



## Ross Sea: An Antarctic Odyssey

17<sup>th</sup> February–20<sup>th</sup> March, 2023

On board *m/v Ortelius*



M/V *Ortelius* was named after the Dutch cartographer Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598) who published the first modern world atlas, the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Theatre of the World) in 1570. MV *Ortelius* was built in 1989 in Gdynia, Poland, as a research vessel for the Russian Academy of Science and was named *Marina Svetaeva*. In 2011 she was purchased by Oceanwide Expeditions. The vessel was re-flagged and renamed *Ortelius*. Now the ship is sailing as a 108-passenger vessel. *Ortelius* is 91 m long, 17.6 m wide, and has a maximum draft of 5.80 m, with an Ice Strength rating of UL1/1A, a top speed of 12 knots, and one diesel engine generating 3200 kW.

Captain: **Per Andersson** [Sweden]

and his international crew of 60 (13 Nationalities)

First Officer:	<b>Mikael Svedberg</b>	[Sweden]
Second Officer:	<b>Sjoerd Van Hoek</b>	[Netherlands]
Third Officer:	<b>Eline Marinka</b>	[Netherlands]
Third Officer:	<b>Martin Hansson</b>	[Sweden]
Chief Engineer:	<b>Aleksandr Bondarev</b>	[Lithuania]
Hotel Manager:	<b>Albert Don</b>	[Netherlands]
Head Chef:	<b>Heinz Hacker</b>	[Austria]
Sous Chef:	<b>Ivan Ivanovic</b>	[Serbia]
Sous Chef:	<b>Norman Estrada</b>	[Philippines]
Ship's Physician:	<b>Eugene Wong</b>	[Canada]
Bosun:	<b>Eli Serra</b>	[Philippines]
Bosun:	<b>Philip Malang</b>	[Philippines]
Expedition Leader:	<b>Sara Jenner</b>	[U.K.]
Assistant Expedition Leader:	<b>Allan White</b>	[Falkland Islands]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Tennessee Blackmore</b>	[U.K.]
Expedition Guide	<b>Vide Brandt</b>	[Norway/Sweden]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Laurence Dyke</b>	[U.K.]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Michael Green</b>	[U.K.]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Christan Long</b>	[New Zealand]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Daniel Martig</b>	[New Zealand]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Gary Miller</b>	[USA]
Expedition Guide:	<b>Chloe Power</b>	[Australia]

**We welcome you onboard!**

**Day 1 - February 17<sup>th</sup> 2023: Bluff, New Zealand**

**Writer: Laurence Dyke**

**08h00 GPS position: 46°45.0'S / 168°17.2'E**

**Wind: SE 3 • Sea State: Calm • Weather: Broken Cloud • Air Temperature: +15°C**

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The day had finally come, the start of a bold Antarctic adventure. In the early afternoon we congregated in the lobby of the Kelvin Hotel, Invercargill; having made our way here from far-flung parts of the world. A few of us had spent some time exploring the wonderful islands of New Zealand through the preceding days and weeks, but many of us had arrived in Invercargill today. A few of us only just managed to get here in the nick of time, a combination of tropical cyclones, floods, and even earthquakes causing all manner of delays, rerouting, and sleepless nights.



Nevertheless, we had made it, and after checking in with Allan, and having our suitcases labelled, we made our way to the coaches. In short order we were bound for the small port town of Bluff; a twenty-minute drive down the coast. Here we entered the industrial port complex, and were escorted through the working areas of the port; past huge container cranes, endless stacks of aluminium ingots, monstrous piles of wood and milled lumber, and mountains of sand, gravel, and rock. In amongst all the bustle and chaos lay *Ortelius*, sat serenely alongside the wharf. The deck lined with a row of smiling faces welcoming us onboard. As we walked up the gangway we first cleared customs, formally leaving New Zealand. Then Albert, our hotel manager, checked us in and our stewards and stewardesses showed us to our cabins.



There was time for a cup of tea up in the Lounge and most of us took the opportunity to explore the ship; our home for the next 32 days. We clambered all over the outside decks, admiring the helicopter on the aft deck, and taking the time to soak in the sunshine and gentle breeze of the Antipodean summer.



At the end of the afternoon we were called to the Lecture Room on Deck 3 for the mandatory ship safety drill. This culminated in a practice-run of the evacuation procedure and included mustering, donning the bright-orange life jackets, and being shown to the lifeboat boarding points. With this out of the way we were formally welcomed to the ship by both Albert, our Hotel Manager, and Sara, our Expedition Leader. Together they gave us an introduction to life on board, the plan for our adventure, and what to expect over the coming days and weeks. Meanwhile the crew were preparing for our departure, the harbour pilot came aboard, and we slipped our mooring lines, gathering way as we passed through the breakwaters heading south. As far south as it's possible to go with a ship. Dinner followed, and we piled our plates high at the buffet; recompense for a long and exciting day.

However, we were not quite done yet. As Sara had outlined earlier, we hoped to cruise Snares Island in the morning, and before we could do so we needed to be briefed on IAATO protocols, and how the Zodiac operations onboard the ship work. With this all checked off we could finally make our way to bed; the gentle rocking of the open ocean soothed us to sleep as *Ortelius* crept out past Stewart Island under the descending veil of night.



## Day 2 - February 18<sup>th</sup> 2023: Snares Island

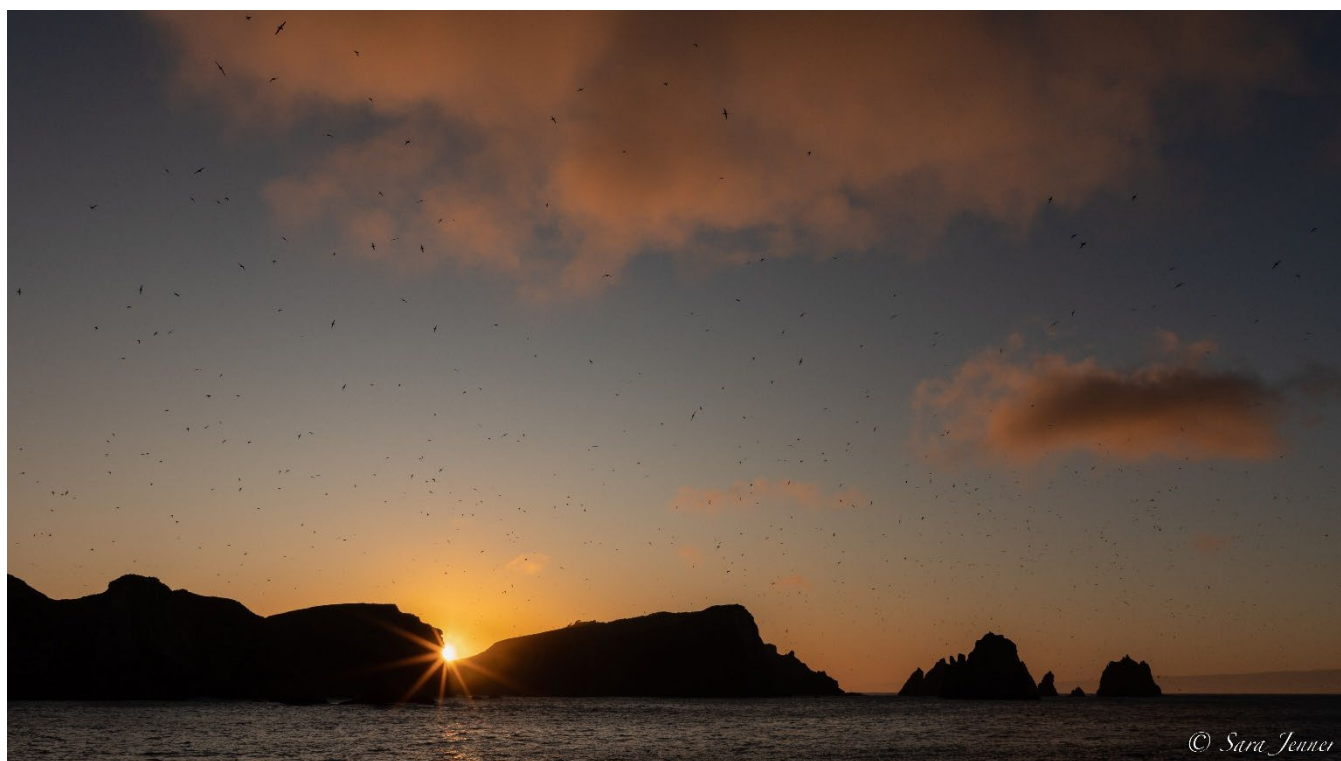
Writer: Gary Miller

08h00 GPS position: 48°02.0'S / 166°35.9'E

Wind: NW 4 • Sea State: Slight • Weather: Broken Cloud • Air Temperature: +16°C

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Oh. My. God. What a dawn. After leaving Bluff last night, we sailed toward Snares Island with the hope of being able to see the islands at least and maybe, just maybe, being able to get our Zodiacs out. We woke to a gorgeous dawn as we rounded the southwestern end of the island in search of a calmer anchorage. In the growing orange light we came to see swarms of albatrosses in the air, soaring high over the island. Down low, along the water, were thousands of **sooty shearwaters** hurrying out to sea for the days foraging. What a bustling place. It wasn't quite cloudless, but the sky was sunnier than we've seen for a while and the sea was calm enough for a Zodiac cruise. The wake-up call came over the tannoy; it was 13°C outside—it hardly seemed to be the subantarctic.



So, after a sumptuous breakfast, we boarded the Zodiacs and our fleet of nine small boats headed out for adventure in the morning. The granites of the island have been eroded by the pounding sea into fabulous cliffs and gullies with many caves. We rounded a few points on the southeast then east side of the island and finally encountered our first group of **Snares erect-crested penguins** nestled into a small valley just above a clear spot along the rocky coast. We could approach fairly close with the Zodiacs, so we got some great views of the penguins. They looked to be just getting ready to start their annual moult.



Slowly motoring around the kelp-fringed coastline, we continued to encounter swooping and soaring **Shy** and **Buller's albatrosses** with an occasional **southern royal** just to remind us all how large they really are. The swell surging against the rocks was fantastic as we merrily bobbed around in our boats. In a few spots, the rocks were positioned in a way that focussed the swell and big waves crashed around us, throwing spray into the air and providing quite the spectacle.

Rounding one of the headlands, we finally came into view of the famous 'penguin slope'; the main access point the **Snares crested penguins** use to get up to and down from their colonies that are hidden in the vegetation along the tops of the island. Very impressive how those small penguins are able to scale such a large, slippery, and foreboding rock face. Half of the group carried on to poke their noses around the north end of the island and were greeted with more spectacular scenery, but no more wildlife than the rest of us saw on along the east coast. On the way back we dawdled in a few big caves and even explored one drive-through tunnel that extended deep into the rock. Passing lots of **New Zealand fur seals** snoozing on the rocks, we made our way back toward the ship. Along the way Gary spotted (and photographed) a lone moulting **royal penguin** in among the **Snares crested penguins** to add to our species list.



We came round the corner, threading the needle between the islands, and past several flotillas of lovely checkerboarded **cape petrels** on our way back to the ship where we got back on board. The weather was beautiful and warm for the rest of the morning and most were outside on Deck 7, taking in the sunshine and watching the Snares recede into the distance in our wake.

We were on our way towards Campbell Island for further exploration and adventure tomorrow. After lunch we conducted our first full biosecurity check in preparation for landing at Campbell Island, and then settled into a comfortable afternoon on board.

In the evening, just before dinner, we were welcomed to the bar for a drink with the captain, a toast to the voyage, and an introduction to our Expedition Team.

This evening we had our first plated dinner in the restaurant, and after a couple of hours of great food, flowing conversation, and a glass or two of wine, we retired to our cabins where the gentle motion of the south Pacific lulled us to sleep.







### Day 3 - February 19<sup>th</sup> 2023: Campbell Island

Writer: Michael Green

08h00 GPS position: 51°53.0'S / 168°53.9'E

Wind: N 7 • Sea State: Moderate • Weather: Rain • Air Temperature: +13°C

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Overnight, and through the course of the morning, we travelled through rolling swells to the beautiful Campbell Island, around 660 km from our departure in Bluff. The island system lies near the southern margin of the Campbell Plateau and is composed of one large island and several smaller satellite islands. The island is the remains of an ancient shield volcano formed between 6 and 11 million years ago, and is mostly composed of basalt, and other extrusive volcanic rocks. These dark rocks, combined with overcast and wet weather, gave the island a slightly foreboding atmosphere as it loomed out of the mist during the morning.



