

2.4 Chronology

Important dates in the history of Scott's hut at Cape Evans hut are listed below.

1902

The area was named by Scott the 'Skuary' on account of the large number of skuas there. Scott and Wilson camped near the site of the hut on the night of 3 January 1904.

BRITISH ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION 1910-13

1911

British Antarctic Expedition arrived 4 January 1911. Scott renamed the place Cape Evans for Lieutenant Edward RGR Evans RN, his second-in-command. Stores and equipment, including two Wolseley motor tractors, 60 tons of fuel and fodder, 2½ tons of carbide, ponies and dogs were put ashore, the site for the hut was levelled and construction begun. The framework was nearly completed by 5 January;

the match-boarding attached two days later, and, by 10 January, the cladding was fixed to walls and roof, the first floor was laid, and bales of fodder were stacked along the south and east sides. The hut was ready for occupation by 12 January.

Ice caves were built, one being stocked with mutton and penguins, and a second used for scientific observations. Inside the hut, the cooking range and heating stove were installed by 14 January, the bulkhead was built by 17 January, Ponting's darkroom by 19 January, and the pianola was assembled by 20 January. The stables were built with walls of coal briquettes and bales of fodder, and a roof of canvas; Bowers's stores annex was built against the south wall of the hut.

Scott returned from a depot laying journey on 13 April and found the hut and outbuildings completed.

In May and June Cherry-Garrard built an experimental hut with rock walls and ten seal skins forming the roof.

1912

Terra Nova arrived back at Cape Evans on 29 February; the annex at the west end of the hut was built and the stables were rebuilt before the ship returned to New Zealand.

The telephone cable to Hut Point was washed out to sea on 7 March. During the winter, there was a fire in the hut on 25 May; Gran wrote that he 'dumped Taylor's bed and a couple of tons of rubbish in the Ross Sea' on 18 August, and in September there was a fire in the stove flue.

1913

Preparations were underway for a third winter when the *Terra Nova* returned on 18 January. The next day, the mules were shot, the dogs were taken on board, the hut was closed up and sufficient stores were left to see a dozen 'resourceful men through one summer and winter at least'.

ROSS SEA PARTY OF THE IMPERIAL TRANS- ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION 1914-17

1915

Aurora arrived with the Ross Sea Party on 16 January 1915; 10 tons of coal and 98 cases of oil were landed, and sledge and souvenirs were collected; 4 March, two anchors were put ashore; work was done on the lighting plant; a blubber stove was installed in the hut on 23 May, and the wardroom stove was taken to the ship for modification to burn blubber. On 25 May, some stores were landed; on 26 May, an anemograph was placed on Wind Vane Hill; 27 May, an altar made in the darkroom, and on 28 May, a pile of blubber was established in the annex. On 5 April, the galley stove was taken to ship; on 3 May, ice was cleared from inside magnetic hut, and on 16 September, space was cleared in the stables as a garage for the motor sledge.

1916

Poles were erected for the wires from the anemometer on Wind Vane Hill on 2 March; the magnetic hut was used as a dog kennel.

1917

Aurora arrived on 10 January to collect the survivors of the Ross Sea Party. A cross was erected on Wind Vane Hill, 16 January. The last occupants of the hut were Shackleton, Joyce, Wild and Jack.

MODERN ERA

1947

Americans visited Cape Evans on USS *Burton* Island on 20 February during 'Operation Highjump'.

1955

Cape Evans was considered as a site for the Air Operations Facility of 'Operation Deep Freeze', but this was subsequently set up at Hut Point. Visitors to the hut photographed the galley from the

north-west window above the stable roof, and the interior of the hut was inspected; the wardroom was filled with ice and snow. Some artefacts were souvenired.

1956–57

February, a report on the hut was compiled by Falla, and artefacts were collected for return to New Zealand; Falla found stores and equipment reasonably preserved, and Bowers's annex still intact (as at November 1956).

1958–59

National Historic Places Trust bronze plaque attached to the west gable end of the hut. Magnetic observations made from the site, the first since 1912.

1959–60

Inspection was made by Roberts of Scott Base, who compiled a report on work to be done.

1960–61

Hut restoration party, consisting of

five New Zealanders (Quartermain, Buckley, Jenness, Prebble and Sandman), removed ice and snow from within the hut and from one of the stable compartments; to make the removal of ice easier, the bulkhead was partially removed. The roof was covered with New Zealand Railway tarpaulins and painted, and battens fixed; a new exterior door and sliding bar was fitted, and the side of the Wolseley motor tractor crate was set up as a windbreak. By this time, Bowers's stores annex had collapsed.

1964–65

The hut was inspected and found to be relatively snow free.

1970–71

Bed wires were observed to be disintegrating; a fire extinguisher was placed in the hut.

1971–72

'Rubbish' deposit outside hut entrance was sorted and artefacts placed in hut. The site of

the ice caves were visible at this time and have occasionally been seen in later years.

1972–73

Thaw revealed extensive 'rubbish' about the north and south walls; 'flammable scrap' was burned; steel sledge runner attachments were found and placed against the hut, and the stable bay with blubber stove was excavated and fodder bales restacked.

1973–74

Numerous artefacts were collected from the site and placed inside the hut.

1974–75

The canvas roof was painted; some artefacts were placed in the hut; excavation was carried out in the stables, and snow was cleared along the south wall. There was melt water in a lake behind the hut.

1976–77

Various 'excavations' were carried out about the hut and numerous

artefacts, especially from near the entrance, were collected; excavations were carried out in the stables, and a surveyed plan of the site was made.

