

SHERWOOD AFTERNOON STAMP SOCIETY INC. Magazine



Educating Greta

Why children need philately

A special edition prepared for the Sherwood Stamp Society to accompany an ~~Open Day, Sherwood State School 25 July 2021~~

This event is now COVID CANCELLED



NEWS & COMING EVENTS – SHERWOOD CANCELLATION

COVID 19 still retains power and influence on the way we live our lives here in Brisbane and indeed in the rest of the world. Despite the efforts at vaccination throughout the community, doubts over their efficacy and the recurrence of a small number of COVID cases in some of our capital cities has meant that a definite schedule for a stamp meeting is a very very fluid statement.

- The Qld Philatelic Council continues to advise as follows:

Under the current Covid-19 circumstances many club meetings and fairs have been cancelled or postponed. QPC is endeavouring to keep our website up to date. Please, before attending a meeting or fair as indicated on our website, contact the club directly for the most up to date information.

Their website: <http://www.qpc.asn.au/>

- **Redland Bay Coin & Stamp Club's**, Coin and Stamp Fair, originally scheduled for Saturday 7 August 2021, has been cancelled due to the plague.
- The **TOOWOOMBA STAMP CLUB** still promotes their National One-Frame Stamp Exhibition, 9-10 October 2021 in Toowoomba. Details are at their website & Secretary. <https://toowoomba2021.com.au>; Email: secretary@toowoombastampclub.org

Unfortunately, due to current COVID restrictions, the Sherwood Open Day scheduled for Sunday 25th July 2021 has been cancelled. But Enjoy the Newsletter !!!



SHERWOOD AFTERNOON STAMP SOCIETY

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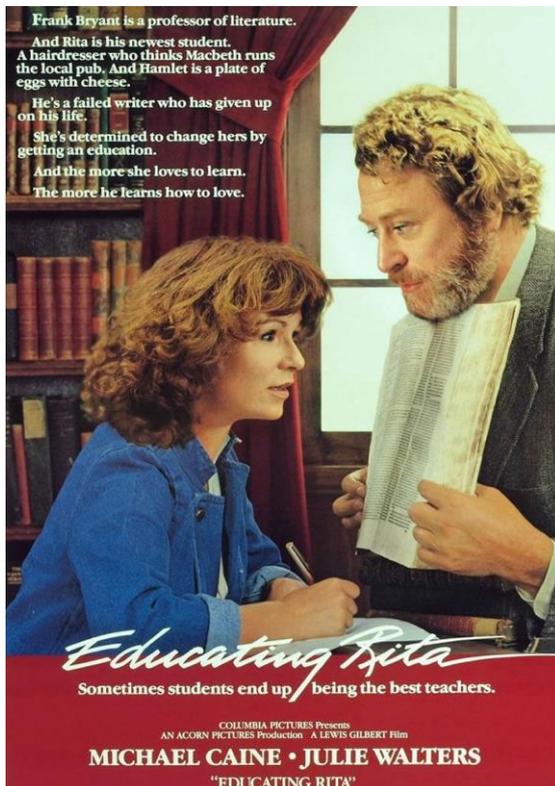
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Cover Story and Theme – Educating Greta

We freely acknowledge that our theme is a knock-off of the 1983 film 'Educating Rita', which told the story of a young but poorly educated woman striving to educate herself.



A brief synopsis follows:

Rita (Julie Walters), a married hair stylist in her 20s, wants to go back to school. She begins studying with Dr. Bryant (Michael Caine), a professor using alcohol to cope with his divorce. Despite his personal problems, Dr. Bryant helps Rita realize her academic potential. In turn, her passion for learning revitalizes his love of teaching.

And so on.

The fine print in the film blurb notes some of the early thoughts of Rita. She thought for example, that **'Macbeth runs the local pub'**, and **'Hamlet is a plate of eggs with cheese.'**

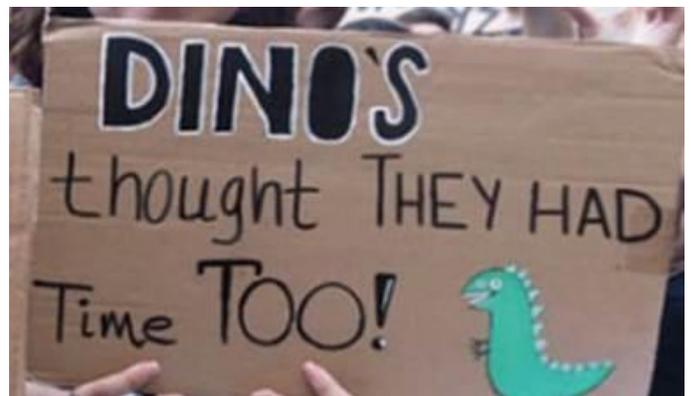
So in this newsletter we turn our attention to **Greta Thunberg**, a young Swedish teenager who has stood at a podium in the United Nations and made unscientific pronouncements about climate change and global warming and planetary catastrophes; she has met Presidents and Prime Ministers, and has become quite the media darling in the last year or so. Unfortunately just about all that she says is total nonsense, accepted as truth by an equally misguided and ill-informed media. The troubling issue is, however, that her unscientific pronouncements are treated as gospel by student children around the world, who, as our cover page displays, have organised very shouty street demonstrations which only serve to demonstrate how little they are learning at school, and how little they know about science.

The concerns we should all have relate to the lack of any scientific basis for her claims of Armageddon, and how this exaggerated and alarmist messaging about the health of Planet Earth has a distressing and emotionally disturbing effect on gullible young people who do not have the factual data to deal with these complex issues. A case can be made for Greta herself to be a victim of child abuse, with persons behind the curtain encouraging the spread of propaganda at their enrichment, but at the expense of the mental and intellectual health of our children, or indeed, my grandchildren.

EDITORIAL NOTE: Your editor is a geologist of 55 years experience, and is well qualified to discuss and assess these issues.

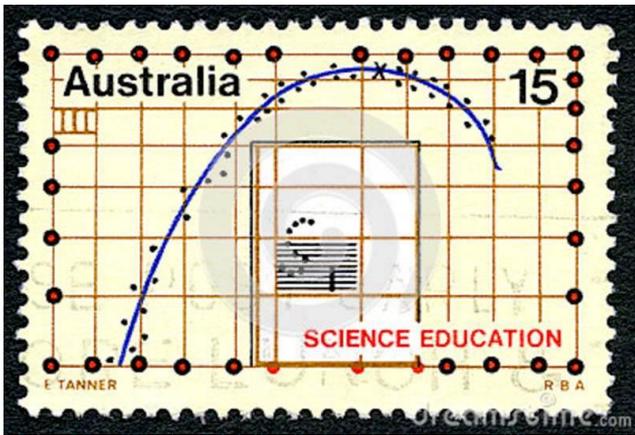
Another look at our cover picture:

The striking children carry slogans and posters, most of which are illiterate, misspelt and factually wrong. It is through **philately** and the message from **stamps** that we hope to demonstrate just how ignorant are the strikers, and their hero Greta, *aka* the **Doom Pixie**.



