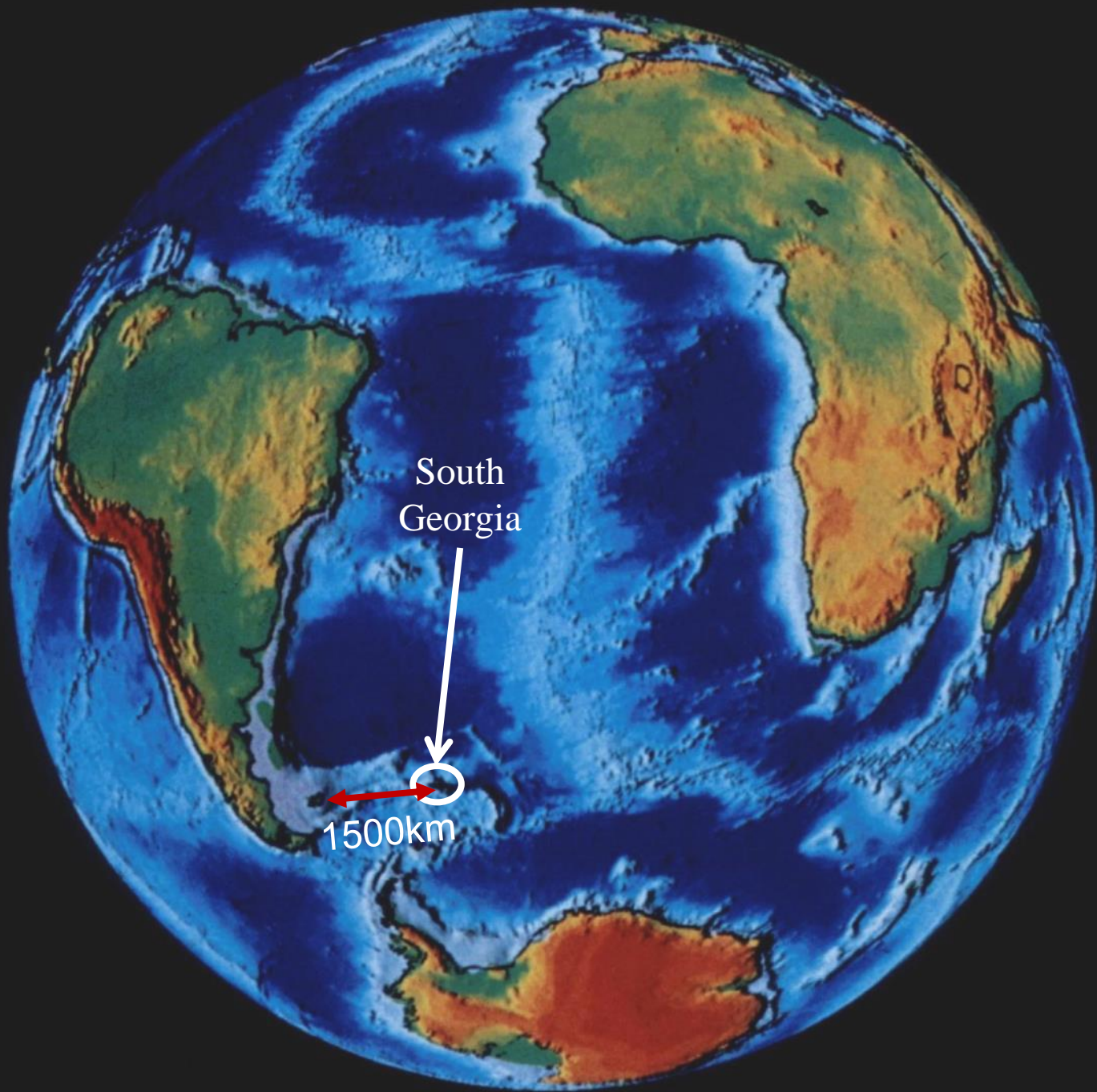


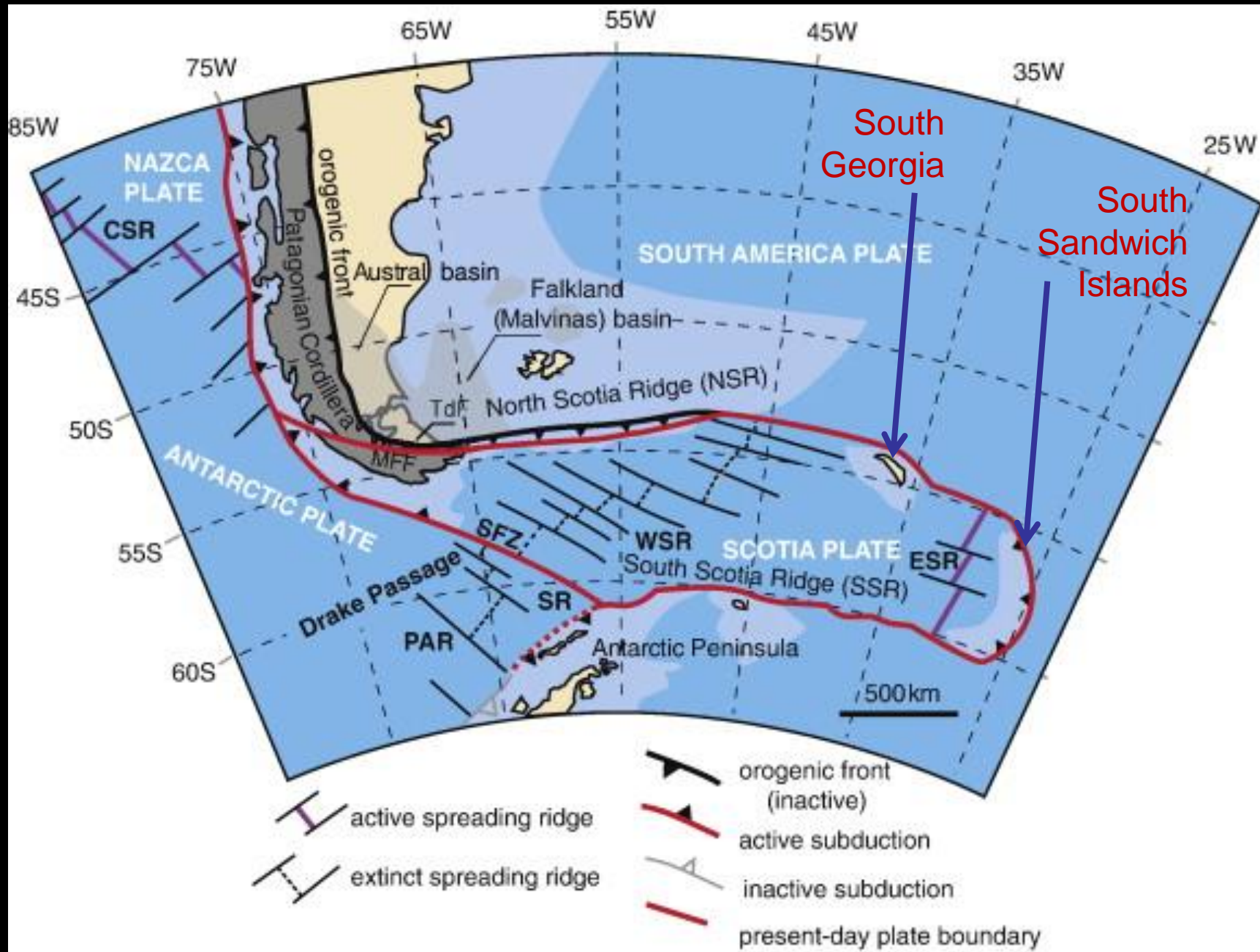
South Georgia a briefing



23 March 2015

Professor David J Drewry
Chair, South Georgia Association





South Atlantic Ocean

Latitude North
≡ York

Length = 170km
Width = 2 to 30 km

South Georgia
Heights in Feet

0 40 km

Scotia Sea







© Matthew Phillips

- A little History
- Commercial Exploitation: sealing and whaling
- Shackleton
- Government and Administration
- Science
- 1982 Invasion
- New Strategies
- Future

A Little History

- 1675 Antoine de la Roché sighted “South Georgia”
- 1756 Gregorio Jerez in the *Leon* passed to south of “South Georgia”
- 1775 Captain James Cook charted islands, landed on 17th January at Possession Bay and claimed the land for Great Britain.