The seas around the island were completely full of life, we saw hundreds of albatross, including: **light-mantled albatross**, **Campbell albatross**, **black-browed albatross**, **grey-headed albatross**, and the huge **southern royal albatross**. There were also thousands of **sooty shearwaters**, **white-chinned petrels**, **giant petrels**, and some very curious **Campbell shags** who repeatedly flew close to the ship—seemingly intrigued by our presence.

Going into Tucker Cove on the Zodiacs we were mesmerised by even more sea birds around us, with **New Zealand sea lions** frolicking in the water, although we marvelled less at the driving rain we experienced on the run-in. Ignoring the rain, the team soon had us ashore for a leg stretch up Beeman Hill with a walk up a hill to a stunning, but incredibly windy viewpoint. Beginning at the scientific station on the shore we climbed slowly up the narrow, but very beautiful boardwalk to the summit of the hill at a leisurely pace and took in the amazing sights

of the natural harbour beneath us. The vegetation was thick, lush, and green, reflecting the amount of precipitation which falls on this isolated place.



Along the way we were lucky enough to see **silvereyes** (a blow-in from further north), **New Zealand pipits**, the elusive and endemic **Campbell teal** and, as we got further up the path, **southern royal albatross** settled peacefully in the vegetation and soaring over us in the sky. **Subantarctic skua** patrolled occasionally, looking for any opportunity for a meal. Some of us heard **Campbell snipe** in the undergrowth, but only a fortunate few caught sight of one.

Too soon it was time to retrace our steps back to the landing site where the Zodiacs were awaiting us. We returned to the ship for dinner. Then the team took us out once more, for a Zodiac cruise around Perseverance Harbour. The weather had finally cleared up, and weak evening sun peeked through the scudding clouds. Our cruise progressed down the fjord, helped along by the strong westerly winds. It was a treat to explore this place from sea-level, and we trickled along the shore, heading through the dense rafts of kelp to spot a variety of wildlife including **Antarctic terns**, **red-billed gulls**, a pair of **kelp gull** parents guarding their large downy chick, a few solitary moulting **erect-crested penguins**, and finally, hidden in the undergrowth, we caught sight of the famous and rare **yellow-eyed penguin**. In the mean-time *Ortelius* had weighed anchor and came charging down the fjord to meet us; within ten minutes we were all back aboard.



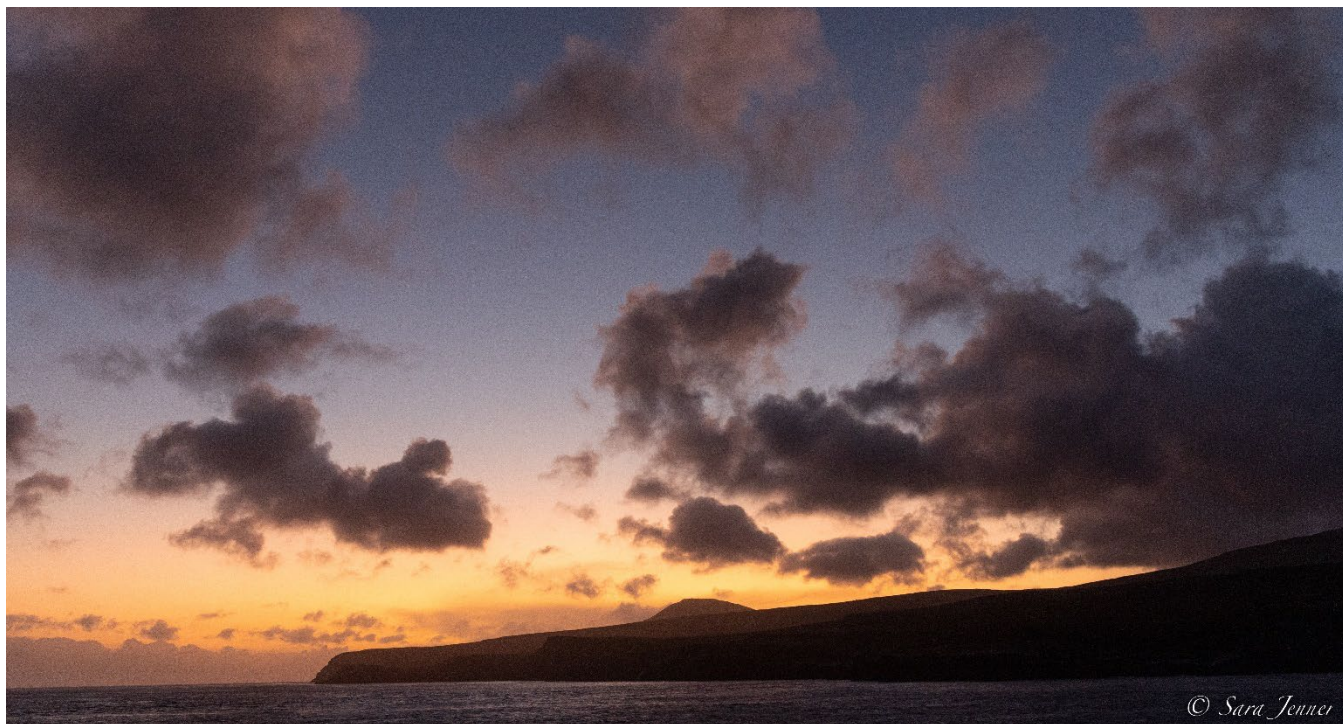








We departed Campbell Island, turning south, into the rolling swells of the South Pacific. A few stayed up until well beyond midnight, and were rewarded with the subtle, ethereal display of the *Aurora Australis*. We gazed out, adjusting our night vision for the subtle green hues dancing in vertical pillars into the darkness. The display was interrupted by Elon Musk's infamous Starlink satellite train—a startling reminder that we are changing our planet, even the vast night sky.





## Day 4 - February 20<sup>th</sup> 2023: South Pacific Ocean

Writer: Chloe Power

08h00 GPS position: 54°19.7'S / 168°18.6'E

Wind: NW 11 • Sea State: Rough • Weather: Rain • Air Temperature: +12°C

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After gently being rocked to sleep, we awoke to our first proper 'sea day'. Gary started with lecturing about the seabirds of the Southern Ocean, with a focus on the albatross species we had encountered so far. He taught us how to differentiate between species by looking at their plumage colours, bill shape, and wingspans. He also hinted at his undeniable love for the skua; some of us were very intrigued to hear about this notoriously disliked bird, and we knew we would hear more about it throughout the voyage.

The swell and wind began to rise throughout the course of our day, but nonetheless, the show went on. Laurence introduced us to the interesting world of polar bathymetry and told us how little-explored these areas are. The seabed of the polar regions is shaped by geological processes forming an array of features including fields of exploding gas hydrate craters. The sea floor can also be intensively ploughed by iceberg keels which shape and contour the seabed. He also told us some stories of his time as a PhD student in Greenland, where he studied the history of the Greenland Ice Sheet, sometimes from land, from huge icebreakers, and sometimes from dirty, smelly, and scary fishing boats.



By mid-afternoon, the sea state had progressively worsened. However, this drew quite a crowd of hardy expeditioners who braced themselves up on the bridge; watching 8–9 metre waves roll under (and over!) *Ortelius*. Windspeeds reached up to 94.4 knots; we had well and truly hit the top end of the Beaufort scale! (12 being the highest). Mother Nature was putting on a show.

**southern royal albatross** gracefully soared above the malevolent washing machine below; spindrift ripped tumultuously from wave crests to troughs, while *Ortelius* rocked from port to starboard, rolling at a staggering level, almost 30°. You really had to hold on. One hand for the ship—always!



Despite these conditions, we couldn't get enough of our Antarctic education, so many of us bravely ventured back down (or back up) to the Bar where Sara then gave us a wonderful presentation on the life and quirks of penguins. Witnessing them on the land over the last few days was one thing, but imagining them living, and thriving, at sea in these kinds of conditions was mind blowing! Such little creatures having to cope with swell conditions of over 10 metres! They really are well adapted to life as a seabird.

In the evening recap, Sara updated us on our voyage progress and gave us the wind and swell forecast for Macquarie Island. Unfortunately, the forecast was not on our side, so we made the tough decision to sail directly towards the Balleny Islands and Antarctica.

Dinner was... interesting. The dining room was chaotic—chairs had fallen over, sugar bowls spilled everywhere, and broken crockery littered the floor initially. However, the restaurant staff had done an amazing job not only plating up our meals, but also delivering them deftly to our tables in the most difficult conditions. It looked like such a balancing act.





As night started to fall, most of us hunkered down in our cabins; we were even advised to hold off on showering as the swell did not ease. If anything the wrath of the ocean increased during the night; in the early hours the largest waves recorded reached over 13 metres and the wind exceed 100 knots! It was time to secure all our belongings, turn down our chairs, and hope for some hours of sleep through the turbulent subantarctic night.



## Day 5 - February 21<sup>st</sup> 2023: South Pacific Ocean

Writer: Chris Long

08h00 GPS position: 57°06.9'S / 169°09.1'E

Wind: WNW 12 • Sea State: Very Rough • Weather: Overcast • Air Temperature: +3°C

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Quote of the day “It doesn’t matter how rich and how famous we are, when we are sea sick, we are all on the same level”. Rodney Russ.

After a very rough day yesterday everyone hunkered down in anticipation of a worsening forecast. Later yesterday evening those brave souls who made it up to the bridge were rewarded with quite a spectacle and this morning was much the same. The maximum swell forecast was meant to be around 9 metres. However, there were moments on the bridge, 14 metres above sea level, when the horizon was completely obscured by towering, angry walls of water. The bow would pitch up violently, throwing any of us unsuspecting seafarers flat to the floor. The ship would then lumber up and over the crest of the wave before crashing down the back side of the swell causing a huge wave of spray to engulf the ship. This continued for much of the day and many of us were down with a terrible case of sea sickness.



For breakfast, lunch, and dinner the expedition staff helped the Dining Room team to deliver all meals to the tables from the buffet. And all passengers had to sit on the solid bench seating, as people were prone to falling off the chairs since the movement of the ship was so violent.

The lecture program continued despite the swell for those hardy seafarers who could make it to The Bar and we were entertained first by Chloe, who talked about Pinnipeds. Then it was Chris

with a short presentation on Macquarie Island, followed by the first part in a four-part documentary about Carsten Borchgrevink's expedition to Cape Adare, and finally Vide told some stories in the Bar after dinner.



Due to the horrific swells our course today was very much towards the east as it was not safe for us to head on our desired southerly bearing. Therefore, through all the pain and discomfort of the pitching and rolling of the ship, very little progress towards Antarctica was actually made today.

## Day 6 - February 22<sup>nd</sup> 2023: South Pacific Ocean and the Southern Ocean

Writer: Tennessee Blackmore

08h00 GPS position: 58°49.7'S / 166°57.9'E

Wind: WSW 7 • Sea State: Rough • Weather: Rain • Air Temperature: +3°C

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After a night of mighty seas, we raise on the morning 22<sup>nd</sup> February to a calmer ocean. We are bound for the Antarctic Convergence, the boundary between the frigid waters of the Southern Ocean and the warmer South Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian Oceans. Now we begin to feel the cold grasp of '*terra Incognita*' as air temperatures have dropped to around 1°C.



We began the day's activities with Chris's tremendous lecture on crested penguins and the research his sister has conducted on the spectacular and wild coasts of New Zealand and the Subantarctic Islands. We cast our minds back to our time on Campbell Island; our last contact with *terra firma* before making the passage south. Refreshed with knowledge, we enjoy excellent seabird sighting of **cape petrels** and **southern royal albatross** that gracefully orbit the ship in winds approaching 50 knots.

Midmorning, we muster down in the Lecture Room for our second round of biosecurity. Having checked and double-checked Velcro, pockets, hidden compartments, and forgotten crevices with vacuum cleaners, brushes, and trusty paper clips, we are now ready to explore the Antarctic without risk of contaminating this pristine environment.

After lunch many gather on the Bridge to scan the horizon for birds, whales, and icebergs. We are graced with much welcome sunshine as the high seas of the previous days seem now just



intrepid memories. With the watch officers we marvel at the distance still to cover to the famed coast of Cape Adare.

Later in the afternoon we watched the second part of documentary about often forgotten polar explorer, Carsten Borchgrevink. We learnt about the incredible efforts of the Antarctic Heritage Trust to preserve Borchgrevink's hut at Cape Adare; the first human dwelling on the 7<sup>th</sup> Continent.