Going clockwise around this Assemblage of Ignorance, at top left we note the sign carrier thinks our PM is full of it, but cannot spell the word 'jealous'. Next, the statement is demonstrably false about sea levels, which are very stable around both Australia and the Pacific now and have been for decades past. The next demonstrator has never been taught the protocols of the apostrophe, and to our left, we note multiple displays of crass sloganeering and misspelling.

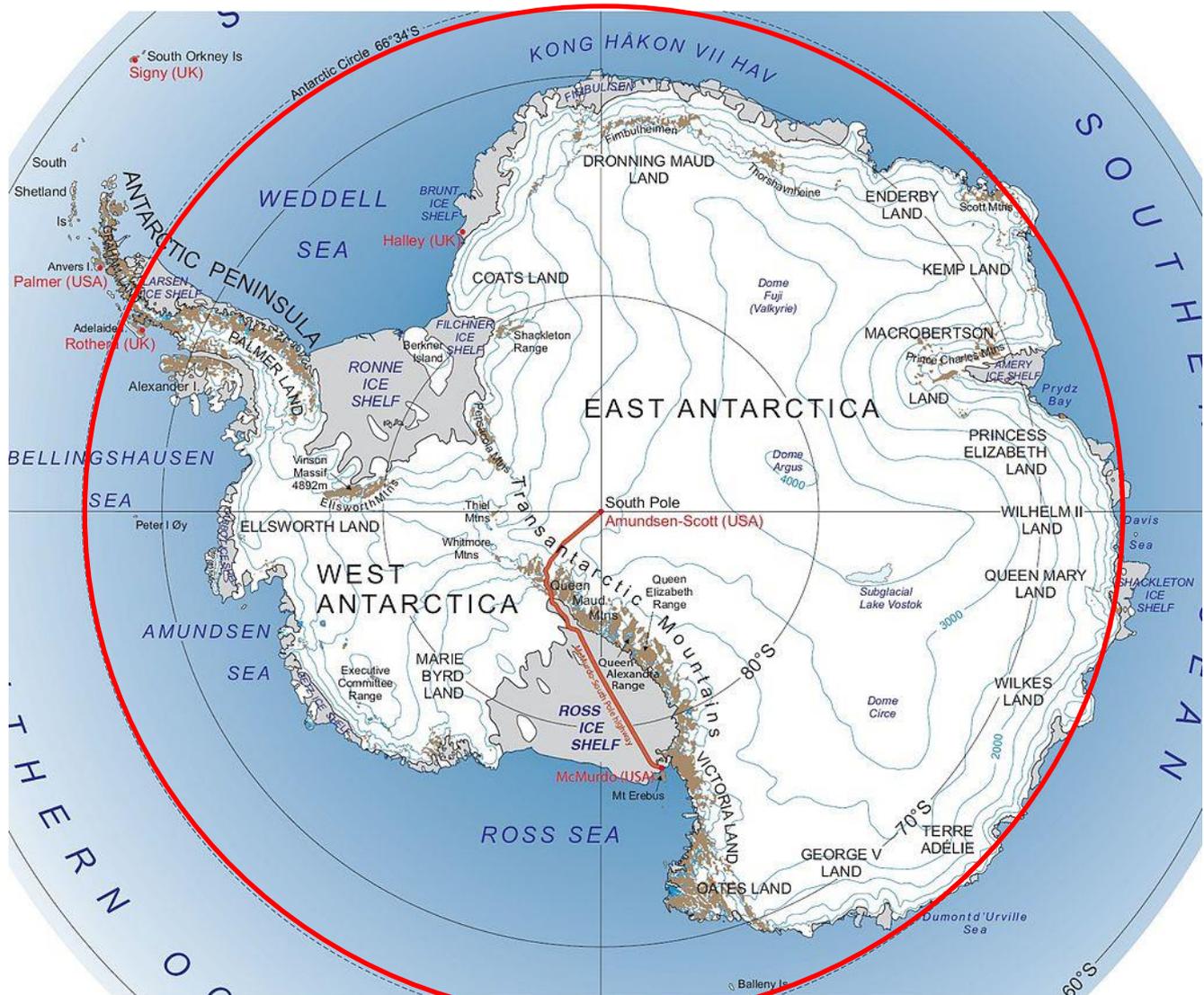
To expand on this latter sign, it misspells 'disappear', and suggests that the poles are melting and that polar bears are 'disappearing'. None of these claims are true, and reasons for this can be illustrated by reference to the geography and nature of our polar regions, focussing mainly on the Antarctic regions and the South Pole, with an occasional detour to New Zealand and the Falkland Islands.



Questions are currently being asked of our schools and the nature of the curriculum, and whether the basics of science, maths and English for that matter, are as rigorous, for example, as those of Singapore. This stamp issued in 20.11 1974 shows a graph of unknown results involving an X and a Y axis – we hope the X axis is NOT Time, and we hope the Y axis is NOT Academic score.

Exploration and science in Antarctica – **Educating Greta:**

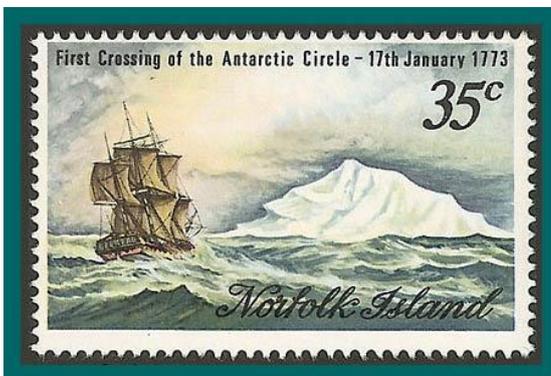
Any discussion of exploration and science will of necessity involve a MAP, and a number of maps will show themselves in pages to come. We start with this one. Why this one?



Well, it shows the Antarctic Circle highlighted in red, one of the five 'circles' which ring planet Earth - from the north there is the Arctic Circle, then the Tropic of Cancer, the Equator dividing the hemispheres, then our very own Tropic of Capricorn at 23°S latitude (**helllooo Rockhampton !!!**), then the Antarctic Circle at 66°34'S latitude. We recall of course that the South Pole is at 90°S. We suspect the circle is close to the northern limit of icebergs that break off and drift away from Antarctica, such as the one shown in this 2021 image from CSIRO, showing their 'Investigator' science vessel.



