the ocean at speed.

[www.oceankiteproject.com](http://www.oceankiteproject.com)

**Dr Margaret Bradshaw** (Geologist and former Trustee), has been doubly honoured in the past year, with a Civic Award from the Christchurch City Council and a room named after her at the International Antarctic Centre. Both awards recognise her significant contribution to Christchurch, Antarctica and the Antarctic community.

**Dr Fred Davey** (Emeritus Scientist, GNS Science), has presented two papers as part of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research, SCAR 2020 online conference; The New Zealand International Geophysical Year (IGY) programme and the start of the New Zealand Antarctic Research Programme, and Cenozoic continental rifting in the north-western Ross Sea, which covers the geological development of the western Ross Sea during the past 60 million years.

**James Harding** (past staff) and partner Frances welcomed baby girl Holly in August this year.

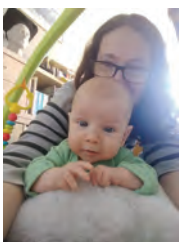


© Alexander Hillary

**Lana Kiddie-Vai** (2019 Inspiring Explorer™) who ventured to the Antarctic Peninsula as one of the first group of students from Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate, received a Pro Vice-Chancellor Māori Scholarship from the

University of Auckland to go towards her first year of study.

**Ciarán Lavelle** (Conservator), part of the Trust's conservation team (2016-2017) who helped to conserve Cape Adare artefacts, has been appointed as Head of Collections Services at the National Museum of Northern Ireland.



© Diana McCormack

**Diana McCormack** (2017-2018 Conservation Ambassador) welcomed baby boy Laurie earlier this year. Diana continues her work as a conservator at the National Museum of the Royal Navy Portsmouth.

**William Pike** (2017 Inspiring Explorer™ and inaugural governance intern) has recently been named as one of New Zealand's top 20 motivational speakers by Australia's Presentation Skills Academy. More information on booking William as an inspiring speaker can be found at [www.williampike.co.nz](http://www.williampike.co.nz)

## In Memoriam

It is with sadness that the Trust farewells:

### Richard Brooke

Lieutenant Commander Richard Brooke (1927-2020) was a Polar Medal recipient, a Royal Navy surveyor and explorer who was selected by Dr Fuchs to accompany the New Zealand Party led by Sir Edmund Hillary in an expedition to cross Antarctica as part of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition (1955-1958). As part of the TAE's Northern Party, he surveyed the Trans-Antarctic Mountains, Victoria Land, contributing to a better understanding of the area. Mount Brooke, Victoria Land, is named after him.

### Richard Gilder

Richard Gilder (1932-2020) was an American philanthropist, good friend and supporter of the Trust. In 2005, Richard and his daughter Ginny saw the Trust's work to conserve the Ross Island heroic-era bases first hand. We are grateful for his help conserving the legacy of exploration.

## Support Us

Help conserve, share and encourage the spirit of exploration.

Please consider donating, becoming a member or supporting the Trust.

Visit [www.nzaht.org](http://www.nzaht.org) for ways to give.