After dinner we are joined by Allan in the Bar, who transports us to the other side of the Southern Ocean; to the windswept isles of The Falklands. He regales us with impressions of his time living, sometimes solitary, on Westpoint Island and of sharing lunch with the legendary Sir David Attenborough.

**Day 7 - February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023: Southern Ocean**

**Writer: Daniel Martig and Chloe Power**

**08h00 GPS position: 62°34.4'S / 168°17.5'E**

**Wind: W 7 • Sea State: Rough • Weather: Cloudy • Air Temperature: +2°C**

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We had made great progress overnight. *Ortelius* had averaged over 10 knots, helped along by a wind of 40 knots from slightly astern. Outside was quite cold for those keen expeditioners out on deck—a mere 2°C, with the ocean temperature only just above, at 4°C. It made us appreciate how seabirds endure life in such cold temperatures.



Our trusty Bridge team notified us of that the first iceberg had been spotted on the radar; *Ortelius* had passed it during the small hours of the night, so unfortunately it was obscured by darkness. Nonetheless, more were sure to come and we would be as ready as ever to spot them.

While the swell had eased a little, Sara made the call to use our weather window wisely (she seems to be a great window spotter!) to brief us on important, and mandatory, IAATO (The International Association of Antarctic Tourism Operators) guidelines for visiting Antarctica. This was then followed by the helicopter operations briefing, which got us very excited about the prospects of boarding a helicopter in the near future. Flying over Antarctica was a big draw for many of us on this trip. We were also introduced to the excellent helicopter team from DAP—Marcelo, Javier, and Julio the pilots, and Mario, Louis, and José the engineers. They seemed just as excited as us!





However, before we could board these helicopters, we had to undertake some practice to understand how the operation runs. We dressed up in all our Antarctic weather gear; layers and all, as if it was the real deal. The Bar suddenly transformed into a departure lounge, with the Expedition Team ushering us out onto the Helicopter Deck in groups of 5. We were assigned individual numbers which represented the group we would be in. We were also given ear defenders, crucial for protecting our ears during noisy operations.

The weather was brisk; cold and windy, and the decks were quite slippery, which made some of us cautious about flying in this sort of environment. However, we were reassured that in the real operations to come, we will only operate when conditions are safe and stable; this was just a practice. And because this was just a practice the helicopters were still secured inside. We boarded them in the warm shelter of the Helicopter Hangar. We got a good sense of how to get in and out of the helicopter, how much room we would have inside, and whether we would need to bring our backpacks or not.

Back on the Bridge, we heard news that another iceberg had been spotted. We eagerly got our cameras out and raced out on deck, and at 16:45, there it was! For some of us, our first ever iceberg. This truly symbolised our presence in Antarctic waters. We were nearly there!

Martin, the third officer, was curious, like many of us, about how tall this iceberg was. So next minute, he had pulled out a sextant (a navigation device used for measuring the angle of celestial bodies) and concluded that it was approximately 35 metres high! Slightly less than 10% of an iceberg sits above water, so the keel of this monster may extend more than 300 metres below the surface of the ocean—a stark, frigid behemoth.

After another wonderful dinner from Chef Heinz's kitchen we retired to the Bar for some story telling with Dan. He had got himself in some pretty hairy situations on a 32-foot yacht in southern parts of New Zealand; including storm conditions off the forbidding coast of Stewart Island and the windswept fjords of southwest New Zealand. We wondered what Dan thought of experiencing the 10+ metre swells just a couple of days ago, and whether this brought back some of those challenging memories.





## Day 8 - February 24<sup>th</sup> 2023: Southern Ocean

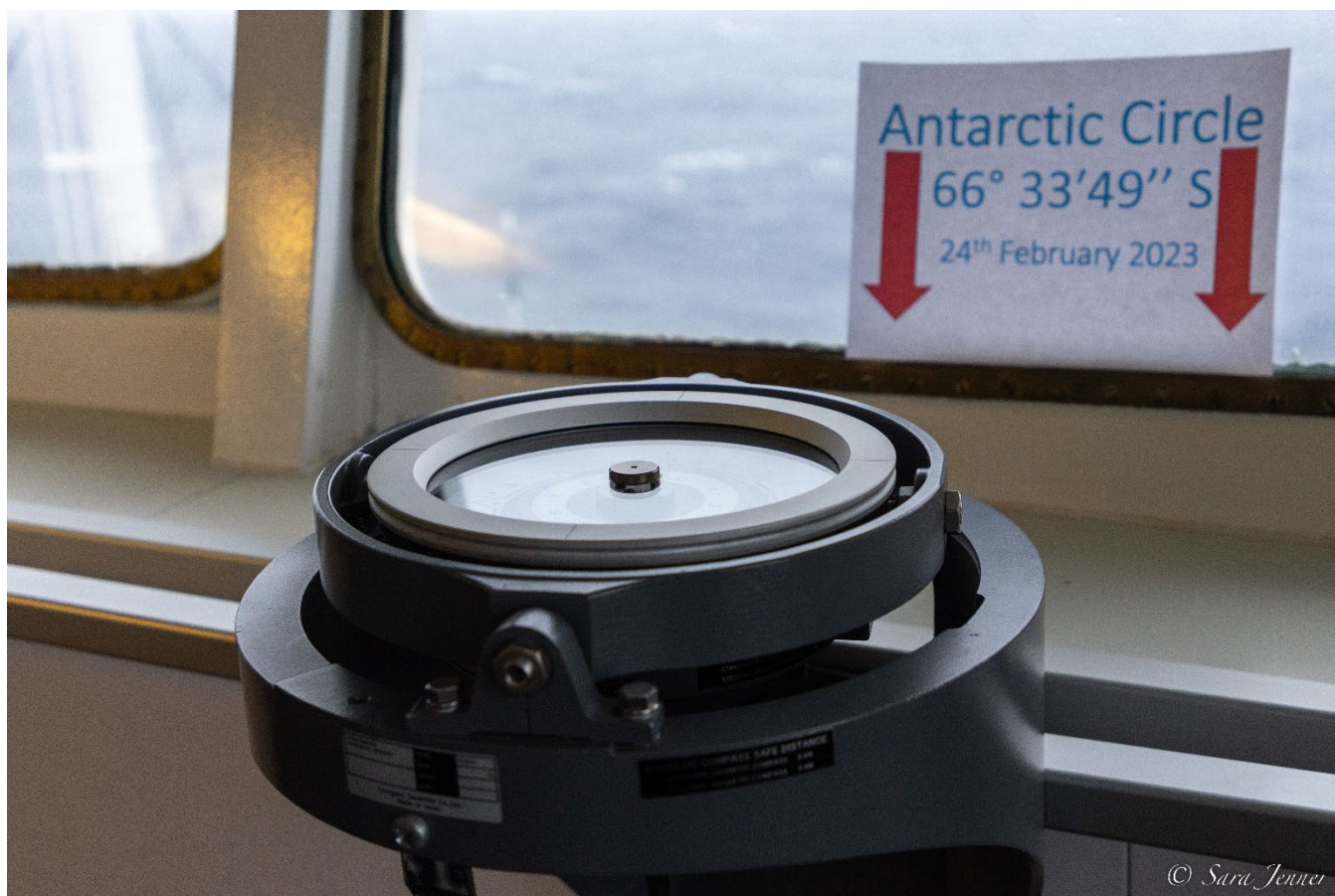
Writer: Gary Miller

08h00 GPS position: 66°43.2'S / 170°02.4'E

Wind: NW 7 • Sea State: Moderate • Weather: Overcast • Air Temperature: +1°C

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Today started a little bit early for some as we hit another 'landmark' in our journey to the Ross Sea. We crossed the Antarctic Circle this morning before breakfast. At 66°33' south latitude we passed officially into the land of the midnight sun. We're too late in the season to experience a proper midnight sun, but for much of the next week, until we start north again, it won't get completely dark through the night.



Ahead of us is another day at sea. At least there's a bit of relief as the swell has reduced from the past couple days. Running through 10–12 metre swells, with an occasional 15 metre brute, gets old quickly, but we had pretty good seas today. The visibility was variable through the day. So instead of having much to see outside, we had an excellent program of talks from the Expedition Team. First up was Tennessee to finally introduce us properly to his number one explorer, James Clark Ross. He regaled us with the remarkable achievements of Ross on his 1839–1843 voyage to discover the Ross Sea, among many other things. It was an astounding voyage in the age of sail and Tennessee told the story with drama and enthusiasm.

Later in the morning, Sara gave us a lesson in how to make the most of our cameras and succeed in taking the sort of photos we are hoping for. She is clearly skilled and gave us many great examples of her own images to illustrate different techniques. Hopefully in the days to come, and armed with this new knowledge, we can be more successful with our cameras.



After lunch, we had a nice break to relax, catch up with diaries, have a nap, or watch out to sea in the hopes of spotting whales or seals as we continue south. We saw plenty of seabirds, including the wonderfully aerodynamic **light-mantled albatross**, and a few of us caught sight of a **humpback whale**, and even saw it present its fluke to us as it dived. The afternoon finished off with the final episode of the Borchgrevink documentary. It's sad to think that it took many years before his achievements were recognised. Despite many difficulties, and controversies, they still managed to overwinter on the Antarctic continent for the first time ever.

The day ended in the usual way with a recap. The weather looked good for the Cape Adare region tomorrow; perhaps we will finally get up in the helicopters around Duke of York Island—and fingers crossed for landing at Cape Adare.





The evening entertainment was Gary talking about living on Maatsuyker Island with his partner; volunteering as caretakers of a historic lighthouse. Six months on a tiny island with no people, no phone reception, no internet, and no heating. Despite the apparent hardships, he expressed huge enthusiasm for their time there. Afterwards, we retired to our cabins, dreaming of flying...



## Day 9 - February 25<sup>th</sup> 2023: Robertson Bay

Writer: Michael Green

08h00 GPS position: 70°38.0'S / 170°00.5'E

Wind: SE 8 • Sea State: Moderate • Weather: Overcast • Air Temperature: -4°C

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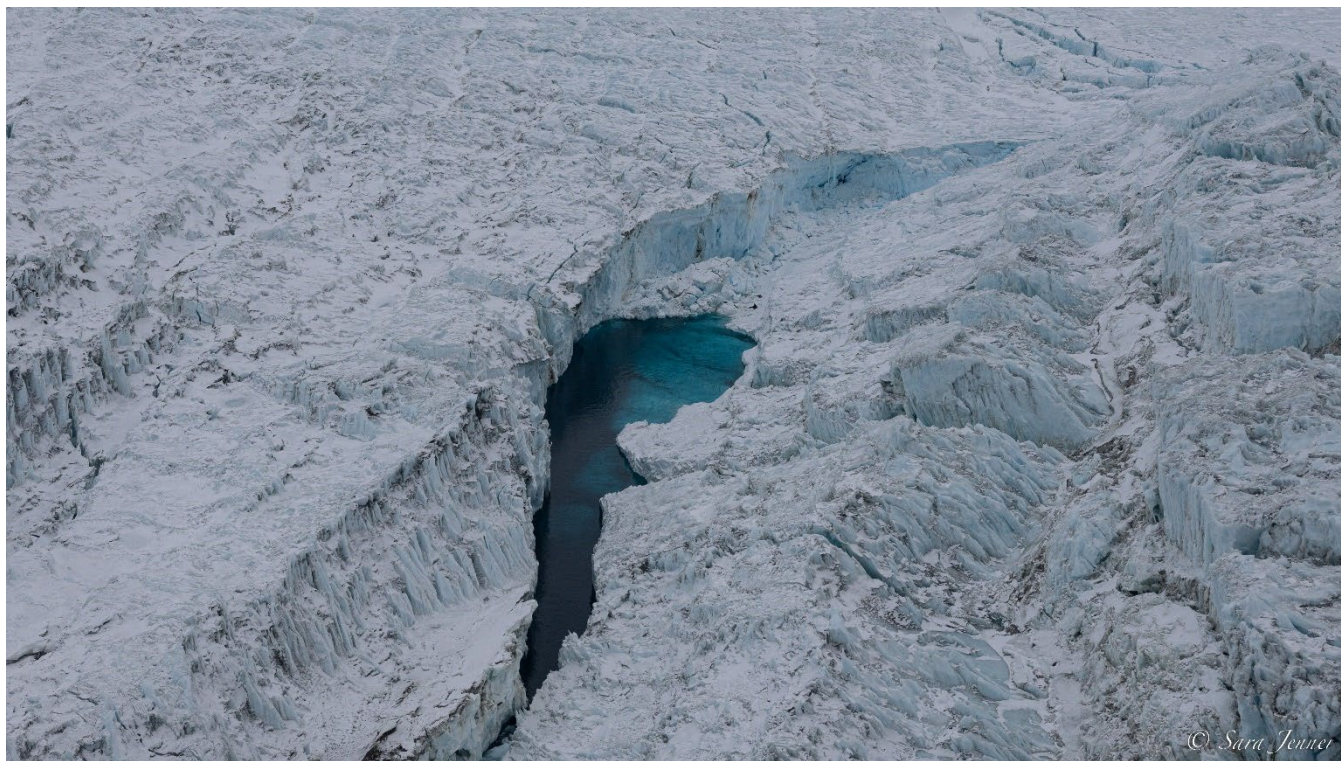
We woke this morning with an incredible sense of anticipation. Might today be our first day in the helicopters? Through the course of the morning *Ortelius* passed along the coast of Victoria Land, past the dark and foreboding ridge of Cape Adare, and up into Robertson Bay. We spent the morning admiring the land and seascapes. The first bands of sea ice wound around the coastline and among an array of tabular icebergs, each seemingly more beautiful than the last. We spent as much time as possible on the outer decks, soaking in the breath-taking Antarctic scenery and revelling in our proximity to land, at last. Those on deck had to dress up warm and make the best use of the sheltered areas of the decks, shifting from port to starboard and back again as *Ortelius* navigated through the maze of ice. Winds were strong, at times more than 50 knots, but there seemed to be a little more shelter towards the head of Robertson Bay.