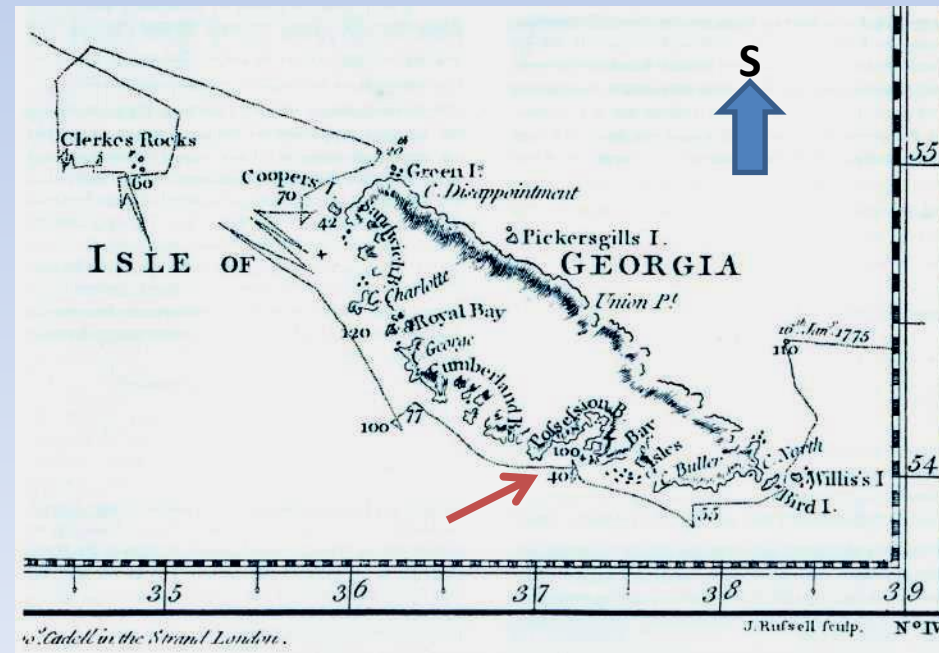


“This land I called the *Isle of Georgia* in honour of H. Majesty”

Jam. Cook



Possession Bay



Sealing

Cook described abundant elephant and fur seals on South Georgia

Sealing industry turned its attention to the islands:

1786 to 1802: First Wave of sealing, then seal numbers were in decline

1814-1821: Second Wave for fur and elephant seals (oil)

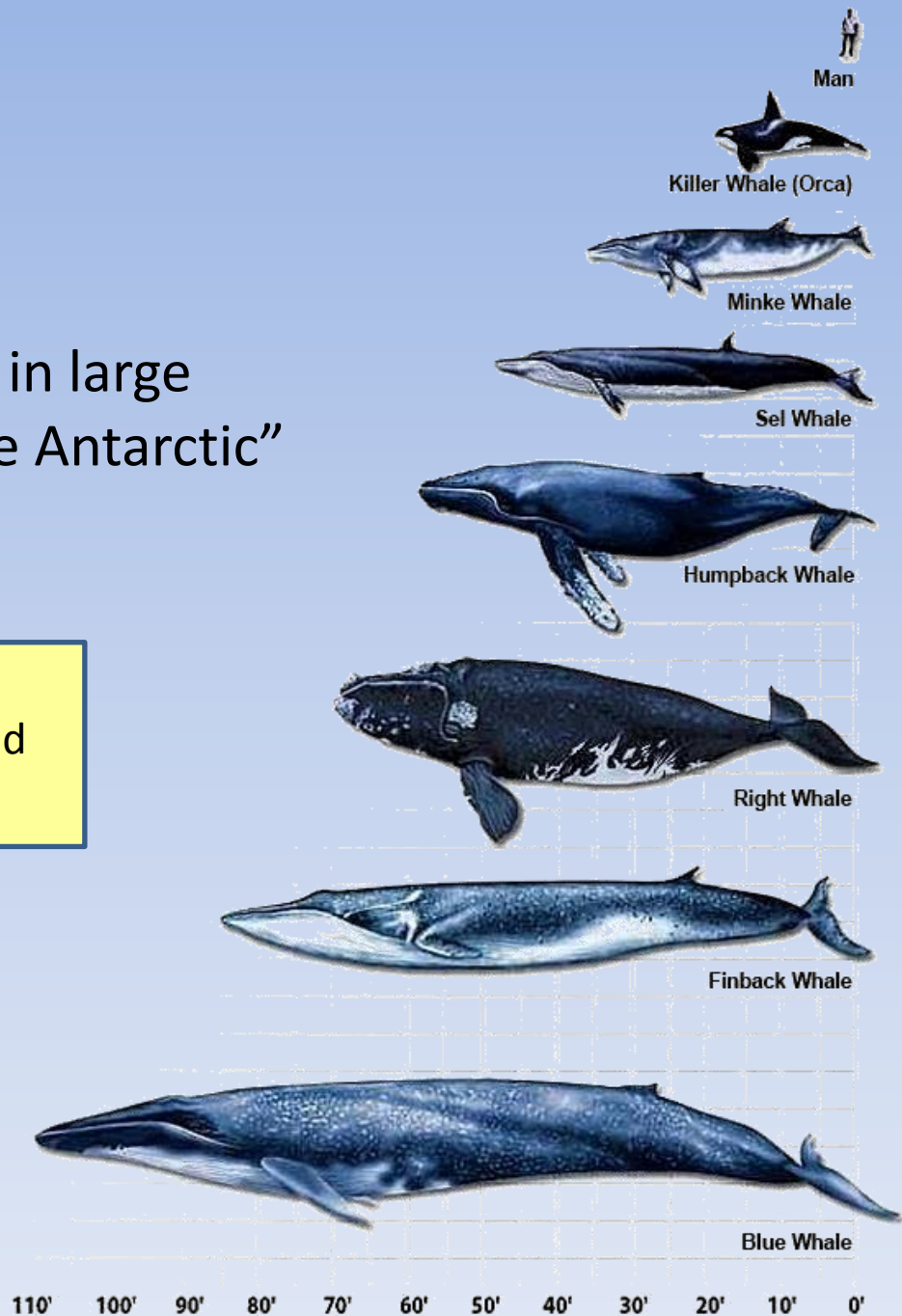
1816 Thomas Smith made two voyages: first yielded 3500 barrels of oil and 5000 fur seal skins; second 2400 barrels of oil and 10000 fur skins.



Whaling

“The history of South Georgia is in large part the history of whaling in the Antarctic”
Headland (1984)

From Cook's time there were reports of abundant whales in the South Atlantic and around South Georgia



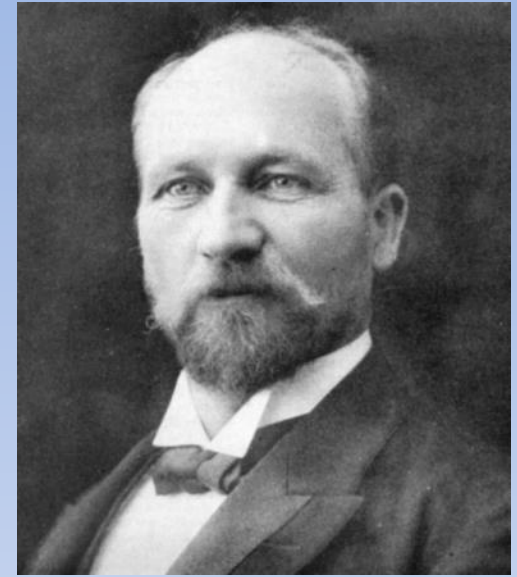
Whaling

Capt. Carl Anton Larsen
Commercial whaling businessman from
Norway, visited SG 1894 & 1902

1904 registered **Compañía Argentina
de Pesce** in Buenos Aires

Sent 3 ships to Grytviken, established
the first whaling station. Followed by
other companies including Christian
Salversen.

*Whaling operated in SG from 1904 to 1965.
1917/18 six whaling shore stations granted
under leases from British Government.*





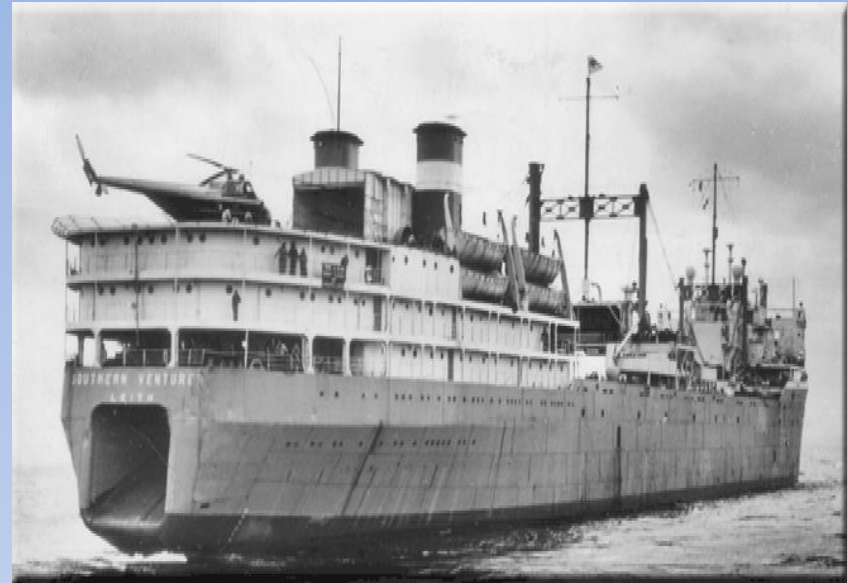
Whale factory ships

Introduced 1925

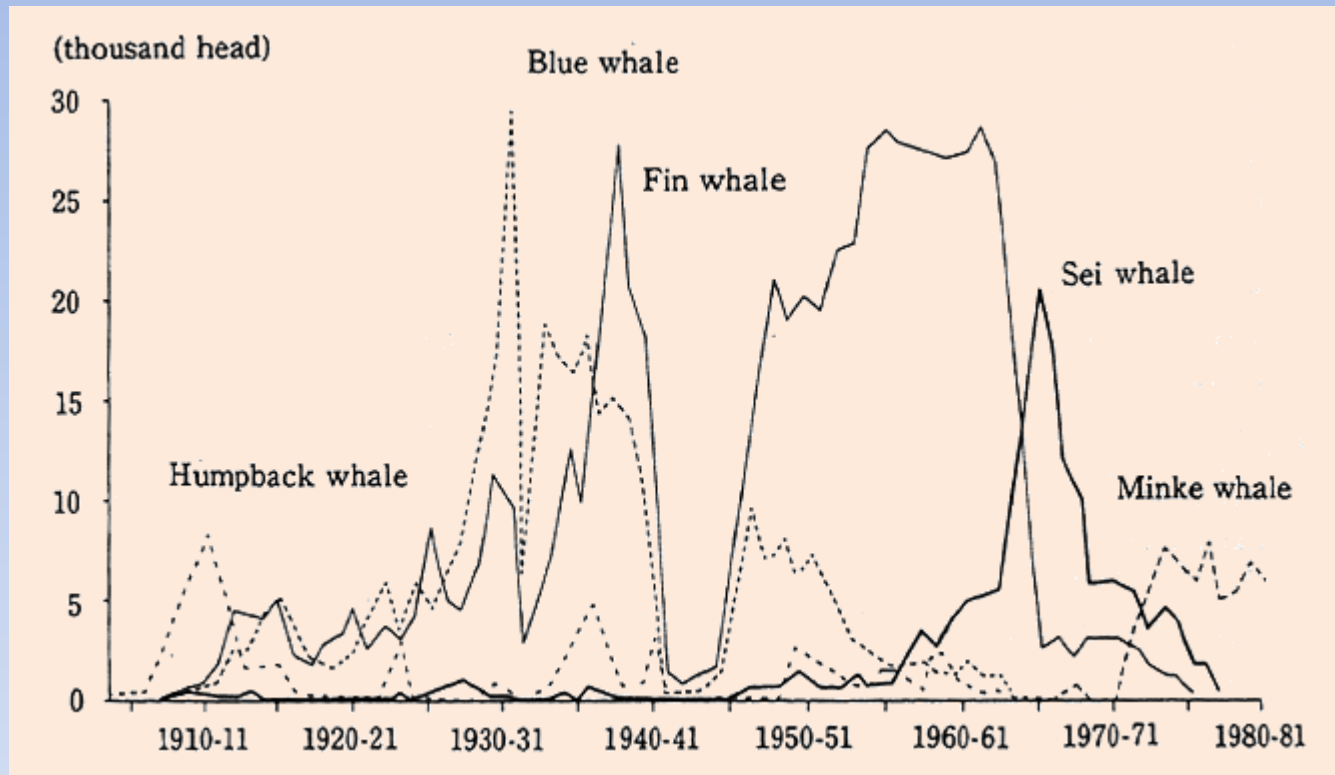
1930-31: 41 factory ships operating in Antarctic waters and 232 catchers supporting them

1932-33 Overproduction and closure of whaling stations on South Georgia except Grytviken

Post WWII Leith Harbour and Husvik re-opened



Demise of the great whales in the Southern Ocean



Over-exploitation and rapid decline in whale populations
Last shore station Grytviken closed 1962 after 58 continuous years, then operated by Japanese company from 1963 until 1965.



Stromness



Grytviken

Leith



Husvik



Government and Administration

Formal British administration commenced 1909

1985 South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands - distinct U.K. Overseas Territory

Commissioner as head of Government.

Previously part of Falkland Islands Dependencies

Commissioner has legal, financial and administrative authority and responsibility for governance of the Territory.

Colin Roberts is the current Commissioner

Senior Executive Officer: policy /Director of Fisheries.

Executive Officer: vessel visit and expedition applications

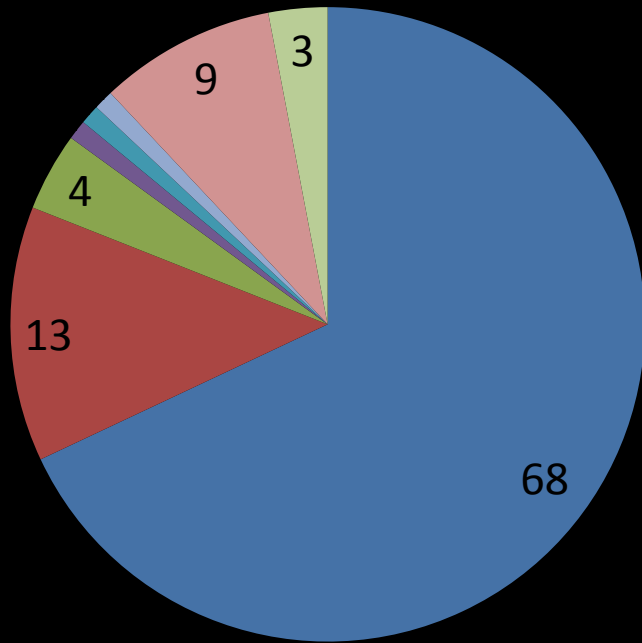
Operations Manager and Environmental Officer

Financial Secretary and **Attorney General** hold similar appointments in the Falkland Islands' Government.

South Georgia Government team is based in Stanley, Falkland Islands



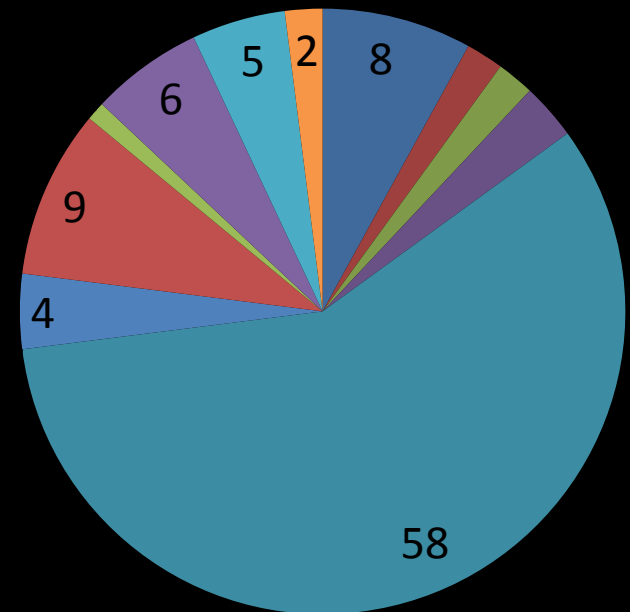
Income



- Fishing licences
- Harbour fees
- Stamps
- Investment
- Customs
- Grants
- Income Tax
- Other
- Reimbursement subcharters

Finance

Expenditure



- Salaries
- Administration
- Mail/stamps
- Medical
- Fisheries management
- Publications
- Environment
- KEP
- Museum
- Other
- Depreciation

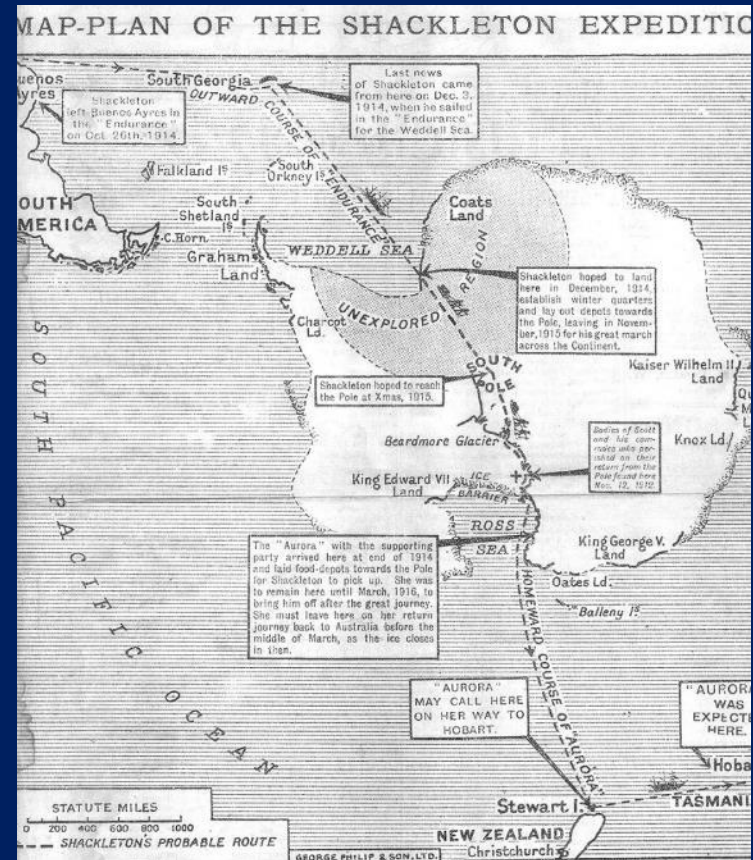
Income 2012
£5,528,000

Expenditure 2012
£5,435,000

Shackleton

Iconic explorer forever associated with South Geo

British Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition 1914-17



Shackleton

Iconic explorer forever associated with South Georgia

British Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition

1915 Shackleton's ship "Endurance" trapped in ice of Weddell Sea and crushed.

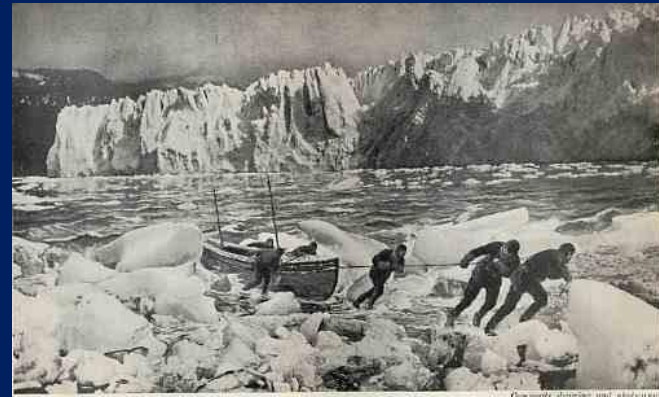
All crew camped on ice

Take to boats

Land on Elephant Island

Prepare one of boats *James Caird*

Shackleton and five colleagues sail 1500km across stormy Southern Ocean to King Haakon Bay, SG.