Hang on now !! Who is the interloper coming in from the Southwest?? There is a clue here with some writing showing that perhaps Norfolk Island is involved, but what's the full story??



The answer of course is blowin' in the wind, since that was all the propulsion available in 1773, when Captain Cook sailed into southern waters as part of his search for the Great Southern Land, Terra Incognita. Cook must have been a restless soul, because not long after he sailed up the east coast of Australia in 1770, he was off again from England in



1772 with two vessels, the 'Resolution' and the 'Adventure'. In this voyage of 3 years or so, Cook sailed south to prove the presence of a great land mass to the south, which some ancient scholars suggested must be there to balance all the weight of the northern polar regions.

That certainly sounds like something Greta might say!!

Cook sailed ever southward from Cape Town, with conditions getting colder all the time. On the 12th January 1773, Cook sent a thermometer down to 100 fathoms (*recall 6 feet = 1 fathom – mathematics again folks*), and found at 180m the ocean temperature was 32°F (0°C), 33.5°F at the surface, and 36°F in the open air – this surely is one of our first known scientific tests of ocean waters, which Greta might tell you are getting very WARM and acidic because of global warming. **That, of course, is just Hobgoblins and Nonsense.**

Just prior to this on 9 January, 1773, the crew stopped for a while and harvested small icebergs floating at about 60°S latitude, recovering about 7 tonnes of freshwater for their ships from that sea ice. All icebergs and sea ice are made of FRESH water, not salt water; the larger icebergs of course come from snow and ice accumulation from the air, but frozen sea water is also fresh, as the slow cooling of ice freezes only water, and excludes salt crystals from the molecular lattice of the water. Very very sciency!!! **Greta, take note!**

Finally, on 17th January 1773 Cook crossed the Antarctic Circle, thus becoming the first person/expedition known to have achieved this feat. The Norfolk Island and AAT stamps each of 35c denomination celebrate this fact. Here is how it was noted in the ship's log.

On 17th January, "we cross'd the Antarctic Circle for at Noon we were by observation four Miles and a half South of it and are undoubtedly the first and only Ship that ever cross'd that line." Forster commented "A place where no Navigator ever penetrated, before the British nation, & where few or none will ever penetrate. For it is reserved to the free-Spirited sons of Britannia, to navigate the Ocean wherever it spreads its briny waves." The next day "the Master & the Captain went up the Masthead & saw to the South & South West by South, a solid Field of Ice, so that it would be impossible to proceed & therefore having gone as far as 67° 15' South, we wore Ship & went North East by North."

For those troubled by the circumnavigation route in the AAR stamp above, here it is shown using a different map projection. Point A is possibly the position of 67°15'S noted above, south of the Circle at 66°34'S. Point B may be at 71°10'S, reached 3.2.1774.



Many other nations have celebrated these magnificent feats of seamanship by Cook and his crew.



Dominica – issued 17.1.1973, the 200th anniversary of Cook’s second voyage on HMS Resolution; and **Cameroon**, as part of a 2-stamp issue 26 .7.1978, celebrating the 250th anniversary of the birth of James Cook (1726 – 1779). Cameroon itself is a small African country with a short coastline fronting the Atlantic, so on a good clear day someone on a hill in that country may have caught a glimpse of Cook’s two ships way back in 1772, as they sailed from Plymouth to Capetown and places south.

A Question of Navigation

Recall August 2019: When Greta was a passenger on a high tech yacht that sailed across the Atlantic, so that she could attend and address a UN conference in New York. Her ‘emissions’ were low, and the yacht was fitted out to be as carbon neutral as possible, powered by wind, and with some solar panels and subsurface turbines to provide electricity for onboard necessities. So many emissions saved – so much virtue signalling on display, but **so much hypocrisy**, as we learn the crew were flown home by jet to Europe, and others were flown out to the USA to sail the boat home. To give credit, Greta did sleep on a small canvas sling bunk while on the trip, so a tick for that.



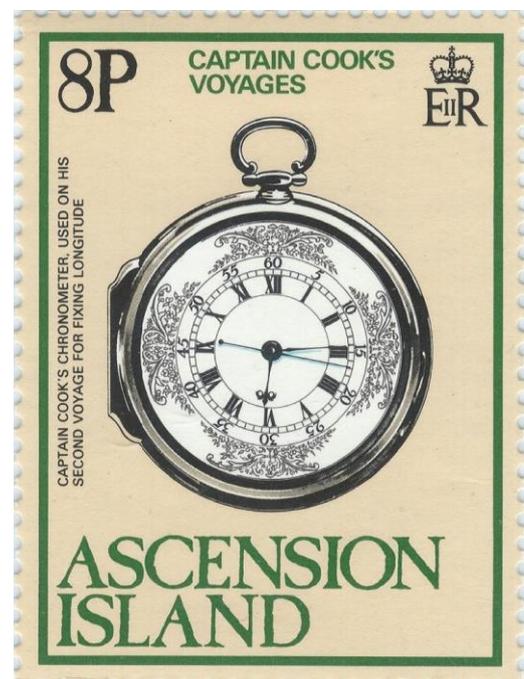
More importantly, this yacht was equipped with the latest satellite navigation, and Greta always knew she would end up in New York, without getting lost on the way across the Atlantic.

Cook's voyage of 1772-73 had no such navigational assistance. These ocean explorers used sextants and hand-crafted timepieces to know where they might be in the vast and empty spaces of our southern oceans. The accurate determination of latitude was reasonably well known at this time, but longitude (the north-south lines) was not readily determined. However, along came Harrison and his marine clocks, whereby an accurate clock was carried on a vessel, after first having been synchronised with the timepieces located at Greenwich, which is located on the 0 or zero degree line of longitude.

By comparing the time at sea with the time at Greenwich, plus some geometry related to the moon's position, one could calculate the longitude at any point. The English even passed a Longitude Act in 1714, so important did they think was the question of Longitude. Harrison had many versions of his clock, from 1735 with model H1, to 1751 with model H4. In 1772, Cook was asked to test the latest H4 model, and here it is, from the horse's mouth. . .

'The chronometer Cook takes with him was made by John Harrison, the foremost clock maker of his age. Harrison took 40 years to create the clock that Cook carried on Resolution. On this voyage, Cook tested the Larcum Kendall K1 marine chronometer which allowed for the first time the accurate calculation of longitude. This chronometer was based on Harrison's H4 chronometer. Cook's log is full of praise for this chronometer and the chart he made of the southern Pacific Ocean using this timepiece is remarkably accurate.'