After a meeting between the Pilots, Captain, and Expedition Leader a decision was reached; conditions were good enough! Our helicopter adventures began with a scenic flight around and over the Sir John Murray Glacier and above the sublime Duke of York Island. We split into our flight teams and the guides soon had us organised and aboard the helicopter for our first flight.





Our excitement was tangible, and as we strapped into the helicopter seats, many of us could barely contain ourselves. Hearing the turbine power-up, feeling the vibrations of the rotors above us, and then being grabbed by the sudden soaring as the helicopter lifted off from the deck and up into the blustery sky was almost overwhelming. Within a few moments the ship looked tiny as we glanced back down the bay. The incredible pilots use all their skill to give us an exhilarating experience, first swooping low over the water, heading up towards the end of Robertson Bay.



We then climbed up towards the mountain in the middle of the glacier. The geology was truly spectacular; the hundreds of delicate sedimentary layers have been squeezed and heated by tectonic activity through the last 300 million years. The folds and faults are testament to the pressure these rocks have experienced, and a slight green tinge hints at the rich copper deposits within.

The helicopters took us higher still, climbing up to the top of the glacier, way over this magnificent river of ice. From this high viewpoint we suddenly dropped; it was like the scene in Star Wars as we dived down among, and even under, the rugged pinnacles of the glacier and plunged over the icefall. We whooped with exhilaration; marvelling at the skill and daring of the pilots, who were also clearly enjoying themselves!

As we made our way down the glacier it became flatter and less chaotic; the crevasses and seracs giving way to a large floating ice tongue which protrudes several miles out into Robertson Bay. We circled over the terminus of the glacier, soaking in the wonderful blue hues of the glacial ice, peering into the vast chasms between the rifting blocks of ice, and even spotting some wildlife from our vantage point in the sky. Most of us saw a **crabeater seal**, ensconced within a pool of aquamarine water between two gargantuan blocks of ice. A lucky few also saw the



incredibly rare **Arnoux's beaked whales**; these elusive and largely unstudied animals have only been spotted in Antarctica a handful of times.



The flight lasted about twenty minutes but the time flew by, we were having such fun. We returned to the ship which looked tiny, even as we made our final approach. The skill of the pilots



was evident as we made a gentle touch down on the flight deck, despite the strong and buffeting winds. Many of us returned to the ship with tears in our eyes, a surreal and wonderful experience.

The professionalism of the helicopter team and deck crew soon had us safely back on the ship where we warmed ourselves with cake and a well-deserved hot chocolate. A perfect start to our flying experience.



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**Day 10 - February 26<sup>th</sup> 2023: Ross Sea**

**Writer: Chloe Power**

**08h00 GPS position: 71°17.1'S / 169°51.2'E**

**Wind: SE 10 • Sea State: Moderate • Weather: Overcast • Air Temperature: -2°C**

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The morning broke with howling winds sweeping violently across Cape Adare. Overnight we had briefly awoken as more anchor chain had been put out; an attempt to stop *Ortelius* dragging in the ever-strengthening wind. Many of us woke early, and headed to the bridge. We were greeted by a ferocious scene; the sea sprayed its energy angrily along the shores of Ridley Beach, dark skies and menacing clouds tumbled over the ridge line, and lone **Adélie penguins** sought shelter besides Borchgrevink's hut as they endured their catastrophic moult. We gazed out at these hurricane-force conditions with the thought of Borchgrevink's party—how ominous it must have seemed to those men upon first sight, yet how incredibly humbling and joyous it would have been to first set foot on the great southern continent. As Carsten Borchgrevink said; "I was sitting foremost in the boat, and jumped ashore as the boat struck, saying 'I have then the honour of being the first man who has ever put foot on South Victoria Land'."



The wind continued to howl, the temperatures dropped, and the anemometer up on the bridge recorded over 99 knots—the device cannot measure beyond this, so we may conclude that the wind exceeded 100 knots for several minutes at a time. Unfortunately, it was abundantly clear that we would not be landing. A thick band of sea ice and icebergs hugged the Borchgrevink Coast, so *Ortelius* made a wide turn around the cape. Meanwhile, we kept a sharp lookout for wildlife among the shifting morass of ice and were rewarded by spotting a sleepy **leopard seal**!



Perhaps tired from chasing those vulnerable moulting **Adélie chicks** back at the Cape. Cruising among the huge icebergs seemed very fitting as Laurence invited us to a morning lecture about glaciers and glaciation in the Bar.





Despite not making a landing, we had a very busy day ahead of us. And a long day it would be, as the wind and swell conditions really slowed down our progress. At times Ortelius was only making a few knots of headway into the short, sharp seas, and brutally cold wind.

Activity Group 1 had the opportunity for a tour of the bridge with Third Officer Martin. They learnt about all the equipment, devices, and knowledge required for navigating through the Southern Ocean and beyond.

Gary then gave us an incredible presentation about the life of **Adélie penguins**, which delved into the years of research he has carried out on this incredible Antarctic species. We sailed past the rugged Possession Islands—notorious for difficult landings and swell-ravaged shores. Tennessee treated us with his dulcet tones on the PA; reimagining the journey James Clark Ross made through this very area more than a century ago. Ross and his party made it to these shores and claimed the islands for Britain—hence the name ‘Possession’. Tennessee didn’t stop there, he then presented us with an amazing talk about the Discovery Expedition of 1901–1904, where Captain Robert Falcon Scott made an attempt on the South Pole.



After a lovely afternoon of polar history and hot chocolate, we headed to dinner where we were welcomed to a BBQ feast and free drinks! Spirits were high, bellies were full of delicious food, and laughter. Morale was great despite the arduous journey it had taken for us to finally reach the icy white continent.





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Games after dinner had started to become a routine for some; 'Monopoly Deal', 'Bananagrams' (a spin on Scrabble), and dice were quickly becoming the crowd favourites. Competition was brewing and friendships were blossoming.



**Day 11 - February 27<sup>th</sup> 2023: Ross Sea**

**Writer: Chris Long**

**08h00 GPS position: 73°41.5'S / 171°42.5'E**

**Wind: SW 2 • Sea State: Slight • Weather: Overcast • Air Temperature: -6°C**

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After the incredibly slow progress made yesterday we were relieved to wake to see *Ortelius* back on track following our course at speeds of 8–11 knots throughout the day. The ocean still showed some residual swell from yesterday's hurricane force winds and our ship rocked and rolled gently as the day started with a fascinating lecture from Chloe about whales in the Southern Ocean. That was followed by Vide talking about the Antarctic Treaty and politics of the continent which is partially claimed by many different countries, but which remains a place where military activities and mining are banned, and cooperation and scientific endeavour thrive.



In the afternoon Michael had the entire bar riveted to their seats as he showed 115 never seen before photographs of Scott's Terra Nova Expedition from the Herbert Ponting collection. As someone who has been lucky enough to spend quite some time in Scott's Cape Evans hut, these pictures brought to life many of the dimly lit corners of the hut. It turned the cold historic feeling hut, into a warm and cosy setting full of laughter, science, hard work, and comradeship along with detailed images showing the elaborate provisions, equipment, and the sense of heroism that the Scott's last trip is so well known for. In the evening, after dinner, Chris showed some of his videos from his time working at Scott Base, including a video of the fish and starfish on the sea floor at Cape Evans filmed on his GoPro lowered through a dive hole in the sea ice.





As the day progressed the swell gradually abated and by evening we were all out on deck enjoying a beautiful tabular iceberg; it hung, seemingly suspended, atop the glassy calm ocean. The sun slid towards the horizon and those on deck late in the evening were rewarded with the most spectacular two hour yellow and gold sunset and with our first views of the imposing might of Mount Erebus. Some time after midnight the *Ortelius* slid gently into the first pancake ice and two **orca** were spotted heading north. Autumn has a firm grip on Antarctica, and the Ross Sea is rapidly beginning to freeze over. We are almost too excited to sleep. What will the next days in McMurdo Sound hold for us?

## Day 12 - February 28<sup>th</sup> 2023: Cape Evans and Hut Point

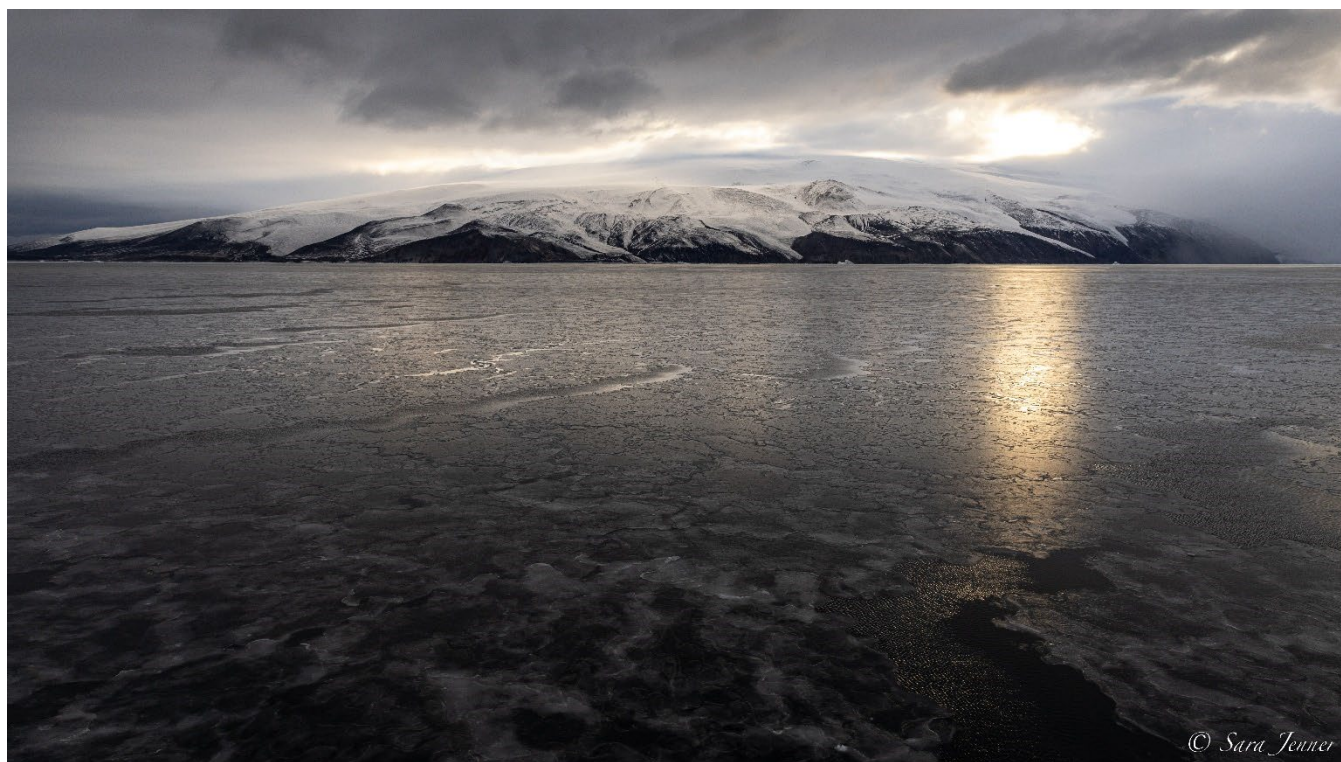
Writer: Tennessee Blackmore

08h00 GPS position: 77°20.6'S / 166°12.4'E

Wind: SSW 2 • Sea State: Smooth • Weather: Broken Cloud • Air Temperature: -7°C

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The 28<sup>th</sup> was a day of days. A day we stood together on the shoulders of giants. We ended the 27<sup>th</sup> with plans to explore Cape Bird, Ross Island. However, an unexcepted break in the weather and ice gave *Ortelius* a chance to make the famed Cape Evans and McMurdo Sound. In the early hours, with mighty Mount Erebus concealed behind a blanket of cloud, Sara woke us ahead of schedule to witness the crimson morning light illuminating the Admiralty Mountain range. Upon orange-lit sea ice, **Weddell seals** lounged, we spotted our first **emperor penguins**, and Type-B **orcas** spy-hopped as we weaved our way through the ice towards the cape.



As the sun rose higher on the horizon, Cape Evans and the hut of Captain Robert Falcon Scott's Terra Nova Expedition (1910–13) came into view. Dwarfed by the black volcanic cliffs, snow, and great icebergs, the Cape Evans hut provided welcomed shelter and winter quarters for Scott's last expedition. With temperatures approaching -33°C with windchill, our ship dropped anchor and we prepared both physically and emotionally for our first rendezvous with a polar legend. Our intrepid crew drivers took the helm of their Zodiacs and carried us to the jet-black shores of Cape Evans. With extremely low temperatures and ferocious winds, the splashes of seawater instantly froze, creating magnificent suits of frozen armour.









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We disembarked the Zodiacs and slowly walked to entrance of the hut. Upon entering we were met by a unique aroma; a smell that can only be experienced and not explained. Before us,



preserved in awe-inspiring detail; the living and working quarters of the Terra Nova Expedition. Cans of food, tins of mustard, boxes of flour, bunks, test tubes, papers, and blankets. Storied items that instantly transported us to that Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration. For many, including most of the Expedition Team, the sensation was overwhelming, and we stood agog and shed tears. We moved with reverence towards Scott's bunk, with the visceral images of Herbert Ponting fresh on our minds. We headed to the stables and marvelled at a period collection of **Adélie penguin** eggs and **emperor penguin** pelts. We imagined life for Scott's ponies and the conversations between Oates and Mares over the warming stove.



As the wind ripped up cascades of fresh snow, we walked up to the Ross Sea Party memorial cross, remembering Expedition Leader Aeneas Macintosh, Victor Hayward, and Spencer-Smith of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition.

Finally, we boarded our Zodiacs and headed back to *Ortelius*, setting course for McMurdo Sound and Hut Point. Over lunch we ventured out on deck and ogled at the mighty Erebus Ice Tongue, extending deep into the bay. Ice conditions were highly favourable, permitting passage towards the United States Antarctic Program McMurdo Station, the largest scientific base on the Antarctic continent. We spotted, on the horizon, Discovery Hut from Commander Robert Falcon Scott's first Antarctic expedition. Used by all of Britain's subsequent South Pole attempts, Discovery Hut was often the last human-made structure seen on the way to the Antarctic interior.



After dinner, we took to our Zodiacs and, for the second time in a day, we stepped foot on storied shores. Walking across a slither of fast-ice, with moulting penguins looking-on, we made our way up to the door of the Discovery Hut in the shadow of McMurdo Station. We crossed the threshold into a colder, bleaker hut and again savoured the historic smell. We learnt of the desperate circumstances of the Ross Sea Party of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition, trapped in a draughty hut with limited and dwindling supplies. We finished this extraordinary day with a visit from an inquisitive **Weddell seal** on the shoreline. We then returned to *Ortelius* to sail toward the famed Dry Valleys of McMurdo Sound.











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## Day 13 - March 01<sup>st</sup> 2023: McMurdo Dry Valleys and McMurdo Sound

Writer: Laurence Dyke

08h00 GPS position: 77°27.9'S / 164°02.2'E

Wind: S 2 • Sea State: Calm • Weather: Broken Cloud • Air Temperature: -9.5°C

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Once again, we woke early, way before our wake-up call from Sara. Overnight, *Ortelius* had crunched through the plates of new sea ice covering most of McMurdo Sound and we found ourselves secure among the ice.

We made our way out onto the frozen decks, with bleary eyes, and coffee in hand. The scene outside was bathed in glorious silence. The main engine was off, and there was not a breath of wind. The only sound was the squeaking of the ice as it gently rubbed against the hull and the distant calls of **skua** and **Weddell seals** further out on the ice floes all around the ship. As the lazy sun rose over McMurdo Sound it cast a pink glow onto the distant mountains, before lighting them gold with the first direct light of the day.



Conditions were absolutely perfect for flying, and before long the ship was a hive of activity. The helicopter deck was soon swarming with mechanics and able seaman; preparing the machines for a day of exploration. As we sat down to breakfast we heard the first flight leaving; the scouting party of guides flying in with all the emergency equipment.

Then it was our turn, the first group gathered together in the Bar, and then we piled into the helicopters and were soon aloft. Rising elegantly off the stern deck, and over this magical Antarctic seascape. Our ship became just a speck in the ice behind us, and as we gained speed

we passed over hundreds of **Weddell seals**, seemingly unbothered by our fleeting moment far above them. We approached the coastline, surrounded by a thick band of last years ice, and then in a flash we were flying above Taylor Valley, over magnificent patterned ground – a maze of interlocking cracks with just a dusting of snow blown into the recesses. We climbed slightly, lifting to pass low and fast over the mighty Commonwealth Glacier and passed deeper into the broad valley. A series of jagged granite peaks flanked the valley, and these seemed to hem in the valley and become more precipitous the further up we flew.



After an incredible flight, we spotted the yellow and blue emergency shelter erected by our guides, and we were guided in to land by José, the smiling helicopter engineer from DAP. We stepped out under the whirling rotor blades, and as the helicopter took off again in a cloud of dust, we found ourselves in a totally wild environment.

The huge wall of Canada Glacier dominated the landing site. Behind it, a steep wall of granite rose impossibly high into the southern sky, and the whole scene was bathed in the weak light of the Austral Autumn. The cold hit us pretty quickly, it was around minus 12°C, and a gentle breeze cut into any exposed skin. However, we had prepared for this, and were dressed well. We set off to explore the landing site. The first thing we saw was a mummified **crabeater seal**. Driving snow and sand had stripped some of the flesh away, revealing the skull around the nose and mouth. No one knows exactly why these animals have crawled so far in land, but it is assumed they became disorientated. There may be more than one hundred dead seals in Taylor Valley alone, and some have been found 1000s of feet above sea level and more than 15 kilometres inland.





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We explored further, and came face-to-face with the front of Canada Glacier. There is something totally otherworldly about glacial ice. The low sun glistened off every shining facet, and it seemed to emanate a majestic cold power. From here, we scrambled up the ridge, and were rewarded with an excellent view, both of the glacier, but also back down the Taylor Valley, and towards McMurdo Sound. The wind on the ridge was biting, and we didn't linger here, despite it's beauty.







After an incredible hour ashore, it was time to reboard the helicopters, and once again we enjoyed a stunning flight back to *Ortelius* under the midday sun.



In the meantime, those on board the ship had several amazing wildlife encounters. Throughout the morning **emperor penguins** hopped onto the ice floes around the ship, staying for a few minutes or for an hour. These adults are feeding in preparation for their winter breeding cycle, and use the ice to rest between foraging dives. Then we had something truly special. In the distance a small pod of **Orca** were spotted, and they were heading through the ice, right for us. They approached the ship, surfacing in the small area of open water just a few tens of metres from the bow. They were so close we could see the individual scratches and scars on their skin. A really beautiful encounter.

In the late afternoon, with all helicopters back on board, we headed back across McMurdo Sound. Captain Per took several small detours to circumnavigate some particularly lovely icebergs, and even positioned the ship bow-on to one to enable us to have a group photo alongside one of these behemoths. A rough calculation established the smaller of these weighed around 4 million tonnes; dwarfing little *Ortelius* which weighs just over 5000 tonnes.

Another sumptuous dinner followed, and as the light faded, we found ourselves off Cape Royds; our planned destination for the morning. We could just see the chimney of Shackleton's hut through the mounds of black lava, and turned in hoping we would be able to land there tomorrow.







**Day 14 - March 02<sup>nd</sup> 2023: Cape Royds, McMurdo Sound, and Cape Bird**

**Writer: Gary Miller**

**08h00 GPS position: 77°30.4'S / 165°48.1'E**

**Wind: Var. 2 • Sea State: Calm • Weather: Clear • Air Temperature: -7°C**

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After such an active and exciting day yesterday, the early wake-up call felt extra early, but then there was a lot of excitement in the air. Today the plan is to visit Shackleton's Nimrod Expedition hut at Cape Royds. Conditions in the early morning were fantastic. We could see most of Mount Erebus and there was only a light breeze. Still, Sara needed a little bit of time to make the final decision; can we go by Zodiac? Or will we fly in with the helicopters?



While everyone was at breakfast, the decision was made. There was no good landing site available for Zodiacs, so helicopters it is. Staff flew over to prepare the landing site and the hut and starting with Group 8, and working down, we proceeded to Cape Royds.

On the flanks of Mount Erebus, Cape Royds is made up of volcanic rocks, particularly lavas and scoria, so flying in it was a stark but beautiful sight from the helicopters. Just an 8-minute flight this time, but still exciting to see things from the air. Once on the ground, and after a short briefing, we walked over a small rise to see the hut. What a wonderful little site for the hut. It looks cosy and inviting, nestled into the rocks and hillside with a view of a pond and the **Adélie penguin** colony. One great advantage of the helicopter arrival; there was almost no waiting for our time in the hut.



Shackleton's hut is quite modest compared to Scott's hut at Cape Evans, after all, Shackleton had a mere 15 men compared to Scott's 45 men. What an atmosphere though! There isn't the overwhelming odour of seal skin and blubber we got at Cape Evans, but still a distinctive mild odour of the years and history embodied by the hut. What a time capsule. The food and boots and sleeping bags. So many tins of familiar brands of food. It looks like you could start a fire in the stove and set about cooking a fine meal. It must have felt crowded during the winter. With 15 men and their bunks, there would be little space to move around. In the little side room that was Mawson's laboratory, there stands a single wheel—all that remains of the first motorcar brought to Antarctica. So much history.

Outside the area was cluttered with more to see. The latrine was conveniently outside, just around the corner from the entrance door. Then the garage for the motorcar, then the stables—all made with a bit of fencing and stacked boxes of provisions. Farther afield there were more supplies stacked in their boxes and a well-weathered Stevenson's screen for the weather station. Not to mention the **Adélie penguin** colony. There weren't many penguins left at the colony, but plenty to see around the hut and in amongst the boulders, looking in a slightly dishevelled state of moulting. Finally, after a couple hours, it was back to the helicopters and back to the ship for yet more adventures.





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After dinner, and after a bit of discussion, it was decided to go for a Zodiac landing at Cape Bird. Getting ashore was nearly as exciting as being on shore. We had to drive through a large band of thick grease ice with some pancakes. The Zodiacs handled it well enough, but still exciting to ride in a little rubber icebreaker. On shore it was a ghost town. There were extensive areas that were obviously nesting colonies, but few penguins left on land. They were scattered around in small groups, hunkered down in out-of-the-wind spots finishing their moult. One highlight were the **Weddell seals**. Several were napping peacefully on the snow-covered beach when we arrived. It was great to get a close-up view of them. In particular, one male, at the farthest extent of the walk, sang for us a bit. It was a weird collection of trills and gulps as he calmly slept on the shore. Unfortunately, a band of heavier pack ice was spotted bearing down on our location. It would be no trouble for the ship, but Zodiacs struggle to push through it and we could have got stranded ashore. We were called back to the landing site after about 45 minutes to end our last, lovely day on Ross Island.

A day of adventure drew to a close with a hot drink in the Bar after dinner. This was briefly interrupted as the setting sun found a tiny gap in the clouds and cast a small corner of the sky into vivid oranges; hemmed in between a glacier front, the frozen sea, and a big band of approaching snow. Then it was time to retire to our cabins once more, to reflect on another magnificent day, and to ponder what the morning may hold for us.













**Day 15 - March 03<sup>rd</sup> 2023: Cape Crozier, the Ross Ice Shelf, and the Ross Sea**  
**Writer: Michael Green**  
**08h00 GPS position: 77°20.9'S / 169°03.9'E**  
**Wind: SE 5 • Sea State: Rippled • Weather: Broken Cloud • Air Temperature: -8°C**

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This morning Sara had planned for us to make a scenic flight along the largest glacier front in the world, the magnificent Ross Ice Shelf, or the 'great ice barrier'. Overnight Ortelius had worked around the corner of Ross Island, into the area of our planned operations. However, for once the weather beat us. As we went to the Bridge to marvel at the vast wall of ice in front of us, we could see conditions were pretty severe. There was more than seventy knots of wind in the gusts and air temperatures were somewhere around minus 50°C when accounting for the effects of wind chill. The captain and pilots decided it was way beyond our safe operating conditions and our best option would be a ships cruise along the calving front. We all agreed with the decision, and were not disappointed as the vista before us was spectacular. The uninterrupted wall of ice stretched as far as the eye could see, and despite it's obviously vastness, it is almost impossible to comprehend that this mass of ice is approximately the same size as France.



As we cruised along the face of the glacier we had a few wildlife encounters. We marvelled at the tenacity of a solitary **Adélie penguin** climbing the almost sheer face of ice, we all wondered how and why it was making its way to the top. Captain Per took *Ortelius* right up to the ice front—less than 100 metres from the wall of ice. From here it was possible to hear the waves crunching the underside of the ice, even despite the howling winds. Most braved the outer decks for at

least a few minutes, although the biting cold wind soon drove us back inside. With noses and fingers soon frozen, the only comfort was more hot chocolate inside the ship.

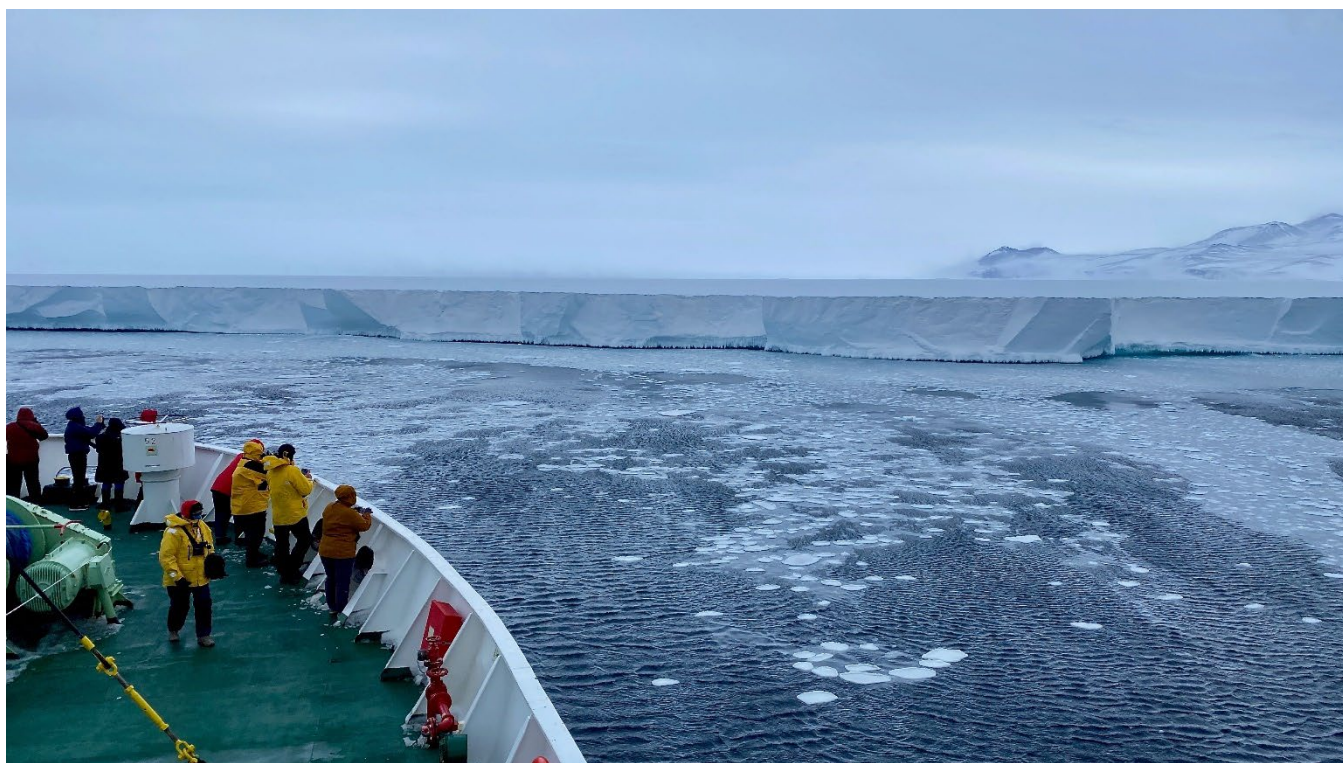


Sailing along the ice front for several hours, and seeing how little progress we had made on the electronic charts on the Bridge, really drove home the scale of the ice front—it stretched away from us for many of hundreds of miles to the east.

On deck we could only hear the click of camera shutters and the wind terrorising the ship, this gave us another small taste of the conditions explorers of old experienced on their expeditions. After spending the whole morning tracking along the ice shelf, we finally turned and headed for open water to begin our navigation towards Peter the First Island. It was sad to see the Ross Sea and McMurdo Sound fall astern of us, but we look forward to many new adventures along the way.

In the afternoon we settled into the routine of our sea days, having a relaxing lunch, perhaps a small nap, and then congregated in the Bar for a great lecture from Allan about the vital and often underappreciated role that sled dogs have played in polar exploration. These magnificent animals are by far the most efficient mode of transport in these inhospitable environments. This was followed by a brief recap, our plans for the morning are relatively simple; we continue to sail to the east! Over dinner the Dining Room was buzzing with all the excitement from the previous days—enjoying a wonderful meal with a glass of wine was a chance to begin to process the impressions of an incredible few days in the heart of the Ross Sea.









LAURENCE DYKE



**Day 16 - March 04<sup>th</sup> 2023: Ross Sea**

**Writer: Chris Long**

**08h00 GPS position: 75°42.1'S / 175°21.3'W**

**Wind: SW 4 • Sea State: Moderate • Weather: Cloudy • Air Temperature: -10°C**

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Today started, like all other great days, with a sterling wake-up call from our fearless Expedition Leader Sara—“good morning, good morning, good morning...”. Those familiar words roused us from a deep slumber and we readied ourselves for breakfast where we celebrated crossing the international date line. There were rumours of dancing on The Bridge at 01:30 a.m.; the moment that we actually crossed the 180<sup>th</sup> degree of longitude, and into the western hemisphere.



After breakfast Gary welcomed us to the Bar for his presentation about ‘The Life of Emperor Penguins’. This is one of the best lectures I personally have ever seen and everyone was fascinated by the life cycle of these hardy birds that call this wild, raw continent their home.

All day the ship was buffeted by strong winds from behind and some patches of the ocean surface were covered in small flows of well-frozen pancake ice. These provide little resistance to the mighty *Ortelius*, and we managed to maintain an average speed of over 10.5 knots throughout the day. However, it does remind us that we are not out of the Ross Sea yet and these pancakes are a sign that winter is rapidly approaching. It is a relief to know that we are headed back towards slightly warmer waters. No one wants to be stuck down here in winter...

Of course, we are not the first in this area. To help us reminisce on the past we joined Vide for his lecture ‘Roald Amundsen Part 1: The Early Years’. The first part in his two-lecture series

about Roald Amundsen's successful assault on the geographic South Pole.

After lunch the Bridge tours continued for today's group and then Chris told us tales from his time 'Calling Antarctica Home'; his lecture about living and working at New Zealand's Scott Base.

The day finished with a delicious dinner and some enthralling and hilarious tropical jungle stories from Tennessee in the Bar afterwards.





**Day 17 - March 04<sup>th</sup> (again!) 2023: Ross Sea**

**Writer: Chloe Power**

**08h00 GPS position: 73°49.7'S / 160°11.8'W**

**Wind: NW 3 • Sea State: Moderate • Weather: Cloudy • Air Temperature: -5°C**

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We awoke to the sun's rays beaming down onto both *Ortelius* and the ocean, with what seemed to be patches of 'matte' and 'glossy' areas dancing over the water's surface. What could it be? It was in fact grease ice (one of the first stages of sea ice) forming over the surface, and it often resembled greenish-brown plumes over the water, which led to some interesting questions up on the Bridge. Was this caused by swarms of krill? Whale poo? Phytoplankton blooms? Interestingly, grease ice can often have a subdued greenish-brown colouration as it forms, giving the ocean a somewhat 'beige slick' appearance. The colour of the ocean is influenced by many factors, such as the sky, direction of sunlight, the amount of nutrients in the water, and wind and wave chop. These can all play a part in altering the colour of the ice we see at the surface.

It was concluded that after observing this greenish colouration for hours beyond the stage of grease ice, that it was mainly due to algae—perhaps predominantly diatoms (a type of phytoplankton). It is these same diatoms that create a yellowish colouration on white patches of some of the cetaceans we have seen so far in our voyage. This was evident on the saddle and eye patches of the **orcas** we spotted a few days ago in McMurdo Sound. Speaking of whales, by mid-afternoon a few **minke whales** were spotted by the keen cetacean lovers as we sailed past multiple icebergs glistening in the austral sun.



Despite another day at sea, the activity list still bustled. We were given an incredible talk about scuba diving in Antarctica by avid diver Michael. We learnt about all the weird and wonderful critters that live below the ice. We saw beautiful photos of **sea spiders**, **nudibranchs**, **isopods**, and even **corals** that somehow grow down here in the cold Southern Ocean. Michael told us about encounters with **leopard seals**, and that when they are seen blowing bubbles it's probably a good time to get out of the water as this is a sign of aggression.



The morning continued with more whale and iceberg spotting from the Bridge, and from the outside decks. We then had the delight of learning all the ins and outs of our ship *Ortelius*. Sara gave a lecture with photos from behind-the-scenes including the Engine Room, Galley, Helicopter Hangar, and some of the crew areas. We were also entertained by the Chief Engineer Aleksandr who was on hand to answer the more technical questions about *Ortelius*. There were many fascinating facts and figures, but one of the things that really stood out was that we make all our own water direct from the sea, and that there is an onboard processing facility to clean all the waste water before it is returned to the ocean.

Learning about the ship continued in the afternoon, with tours around the ship in small groups directed by both our Captain Per, and our Hotel Manager Albert.

Tennessee, always oozing with his passion for polar history, entertained and enlightened us with the incredible story of the Nimrod Expedition. After dinner, storytelling was a little different. It was requested that the Expedition Team share their stories of what they got up to during the pandemic. There was such a wide range of experiences, from Sara calling one of the Oceanwide sister ships home, to Allan having a whole island in the Falklands for himself and his wife, to



Michael converting a loft into a beautiful photography studio. It was great to hear these stories and to also realise how lucky we were to be sailing the seas with human connections.



**Day 18 - March 05<sup>th</sup> 2023: Amundsen Sea**

**Writer: Tennessee Blackmore**

**08h00 GPS position: 71°34.7'S / 147°09.0'W**

**Wind: NW 3 • Sea State: Slight • Weather: Broken Cloud • Air Temperature: -4°C**

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Sun breaks on another day upon the tantalising, remote Amundsen Sea. We have navigated through the seemingly endless fields of pancake ice and now head into clearer water. Today was the day of the long-anticipated charity auction.

There is no better way to pay our respect to the namesake of this great sea than the second part of Vide's 3-part lecture epic—'The Life of Roald Amundsen'. We listened in wonder at Amundsen "speed and efficiency of travel" and of his successful conquest of the South Pole. Afterwards, we head out on deck and spot a **minke whale** charging ahead of *Ortelius*. We breathe in the cold crisp air and think of both the human and dogs' great journey to 90° south.



We reconvened in the Bar to learn from Chloe about Antarctic sea ice and its great ecological importance to the continent. During the winter Antarctica roughly doubles in size with sea ice that has besieged many an explorer's ship. This impenetrable belt is a vital habitat for phytoplankton and is part of what makes the seas around Antarctica so rich in wildlife. We break for lunch; perhaps musing on the contrast between the bounty we are served and the rations of Shackleton, Scott, and Amundsen on their sledding journeys.