Shackleton

Iconic explorer forever associated with South Georgia

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Land on Elephant Island

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Shackleton and five colleagues sail 1500km across stormy Southern Ocean to King Haakon Bay, SG.

Three traverse mountainous and glaciated interior to Stromness Whaling station



1922 Shackleton-Rowett Expedition

Sailed to South Georgia
Shackleton died 5th January
onboard *Quest* moored in King
Edward Cove near Grytviken



Science

1882-83 (First) International Polar Year
German expedition at Royal Bay
Made astronomical, meteorological,
gravimetric and tidal observations, biological,
and geological research



Inter-War years: **Discovery**
Investigations

immense advance in knowledge of the
Southern Ocean its whale populations

Post WWII a number of primarily
biological expeditions to study seal and
penguin populations, also mapping



British Antarctic Survey

1969 – 1982 BAS operated scientific station at KEP

BAS base at Bird Island 1972-

Station personnel evacuated following Argentine invasion

New KEP station constructed and occupied in 2002. BAS research work primarily in support of fisheries

Geology, glaciology, botany and biology, meteorology and upper atmosphere, offshore biological science – Southern Ocean ecosystem



BAS scientists undertake scientific research under contract to GSGSSI to provide scientific advice to assist sustainable management of commercial fisheries.



Fishing

Around 20 vessels (widely registered (eg.UK, Chile, Uruguay, Spain & South Africa) licensed each year to fish in 200NM Maritime Zone.

Currently three species exploited commercially around South Georgia:

- a) Patagonian toothfish (*Dissostichus eliginoides*) longline fishery in austral winter
- b) Mackerel icefish (*Chamsocephalus gunnari*) by pelagic trawlers during the austral summer
- c) Antarctic krill (*Euphausia superba*) during the winter months



Tourism

Cruise ship activities







Mountaineering Expeditions

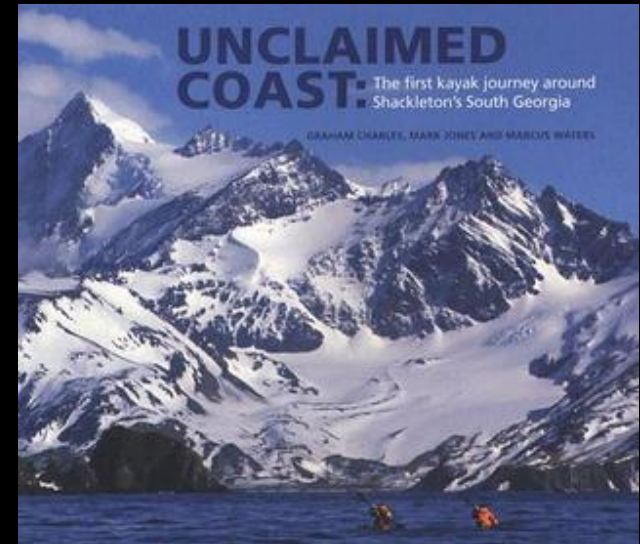


STEPHEN VENABLES

Shackleton's Steps in South Georgia

The Lit & Phil, Lecture Room, 23 Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1SE
Tuesday 9th December 2014

For full details visit
www.thenmc.org.uk/meets



1982 Argentine Invasion

18/19th March salvage operations at abandoned whaling stations

25 March *Bahia Paraiso* arrived with Argentine special forces; raised Argentine flag.

2 April Argentine forces attack & occupy Falkland Islands



HMS Endurance



Guerrico



3 April Gun battle at King Edward Point. Royal Marines surrendered and with BAS personnel evacuated to Argentina

21 April a British task force arrives at SG

25 April Bombardment in Bay. Argentine Garrison surrendered.

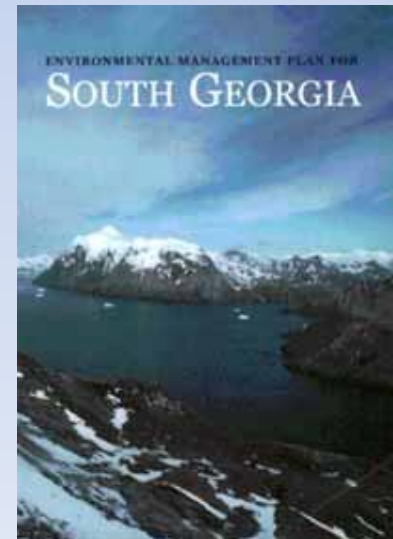


New Strategies

SGSSI Strategy 2010-2015: Developed by GSGSSI and FCO Polar Regions

To protect rich natural environment and unique biodiversity. Underpin sustainable management of islands' fishery and conserve its heritage.

