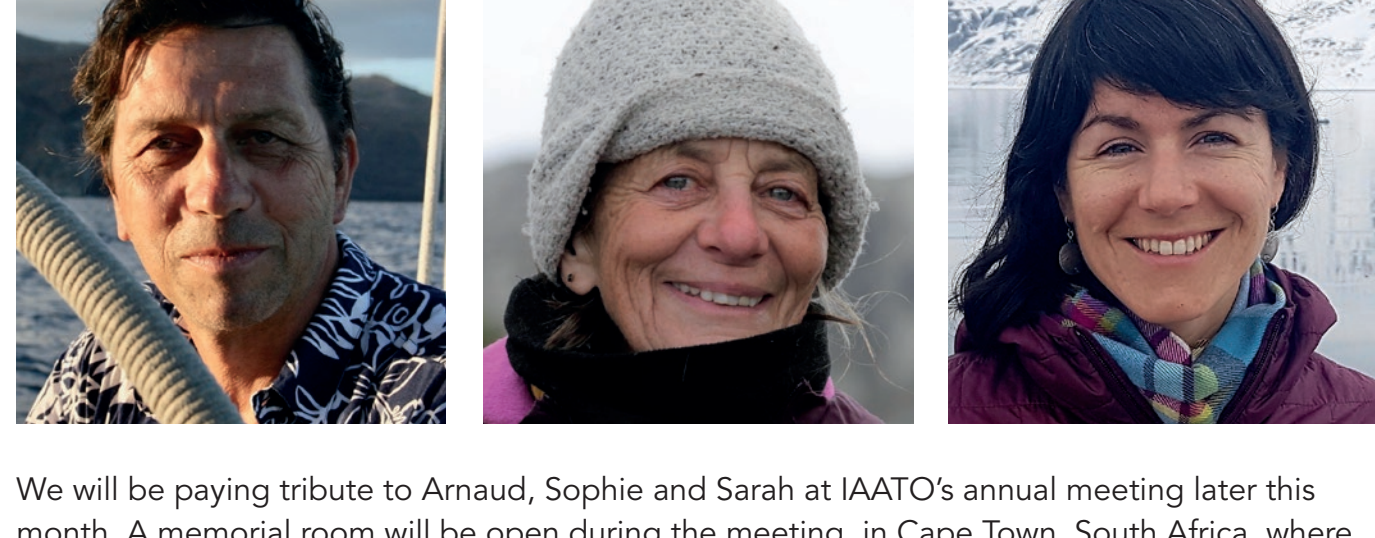


Dear Field Staff colleagues,

I wanted to use this, the final field staff newsletter of the season, to acknowledge the incredible work you have done this year, the memorable moments, challenges overcome and the visitors you have helped graduate to Antarctic ambassadors.

But our season has ended with a terrible loss to our community; the deaths of **Arnaud Dhallenne, Sophie Labrue and Sarah Auffret**; three people who have been taken from their families, friends and colleagues while doing the jobs they loved, and carried out with incredible skill, tenacity and spirit.

Responding to these tragedies has been a challenge I hope we never have to repeat; once the initial shock, horror and heartbreak has given way, how do we adequately encapsulate their achievements and contributions to our industry, and our world, to honor them in the way their tragic and premature passing deserves? It seems like an impossible task to do our three colleagues justice and, of course, our priority has been to respect the wishes of their families, who are navigating through their own grief in different ways.



We will be paying tribute to Arnaud, Sophie and Sarah at IAATO's annual meeting later this month. A memorial room will be open during the meeting, in Cape Town, South Africa, where friends and colleagues will be able to take time to reflect and to write their tributes or share memories in three books of condolence. If you are unable to attend but would like to submit a tribute, please [email Hayley](#) who will ensure it is included.

The events of last month have shone a spotlight on the unique nature of what we do and how our jobs forge relationships more akin to family than those between colleagues. It is ultimately these bonds that help us through difficult times.

I have no doubt that Arnaud, Sophie and Sarah will not only live on in our thoughts but in our deeds, and I think that's the best tribute we could pay to them.

Lisa

Lisa Kelley
Head of Operations
International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators

Antarctic Organisations Launch Fellowships and Scholarship Opportunities

IAATO has joined forces with the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs (COMNAP) to launch Antarctic-related fellowships for early-career researchers.

This year, the IAATO Antarctic Fellowship will offer funding of up to USD \$15,000. The proposed project must reflect the objectives of IAATO and result in adding to our understanding of human presence in the Antarctic region. The deadline is 10 June 2019.

