



Australian
National
University



SOLVING A 170 YEAR-OLD MYSTERY THE FRANKLIN DISCOVERY LECTURE SERIES

Thursday 19 February

5.30-7pm

Weston Theatre, JG Crawford
Building, Lennox Crossing

ANU

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On May 19, 1845, Her Majesty's Ship (HMS) Erebus and HMS Terror of the Royal Navy departed England on a much-heralded Arctic expedition in search of the Northwest Passage. Under the command of Sir John Franklin, former Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen's Land, the expedition's two ships set out with a complement of 129 officers and crew. The two ships were last seen entering Baffin Bay in August 1845.

Since 2008, Parks Canada has led six major searches for the lost Franklin Expedition ships, covering many hundreds of square kilometres of the Arctic seabed. The discovery of a ship on the sea floor, made by side-scan sonar towed from the Parks Canada research vessel Investigator, was confirmed on September 30, 2014 to be the lost HMS Erebus.

Presented by the High Commission of Canada, The Franklin Discovery Lecture series will uncover the operations and technologies involved in the ongoing contemporary searches for the missing ships, and will explore the critical role played by Lady Franklin in the initial search for her husband.

The lecture will be delivered by Dr Erika Behrisch Elce of the Royal Military College of Canada, whose work focuses on the letters of Lady Franklin concerning the search for the lost Franklin Expedition, and Canadian Coast Guard Captain William (Bill) Noon who led the Canadian expeditions in search of the Franklin ships.

This lecture will be live-streamed at the following link:

[http://www.livestreamaustralia.com.au/
franklin-discovery-lecture-anu/](http://www.livestreamaustralia.com.au/franklin-discovery-lecture-anu/)

Canada

This event is presented by the High Commission of
Canada

Finding HMS Erebus: searching for the Franklin Expedition 2008-2014

Captain William (Bill) Noon

After nearly 170 years of searching to unravel the mysteries surrounding explorer Sir John Franklin's fabled arctic voyage, the Canadian Victoria Strait Expedition team located one of the historic ships in September 2014 to finally solve one of the world's greatest archaeological cold cases. Led by Parks Canada, the 2014 expedition brought together an unprecedented number of public, private and non-profit sector organisations to share resources and expertise. Ultimately, it was the combination of state-of-the-art technology with 19th century Inuit oral testimony that led to the discovery of the nearly intact HMS Erebus in the eastern waters of Queen Maud Gulf.

The Canadian Coast Guard (CCG), a special operating agency of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, contributed the primary platform using CCGS Sir Wilfrid Laurier, an 83-metre Arctic Class 2 icebreaker, and its helicopter. Key experts aboard the Laurier included the Canadian Hydrographic Service's hydrographers, the Government of Nunavut's archaeology team, and Parks Canada's underwater archeological team, collaborating closely with the Canadian Coast Guard crew to combine expertise, technology and understanding of Inuit history and follow the clues leading to Franklin's lead vessel.

Captain Noon's on-scene account provides an overview of the recent modern searches, including the operations, the technologies, the role of Inuit knowledge, and the drama surrounding the discovery. The Franklin Expedition ships, HMS Erebus and Terror, are an important part of Canadian history, laying the foundations of Canada's Arctic sovereignty nearly 170 years ago.

Captain William Noon is Commanding Officer of the Canadian Coast Guard Ship (CCGS) the icebreaker Sir Wilfrid Laurier. He joined the Canadian Coast Guard in 1981, and has served as Navigation Officer on numerous ships in British Columbian coastal waters and in the Canadian Arctic. Captain Noon has also commanded research ships undertaking offshore oceanographic and search and rescue missions. In September 2014, as Captain of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and in collaboration with Parks Canada, he played a key role in the discovery of HMS Erebus - one of two ships from Sir John Franklin's ill-fated quest to find the Northwest Passage that began in 1845 and ended when his vessels became stuck in ice. Captain Noon has a keen interest in maritime heritage and has been a trustee for the Maritime Museum of British Columbia. He is also on the board of the Victoria Classic Boat Festival, and is a member of the Thermopylae Club of Victoria, which aims to protect and preserve the nautical history of Canada's west coast. His remaining time is spent restoring and cruising aboard his 67 year old wooden boat, Messenger III, a former coastal mission boat.

The Penelope of England: Lady Franklin, the search for Sir John Franklin and Victorian England's 'modern odyssey'

Dr Erika Behrisch Elce

Lady Franklin is best known as the wife of lost explorer Sir John Franklin, the "Penelope of England" waiting for her heroic husband's return from Victorian England's Odyssey. Writing letters to Members of the British Admiralty, members of Parliament, and international heads of state, Lady Franklin was instrumental in keeping the search for her husband in the public eye long after the British Government would have given him up for lost. When internationally-funded searches turned up little evidence of the expedition's fate, it was Lady Franklin's privately-funded voyage that ultimately gave her husband and his companions the title "First Discoverers of the Northwest Passage." Still, in her time Lady Franklin remained a marginalised figure: a woman and a wife with no official say in how the Government chose to conduct their affairs, whose letters were eventually ignored and even condemned in the press. This presentation looks at Lady Franklin's highly politicised role in the search for her husband – as representative and advocate for all the families of the missing men, as a visual stand-in for Sir John himself, and as an eloquent, disruptive voice of dissent.

Dr Behrisch Elce is Assistant Professor in the Department of English, Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, Ontario. Her research interests encompass nineteenth-century Arctic exploration narratives, travel writing, the literature of science and nationalism, nineteenth-century non-fiction prose, and Victorian print culture. She is author of a recent book on Lady Franklin entitled *As affecting the fate of my absent husband: Selected Letters of Lady Franklin Concerning the Search for the Lost Franklin Expedition, 1848-1860*, published in 2009 by McGill-Queen's University Press.

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