

## MUSEO MARITIMO DE USHUAIA NAVAL MODELS HALL

### Tierra del Fuego, its History and its Ships

*Naval models chosen for this exposition are chronologically arranged to show the development of shipbuilding in the last five centuries. For this to be clearly seen, all maquettes keep the same scale (1/100) and were built by the same naval modeler. Human scale is represented by a man 1.80 metres high. Accessories --even chains-- were handmade on their corresponding scale.*

*The history of Tierra del Fuego was always linked to the sea. The first commercial flights began in 1948. Till that moment, the only connection with the continent had been the sea.*

### HALL I ALMIRANTE BROWN

#### Nº2) HERNÁNDO DE MAGALLANES TRINIDAD CARRACK

In 1520, he sailed through the strait which was named after him and, although its existence had already been conjectured some years before, he was the first European who sighted the land and called it "Tierra de los Fuegos" (The Land of Fire). Johann Schoner's globe (1515) and "Lopo Homen" chart (1519) had already shown the possible union of the two oceans.

Carracks are vessels of Portuguese origin which evolved from caravels. One of their main characteristics to be highlighted is their larger shipload which enabled the shipping of more men. And, besides, two novel buildings --the foredeck and the poop deck. Both used as turrets in battles. They used square sails.

During the next 100 years many seamen sailed through the strait --all of them had to endure violent storms and fights with the native indians. Francis Drake --the renowned pirate--, in 1576; the English Thomas Cavendish, in 1586; the Dutch Olivier van Noort, in 1589; and his countryman Joris

Spilbergen, who went on the fifth voyage in 1614, were the ones who sailed around the world.

In 1584, Sarmiento de Gamboa is sent by Spain to take possession of the strait and to found two towns. Only one of them is recalled as "Famine Harbour" as most of the colonists die. Spain is seriously harmed when in 1588 the English fleet defeats the famous Invincible Armada.

#### Nº3) EENDRACHT HULK

The passage by the Magellan Strait could only be used by ships belonging to the East India Company. So, other merchants decided to look for a new trade route. Schouten and Le Maire on their "Eendracht" Hulk did it. They were the first in surrounding Tierra del Fuego and discovered "Mauritius Land" (nowadays known as Mitre Peninsula), "Staten Land" (De los Estados Island) and the famous "Hoon Caap" (Cape Horn), so called in honour of the port from where they set sail. As at that moment they were thought to be lying, they were taken to prison.

Hulk (1616) are of Dutch origin and the way their hull is built is their main characteristic. Notice the rounded bow and poop with their boarding in clinker work.

It is particularly noticeable the influence of the Viking naval tradition from the North Sea on her in contrast to the "carrack", representative of the Mediterranean naval tradition.

#### Nº4) CARAVEL NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL BUEN SUCESO

Nodal brothers (with two similar caravels) became the first men in circumnavigating Tierra del Fuego in 1618 --another Spanish attempt to maintain its overseas domain and to make sure that what Le Maire had said was true.

For their maneuverability, caravels were the ships preferred for exploration voyages. Their Lateen sails enabled them to sail against the wind. These vessels originated in Portugal from the ships used by fishermen along the Atlantic coast about 1450. Jaques L' Hermite's expedition arrives from The

Netherlands in 1624. Their observations on the indigenous Yamanas in Nassaw bay are of interest. Fourteen sailors are murdered by the natives in that opportunity.

During the following two centuries Tierra del Fuego is scarcely visited. Seamen try to avoid sighting land in this region. The desolate climate and its inhabitants, who were regarded as cannibals, caused this attitude.

Hundreds of ships sail south off Cape Horn, many of which wreck or disappear. This region is considered a dark place, but they have to pass by all the same in search of the East Indies, then for Peruvian treasures and later on for the west coast of America and migration to Australia.

Hendrik Brower's Dutch expedition circumnavigates De los Estados Island in 1642. The French captain Freizer makes a chart of Le Maire strait in 1712 and Las Malvinas are christened "Novum Belgium" by Jacob Roggeveen --of Dutch origin-- in 1721.

Beauchesne's (1698), G. Anson's (1740), J. Byron's (1764) and James Cook's (1769) expeditions add a gloomy ingredient to the southern navigation with their awful stories about storms, glacial cold and skirmishes with the aggressive natives.

#### Nº5) SCHOONER NUESTRA REAL CAPITANA SAN JOSE Y LAS ANIMAS.

This small schooner is honoured by being the first vessel built in Tierra del Fuego. Somewhere near Mitre Peninsula, the Spanish schooner "Purísima Concepción" wrecked in 1765.

Wreckers built this vessel out of the remains of the "Purísima Concepción" and sailed up to Buenos Aires. They were 193 wreckers in all and had to sail so tightly packed that --the story tell us-- four of them died of suffocation

### HALL II MIRÓN GONIK

#### Nº6) CORVETTES DESCUBIERTA & ATREVIDA

This corvette --commanded by the Italian sailor Alejandro Malaspina-- together with her identical

twin "Atrevida" were the ships which served for the most important scientific expedition organized by Spain in its colonies. One of its aims --apart from the ones specifically scientific-- was to make navigation charts and learn about the political situation in each region.

The two of them were great ships built with all the latest improvements available in that age in order to fulfil its mission.

While life in Tierra del Fuego went on as if in the Stone Age, in 1775 the American Revolution for Independence was going on. The Viceroyalty of the River Plate was settled down in 1776, and in 1789 the French Revolution broke out.

#### **Nº7) BRIGANTINE ESPORA - CUTTER LUISITO**

In 1873, Argentine navigator Luis Piedra Buena's "Espora" brigantine wrecked in De los Estados Island. The remains of it were used to built "Luisito" cutter which went on sailing in southern waters ratifying Argentine sovereignty. His activities as a merchant and sealion hunter --trade that he learnt from the American Smiley-- made him the owner of De los Estados Island. He also engaged in business in Punta Arenas (then in San Gregorio) and in an establishment in the province of Santa Cruz.

A few months before having to leave for Tierra del Fuego with the South Atlantic Expeditionary Division commanded by Augusto Lasserre, he died in Buenos Aires in 1884 being Commander for the Argentine Navy.

#### **Nº19) CORVETTE "CAÑONERA PARANA"**

Parangunboat, the flagship of the South Atlantic Expeditionary Division (1884). When the fleet commanded by Augusto Lasserre sighted land in Ushuaia bay, they found an Anglican mission under Thomas Bridges. A census of the Yamanas taken by Bridges showed that the natives were 1,000 --including women, men and children.

On October 12 the town of Ushuaia is officially founded and the Argentine flag replaces the one of the Mission (a white cross on a red field).

In De los Estados Island a subprefecture post, a lighthouse --Verne's of the End of the World--, a garrison and the first penitentiary settle down.

#### **Nº20) SCHOONER SOKOLO**

Some ships such as Pascual; Rispoli's "Sokolo", known as "the last pirate of the Beagle", became famous. The temptation of dealing with sealions skin, liquor and of organizing clandestine hunts on a naval frontier is not strange. But what mainly gave it renown was the fact that it took part in escapes from the Prison as is the case with the famous anarchist Radowizki.

She was abandoned on a shabby pier in the Chilean "Yendegaia" farm --owned by the Serka family--, a few metres away from the border.

#### **Nº24) SCHOONER MARÍA AUXILIADORA**

Although Anglicans stayed in Beagle canal and Malvinas Islands, Salesians and some pioneers settled down in the area of Río Grande and Punta Arenas in 1893. They also needed ships to keep in touch with Punta Arenas and get building supplies and food until the farm began to produce. "Marja Auxiliadora" schooner --bought by the brotherhood in 1892-- made them independent from hiring Chilean ships. After it sunk in 1898, they bought the "Torino" steamer which was also lost some years later.

#### **Nº21) CLIPPER DUCHESS OF ALBANNY**

"Duchess of Albany" clipper wrecked in July 1893 in Mitre Peninsula --on the Atlantic coast of Tierra del Fuego. It is one of the numerous shipwrecks which took place in this region.

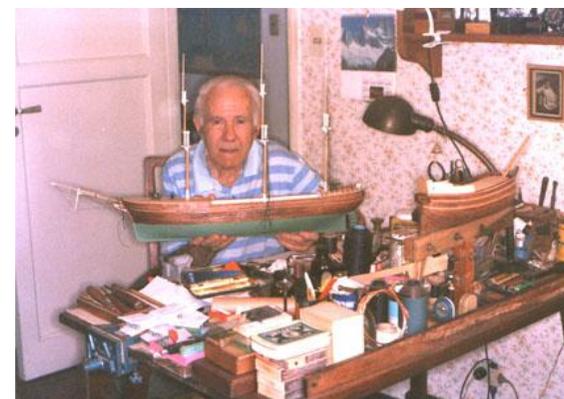
Tempests and calm weather are frequent in this area. Constant currents may, in certain places, reach 8 knots. Because of them visibility was poor and ships crashed into the coast and wrecked.

Both the hull and the rigging in the "**Duchess of Albany**" were made of iron. Many vessels similar to this clipper surround Tierra del Fuego.

#### **Nº1) A.R.A 1ºde MAYO**

"1º de Mayo" was a ship of importance for Tierra del Fuego. As a transport for the Argentine Navy, it took here the first convicts in 1896. For many years it was the link between this region and Buenos Aires. Newspapers, letters and supplies were taken here by the "1 de Mayo" and it took back ex prisoners and brought new shipments.

She also was in Antarctica. In the model, we can see it fitted out for the crossing of the tempestuous Drake in 1943. It sailed with its only motor helped by its sails. Soon afterwards, it steered straight for the coast of Buenos Aires.



Model maker Mirón Gonik

#### **HALL III VITO DUMAS**

#### **Nº8) BEAGLE BARK**

Took a leading part in the two English expeditions that, for the first time, studied the region thoroughly. William Parker King in 1829, and Robert Fitz Roy in 1831 were its captains.

Among other things, naturalist Charles Darwin described --unfortunately-- the primitive inhabitants of the area.

They also were the first in trying to establish a missionary --the Rev. Richard Mathews in Wulaia-- in the region but, given the warlike indigenous

people, he had to be rescued and thus rejoined the expedition.

Although sailingboats continued their exploration voyages, in 1819 the first steamer crosses the Atlantic Ocean and in 1840 **"Chile" and "Perú"** steamers sail in the Magellan Strait giving birth to a new era in the communications and the development of the region.

In 1843, Chilean government reacts to this by taking possession of the strait and founding Bulnes fort near the place where "Famine Harbour" had been. Four years later, the fort was moved to its present site in Punta Arenas.

The first telegraph was sent by Samuel Morse in 1840 and the first experiments on the use of iron in the building of hulls for ships began in the same year.

#### **Nº9) THE THREE ALLEN GARDINER SAILINGBOATS**

South American Missionary Society --English Anglican missionaries-- used these ships for its intentions in Malvinas Islands and Tierra del Fuego. They are named after the missionary who began the work in Tierra del Fuego and died in Español harbour together with his brethren.

**"Allen Gardiner I"** was bought in 1854. These schooners with foretopsail were frequently used for coastal trading in the North Sea.

**"Allen Gardiner II"** was a classic fishing ketch of the North Sea and took over from the former in 1874. Because of economic reasons, a smaller vessel was chosen.

**The third "Allen Gardiner"** was a schooner with a steam machine. Thomas Bridges had claimed that a ship with a machine was necessary to navigate channels and thus get to the furthestmost places with the evangelizing work.

In 1869 bishop Stirling became the first European in living with the Yamanas in the mission established in Ushuaia bay.

Then came the Bridges in 1871 and, soon afterwards, Lawrence family in 1873.

#### **Nº10) ROMANCHE VESSEL**

Belonging to the French expedition to Cape Horn in 1882. Commanded by L. Martial, this ship had an important role in the region. Even though it arrived to study the passing of Venus and perform several scientific tasks, this expedition also was of importance for its contribution to anthropology.

This ship, typical of that age, gives us a notion of the cargo tall ships that used to sail by Cape Horn. Apart from the route to the west coast of America -- either from Europe or from the east coast--, they sailed towards Australia or in search of Nitrate in the north of Chile.

#### **LELA**

The Bridges had this ship built in Cowes, England, in 1929. She has a strange appearance --both for her rigging, her hull lines and for her two internal engines, it becomes clear that they were specially designed. Years sailing these channels, with head wind, rocks and shoals resulted in this design. This vessel went on working for many years transporting sheep from Gable Island. At present, she is at Harberton establishment.

#### **Nº16 y Nº17) CUTTER GARIBALDI & TOMASITO AND SCHOONER NEGRA & BLANCA**

Dependency on ships was absolute. The only way a trade could prosper was having a sailingboat. It was thus necessary to be a good sailor, apart from a merchant and a cattle breeder.

The Bebans owned several vessels, **"Garibaldi"** cutter (1896); **"Negra"** schooner (1911), on which they even went to Brazil; **"Tomasito"** (1913) and **"Blanca"** schooner (1916). This family bought and sold ships according to the development of their activities.

Ships sailed from Ushuaia to Punta Arenas and the various farms on Beagle canal and Navarino island. Medicine, cattle, passengers, workers and gold-diggers were shipped on these cutters. They were also used for fishing or for the sealion hunt. They were the real doers of the regional development.

#### **Nº18) BRIG PHANTOM**

Meanwhile, in Ushuaia, Thomas Bridges leaves the mission in 1887 and settles down in Harberton where he founds the first farm in Tierra del Fuego. As the only means of communication is the sea, he buys **"Phanton"** brig in 1897. His idea was to avoid dependence on expensive freight and to be able to ship timber to the continent and then, on coming back, get what he needed for his storehouse -- things such as coal and food supplies.

This is a cargo with roomy holds and a deck fit for stowage. It is a typical North Sea cargo.

#### **HALL IV ALMIRANTE IRIZAR**

This hall exhibits a series of dioramas of the most famous shipwrecks in the region.

**DESDEMONA:** located on cape San Pablo, on the Atlantic coast of Tierra del Fuego (1985).

**GOVERNOREN:** floating factory that ran aground on Enterprise Island (Gerlache channel), on the Argentine Antarctic Sector (1915).

**MONTE SARMIENTO:** located opposite ranch Estancia Remolino, on the Beagle Channel (1912).

**LOGOS:** located on an islet near Snipe Island, on the Beagle Channel (1988).

**MONTE CERVANTES:** she ran aground against some rocks near Les Eclaireurs lighthouse, on the Beagle Channel (1930).

**TUGBOAT ST. CHRISTOPHER:** she ran aground (1954) opposite Ushuaia, becoming a symbol of the place.

## USHUAIA JAIL and MILITARY PRISON

Extracted J. Carlos García Basalo

On January 1896 the first group of 14 convicts arrived on board the naval ship "1° de Mayo". In this way the Reincidents Jail got under way housed temporarily in wooden and tin huts.

The idea was to colonize with convicts and they immediately sent 11 more men and 9 women volunteers.

All were ex-convicts who had fallen again.



### MILITARY PRISON

The Military Prison on the Isla de los Estados, first functioned in San Juan de Salvamento and later in Puerto Cook. In December 1902 was moved for humanitarian reasons to Ushuaia. The place chosen was Puerto Golondrina to the west of the city. There it started, in tin huts and sheds transferred from the Isla de los Estados. There was a notion to build a penal colony also but this did not prosper.

In 1911 the President of the Nation signed a decree that fused the Military Prison and Jail of Ushuaia.

## THE ACTUAL CONSTRUCTION

In 1902 construction started in the National Prison. The site selected was the same where temporary constructions were, east of the little town of Ushuaia which consisted of little more than 40 houses.

Until 1920 the construction continued on the jail which was done by the convicts.

The original idea was to build a Penal Colony for 580 convicts at Lapataia, for which 2,500 acres of land were reserved on the border with Chile.

In 1920 the jail had five pavilions with 79 exterior facing cells each. The 380 cells were single but the jail housed more than 600 convicts at one time.

Between the pavilion 1 and 5 a bakery. To the front of the bay an administration building was erected. The workshops were housed in separate buildings. Only in 1943 a modern hospital was inaugurated which later became the hospital for the Naval Base and for a long time the only hospital in the zone.

The Main Hall was used as a conference hall, cinema and auditorium for any occasion.



## TRABAJO Y DISCIPLINA



As time went by, convicts guilty of serious crimes, many for lifetime or long sentences were sent there.

The systems used were based on work for lifetime with a little salary. They also had primary school education and severe discipline. The jail had 30 different work areas, some being outside the limits of the jail.

The workshops tended to the jail's needs and rendered services to all the town of Ushuaia. These were the first printing shop, telephone, electricity, fire station, etc.

Outside the jail the convicts were used for building streets, bridges, buildings and also at the timberland.

In this way thanks to the convicts a railway was built in the year 1910. This became the southernmost railway in the world. It was 25 kms. long and ran alongside Maipú street to Monte Susana and split in two sections towards what is today the National Park.