- 1 manage SGSSI and surrounding 200 nautical mile Maritime Zone,
- 2 conserve the relatively pristine environment, preserving and, where practicable, restoring native biodiversity and habitats
- 3 provide safe and sustainable management
- 4 manage tourism with minimum impact but optimises income
- 5 preserve the unique industrial heritage of South Georgia
- 6 encourage high quality scientific research to underpin GSGSSI management
- 7 manage finances prudently and to diversify revenue streams
- 8 maintain the inhabited facilities at King Edward Point and Grytviken
- 9 improve public awareness of South Georgia



- Habitat Restoration
- Removal of Reindeer

South Georgia Heritage Trust programme



PEST PATROL Team's Mission to Eradicate Rodents



31 species of birds use the Island for breeding, of which many are endangered including the breeds below



Antarctic prion

Pintail duck



Pipit

Wilson's storm petrel



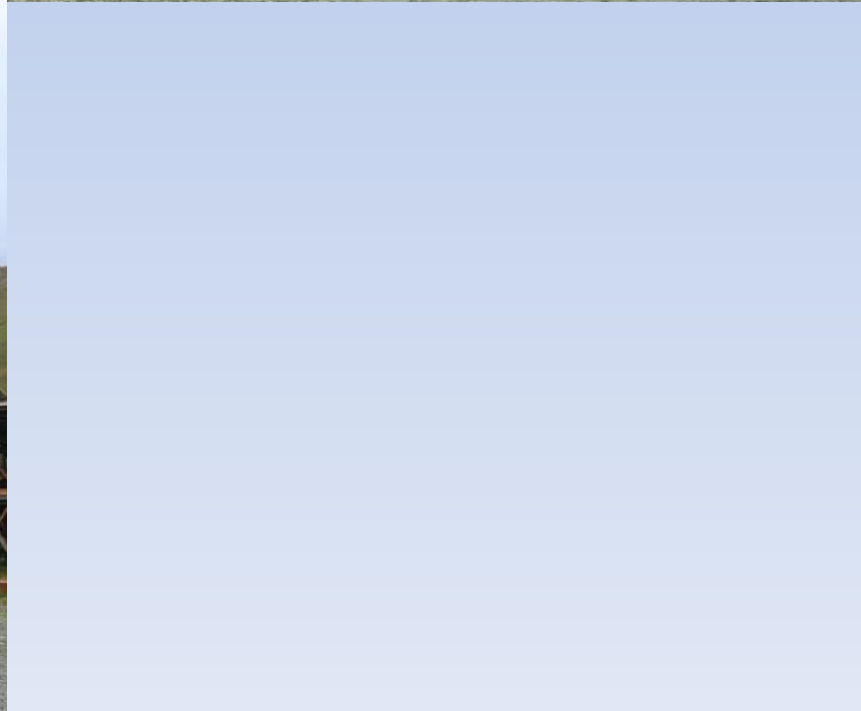
200 tonnes of poison bait scattered over the Island

70% of rat-infested areas now baited

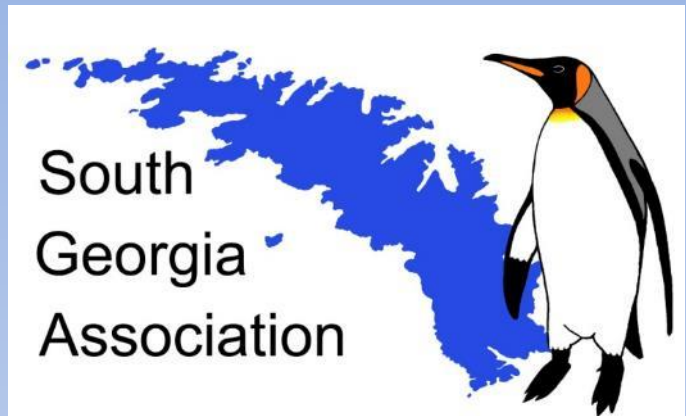
Heritage survey



Preservation



South Georgia Association



Membership Organisation: “constituency” for South Georgia
300+ members; active Committee
Publish Newsletter twice a year
Website/Facebook/Twitter
Hold a Spring Meeting/AGM
Organise and run Conferences
Host visits in UK
Sponsor events
Offer small grants for SG-related activities

We are consulted and advise GSGSSI on legislation, initiatives, strategic plans including fisheries, marine conservation, terrestrial conservation, heritage, tourism etc.



THANK YOU

