

Devon and Cornwall Polar Society Chairman's Report 2018/19

Last year was another busy one. 2018 was a significant year as it was the 10th birthday of DCPS and the 150th of Captain Scott born on 6 June, 1868 at Outlands

In March, we welcomed Chris Marsden to our meeting who showed his stunning film of the emperor penguins at Snow Hill. Our birthday was celebrated with a fine cake and champagne as well as a film of our last 10 years activities put together with music by Tim Burr.

In October, James Killingbeck gave a fascinating talk about the work he has been doing researching the glaciers of Greenland entitled 'Sailing on Thin Ice.' His talk included many aspects of life in Greenland amongst the Inuit and included part of the BBC film made with Chris Packham.

The highlight of the year was another highly successful DCPS event to commemorate Scott's 150th birthday in Plymouth. On 6 June over 100 polar enthusiasts attended a varied day of activities. The day started with a church service organised by Father Silk of St Bartholomew's Church on the site of Outlands House. The children of Ford School singing a specially composed song about Scott. Falcon Scott unveiled a plaque to his grandfather and the service was attended by the Lord Lieutenant of Devon, the Lord Mayor of Plymouth and our patron Dr David Wilson. There followed a wreath laying ceremony at the Scott Memorial at Mount Wise which was accompanied by a moving lament by a lone piper. After lunch at the Duke of Cornwall Hotel, biographer David Crane talked about Scott: the man and the myth and this talk was followed by a talk by Prof Lloyd Peck of BAS on Marine Science in Antarctica. Lloyd also gave a well-received interactive talk for young people the evening before at the new Scott College in Stoke village. A gala dinner was preceded by live music from the Polar Trio who sang Edwardian songs. The Duke of Cornwall provided a fine three course dinner in the ballroom and Falcon Scott gave a very personal and thought provoking talk about growing up with such a famous father and grandfather.

Everyone enjoyed the day and the President of the Society John Killingbeck thanked organisers Julie Ellis and Brigitte Dixon, the Scott 150 committee and sponsors very warmly for their organisation and support. BBC Spotlight TV covered the event in their news that evening.

Many thanks to all the committee for their contributions and work over the course of the year and to our loyal members who attended our events. Membership has remained steady and we are pleased to welcome all our new members. Finances remain reasonably healthy.

We are sorry that John and Val Thorne are stepping down from the committee this year. Val has done a fantastic job as membership secretary and keeping all our membership records; no easy task. John and Val have been strong supporters of the Society from the very early days of the Polar Buffs when we met at Smithaleigh near Ivybridge. We shall miss them from our meetings. I am planning to stand down as Chairman this year and we expect some other changes on the committee. We always welcome members stepping forward to help on the committee and offering ideas for activities. This is the way we can keep the Society fresh.

All the best for next year!

Paul Davies
21 March 2019