



Press release

For immediate release

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RSGS Announces Two New Explorers in Residence

The Royal Scottish Geographical Society (RSGS) is excited to announce the appointment of two new Explorers in Residence. Luke and Hazel Robertson were appointed as the society's Explorers in Residence on Thursday 20th April, joining Craig Mathieson who also holds the title.

The role of Explorer in Residence (EiR) was introduced in 2014, by Chief Executive Mike Robinson, in order to recognise some of our best young explorers and the role that exploration still plays in inspiring people about the world around them. The aim of the EiR role is to excite people about the world's physical and cultural variety, to awaken people's personal potential and better inform them about global issues.

Talking about the role of RSGS in exploration Mike Robinson said:

"RSGS has an incredibly rich history of association with many of the most influential names in exploration of the last 150 years. We were founded by David Livingstone's daughter, Agnes, Ernest Shackleton worked for the society and William Speirs Bruce, who was a council member, led the first Scottish Antarctic expedition in 1902. In addition we have hosted most of the leading lights in exploration of the last 130 years including Hillary, Amundsen, Scott, Stark, Mallory, Shipton, Kingsley, Bird, Nansen, Armstrong, Heyerdahl and many many others. However this is not an historical role, we continue to play host to most of the leading contemporary explorers and adventurers.

"I am delighted to welcome Luke and Hazel Robertson on board as our latest Explorers in Residence. They have a wonderful energy and an infectious enthusiasm and are great role models for future generations interested in the world around them. I look forward to helping Luke and Hazel accomplish much more and wish them the best of luck as we follow them, albeit remotely, on their Alaskan adventure."

Speaking about their appointment as the latest Explorers in Residence, Luke and Hazel said:

"We feel truly honoured and humbled to be named as an 'Explorers in Residence' for the RSGS. It's a title that has much weight and significance given the staggering history of the organisation and the centuries of explorers who have shaped it. Built in to every one of us is the curiosity associated with human nature and we truly believe we are all explorers.

"Through this partnership, we're aiming to inspire people through exciting learning and engage with anyone who has an interest in the world around us.

"Promoting science and encouraging participation in outdoor activities is one of many goals we share with the Society and we want as many people as possible to explore the natural environment and the human societies who call it home."

Luke and Hazel leave for their next expedition, Due North:Alaska, on Saturday 6th May. Due North:Alaska will see the pair travel the entire length of Alaska purely using their own power, a world first. In 80 days Luke and Hazel will

travel 2000 miles by running, kayaking and biking. To follow their journey search “Due North Alaska” or follow Luke, Hazel and RSGS on social media.

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Notes for Editors:

Luke Robertson:

In 2016, with an artificial pacemaker and less than two years after undergoing brain surgery, Luke became the youngest Brit, the first Scot and one of less than 20 people in history to ski 730 miles solo and unsupported to the South pole.

Luke has also completed successful expeditions to Norway and Greenland and competes in long distance endurance events. These include the Ben Nevis Triathlon, the Ten Peaks Ultra and the 250 mile 8 day inaugural Cape Wrath Ultra. He can also be found trying to go fast on bikes and skis.

He is an ambassador for Marie Curie, the Polar Academy and the Greener Scotland Campaign and a patron of the Royal Geographical Society and the Scottish Royal Geographical Society. As well as TEDx speaker, he has delivered presentations to a variety of audiences and has been a guest contributor to the BBC website. He has 6 years of business experience.

Hazel Robertson:

Hazel has led an expedition in Canada, climbed Kilimanjaro unsupported via the treacherous Western Breach and loves anything that takes her outdoors, including back-country skiing, mountain biking and long distance multi-day ultramarathons. In 2016 she ran a 140 mile Ice Ultra on snowshoes in Arctic Sweden and the very first 250 mile Cape Wrath Ultra through the beautiful and remote west coast of Scotland.

Craig Mathieson:

The existing RSGS Explorer in Residence (EiR) is Craig Mathieson. Craig successfully led the first dedicated Scottish Expedition to the South Pole in 2004, man-hauling his sledge 730 miles over the Antarctic Continent.

Craig founded and runs the Polar Academy, a charity which uses the medium of exploration to build children’s confidence and understanding of our planet. Each year the Polar Academy trains and takes a group of specially selected school pupils on an Arctic expedition to Greenland.

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