

Dear Antarctic and polar booklovers,

In just over 50 days the fourth SouthPole-*sium* will convene in Dublin.

(See the flyer below)

At the moment we have 32 people registered. Many of you receiving this e-mail are among those that previously indicated that they will or might attend but who have yet to register.

Our goal is have 60 people registered, any fewer will cause some financial strain. So please consider coming to Dublin and please encourage your friends and colleagues to do so as well. (The Registration costs may go up by €20 after May 1st.)

To see who has presently registered go to <http://www.antarctic-circle.org/gathering4-registered.htm>

There have been some changes to the agenda/schedule since the launch of registration at the end of January. (See <http://www.antarctic-circle.org/gathering4-agenda.htm>) The main one is that the bus tour to Athy and environs will now be an all-day affair on Sunday rather than on Monday. At the moment, 21 Registrants will be onboard.

- We are arranging a three-course luncheon at the historic and picturesque **Kilkea Castle**, will visit the nearby **Kilkea House** where Shackleton was born, and see some of the sites/sights of the surrounding 'Shackleton Country.'

- Much of Sunday will be spent at the **Athy Heritage Centre**. If there are still things to talk about after Saturday's all-day session, we'll do so. Perhaps a moderated panel discussion combining such subjects as the current and future state of collecting Antarctica and posing once again (raised in 2012 at the first SouthPole-*sium*) the question of what to do with a collection when age and space become issues. There will be polar and Shackleton material on display in addition to the permanent exhibits. We expect to have some rare and secondhand polar books for sale. In the past we've had an auction to support the SouthPole-*sium*. We might continue this tradition in Athy if attendees bring along enough items to make an interesting and enjoyable sale. Bring a book or two, some Antarctic ephemera, a penguin item or anything polar related you'd like to divest yourself of. At some point tea, coffee and biscuits will be served. Perhaps the most interesting part of our visit will be a presentation on the exciting plans for the **Shackleton Museum**. Renderings of what is being proposed will be shown and discussed. The Museum—due to open in October 2021—will include a book and resource component which will be described and discussed.

- Before we head back to Dublin (arriving no later than 8pm) there will be time to admire the Shackleton statue outside the Heritage Centre and certainly an opportunity to have a pint at **O'Briens**, Athy's unofficial polar gathering place.

- Those who have elected not to go on the bus tour are welcome to come to Athy on their own and attend the sessions in Athy at no charge. As you may know, Athy is accessible by train (from Dublin's Heuston Station) and bus (from

Dublin's Busáras or Central Bus Station).

- Another change is that the Friday session will be expanded a bit to begin earlier than originally proposed. We'll begin—for those who are present and interested—at around 3pm with the Opening Reception beginning around 6pm. Depending on how many people are present at 3, we'll either start our introductions which will continue Saturday morning, or cycle through some informal topics proposed by the organisers and/or the attendees. (A few words about the introductions: For those who haven't attended before, we go around the room and ask everyone to say something about themselves, their interest in the Antarctic, projects that they may be pursuing, questions that they may wish to pose, etc. These sometime last a minute; others might go on for 15 minutes or so, interspersed with queries and discussions. We have found this to be a useful exercise. It's a way for everyone to know who's attending and what they're interested in and invariably leads to later informal conversations and discussions.)

- One Registrant in particular has asked about why we aren't including **Banbridge** in the Sunday excursion. This town in County Down is steeped in Francis Crozier sites and is always worth a visit by those interested in either the Arctic or the Antarctic or both. The short answer is that we concluded there wasn't enough time plus it's more or less in the opposite direction (and 81 miles from Dublin). But at least two registrants are keen to go and hope to set off to Banbridge early on Friday morning, returning by 3pm or shortly thereafter. We'll arrange for a private car and volunteer driver. If others would like to do this we'll see if we can enlist other cars or possibly hire a minibus (which will mean an extra fee to cover the cost). If you are interested in visiting Banbridge on Friday, let us know. So far, Gina Koellner and Michael Smith (*the Crozier expert*) are on board.

- Another Registrant recently asked if he could bring his partner to the Saturday night banquet. This was not originally an option, but we are happy to accommodate guests that evening. The charge will be €80 to include the Banquet and the Reception beforehand. Let us know if you'd like to bring a guest and if you've already paid your Registration you can settle up with us in Dublin.

- At previous SouthPole-*siums* the speaking schedule has been pretty flexible. This time it's all up to the so-called 'Irish Contingent,' chaired by Joe O'Farrell. Contact Joe if you'd like to give a talk (ofarrellja@gmail.com). Remember, talks are generally limited to a 15 minute-duration and ideally should not be read. See <http://www.antarctic-circle.org/gathering4-subject.htm> for talks so far suggested.

- Past SouthPole-*siums* have featured a variety of contests. Participation has been spotty at best. The first to be unveiled this time and perhaps the only one is "**Three Acrostics**." You can access it at <http://www.antarctic-circle.org/gathering4-acrostic.pdf>

We plan to send out a similar e-mail Update shortly before the SouthPole-*sium*

commences.

Regards,

Rob Stephenson, for the Organizing Committee (Laura Farrelly, Kevin Kenny, Jim & Geraldine McAdam, Joe O'Farrell, Jonathan Shackleton, Robert Stephenson, Seamus Taaffe and Margaret Walsh)

This e-mail was sent to the following:

Ted Benttinen
Hester Blum
John & Sue Bonham
Angie Butler
Doug Cochrane
Trevor Cornford
Richard Dehmel
Steve Dibbern
Laura Farrelly
Joe & Beth Fitzsimmons
Magnus Forsberg
Medbh Gillard
Ann-Rachael Harwood
Bob Headland
Robert M. Henrici
Bernadette Hince
David Hirzel
Kevin Kenny
Donald & Valerie Kerr
Geir O. Kløver
Anders Larsson
Eimear Leonard
Bryan Lintott
Peter Lund
Lucy Martin
Wilson McOrist
Shane Murphy
Peggy Nelson
Trevor Potts
Gill Poulter
Beau Riffenburgh
Jahn Rønne
Michael Rosove & Sheila Pressman
Liesl Scherthanner

Hilary Shibata
Philip Sidney
Anne Strathie
Mike Tarver
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Neale Webb
Don Webster
Tricia Wood
Jack Wrigh