Philately has recognised this achievement of science and superior workmanship by issuing stamps – for example, one by Great Britain in 1993, and the other in 1979 by the Ascension Islands, which lie roughly along the equator in the path of Cook's ships as he sailed south towards Cape Town.

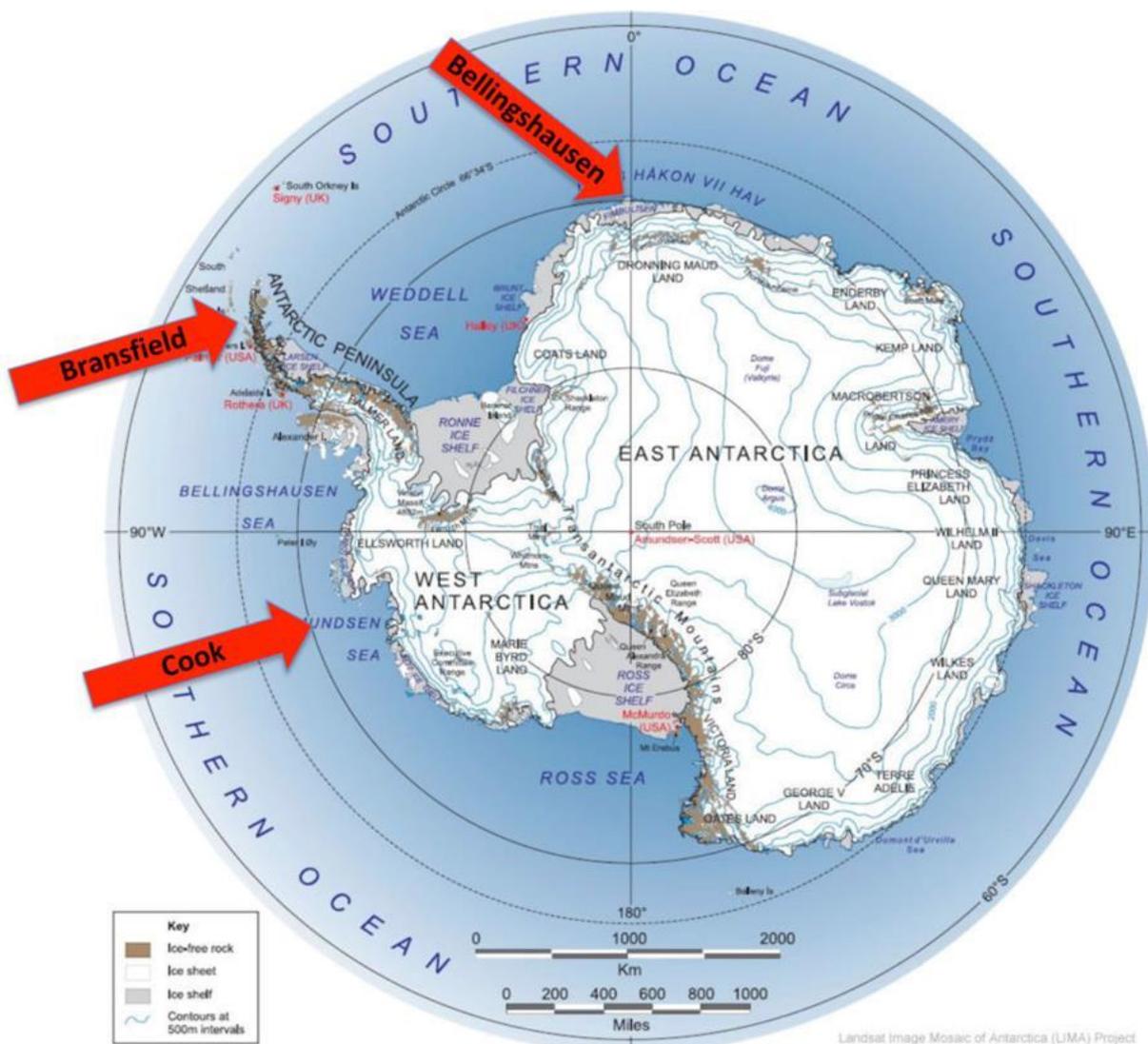


Cook was also asked by the Admiralty that if he was going to find Antarctica, he might like to check out a rocky island on the way south, reported many years before by Frenchman de Lozier in 1739, at 54°S, 9°E, placing it many km SSW of Cape Town. Cook was unsuccessful in locating this island, which the Frenchman had named **Cape Circumcision**. Just too long at sea one might conclude.

James Cook did not actually 'find' anything on this trip of exploration 1772-73, but he was able to show that no great southern land existed immediately NORTH of the Antarctic Circle, and he correctly surmised that a land mass could well exist to the south, as a source of all the ice he was seeing from 66°S to 71°S.

But here come the Russians. . .

The first sighting of Antarctica is now widely acknowledged to have taken place on the 28th (maybe the 27th) of January 1820 during the voyage of two Russian ships, the *Vostok* and *Mirny* under the command of Captain Fabien (Thaddeus) Gottlieb von Bellingshausen during a two year exploratory expedition around the world to discover



new lands for the Russian Empire. Bellingshausen's ships were the first to have crossed the Antarctic Circle since Cook nearly 50 years earlier, and they did so on the 26th of January 1820.

To reinforce and simplify our geography, we will endeavour to view Antarctica in this position – the Weddell Sea is to the top, and the Ross Sea and ice shelf to the bottom. The NW quarter is closer to South America, while the SE quarter is closest to Australia and New Zealand. Amundsen and Scott for example started their polar expeditions from the Ross Ice Shelf, which for comparison, is just about as big as the nation of France or the Yukon.

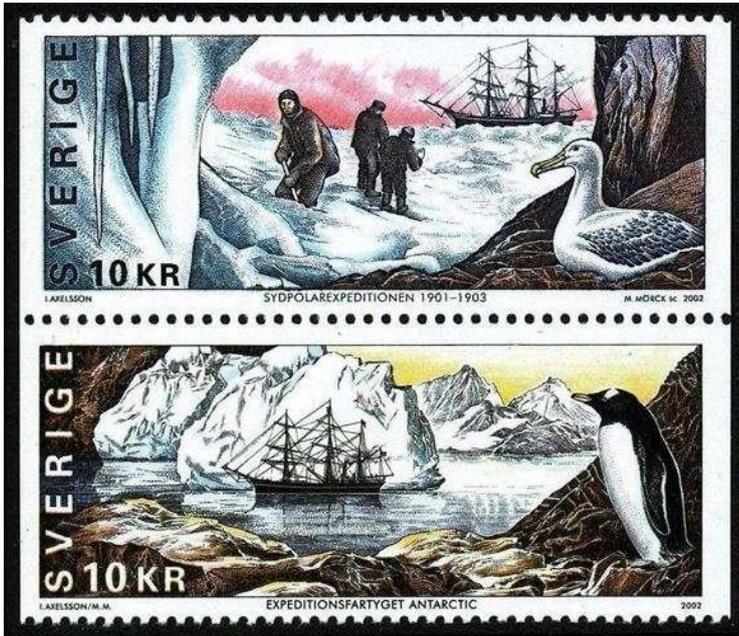


The voyage of Bellingshausen was celebrated by Estonia 10 Sept 2003, and again by Russia in 28 January 2020, in a joint issue with Estonia; in this minisheet, we are reminded that there are often minor players who never get the kudos they deserve - the 1820 expedition was in fact a voyage of two ships, the second ship commanded by Mikhail Lazarev, shown with Bellingshausen. This voyage started from Kronstadt on 16 July 1819, and lasted 751 days.



The Golden Era of Antarctic Exploration 1901-1915

The quest for exploration glory and thirst for scientific knowledge saw numerous expeditions launched in this so-called 'golden era' of the early 20th century. Names like **Robert Scott**, **Raold Amundsen** and **Ernest Shackleton** echoed around the learned societies of the day, while in reality they endured more hardship than almost any men who have ever lived, in their quest of being the first person to reach the South Pole.



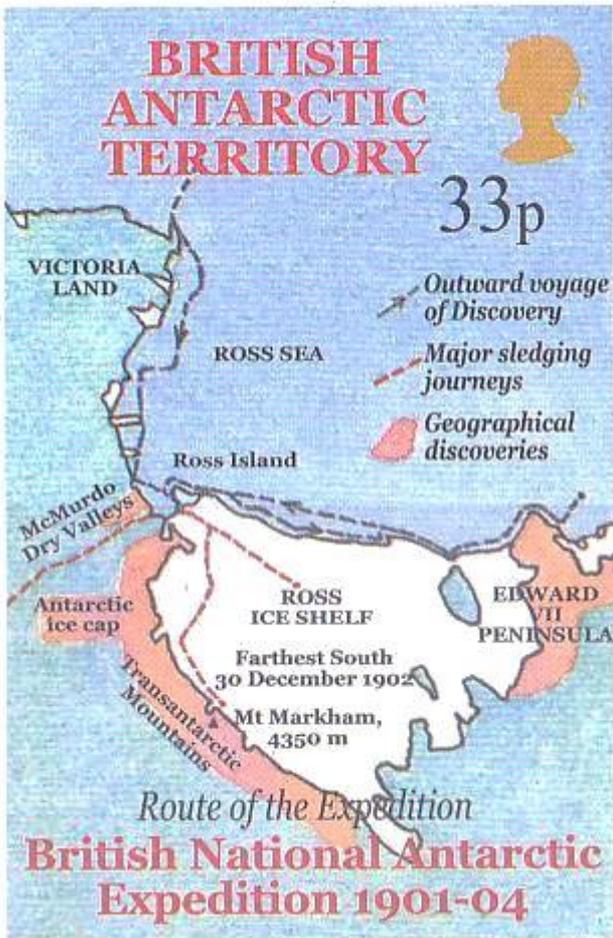
In the period 1901-03, Germany got into the act with Mr Drygalski and his ship Gauss, and he named the coast of Kaiser Wilhelm II Land, near our Davis Base (see map, page 5). Greta would be pleased to note that Sweden also mounted a polar expedition 1901-03, captained by Otto Nordenskjöld and Carl Anton Larsen; they left Gothenburg aboard a vessel imaginatively named "Antarctic".

The expedition camped on Snow Hill Island, on the NW tip of the Weddell Sea (Map, page 5), and, like others to come, saw their vessel stuck and crushed in ice, to eventually sink. The party was rescued by relief ships from Argentina in November 1903. The stamps above were issued 24 January 2002.



This cover dated 19.8.1902 was sent to sailors Harald and Jean Egelin, two seamen on the 'Antarctic', and addressed to them in the hope the ship was at Tierra del Fuego, in southern Argentina. The stamp is part of a King Oscar II set issued 25.3.1891.

Robert Scott led his famous 1901 Discovery expedition, but was criticised for not getting to the pole, despite numerous scientific achievements, which included a sled traverse to the most southernmost point so far – at 82°17' S. The map of his journey is shown here, together with his ship, the 'Discovery', which left NZ in November 1901, arriving in the Ross Sea area in February 1902.



Upon landing near Ross Island, they launched a balloon at their winter camp near McMurdo Sound on 4 February 1902.

The balloon went to 180m height, and not surprisingly, all Scott could see was the Ross Ice Shelf, an area about the size of France. A young Third Officer on the 'Discovery' was Ernest Shackleton, and he also made a second flight in the balloon, and was, of course, destined for greater things. But not this time.

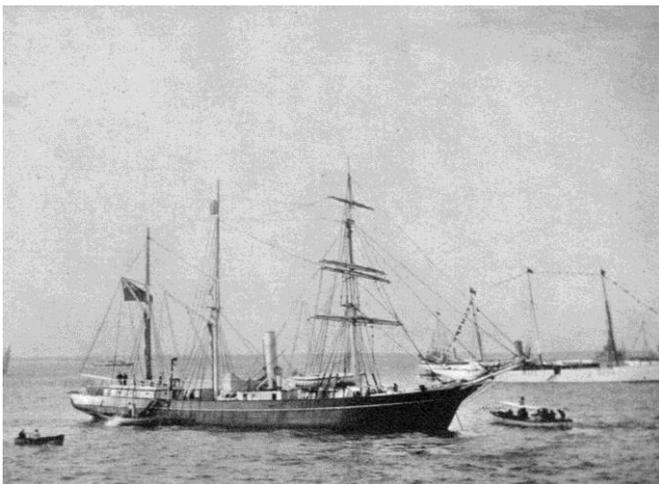


Scott's group overwintered at their base camp, and a team set out to explore the great Ross Ice Shelf in late spring, on 2 November 1902; progress was slow, as they adopted a relay type of travel that meant they travelled 3 miles for every mile travelling south. The team reached their southernmost point on 30 December 1902, and turned around without making it out of the Ross Ice Shelf. After dogs died and Shackleton contracted scurvy; they arrived back at camp 3 Feb 1903 after sledging etc for 1540km. Shackleton

was repatriated on a relief ship, but Scott spent another winter in McMurdo Sound. Scott's ship was finally released from the ice by some melting and assorted explosives and ice axes, and he finally arrived back in New Zealand 17 February 1904.

