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MEDIA RELEASE

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CENTURY OLD ANTARCTIC IMAGES DISCOVERED IN CAPTAIN SCOTT'S HUT

Photographic negatives left a century ago in Captain Scott's last expedition base at Cape Evans have been discovered and conserved by New Zealand's Antarctic Heritage Trust. The negatives were found in expedition photographer Herbert Ponting's darkroom and have been painstakingly conserved revealing never before seen Antarctic images.

The Trust's conservation specialists discovered the clumped together cellulose nitrate negatives in a small box as part of the Ross Sea Heritage Restoration Project which has seen more than 10,000 objects conserved at Scott's Cape Evans hut. The negatives were removed from Antarctica by the Trust earlier this year. Detailed conservation treatment back in New Zealand separating the negatives has revealed twenty-two images. The photographs are from Ernest Shackleton's 1914-1917 Ross Sea Party, which spent time living in Scott's hut after being stranded on Ross Island when their ship blew out to sea.

One of the most striking images is of Ross Sea Party member Alexander Stevens, Shackleton's Chief Scientist, standing on-board the *Aurora*.

Although many of the images are damaged, the Antarctic Heritage Trust was able to recognise landmarks around McMurdo Sound, although the identity of the photographer remains unknown.

"It's an exciting find and we are delighted to see them exposed after a century. It's testament to the dedication and precision of our conservation teams' efforts to save Scott's Cape Evans hut," said Nigel Watson, Antarctic Heritage Trust's Executive Director.

In 2010 the Antarctic Heritage Trust (NZ) discovered three crates of whisky and two crates of brandy under Ernest Shackleton's 1908 base during conservation work.

The images are available online at www.nzaht.org

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Background to Antarctic Heritage Trust media release 10 December 2013**Photos**

Photo credit: Antarctic Heritage Trust, nzaht.org

1. Alexander Stevens on the deck of the *Aurora*, McMurdo Sound, Antarctica. Photo credit: Antarctic Heritage Trust, www.nzaht.org
2. Iceberg and land, Ross Island, Antarctica. Photo credit: Antarctic Heritage Trust, www.nzaht.org
3. The cellulose nitrate negatives, found blocked together. Photo credit: Antarctic Heritage Trust, www.nzaht.org

Background to the conservation process

The photographs found in Captain Scott's expedition base at Cape Evans, Antarctica required specialist conservation treatment. The Antarctic Heritage Trust (NZ) engaged Photographic Conservator Mark Strange to undertake the painstaking task of separating, cleaning (including removing mould) and consolidating the cellulose nitrate image layers. Twenty-two separate sheets were revealed and sent to New Zealand Micrographic Services for scanning using a Lanovia pre-press scanner. The digital scans were converted to digital positives.

Antarctic Heritage Trust

The Antarctic Heritage Trust (NZ) is a not-for-profit organisation responsible for the conservation of five historic sites in the Ross Sea region of Antarctica including Ernest Shackleton's, Robert Falcon Scott's and Edmund Hillary's expedition bases through its Ross Sea Heritage Restoration Project. Work is currently centred on conserving artefacts from Scott's 1911 expedition base and conserving Scott's 1902 expedition base.

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[Explore inside Captain Scott's 1911 historic expedition base](#) where the lost Ross Sea Party photographs were found.