The jail had various ships among which the "Godot" was the most known. In 1947 the President of the Nation disposed the closure of the jail and the installations were transferred to the Navy and a Naval Base was installed there in 1950.

## ANTARCTIC MUSEUM JOSÉ MARÍA SOBRAL

The Antarctic wing José María Sobral offers some approaches to the Argentine activity in Antarctic lands.

There are enough items of evidence to validly assume that it was a seaman from the River Plate the first to arrive in Antarctic lands in the American quadrant. The records of the port of Buenos Aires of the early 19<sup>th</sup> C prove this when reporting voyages to the islands near the South Pole, also generically known as *Patagónidas*. Some months after their departure, ships returned with their holds full of fur seal skins when that species was extinct along the coasts of South America. This was the time of seal hunters.

But it was not until the early 20<sup>th</sup> C when the activity in Antarctica became more intense given the suggestions of the International Geographical Congresses which had taken place at the end of the previous century. Therefore, Argentina supported the great international Antarctic expedition in which Belgium, Sweden, France, Germany, Scotland and England took part. In order to provide scientific help, a magnetic and meteorological observatory was built on an island near De los Estados Island to carry on observations simultaneously with the various expeditionary groups.

A series of relevant events took place at that time: sub-lieutenant José María Sobral took part in doctor Otto Nordenskjöld's expedition, this same expedition was rescued by the *Uruguay* corvette carrying our flag, an observatory on the South Orkney Islands was bought—the only scientific observatory which continually operates in the Antarctic continent since 1904—, support to the French expedition headed by Jean-Baptiste Charcot, and the setting up of the *Compañía Argentina de Pesca* (Argentine Fishing Company) on San Pedro or South Georgia Islands.

Buenos Aires became at that time the landfall port of all expeditions which marched south to study the

mysteries of the Antarctic continent, practically unknown till then.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> C, this activity became more intense. Firstly, different episodes were added to the occupation of the South Orkney Islands and later a greater scientific and logistic deployment throughout the territory, which increased with the Antarctic Treaty that turned the continent into a place exclusively destined for scientific research. Today, Antarctica is everyone's and none's land. Numerous countries water knowledge from the sixth continent which has become a large reservoir for the future of mankind. Some historic and current expressions of this Antarctic continent are on exhibit in our rooms.

### Rooms 1 Expedición Dr. Otto Nordenskjöld

The Swedish expedition 1901-1903 led by Dr. Otto Nordenskjöld, including the Argentine Lieutenant José M. Sobral, wintered at Snow Hill Island, east of the Antarctic Peninsula.

### Rooms 2 Carlos A. Larsen

The expedition had scheduled a single winter stay but, in February 1903, the expeditionary ship *Antarctic*, which was going to take the winterers back, wrecked in the Weddell Sea.

### Rooms 3 Dr. Gunner Andersson

Prior to the shipwreck, 3 men had been left at Hope Bay to reach Snow Hill through the iced sea, and if the ship did not arrive on time at the island, to return on foot to the disembarkment site (Hope Bay). The shipwrecked people of the *Antarctic* took refuge at the volcanic Paulet Island, and the three groups remained isolated until the rescue expedition arrived in November 1903.

The three men at Hope Bay had to build a small hut with stones to survive. The original elements used were recovered and are shown at the exhibition.

### Room 4 Fossils

Millions of years ago, Antarctica was part of a greater continent, Pangea, which split apart and

drifted away in different directions. Back then, present day Antarctica was located at warmer latitudes, had vegetation, and warm- and cold-blooded animals. Some parts of the Antarctic continent sunk into the sea depths, and later emerged, fossilizing mollusks as the ones shown in the exhibition, predecessors of present valve shellfish and squids. These mollusks belong to the emerged lands of Ross Archipelago.

### Room 5

Planes belonging to the Argentine Navy and the Argentine Air Force have been making incursions across the polar sky since the 1940s. Some years later, there were flights to the South Pole and even transpolar flights. The names of the pioneers we must remember, without detriment to the crews, are Naval Captain Hermes Quijada and Captain Mario Olezza, as well as the precursor flights from Belgrano Base led by then-Colonel Hernán Pujato in small single engines that, in their attempt to reach the Pole, provided information about the unknown geography of the south area of the Weddell Sea. The setting up of Marambio Base, with a runway operating throughout the year for planes of enormous size, broke the winter isolation of Antarctica, allowing the transport of injured people, materials, and correspondence all year round.