He's Back! Shackleton's NIMROD Expedition 1908-09

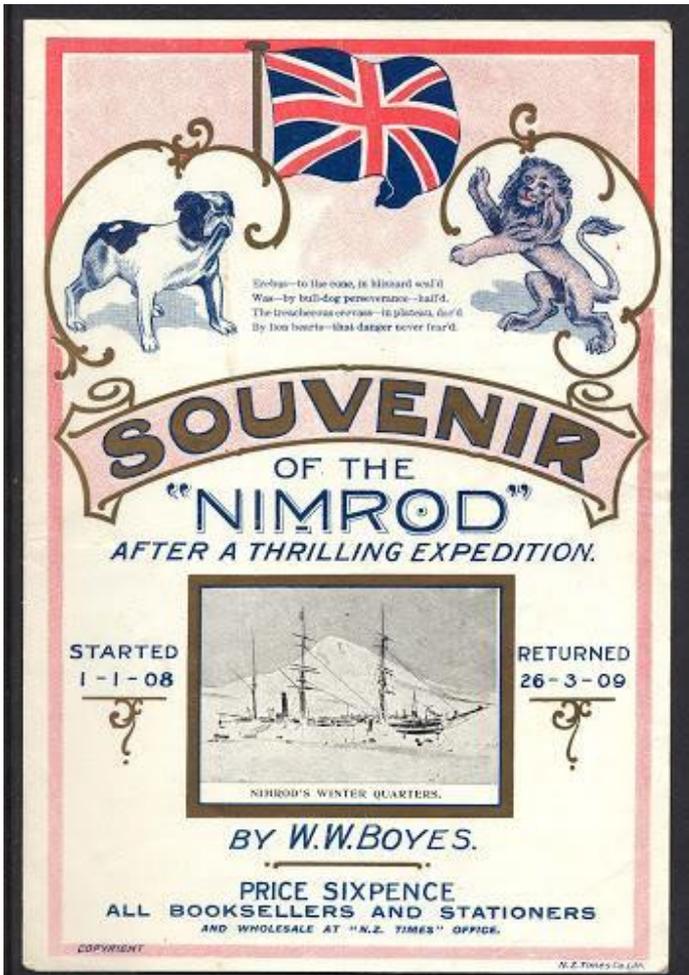
Ernest Shackleton assembled an expedition to explore Antarctica, and three Australians formed a significant part of his scientific team – Edgeworth David, Douglas Mawson and Alistair Mackay. The party departed Great Britain in their ship, the SS Nimrod, shown here leaving home, and the same ship depicted on the AAT stamp issued 1979-82



It is worth noting that the first stamp issued as part of the Australian Antarctic Territory was the blue 2/- , issued 27 March 1957, as part of an aggressive campaign by Australia to establish territorial credentials in Antarctica. From Wiki, "it features the flying of the Australian flag, in Vestfold Hills, Antarctica, on March 3rd, 1954, after a temporary landing in the Antarctic by Peter Shaw, Philip Law, and Dr. Arthur Gwynn." The Vestfold hills are 2000km to the ENE of the Ross Ice Shelf, and so have no geographic connection to the Nimrod expedition.

The Nimrod Expedition of 1907–1909, otherwise known as the **British Antarctic Expedition**, was the first of three successful expeditions to the Antarctic led by Ernest Shackleton. Its main target, among a range of geographical and scientific objectives, was to be first to the South Pole. This was not attained, but the expedition's southern march reached a furthest latitude of 88°23'S, just 97.5 nautical miles (180.6 km; 112.2 miles) from the pole. This was by far the longest southern polar journey to that date and a

record convergence on either Pole. Shackleton had decided that he and a small team would try for the South Pole, and that a separate group led by Welsh Australian geology professor Edgeworth David would attempt the first ascent of the nearby Mt Erebus (an active volcano), and also find the estimated location of the South Magnetic Pole.

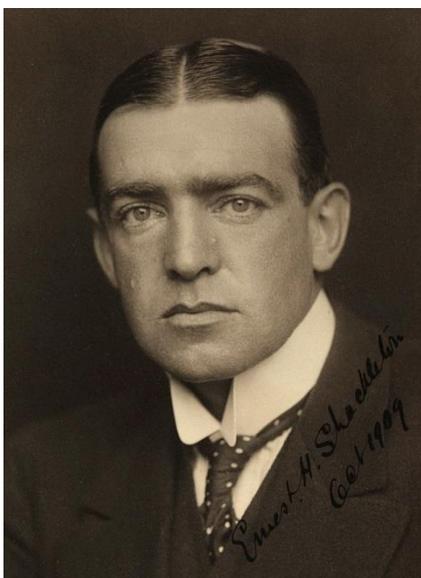


The Souvenir booklet produced shows the start and finish dates of the expedition, and an image of the Nimrod stuck in ice at their base at Cape Royds. We have important maps of the Nimrod expedition to show in later pages, to place the philately in better context.

This photo image shows the polar team at their furthestest point south.



Jameson Adams, Frank Wild and Eric Marshall (from left to right) plant the Union Jack at their southernmost position, 88°23'S, on 9 January 1909. The photograph was taken by expedition leader Ernest Shackleton.



This is Shackleton to left, and Zealandia stamps from NZ 1908 with normal and offset overprint.



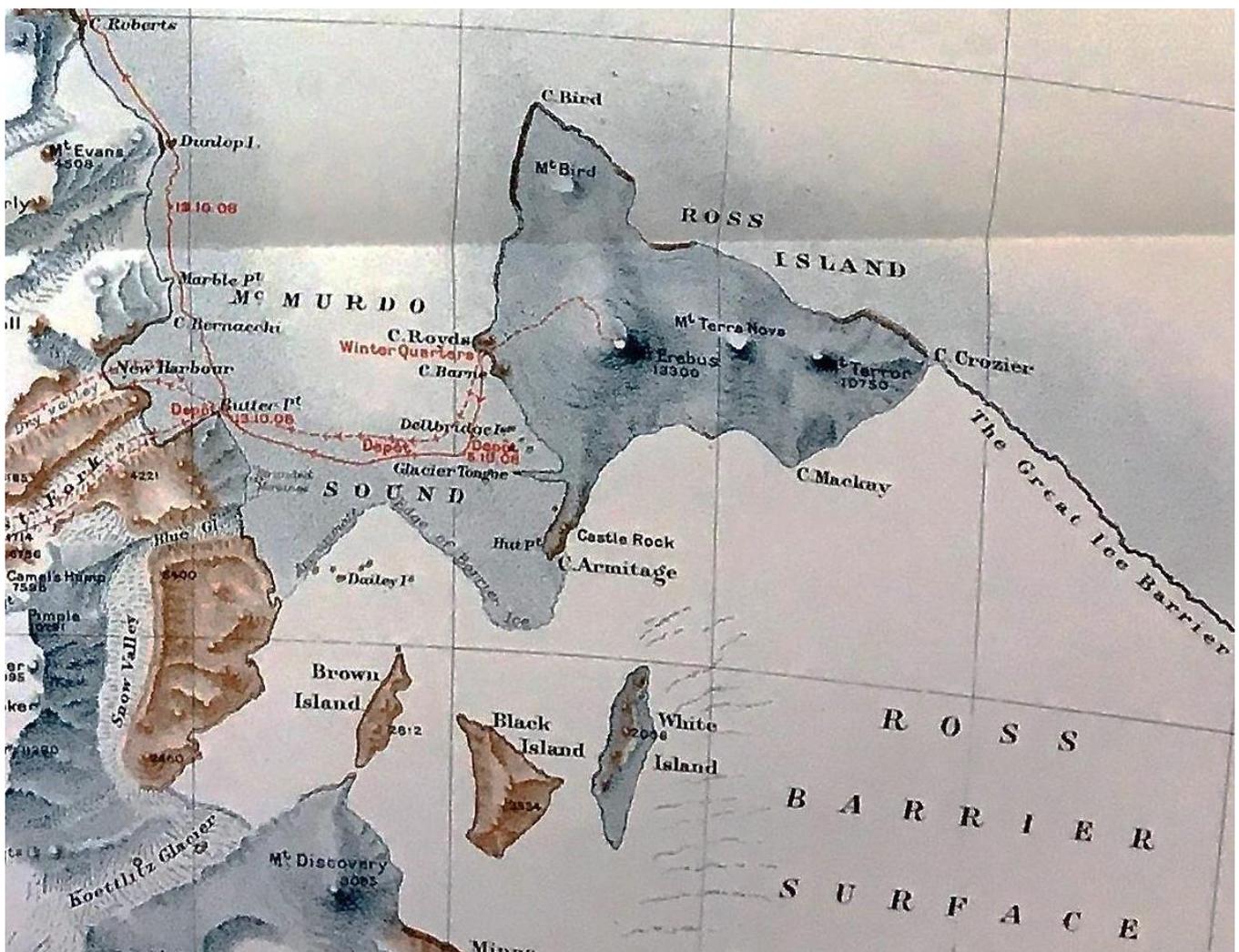
The Nimrod voyage into the Ross Sea – geographic context

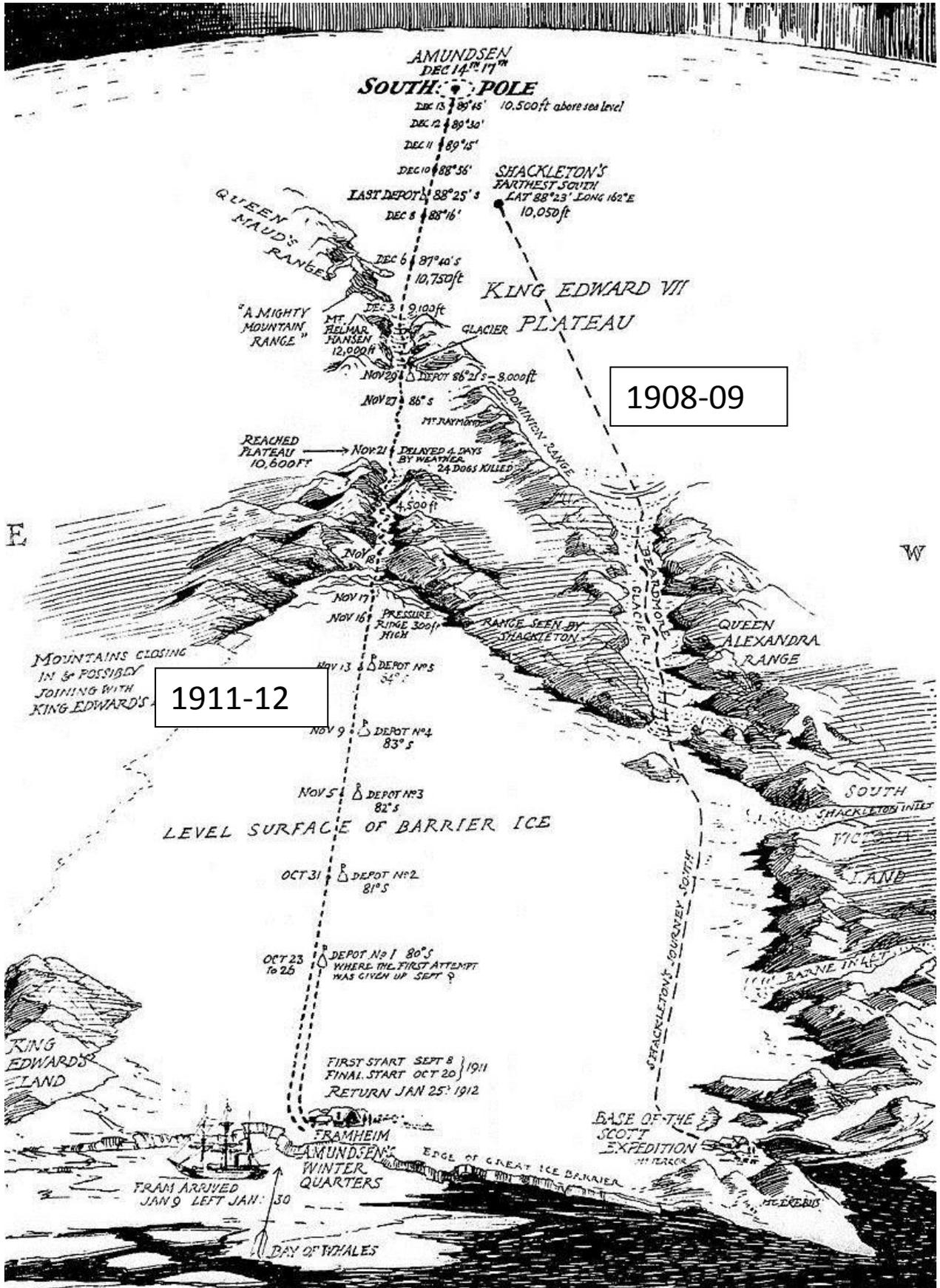


This map is held in the collection of the Bodleian Library in the University of Oxford. It shows the hand-drawn charts of the Nimrod as it entered the Ross Sea from New Zealand, with navigators on board naming parts of the coastline as they passed by in search of a suitable winter base for the expedition. The South Pole is located off this map, well to the south.

The **RED** circle shows the location of the base camp for the expedition at Cape Royds, and also the location of Mt Erebus looming over the camp location. The **BLUE** circle top left shows the location of the magnetic south pole, which was the journey undertaken by David, Mawson and Mackay

Below is detail of the winter quarters for the expedition, and the looming conical shape of the nearby Mt Erebus; also shown is the Great Ice Barrier, which, as we have noted earlier, is a vast ice sheet about the size of the Yukon or France which also anchors large islands such as Ross Island. The David trek up to the summit of Mt Erebus is also shown. This base camp at Cape Royds was established 3 February 1908; Erebus was ascended from 5 March 1908, with a return to base 11th March 1908. Shackleton left for the Pole 29 October 1908, reached his southernmost point 9 Jan 1909 after a hard slog, and returned to base in terrible physical shape on 4th March 1909.





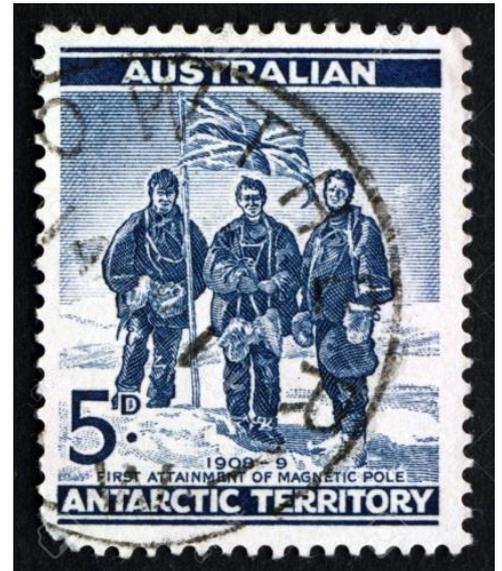
This map shows the path of Shackleton and his 3 fellow explorers from their base camp near Mt Erebus, and their ascent up the Beardsmore glacier onto the polar plateau, in late 1908; superimposed on his 1908-09 trip is the route taken by Amundsen in his successful attempt to reach the South Pole on 14th December 1911.

We acknowledge, out of context, the achievement of Amundsen – the first man to reach the South Pole.



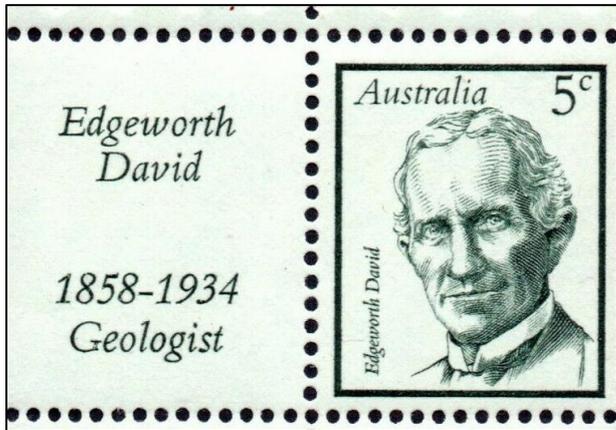
The Norway 90 ore was issued 10.11.1961; the 100 ore stamp on 23.6.1971; and the Hungarian stamp on 15.5.1948

The Celebrations in Philately of the British Antarctic Expedition:

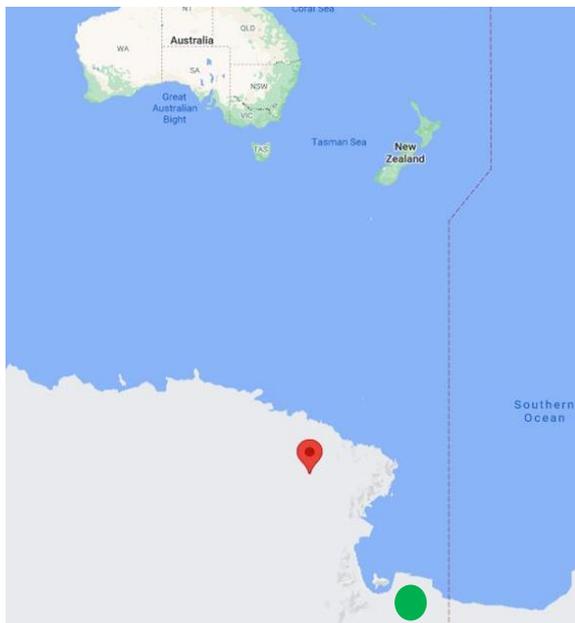


New Zealand made a very specific issue in 1990 that showed, for the first time, Douglas Mawson with Shackleton. The iconic photo of 17.1.1909 shows Mackay, David and Mawson at the Magnetic South Pole, transcribed faithfully as the AAT blue 5d stamp issued 15.12.1959, with the Union Jack redrawn for artistic effect and clarity. In what might be termed 'trivia', Edgeworth David in the middle is shown releasing the camera shutter using a piece of string. **Greta would not know that !!** And several mostly intact cases of whisky and brandy left behind at Cape Royds in 1909 were recovered in 2010, for analysis by a distilling company.

We should never underestimate the hardship, strength and courage shown by these three men in their discovery of the south Magnetic Pole. This is the point where the magnetic strength fields of planet earth are focussed into a point, and it is quite different to the South Pole, which is the point of rotation of the Earth on its axis. The magnetic pole travels with time as the iron-nickel core of the earth heaves and convects deep within the mantle.



On 16 January 1909, observations showed them to be about 13 nautical miles (24 km; 15 mi) from the Magnetic Pole. The next day, 17 January 1909, they reached their goal, fixing the pole's position as 72°15'S, 155°16'E, at an elevation of 7,260 feet (2,210m). In a muted ceremony, David took formal possession of the area for the British Empire. Their trip was about 950km, and they nearly missed the boat so to speak, when they rejoined the Nimrod on the way home from Cape Royds on 4 February 1909. The party had been travelling for four months and were wearing the same clothes in which they had departed Cape Royds; reportedly "the aroma was overpowering".



The 5c David stamp above was issued 6.11.68. This map shows the location of the Magnetic South Pole (in RED) at about the time of the 1909 expedition. It moves with time; for reference purposes, the green dot is the location of Mt Erebus and the Shackleton base camp at Cape Roydes.



In view of the fact that **Greta Thunberg** has set herself up to be an object of some attention, she should not be surprised at the efforts of some to take the mickey so to speak. And we all have to look out for COVID, no matter what the variant.



The
SCOTTISH VARIANT
At least you can hear it coming.