After lunch, Sara exercised her power to claim time back, and, at 2 p.m. we effortlessly travelled to 3 p.m., which was immediately marked by a frenzy of ship tours. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Officer Martin



performed his highly-coveted Bridge tour, Captain Per and Hotel Manager Albert gave an extensive tour of *Ortelius*, talking about all the people, spaces, and systems that keep the ship functioning efficiently. Michael also gave a fascinating tour of the impressive polar diving facilities that cold-water divers use to explore the lowermost reaches of these frigid waters.



At 16:55 we gathered in The Bar to watch an inspiring film showcasing the extraordinary work the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust (NZAH) undertake to preserve and restore Shackleton's, Scott's, and Borchgrevink's huts from the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration. To help support this important work, the Expedition Team put on charity auction offering a series of unique items including stunning framed prints of the Terra Nova Expedition, magnets crafted onboard *Ortelius* by the engineering team, a copy of Chris's very own biography, hand illustrated maps, and the much-coveted ship's flag. The bar opened with Happy Hour and as the drinks were flowing, we opened. Frenetic bidding wars ensued, with the Expedition Team and guests alike battling it out. The most sort after lot was the ship's flag; battered and torn by 100 knot plus winds, a physical reminder of the high seas we navigated to reach the Ross Sea. As the night drew to a close, we had raised more than \$5,000 US for the NZAH; true cause for celebration.

After dinner, we returned to the bar one last time for 'passenger storytime'. Four guests would take to the stage to entertain crew, guides, and fellow passengers alike. We began with a tremendous timelapse from Gregor of *Ortelius* powering through Greenlandic ice. This was followed by John discussing his flight to the geographic South Pole. Roger took to the microphone to share the true meaning of happiness from a conversation he had in Alaska with a former prisoner of war from Second World War. Michael closed the evening out with tales of a long-postponed navigation challenge in the wilds of the Australian outback! We turn in for the night, edging closer to the famed Peter I Island.

## Day 19 - March 06<sup>th</sup> 2023: Amundsen Sea

Writer: Laurence Dyke

08h00 GPS position: 70°00.5'S / 137°42.7'W

Wind: W 7 • Sea State: Moderate • Weather: Overcast • Air Temperature: -2°C

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Overnight we had made excellent progress again, *Ortelius* was helped along by both a gentle tail wind, and a little extra nudge from the Antarctic Circumpolar Current. Our tough little ship had averaged over 11 knots through the small hours.

We woke to another stunning day. A few early birds were up on the Bridge to see the sun rise; they saw from our progress on the electronic chart display that we had now properly left the Ross Sea in our wake and were well into the Amundsen Sea sector of Antarctica. The rest of us woke to the soft autumn sunlight pouring in through our portholes and cabin windows.



After another luxurious breakfast we headed either to the Bridge or to the outside decks. We seemed to have entered a world of icebergs. From horizon to horizon the sea was littered with absolutely vast pieces of ice; some brash ice and bergy bits, but many were the size of apartment blocks, and a few were several kilometres long, easily the largest icebergs we have seen so far, and amongst the largest floating pieces of ice on the planet. The majority of these icebergs have likely come from the massive glaciers of the Amundsen Sea sector of the West Antarctic Ice Sheet. The largest of these, Pine Island Glacier, and Thwaites Glacier, have sometimes been called the 'doomsday glaciers' as they drain a huge area of West Antarctica, and are considered to be very unstable. Some glaciologists assert that a catastrophic retreat of these glaciers is already underway, and that this may lead to the disintegration of the majority of the West



Antarctic Ice Sheet; a vast body of ice which contains enough ice to raise global sea levels by around 5 metres.

We spent the entire day traversing through a veritable highway of icebergs. At times it was possible to see more than 100 separate icebergs, and they came in all manner of shapes, sizes, and even colours. Most were square and tabular, and looked much like the ice shelves and glacier tongues which they have rifted away from. However, there were also an endless array of icebergs which had rolled over, exposing faces which had been carved into wonderful patterns and shapes by the waves and by the gentle melting of the sea.



As usual we had a schedule packed with interesting lectures from the Expedition Team. Sara started proceedings with a lecture about **Antarctic krill**. This examined their life cycle and underlined their importance as the keystone species around the icy continent. Krill are the primary food source for the vast majority of the animals here; from penguins and seals, to the largest of the whales. And right on cue, Vide cut across Sara's lecture to announce over the PA system that **fin whales** had been spotted close to the ship. We rushed onto the Bridge and were rewarded with sightings of the second largest animal on the planet—a gentle giant of the sea.

A little later in the morning Tennessee took to the stage and talked about the incredible exploits of Captain Scott's Terra Nova Expedition. This included a look at 'the worst journey in the world' the story of a heroic, brutal, and not particularly successful mini-expedition by members of Scott's party to walk to Cape Crozier—a desolate and utterly windswept peninsula on the edge of the Ross Ice Shelf.

After lunch many of us settled in our cabins for a brief afternoon nap; although this was curtailed slightly by the loss of another hour, we are making rapid progress to the east, and marching through the time zones.

In the afternoon Alan gave a fascinating presentation and collection of anecdotes about the use of helicopters in Expedition Cruising. He has been involved in some of the earliest and most daring expeditions in the polar regions, including flying from huge Russian icebreakers on a fleet of ageing Soviet helicopters.



As usual we had our daily recap with Sara and her team, and there was not a huge amount to report; our progress continues to be excellent, and the weather for the coming days looks great. This was immediately followed by dinner, yet another wonderful meal—it is continuing source of amazement that we have not had the same dish twice, and that there is still a plethora of fresh fruit, vegetables, and even salad leaves! Chapeau Chef Heinz.



**Day 20 - March 07<sup>th</sup> 2023: Amundsen Sea**

**Writer: Gary Miller**

**08h00 GPS position: 68°25.0'S / 127°30.8'W**

**Wind: SSW 3 • Sea State: Slight • Weather: Broken Cloud • Air Temperature: -3°C**

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“Good morning; good morning; good morning”. Ah that familiar refrain, every morning at 07:45. Despite having several days at sea, we are keeping busy. Sea conditions remain easy going for us. From the Bridge before breakfast we had a seemingly constant squadron of **Antarctic petrels** keeping us company circling the ship. They have become a regular and comforting sight each day as we make our way toward Peter I Island. By 09:00, the call went out that Michael would be presenting some analysis on ‘What Killed Scott’. By looking in detail at the conditions reported in the diaries, it appears that Scott and his pole party were very unlucky in choosing an exceptionally cold year for their expedition. Michael then explained some of the many different factors that contributed to Scott and his men perishing on their return trip from the South Pole.



Soon after Michael finished, Laurence took the podium to give us a fascinating talk on the hazards posed by glaciers in a changing climate. These ranged from quite local effects, such as avalanches and rockfalls, to the global effects on sea level, and problems with water management. A tremendous collection of facts and figures to illustrate some of the issues we will be facing as glaciers continue to shrink around the world. While speaking, one **minke whale** was spotted from the Bridge—the only whale recorded today and a meagre showing it was.

After lunch we had our, now usual, jump of one hour. It's great not to lose an hour of sleep in the night, but still, it makes the day shoot past very quickly. As soon as the clock shifted, we had our various tours again. One group to the Bridge to hear of the workings of the control centre. We have X-band and S-band radars constantly scanning the horizon to indicate the distance and size of the many icebergs, bergy bits, and growlers out there that could bring some grief to the ship. Everyone should be able to find the course, speed, wind speed, and location of the ship from the paper charts or electronic charts by now. Some of those not visiting the Bridge today joined the divers tour with Michael or the ship's tour with the Captain and Hotel Manager to get an understanding of how *Ortelius* functions as a polar passenger ship.



By 16:00 the call went out for Gary's talk on **skuas**. From his research over many years he had thrilling tales of sex, predation, cannibalism, siblicide, and adoptions—all seen in these large and interesting birds. They are much maligned, but only deserving for part of that rapacious repute. Gary told us that the penguins destroy the eggs and sometimes even kill the chicks of the skuas. What goes around comes around.

Finally, after our usual recap and dinner, we had some light entertainment with the film, Happy Feet. Gary worked as a consultant on the film so he gave us a short introduction about a bit of the process and the role he played in creating the film. So, despite being 'another day at sea', we seemed to be busy from breakfast until well after dinner. Whew.











## Day 21 - March 08<sup>th</sup> 2023: Amundsen Sea

Writer: Chloe Power

08h00 GPS position: 68°44.4'S / 116°35.4'W

Wind: SW 2 • Sea State: Smooth • Weather: Broken Cloud • Air Temperature: -4°C

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So far, the Amundsen Sea has been a treat. Gentle swells, favourable winds, and calm seas have made waking up easy, and most of us are eager to head out on deck as the sun rises.



To start our morning of Tennessee graced us with an incredible account of The Ross Sea Party of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition. He described it as the 'forgotten side'. We learnt about the hardships and misfortunes of Mackintosh, Joyce, and the sledding party; marooned after a fierce storm which set their ship, *Aurora*, adrift. Faced with a seemingly impossible task, The Ross Sea Party would undertake a long arduous march with very limited supplies to lay depots along the Ross Ice Shelf in preparation for Shackleton's Continental crossing. A crossing which, in fact, never came.

Chris then gave us an insightful and relevant talk about weather patterns and forecasting in the Southern Ocean and around Antarctica; this provided us a great overview of the weather and synoptic systems we've experienced in our trip so far. This also set us thinking about how Sara, the Captain, and the Bridge Team make their decisions for our operations down here in this wild environment. However, Chris' talk got interrupted by none other than a pod of **orcas**!

We raced outside, jumpers and gloves only half on, cameras and binoculars ready, and there they were, a pod of **Type-A orcas** cruising between *Ortelius* and some icebergs—a photographer's dream.





We have so far managed to see three different ecotypes of **orcas** on our voyage. We encountered **Type-B** and **Type-C orca** deep in the Ross Sea. These primarily feed on seals and fish respectively. However, **Type-A's** mostly prey on **minke whales** and **elephant seals**, although their diet can be quite diverse. The **Type-A's** also have a prominent white eye patch and generally lack a dorsal 'cape', making them relatively easy to identify. It was such an incredible sight; **orcas**, icebergs, blue skies and hardly a breath of wind—a dream scene for anyone who loves the Antarctic.

As the **orcas** continued to cruise in the opposite direction, we headed back inside to hear the end of Chris' weather talk. Which was then immediately interrupted again! Another pod of **orcas** were spotted! How rude of them to distract us from our meteorological education. Chris decided he would continue the last few slides of his lecture in the evening's recap instead.

We were also blessed with some **humpback whale** sightings today too. It was a whale highway!



Michael's fascinating dive tours continued after lunch, with some of us eager to try diving in the Antarctic one day. The rest of us were completely horrified at the idea of plunging our bodies into sub-zero temperatures for hours on end.

It was only fitting that Sara changed her afternoon lecture to a subject more relevant—**killer whales/orca**. We learnt more about the ecotypes found in both the Southern and Northern hemispheres and that the term 'killer whale' was derived from the term 'whale killer' which was originally used by Basque whalers, and it has been misconstrued over time.

After an incredible, iceberg-dotted sunset, we headed off to dinner. Storytelling tonight was given by our wonderful helicopter pilots and engineers who told us some amazing and sometimes nerve-racking stories from their time both up in the air and on *terra firma*.





**Day 22 - March 09<sup>th</sup> 2023: Bellingshausen Sea**

**Writer: Michael Green**

**08h00 GPS position: 68°49.7'S / 105°20.8'W**

**Wind: SSE 4 • Sea State: Slight • Weather: Clear • Air Temperature: -2°C**

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We have made good progress even though the sea overnight has been choppy. The ship is still making ten knots, we have now entered the Bellingshausen Sea, and Peter the First Island is getting closer by the hour. Today we had a full lecture programme. Michael took a group for the dive tour in the afternoon.



After Vide talked about Amundsen, this story is full of intrigue and the great man had many adventures just like we are doing.

Sea days are a good time to digest the adventures we have just enjoyed; many people were in the Bar excitedly discussing the huts and ice we had enjoyed, and the ice that is still around the ship. So far we have sailed for three days through majestic icebergs, it is a beautiful sight around the ship.

At 18.15 it was time for the daily recap and Sara discussed our plans for tomorrow, another day at sea. Then it was time for dinner and, following another delicious meal, Helena gave her story about her experiences of Kayaking in Alaska, an intriguing end to the day.

So good night and here is to another day tomorrow.