### Room 6

Radio communications started in Antarctica from Laurie Island in 1927, breaking the isolation in which scientific commissions had lived. Until the 1970s, the scientific base "Almirante Brown" at Paradise Bay was equipped with this radio station.

### Room 7 Polar atmosphere

The "aurora australis" is an incredibly beautiful high atmospheric geomagnetic phenomenon. Along with the research on the so-called "ozone hole" and "global climate change", they are studies required to determine policies to preserve our planet for the future.

### **Room 8 Great voyages**

Besides the aforementioned José María Sobral, Argentinian pioneers conducted scientific activities in the observatory on Laurie Island, South Orkney Islands, while the Argentine Navy was in charge of the reconnaissance and occupation of the Antarctic territory in the 1940s. In 1950, the Argentine Antarctic Institute was founded to centralize all polar scientific activity. The designer of this great Argentine polar project was General Hernán Pujato. A major figure in the greatest land crossings through Antarctica, the Fuegian by adoption Major Gustavo Giró Tapper also implemented the advance party of the South Pole expedition led by Colonel Jorge Edgardo Leal.

### **Rooms 11 and 12 Belgian Expedition**

The scientific expedition led by the Belgian Adrien de Gerlache between 1897 and 1899 was forced to winter at the Bellingshausen Sea, west of the Antarctic Peninsula, when the *Belgica* was trapped in ice. Roald Amundsen, the first man to reach the South Pole some years later, was part of this expedition.

### **Rooms 13 and 14 Antarctic whalers**

In 1906, captain Carl A. Larsen, who had commanded the *Antarctic* in the Swedish expedition headed by Dr. Otto Nordenskjöld, founded the Fishing Argentine Company (Compañía Argentina de Pesca) on Saint Peter Island, South Georgias. This first settlement started the peak of whale hunting in the southern seas.

### **Room 15 Antarctic bases**

Modern polar ships provide the logistic support for scientific activities in Antarctica. The icebreaker *San Martín*, purchased in 1954, was replaced by the icebreaker *Almirante Irizar*. The polar transport *Bahía Paraíso* wrecked some years ago close to the American base "Plamer," fortunately there were no victims.

### **Room 16 Endurance Expedition**

Ernest Shackleton was one of the most important explorers of the so-called "Heroic Age." He had taken part in Robert F. Scott's first expedition in 1903, and then attempted to get to the South Pole in 1907, reaching a latitude which was a hundred miles from his destination, where he had to return to safeguard his life and the lives of the members of his expedition. In 1914, he planned a transpolar expedition that would leave from the Weddell Sea, cross the continent by the South Pole, and reach the Ross Sea. Unfortunately, the ship was trapped in ice in the Weddell Sea and wrecked. Shackleton and his men took refuge on Elephant Island, South Shetland Islands. From there, Shackleton, showing an incredible courage, crossed the most dangerous sea in the world aboard a small boat and reached Saint Peter Island. After many failed attempts, he managed to rescue all the members of his expedition with the Chilean tender *Yelcho*.

### **Room 17 Corvette ARA Uruguay**

The corvette *Uruguay* belongs to the Argentine Navy,

the oldest afloat. It belonged to the "Sarmiento Squadron," named after the President who ordered the purchase of three equal gunboats from English shipyards. Having a rich southern operating record, and given the lack of news about the Swedish expedition, the ship was prepared at the Navy shipyards for a rescue operation, venture that finished successfully in November 1903.

### **Room 18 South Orkney Islands**

The meteorological observatory on Laurie Island, South Orkney Islands, is the first and single scientific laboratory that has been conducting research without interruption in Antarctica since 1904. It was purchased from the Scottish National Expedition led by Dr. William Bruce in January 1904. They raised the Argentine flag on February 22<sup>nd</sup> that same year. The original Bruce house was replaced by a wooden house, nowadays Moneta house museum, named after an Argentinian who wintered there four years. William Speir Bruce was a distinguished polar scientist who abandoned medicine to take part in the Scottish National Expedition, exploring the Weddell Sea and wintering on Laurie Island in 1903.

### **Room 19 Schooner Austral**

The *Austral* was the second Argentine ship assigned to polar service. It was purchased from the French scientist Jean-Baptiste Charcot. Unfortunately, it sank in the River Plate during its second trip to Laurie Island.