Other Antarctic-related fellowships and scholarships are being supported by COMNAP, the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR), the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Different deadlines and eligibility criteria apply. [Read more here.](#)

Recycling in Ushuaia

Responsible waste management is business-as-usual for IAATO operators who are encouraged to seek recycling providers when disposing of their waste. For operators using port facilities in Ushuaia, there are two recycling providers that the IAATO Secretariat are aware of, [SeaGreen Recycling](#) and SOMA/Stericycle. Your operator's port agency will be able to provide more information.

Remembering Edward Bransfield

A charitable group, set-up to raise funds for a memorial to navigator Edward Bransfield, whose expedition sighted the Antarctic continent in 1820, hopes to unveil a memorial to the historic figure on the 200th anniversary of the sighting.

For more information on the project see <http://rememberingedwardbransfield.ie>

Field Staff Assessment results

The IAATO field staff assessment has been designed to ensure all staff are aware of updates to the FOM; and in particular the seasonally-changing guidelines from the Antarctic Treaty. Whilst no doubt there is scope for further improvements, this is our collective way of demonstrating to the regulators and the wider world that IAATO operations are being informed by Internationally required, current and relevant information.

- 2,472** staff and vessel crew are now registered in the database; no double entries
- 4,912** assessments have been taken for the past season (this includes the practice option)
- 1,435** staff and vessel crew passed at least one of the exams; the split for the platforms is as follows:

Pen/SG for Guides: 959	Ship Officers/Crew: 211
Pen/SG for ELs: 218	(includes Home Office staff)
Ross Sea for Guides: 41	No IAATO employer: 6

The average score for all platforms was between 90-93%, which is similar to previous seasons.

In the news...

Human footprint in Antarctica measured for the first time

New research, using satellite images to measure human activity in Antarctica, has found that more than half of all large ice-free coastal areas have now been disturbed. Lead author, Shaun Brooks from the University of Tasmania, said "The data we have collected can be used to inform decision-making on Antarctic conservation and environmental management, as well as to track future impacts and changes. It may also serve to encourage greater coordination and sharing of facilities between nations and users accessing Antarctica, to help limit the human footprint."

The research is published in [Nature Sustainability](#). The authors have kindly shared a copy of the paper with IAATO. If you would like a copy, please contact Amanda (alynnes@iaato.org).

Lion King to debut in Antarctica... or is it?

A few penguin feathers may have been ruffled earlier this month, when Disney announced it was taking the legendary stage musical to the seventh continent.

The news was broken with a two-and-a-half minute 'behind the scenes' YouTube video of the cast preparing to take to the stage in a 2000-seat purpose-built ice theatre in Antarctica.

After initial bewilderment, and a raised eyebrow or two at the 'polar bear fur' costumes, many would have been quick to notice the interesting timing of the news – April 1st, or April Fool's Day.

Check out the video [here](#).



IAATO vessels help solve killer whale mystery

Photographs taken aboard IAATO vessels since the 1990s have supported research which, this year, has brought scientists face-to-face with a mysterious and sub-Antarctic waters. [Read more](#) or [watch a film](#) of these amazing animals.

Ice-breaker

Keith Heger | Field guide, PolarExplorers



How long have you been working in the Antarctic?

My first season in Antarctica was 2007. I utilized the retired Patriot Hills base camp and flew from Punta Arenas, Chile. I have had the opportunity to return almost every year since. Highlights include a 2014-15 expedition during which I guided a group of three on a 42-day ski from the "Messner" start to the South Pole.

What areas of Antarctica have you worked in?

The polar plateau, vicinity of Union Glacier and Mt. Vinson.

Interested in being featured?

Speak to your employer and contact Hayley in the IAATO Secretariat at hcourt@iaato.org

What do you love most about your job?

Working with team members that are energetic about travelling to Antarctica for the first time. I enjoy helping them plan the logistics and overcome the nervous energy during our travels and while on expeditions. Their sense of accomplishment feeds my soul.

And what do you find most challenging?

The planning and preparations are often the hardest aspects, often because regular home routines pull away your focus. During the expedition your success is directly dependent on the planning and preparation that you did well before the expedition ever reach Antarctica. To have a fun, safe and successful expedition every detail must be well planned in advance.



What is the biggest lesson you've learned while working in Antarctica?

Traveling long distance over the frozen continent requires a high level of patience. You cannot rush the daily progress and consistency leads to success.

Tell us about a special polar memory...

A team member of ours once carried with him a medal of honor bestowed to Ernest Shackleton by the Italian government after one of his expeditions. It was emotional to hold it in my hands at the South Pole.

What item(s) do you always pack for your time South?

Two pairs of sunglasses. A brimmed baseball cap and my wife's banana bread.



International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators
50 South Commons Way, Unit E-5B, South Kingstown, RI, 02879, USA

IAATO is a member organization founded in 1991 to advocate and promote the practice of safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic.