You are invited to the launch of

CLASS AND COLONIALISM IN ANTARCTIC EXPLORATION, 1750 - 1920

BY BEN MADDISON

Date: Tuesday 15 April 2014
Time: 5pm for 5:30pm start
Venue: Panizzi Room
       Library, Building 16
       University of Wollongong

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Ben Maddison is an Antarctic historian and Senior Lecturer in the School of Humanities and Social Inquiry in the Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts at the University of Wollongong.

Dr Maddison joined 74 others on The Spirit of Mawson Australian Antarctic Expedition, setting sail from Bluff, New Zealand in early December 2013. The Expedition marked 100 years since Australian explorer Sir Douglas Mawson ventured the very same sub-zero path, with the ship’s passengers revisiting century-old measurements to collect new data for records about the earth’s health.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Between 1750 and 1920 over 15,000 people visited Antarctica. Yet, despite such a large number the historiography has ignored all but a handful of celebrated explorers. Maddison aims to redress this balance and presents a study of Antarctic exploration from below. Sailors, sealers, whalers, cooks, mechanics, engineers, stokers and radio operators were all necessary in bringing the upper-class 'hero explorers' to the continent and supporting their expeditions. Likewise, resources obtained from local populations in southern Africa, Australasia, the Pacific and South America were vital to their success. In telling the story of these forgotten facilitators, Maddison argues that Antarctic exploration can be seen as an offshoot of European colonialism.

Dr Maddison's book takes the point of view of “history-from-below”, lambasting the biased concept of heroes, exploration and discovery as reflecting only the activities of only a few prominent individuals.

Book published by Pickering & Chatto, 2014

FACULTY OF LAW, HUMANITIES & THE ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG