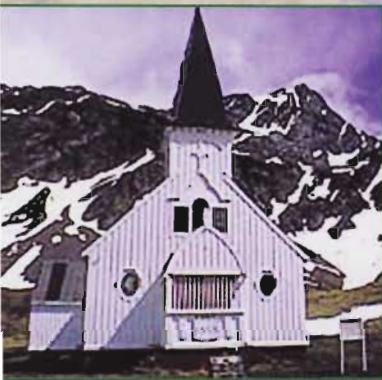


SOUTH GEORGIA TODAY

Although most who travel to South Georgia Island come for the breathtaking natural beauty, there are a few other sites that offer intriguing surprises.

There are no roads on South Georgia Island. No ferries shuttle passengers to and fro. No hotels offering tourist accommodations. There are no restaurants, supermarkets or pharmacies.

Yet, the brave soul who makes the journey through the freezing waters of the South Atlantic, will be rewarded not only by unsurpassed natural beauty, but a few man-made structures which stand as a reminder of the tenacity of the men who once inhabited this remote isle of ice.



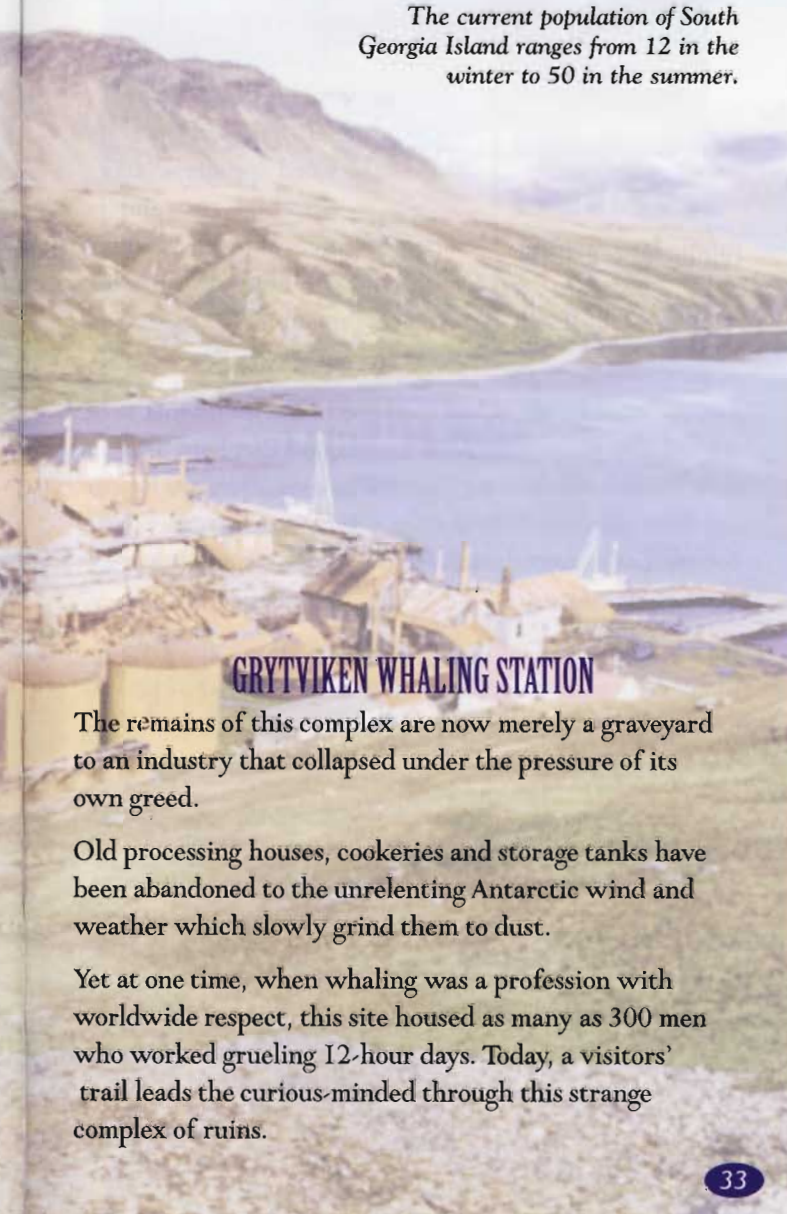
THE WHALERS CHURCH

Its bell rings out over the frozen landscape, through the clear and frosty air, ricocheting off the mighty snow-crowned peaks. Three marriages have been performed in its simple wooden interior. And since twelve births have taken

place on South Georgia, it has seen its share of baptisms as well. Designed by a Norwegian architect and consecrated on South Georgia on Christmas Day, 1913, this is the only structure on the island that still serves its original function.

THE ISLAND'S LANDMARKS

The current population of South Georgia Island ranges from 12 in the winter to 50 in the summer.



GRYTVIKEN WHALING STATION

The remains of this complex are now merely a graveyard to an industry that collapsed under the pressure of its own greed.

Old processing houses, cookeries and storage tanks have been abandoned to the unrelenting Antarctic wind and weather which slowly grind them to dust.

Yet at one time, when whaling was a profession with worldwide respect, this site housed as many as 300 men who worked grueling 12-hour days. Today, a visitors' trail leads the curious-minded through this strange complex of ruins.



WHALE TALES

Mighty, majestic and magnificent, the many whales that call the South Atlantic home are true treasures of the deep.

They cruise the depths of the chilled waters around South Georgia like giant living submarines. They are the largest of all animals found in the South Atlantic Ocean. They spend their entire lives in the sea yet need a steady supply of fresh air to survive. They are the great whales, overseers of the oceans, commanders of the seas.

A TINY GIANT

All whales fall into two broad groupings: toothed whales and toothless, or baleen whales. The Minke Whale is the smallest of all baleen whales...and the most plentiful in the South Atlantic Ocean. These two facts are more closely



related than they might seem. Because of this whale's relatively small size (they grow to an average length of 26 feet and weigh 6 to 8 tons), they were not hunted by

whalers in the early part of the 20th century. As a result, approximately 500,000 thrive in the waters surrounding South Georgia Island.

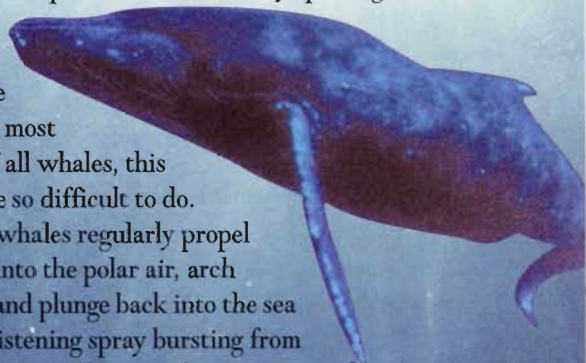
A RARE MUSICIAN

Unlike the Minke Whale, the Humpbacks are a rarer species. Due to overhunting in the early 1900's, these gentle giants have earned a place on the endangered species list. That's why spotting one is a true sight to be treasured.

And because they are the most acrobatic of all whales, this might not be so difficult to do. Humpback whales regularly propel themselves into the polar air, arch backward, and plunge back into the sea sending a glistening spray bursting from the ocean surface. They are also famous vocalists, composing "songs" that can last up to 35 minutes.

SOUTH GEORGIA'S WHALES

Female Humpback Whales can reach lengths of up to 62 feet!



CELEBRITY OF THE SEAS

Perhaps the most famous of all whales is the Killer Whale or Orca. It too can be found in the waters surrounding South Georgia. Seals and penguins must keep a constant lookout for this beautiful but dangerous predator. Killer Whales have been known to tip ice floes into the air to slide its prey into its substantial jaws. Orcas live in pods of up to fifty individuals. Each pod "speaks" its own whale dialect of clicks and calls.

ISLAND BORN BENEATH THE SEA



From its birth beneath the icy South Atlantic Ocean millions of years ago to its present day splendor, South Georgia is truly a land of wonders.

Look on any globe and it won't take too long to realize that the continents of South America and Africa could fit together like two giant puzzle pieces. Once a single land mass, these two continents have moved steadily apart for the past 200 million years with their southernmost tips gaining the most distance: Cape Horn and The Cape of Good Hope.

As South America and Africa drifted apart, the Earth's thin crust was ruptured and layers of rock were forced upward, eventually bursting through the surface of the South Atlantic to form nearly 200 islands. The most spectacular of all these icy islands is South Georgia.



ISLAND TOPOGRAPHY

South Georgia has been called "The Alps Of The South Atlantic".

MOUNTAIN GUARDIANS

South Georgia is the highest and most mountainous of all the islands surrounding Antarctica. At its heart stands the massive Mount Paget, a stony snow-capped giant rising 9,625 feet into crystal clear air. Paget, along with five other towering peaks that are a continuation of the Andes Mountain Range, stand sentinel over South Georgia, ensuring that it will remain a pristine paradise inhabitable by only

the most tenacious of Mother Nature's creatures.

These enormous mountains also serve as a stalwart against the frigid westerly winds that would otherwise batter the island's north coast. As a result, the bays along this edge of the island have provided shelter for dozens of manned expeditions over the years as well as a safe home for one of the richest concentrations of marine mammal and bird life in the world.

South Georgia may at first seem a harsh land. But for those creatures who know how to unlock its icy secrets, it is quite simply an untouched island haven. Come, explore it with us now...





OUR FASCINATING FLIGHTLESS FRIENDS

Although they're mostly black and white in appearance, Penguins are South Georgia's most colorful residents!

King. Gentoo. Macaroni. The names are as fanciful and enchanting as the penguins to whom they belong. These adorable formally attired creatures hop, wobble and wander South Georgia's beaches by the thousands, creating crowds that are truly stunning to behold.



A FEATHERED ONE CALLED MACARONI

With bright orange tufts of feathers sprouting out from their foreheads, Macaroni Penguins are easy to spot on the brown beaches of South Georgia Island. Not that they'd ever be that difficult to find. "Maccies" as they are referred to, are the most plentiful penguin species in the subantarctic region, numbering 5.4 million pairs on South Georgia alone!

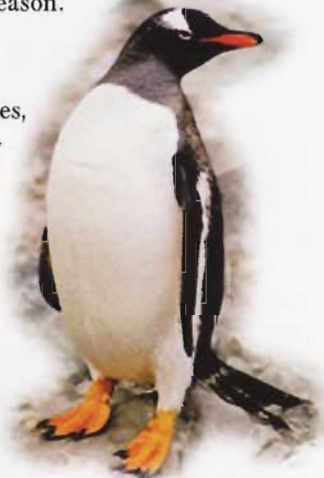


A BIRD AND HIS KINGDOM

Standing at just over three feet tall and weighing approximately 33 pounds, the King Penguin's name is well deserved. Second only to the Emperor in claiming the title of world's largest penguin, King Penguins make a striking site on South Georgia's shores as orange-red splashes around their necks shine in the dazzling subantarctic sun. Both the male and female birds share in protecting their precious eggs from freezing sub-zero days. After 55 days, the chicks hatch and remain close to mom and pop throughout the entire summer season.

THE GENTLE GENTOO

Compared to other penguin species, the Gentoo comprises a relatively small portion of South Georgia's penguin population. The stylish Gentoos accent their traditional black and white tuxedo with pinkish-orange feet and with orange highlights on their beaks. As with many other penguins, the Gentoos feed on lantern fish, squid and crustaceans from the nearby seas and regularly dive to depths of over 100 yards in search of a meal. Talk about working for your supper!



LOOKING AHEAD

Once the site of a near ecological disaster, South Georgia is now a refuge for creatures great and small!

South Georgia is a place where the bitter cold seems to have the unlikely power of slowing down even the steady hands of time. Where the word “progress” has little to do with high-rises and supercomputers and more to do with how wildlife has been able to regenerate after the ravages of man.

For the seals, progress has been good. The island that once spelled almost certain death for Fur and Elephant Seals has now become one of their greatest havens. They are free to live virtually untouched by the outside world—except of course for occasional contact with the dedicated scientist or eco-tourist!

In fact, most of the wildlife on South Georgia has grown so unaccustomed to people, that it's easy to get up-close to seals, birds and penguins without them quickly scampering away.

For the whale population, recovery is taking a bit longer. The seas are still relatively empty because of the decimation of so many of their kind. But with international whaling legislation and enough time, perhaps these mighty creatures of the deep will someday return to their former splendor.



A NATURAL KINGDOM

They are few havens of natural beauty left in the world that aren't fighting to keep their splendors intact. In South Georgia Island's case however, the war has already been fought. And in the end, it was the kingdom of ice and snow that was victorious.

With its shores protected by an icy moat that stretches for hundreds of miles and its land watched over by imposing peaks of ice, we can be sure that this particular kingdom is one that will be preserved forever as one of the most splendid Living Edens on Earth.

