British Antarctic Survey Archives Service

Deaths of FIDS/BAS Staff in the Antarctic

Last updated 7 July 2016  Joanna Rae, BAS Archives Service

See also list of those who died in service outside Antarctica.

FIDS/BAS employees – who died whilst serving at an Antarctic Base/Station

The British Antarctic Survey (BAS) cares for the graves and memorials in the Antarctic of those listed below. Photographs of most of these are available from BAS Archives Service (contact basarchives@bas.ac.uk).

This information also appears on the BAS Club website http://www.antarctica.ac.uk/basclub/ and the British Antarctic Monument Trust website http://www.antarctic-monument.org/ (which also has photographs and memories from relatives and friends of those who died)

1948
Oliver Burd and Michael C Green, 9 Nov 1948, Hope Bay
Killed in hut fire.
Graves in the vicinity of the original hut.
Commemorative place names: Cape Bird & Cape Green, Trinity Peninsula.

Eric Platt, 10 Nov 1948, Admiralty Bay
Heart attack.
Grave marked by cross in vicinity of base.
Commemorative place name: Platt Cliffs, King George Island.

1953
Arthur H Farrant, 17 Nov 1953, Deception Island
Suicide.
Grave in whalers’ cemetery. Cross was probably washed away or buried by the mud slide caused by the 1969 volcanic eruption.

1956
Ronald G Napier, 24 Mar 1956, Admiralty Bay
Drowned when dinghy overturned.
Memorial (cross in vicinity of base) (body not recovered).
Commemorative place name: Napier Rock, King George Island.

1958
Stanley E Black, David Statham and Geoffrey Stride, 27 May 1958, Horseshoe Island
Lost when sea ice broke up during depot laying trip to Dion Islands.
Memorials - single cross on Beacon Head, Horseshoe Island and plaque at Rothera Point (bodies not recovered).
Commemorative place names: Black Pass, Statham Peak & Stride Peak, Pourquoi Pass Island.
1959
Alan Sharman, 23 Apr 1959, Admiralty Bay
Fractured skull following a fall on rocks when out walking.
Grave, marked by cross in vicinity of base.
[Commemorative place name: Sharman Rock, King George Island – but feature later found to be non-existent.]

Dennis R Bell, 26 Jul 1959, Admiralty Bay
Crevasse fall.
Memorial - cross in vicinity of base (body not recovered).
Commemorative place name: Bell Point, King George Island.

1961
Roger Filer, 13 Feb 1961, Signy
Fell from cliff while doing ornithology work.
Grave on Pantomime Point.
Commemorative place name: Filer Haven, Signy Island.

1963
Neville S Mann, 15 Aug 1963, Halley
Lost on sea ice (part of a 2 sledge party which became separated in bad weather).
Memorial - plaque at Halley Station (body not recovered).

Leading Seaman Reg Hodge and Able Seaman Michael Lane, 6 Dec 1963, HMS Protector
Two Royal Navy seamen killed and a third seriously injured in an explosion aboard HMS Protector 6 Dec 1963 while the vessel was working with RRS Shackleton on joint seismic surveys for BAS (Prof. Griffiths’ project.) (Source: AD3/1/AS/138/3/3(1) - unnamed in BAS’s records)

1965
Jeremy T Bailey, David P Wild and John K Wilson, 12 Oct 1965, Halley
Occupants of Muskeg tractor lost in crevasse fall en route to Vestfjella.
Memorials - plaques on Survey Point, Vardeklettane, Heimfrontfjella and at Halley Station (bodies not recovered).
Commemorative place names: Bailey Ice Stream, BAT; Baileyranten, Wildskorvene & Wilsonbergen, Droning Maud Land.

1966
John F Noel and Thomas J Allan, Jun 1966, Stonington Island
Died of exposure whilst sitting out a storm in a snow hole during field trip, Butson Ridge area.
Graves on Flagstaff Hill.
Commemorative place names: Mount Noel & Mount Allan, Traverse Mountains (Rymill Coast); Tragic Corner (Fallières Coast).

1976
Geoffrey H Hargreaves, Michael A Walker and Graham J Whitfield, Sep 1976, Argentine Islands
Lost during return from ascent of Mount Peary.
Memorial - single cross on Rasmussen Island (bodies not recovered).

1980
Miles V Mosley, 2 Feb 1980, Halley
Hit by low flying aircraft.
Memorial - plaque at Halley Station (buried at sea).

1981
John H M Anderson and Robert Atkinson, 16 May 1981, Rothera
Crevasse accident on Shambles Glacier.
Memorial - single cross on Rothera Point (bodies not recovered).

1982
Ambrose C Morgan, Kevin P Ockleton and John Coll, 14 Aug 1982, Argentine Islands
Lost when sea ice broke up during field trip, Petermann Island area.
Memorial - single cross on Petermann Island (bodies not recovered).

2003
Kirsty M Brown, 22 July 2003, Rothera
Drowned when attacked by Leopard seal while snorkling.
Memorial at Rothera Point. Body returned to UK for burial.
Commemorative place name: Kirsty Island, Ryder Bay (Adelaide Island).

In addition a small number of non-BAS staff have died at our stations, for example:

1994
N J Armstrong (Canada), D N Fredlund (Canada), J C Armstrong (Canada) and E P Odegard
(Norway), 23 Nov 1994, Rothera
Kenn Borek Air Ltd aircraft crashed on take-off after re-fuelling at Rothera.
Memorial at Rothera Point (bodies not recovered).

Memorials outside the Antarctic

British Antarctic Survey Cambridge – Memorial Orchard, 2005
British Antarctic Survey Cambridge – Book of Remembrance, Apr 2011 (displayed in the Library)
St Paul’s Cathedral crypt – Memorial Plaque, Apr 2011
Scott Polar Research Institute – Book of Remembrance, Apr 2011
Scott Polar Research Institute – Monument sculpture (part 1), Apr 2011
Stanley, Falkland Islands (Dockyard Point) – Monument sculpture (part 2), Feb 2015

Sources

1. AD3/2/121/143/30
2. Archives Information Sheet 1, ed. 4 (and sources referenced there)
3. Staff personal files
4. Rod Downie, Oct 2002
5. 80/31/4512 (file on Kirsty Brown’s death)
6. Place name research by Petra Searle, 12 Dec 2007
7. Publications:
• British Antarctic Monument Trust
  See http://www.antarctic-monument.org/ for details, including photographs and memories from relatives and friends of those who died.
Appendix 1 – Alphabetical List of FIDS/BAS Staff Who Died in the Antarctic

Thomas Allan, June 1966, Stonington Island
John Anderson, 16 May 1981, Rothera
Robert Atkinson, 16 May 1981, Rothera
Jeremy Bailey, 12 October 1965, Halley Bay
Dennis Bell, 26 July 1959, Admiralty Bay
Stanley Black, 27 May 1958, Horseshoe Island
Kirsty Brown, 22 July 2003, Rothera
Oliver Burd, 9 November 1948, Hope Bay
John Coll, 14 August 1982, Argentine Islands
Arthur Farrant, 17 November 1953, Deception Island
Roger Filer, 13 February 1961, Signy Island
Michael Green, 9 November 1948, Hope Bay
Geoffrey Hargreaves, September, 1976, Argentine Islands
Reg Hodge, 6 December 1963, HMS Protector
Michael Lane, 6 December 1963, HMS Protector
Neville Mann, 15 August 1963, Halley
Ambrose Morgan, 14 August 1982, Argentine Islands
Miles Mosley, 2 February 1980, Halley
Ronald Napier, 24 March 1956, Admiralty Bay
John Noel, June 1966, Stonington Island
Kevin Ockleton, 14 August 1982, Argentine Islands
Eric Platt, 10 November 1948, Admiralty Bay
Alan Sharman, 23 April 1959, Admiralty Bay
David Statham, 27 May 1958, Horseshoe Island
Geoffrey Stride, 27 May 1958, Horseshoe Island

Michael Walker, 6 September 1976, Argentine Islands

David Wild, 12 October 1965, Halley Bay

John Wilson, 12 October 1965, Halley Bay

Graham Whitfield, 6 September 1976, Argentine Islands