1977–78

The roof was painted again; ice was excavated from the annex and snow cleared from around the stove at the east end of the stables. The Harrowfield inventory of artefacts was made at this time; test archaeological excavation was carried out, and a beach profile in front of the latrines was surveyed. Plywood structure placed over magnetic hut by O'Donnell, Burrows and Gill.

1978–79

Building survey carried out by Oliver; the roof was painted, and canvas was attached to the front wall of the stables.

1981–82

An assessment of artefacts was carried out by Fry (National Museum

of New Zealand), and management considerations were identified by Turner for the Historic Sites Management Committee (HSMC).

1982–83

Conservation problems relating to the structure and artefacts identified by Fry; temperature and relative humidities recorded; cans were removed for trial conservation work at the National Museum of New Zealand. A photographic record of the site was made by Dougherty, and the beach face surveyed.

1985–86

'Category A' artefacts removed to Christchurch by HSMC.

1986–87

Tins examined for leaks; the remains of Bowers's annex on the south wall were assessed, and the beach face surveyed.

1987–88

Archaeological excavation and

reconstruction of part of Bower's annex was carried out by Ritchie and Cross, along with some drainage work on the south side of the hut; Cochran completed a building survey and measured drawings of hut; the beach face was surveyed, and levelling points were established. Concern was expressed at this time that the proposed butylclad sheathing might result in moisture retention within the hut; dangerous chemicals were removed, and the trial butylclad on the latrine roof was examined.

1988–89

Archaeological excavation of stables was continued by Ritchie. Plywood was fixed to the roof of the stables and butylclad glued to this; the north wall of the stables was removed, plywood attached and the cladding put back. The beach face was surveyed again, and a deformation survey of the hut was carried out, with little or no movement evident.

1989–90

New plywood and butylclad sheathing was fixed to the roof of the hut and annex. The removal of snow and ice in the annex and stables was completed by Fyfe; drains were cut to drain water that was pooling at the eastern end of building. A deformation survey was carried out; data was collected for the inventory, and display/interpretation/security concepts were assessed.

1990–91

A data logger to measure temperature and relative humidity throughout the year was placed in the hut; humidity readings were taken with a psychrometer, and a museological inventory of all artefacts in the hut begun. There was a pool of melt water in the galley, and a deep frozen pool behind the south wall of the annex. A deformation survey was carried out; battens were fixed on the annex roof, a drain was dug and a strip of butylclad was placed along the base of the south wall.

1991–92

New weatherboards fixed during the 1988–89 season were observed to be turning grey; the drain along the south wall was cleared to 300mm depth, and butylclad was placed up the wall behind the bottom three weatherboards and below the bottom weatherboard extending some 400mm into the scoria. Bituminous foam strip was used to block gaps between boards in the annex walls. A deformation survey was again carried out; the excavation in the stables was completed by Fyfe; data for the museological inventory was gathered by Woodings, and a detailed photographic record was made by McCredie.

1992–93

Artefact condition reporting was carried out, as were test treatments and some remedial conservation work by Campbell.

1993–94

This year saw the completion of the Artefact Inventory, along with an assessment of the artefact conservation issues; environmental data was gathered with a thermohydrograph.

1994–95

An archaeological excavation of stores near the north elevation door to the annex was carried out; conservation observations and inventories for the southern store depots and fuel dumps were made.

1995–96

Thermohydrograph readings were taken; drainage channels cleared; selected artefact conservation monitoring was carried out, and hazardous chemicals were removed.

1996–97

Mould samples were collected by personnel from the University of

Waikato; an historical survey of artefacts was made; an assessment of metal artefacts was made, along with some corrosion coating trials and product testing.

1997–98

Butylclad was attached to the corner beside the main door; an aluminium foot grating was installed by the door, and ice was removed along the south wall. An assessment was made of the extent of ice beneath the floor of the hut, and the floor structure examined; dampness and mould in the galley was investigated, and further sealing was carried out to the annex walls. Artefacts were photographed, and some were selected for the Reserve Collection, in Christchurch. The position of the second *Aurora* anchor was documented. Metal coatings were checked; corrosion sampling was carried out, textiles were examined and some remedial conservation work was carried out by Clayton.

1998–99

A detailed site map showing archaeological deposits was prepared by Jacomb, Ruud and Harrowfield, using Differential GPS and a telescopic alidade; artefacts were photographed, and an inventory made of the southern stores dump. There was a large melt pool near the south-east corner of the hut; drains were excavated, and several test pits were dug to establish the level of the permafrost. Conservation work was carried out on Scott's bed, and the inventory of textiles was completed. Research on the internal climate of the hut was carried out by Mason from Canterbury University.

1999–00

Remedial conservation work was undertaken, including work on seven bed frames; butylclad was placed over the metal sheet beneath the wardroom stove. Starting this season, and continuing to the 2003–04 season, an assessment has been

made of biological decay and non-biological deterioration of the timbers of the hut. This work has been carried out by a joint New Zealand (University of Waikato led by Professor Roberta Farrell) and United States (University of Minnesota led by Professor Robert Blanchette) team of scientists.

2000–01

Conservation work was undertaken on three bed frames; repairs were made to the stable roof, and experiments continued with metal coatings.

2001–02

Conservation work continued on the bed frames; metal coatings were assessed, and condition reporting and documentation was carried out. Site survey work, including measuring, was carried out by Wild of JASMAX, and an assessment was made of engineering problems. Photography for a book by Josef and Katharina Hoffehner and filming by Jonathan Partridge (October Films London) was carried out. A winter inspection was made by Rigarlsford in September 2002.

2002–03

Site survey work, including data for measured drawings, collected by Wild and Cheshire of JASMAX. Engineering issues, including ice heave under the floor of the hut, ice and frost on interior timbers and the impact of snow accumulation, were assessed.



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- 6 Scott, *ibid*, vol I, pp 329–330.
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