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**Day 23 - March 10<sup>th</sup> 2023: Peter I Island**

**Writer: Chris Long**

**08h00 GPS position: 68°42.3'S / 094°25.4'W**

**Wind: SE 9 • Sea State: Rough • Weather: Snow • Air Temperature: 0°C**

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There was excitement in the air as we woke this morning, and one question hangs above us as we rock and roll our way to the east... Are we going to land at Peter I Island today? It wasn't long before we calculated that our slow progress over the previous 12 hours, bashing into swell, would have pushed our estimated time of arrival to the island until later in the afternoon. In turn this might make an actual landing less likely. But you never know exactly what can happen, so we crossed our fingers and continued east.



After a delicious breakfast we joined Chloe in the bar for her lecture about the Australasian Antarctic Expedition led by Douglas Mawson. It has been fascinating learning about different heroic expeditions originating in Britain and Norway from Tennessee and Vide, and it was great to hear from our Australian guide Chloe about her countries' heroic explorer, Mawson.

After another buffet lunch we headed back up to the Bar for Laurence's lecture about Antarctic icebergs. For the last few days we have been iceberg watching, and it was fascinating to learn more about where they come from, the sizing and naming conventions, and some very interesting facts about them too. For me, the most incredible fact is that the ice inside a large iceberg is still roughly the same temperature as the surrounding air at the time that particular layer of ice was formed. If an iceberg was formed in the centre of Antarctica the interior temperature may be -30°C, or even lower. This temperature can be measured by a thermometer lowered through a hole drilled in an iceberg or ice shelf.

As the afternoon wore on there was excitement on the Bridge as Peter I Island was finally spotted ahead in the gloom. We closed in and the swell abated just a little as we approached the NW corner of this rugged, ice-capped mountain. With motion on the ship, and a very strong wind blowing it was immediately obvious that we would not be doing a landing today. And looking ahead at the forecast for the following two days we could see that weather was meant to deteriorate further. Therefore, the decision was made to continue on, towards the Antarctic Peninsula, where we can use our time more wisely, and finally set foot on dry land again.



First however, we enjoyed a ships cruise along and around the northern end of the island. Here, a large group of seals could be seen sleeping on the snowy shoreline just above the huge breaking waves that constantly pound this rocky, icy coastline. One **elephant seal** was even spotted and there were numerous **Antarctic fur seals**, and even some **humpback whale** sightings around the ship. Much of the island was obscured by cloud, but what we could see was almost entirely covered in an ice cap. What a desolate place this island is. There is no wonder that only around 20 **Adélie penguins** and few colonies of sea birds call this island home.

As we went below for dinner, we turned our bow to the east again and, as night closed in, so too did our view of Peter I Island.





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## Day 24 - March 11<sup>th</sup> 2023: Bellingshausen Sea

Writer: Tennessee Blackmore

08h00 GPS position: 68°33.6'S / 085°59.7'W

Wind: S 7 • Sea State: Rough • Weather: Cloudy • Air Temperature: -2°C

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Day breaks on the morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> March as the venerable *Ortelius* heaves her way through the mighty and powerful Bellingshausen Sea. We have been navigating the Southern Ocean for the best part of ten days and with elusive and wild shores of Peter I Island now behind us, the Antarctic Peninsula beckons. Before we heed the call of land there is one great tradition to uphold, Karaoke...

We begin our day with an intimate and enlightening Q&A session with our very own master and commander, Captain Per. The head of a family of 140 crew, passengers, and staff, our Captain, supported by the *Ortelius*'s officers and engineers, is ultimately responsible for all aspect of our ship operations. Captain Per shared the secrets of the effortless ballet of bridge watch rotation and of being our ship's master.



Roused by Captain Per's session, many of us descended on the Bridge; joining the officers and crew and scouring the horizon, for ice, wildlife or for any sign of the mighty continent we have very nearly semi-circumnavigated. The patient and committed are treated to stirring views of mesmerising **light-mantled** and **black-browed albatross**, flying mere meters from the Bridge. Throughout the day we were also treated to distant and close breaches, blows, and tail fluke sightings of **humpback whales**. Known affectionately as 'the showman of the sea', these gentle leviathans are perhaps the whale watchers most obliging and considerate cetation; spy-hopping, and pectoral slapping throughout the day.



Mid-morning we had a presentation from Gary about sea ice; investigating its formation, dynamics, and means of navigating through and around it. We have seen sea ice in its many forms during our voyage so far, from grease ice, to pancakes, floes, and fast-ice. Our ship is not an icebreaker; it does not use its weight or displacement to break through sea ice. Instead, *Ortelius* uses its ice-strengthened hull to push ice out of the way, enabling us to explore in ice-choked waters. Unlike the explorers of old, who used techniques such as 'ice blink' and 'sea sky', effectively using clouds as mirrors to reflect the sea conditions beyond the horizon, our Bridge Officers and Expedition Team use the latest in satellite imagery to see where the ice lies.

After lunch, Sara once again takes an hour away as we retire to our cabins for an afternoon nap. The Bellingshausen Sea lives up to its infamous reputation and the weather conditions close in; as a consequence Michael's coveted diving tour is postponed. We once again fill the Bridge as we marvel at the majestic and endless Southern Ocean.



At 16:00 tea and cake are served in time for a lecture befitting of the tempestuous condition we have come to know so well. We muster in the Bar, to join my own lecture on "the greatest survival story ever told"—Sir Ernest Shackleton's Weddell Sea Party and the infamous open boat journey that seems utterly unthinkable on a day like today. Having learnt already of the intense suffering and tragedy of the often-forgotten Ross Sea Party, we plunged straight into tale of *Endurance* and her crew. We follow *Endurance* into the Weddell Sea with aspirations of making the first continental crossing and we feel the vice-like grip as Shackleton and his men become beset in ice. With their ship destroyed by churning currents forcing the sea ice together, Shackleton is

forced to make a dash towards land and later to the remote Elephant Island. His only hope is to reach the whaling outpost of South Georgia to raise the alarm and dispatch a relief expedition. Salvation lies 800 nautical miles away and their only means of transport was a keelless open lifeboat; the *James Caird*. Against all odds Shackleton and five of his men, including *Endurance*'s Captain, Frank Worlsey, would make it to the island, traverse it uncharted, and reach the whaling station of Stromness. He was then able to finally rescue the remainder of his men on Elephant Island three months later with the help of Chilean Navy Officer Luis Pardo aboard the tug *Yelcho*.



After dinner, we are invited back to the Bar for Happy Hour and to embark on one of *Ortelius*' greatest traditions—Karaoke. Gary and Chloe broke the silence in style and commenced a night of festivities. The Expedition Team, guests, and crew alike would join in stirring renditions of Tom Jones, Elvis Presley, disco classics, and a very David Attenborough(ish) rendition of All Night Long. The shy-turned-bold queued at the Karaoke machine, helmed by Hotel Manager Albert, carefully selecting their next track. The crew stole the evening, showing up the Expedition Team and guests with their pitch perfect ballads. For those who chose to steer clear of the microphone, an improvised dance floor, replete with disco lights, made the perfect venue to boogie the night away.



**Day 25 - March 12<sup>th</sup> 2023: Bellingshausen Sea**

**Writer: Laurence Dyke**

**08h00 GPS position: 68°09.4'S / 076°19.2'W**

**Wind: E 8 • Sea State: Moderate • Weather: Overcast • Air Temperature: -2°C**

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This morning we woke to some slightly bumpier seas and perhaps a few sore heads from last night. The wind had been variable, and the sea was confused, with several swells running in different directions creating an awkward pitching motion that was not very predictable. Nonetheless, we all got on with our days, for the most part we have earned our sea legs.



Breakfast was another luxuriant affair, and we revelled in having plenty of time for conversation and coffee, the last day without landings for a while hopefully! With food still on the mind, we headed up to the Bar to hear Michael talk about the role of food in Antarctic expeditions, and particularly the trials and litany of errors during the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration. In some cases, inadequate and insufficient food was the primary reason for failure, injury, and unfortunately also for death.

After a break, a cup of coffee, and a quick visit to the Bridge, we returned to the Bar to hear Vide talk about the Swedish Antarctic Expedition. It was led by Otto Nordenskjöld and Carl Anton Larsen aboard the ship *Antarctic*. The expedition involved some heroic successes; notably it's scientific and surveying work. But it also involved great hardships, including two winters spent in Antarctica, in small, ill-equipped huts. The latter winter was unplanned after their ship was

crushed in the pack ice of the northern Weddell Sea. The food and fuel supplies were very limited and the crew survived by killing thousands of penguins and hundreds of seals; eating the meat, and burning the fat and feathers in crude stoves. Eventually, the remaining crew, dogs, and cat, were rescued by the Argentinian Navy aboard the ship *Uruguay*. The exploits of the Swedish Expedition earned Nordenskjöld lasting fame at home, but ultimately left him massively in debt.



A little after lunch the seas became much calmer, and by mid-afternoon the banks of fog had lifted. Perhaps the influence of the Antarctic continent on the weather? By now it was just 80 miles ahead of us. We watched our progress from the Bridge and many saw some quite large gatherings of both **fin whales** and **humpback whales**. Over several hours we probably encountered more than 40 whales; most just distant blows, but a few surfaced close to the ship.

Most then retired to their cabins for a nap, and revelled that it was extra-long; this was the first sea day in a long time without a time change. We are now in the same time zone as Argentina.

Sara was finally able to give her presentation on women in Antarctica; having been cancelled several times previously due to swell and wildlife sightings. Up until surprisingly recently there has been institutional and personal discrimination against women in Antarctica, and undoubtedly it will take time for these problems to be completely addressed and rectified. We learnt that it was not until 1931 that a woman even set eyes on the Antarctic continent, and Ingrid Christensen again went on to make history by being the first woman to fly over Antarctica in 1937. The first women to overwinter in Antarctica did so between 1946 and 1948; American women Jackie Ronne and Jennie Darlington helped establish the US research station on Stonington Island, not far from our current position in the Bellingshausen Sea. Recently, Antarctica has become somewhere that equality can thrive and there has been gradual progression to more inclusion of under-represented groups. However, there is a lot more that can still be done.



## Day 26 - March 13<sup>th</sup> 2023: Horseshoe Island and Pourqouis Pas Island

Writer: Gary Miller

08h00 GPS position: 67°47.4'S / 067°17.1'W

Wind: NE 4 • Sea State: Slight • Weather: Overcast • Air Temperature: 0°C

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Sometime in the wee hours of the morning, it became apparent that we had finally left behind the swell of our open ocean transit from Ross Island. As we heard the wake-up call, it was eerily still and quiet around the cabin. We were just coming into position at Horseshoe Island in the northern end of Marguerite Bay on the Antarctic Peninsula.



Just around 08:00 we boarded the Zodiacs for the short and bumpy ride to shore. It was a beautiful day, with clouds roiling round the peaks, but also glorious patches of sun. Horseshoe Island was the site of a British Antarctic Survey year-round station for 5 to 10 men from 1955 to 1960, with another single year of activity in 1969. Similar to the huts on Ross Island, the hut was a veritable time capsule, albeit from a slightly more modern time. Coming in the door, we immediately saw the sledging workshop with pieces of a dismantled sledge up on the bench. Most of the summer activity of the men at the station consisted of long dog sledging expeditions for mapping, surveying, and geological investigations along the spine of the peninsula. Going farther into the hut was the main bedroom; lined with bunks and with a large table in the centre of the room. All the spare space was filled with wooden crates full of 65-year-old food stuffs in tins and jars. Further into the hut, there was a generator room to the right, with a solid concrete floor to minimise the vibration the big diesel generators would have caused. Next, on the left, was the radio room, with much of the old radio equipment still in place. Then another bunk room. This one had the library which was mostly full of pulp novels, but had several classic titles too.





Not to mention the 1950s magazines and news items. Towards the far end of the hut was the kitchen with a dining table, storage closets of food stores, the met room for the weather observations, and just behind the back door—the loo. It was fascinating to have a chance to wander through this little corner of history. Outside, the hut featured large in the landscape, but there were also a couple of outbuildings to used to compose our photos.



More importantly, outside was the unbelievable scenery and some wonderful wildlife. We had our first encounter with a small group of male **Antarctic fur seals**, as well as a few small groups of **Adélie penguins** wandering around the beaches and hills. Most of us took a long walk that included either a little detour inland towards the shore of a freshwater lake and back to the shore to the far end of the beach, and/or a short hike to the top of our part of the island for an exquisite view of the surrounding mountains of Adelaide Island in the distance, and Pourquoi Pas Island just across a small channel. With so much to see and do most of us spent nearly 4 hours on shore, enjoying our first good walk on solid land in 11 days.

After our usual scrumptious lunch, we were in position at Pourquoi Pas Island. No special history here, but a few small **Adélie penguin** colonies were still occupied by a small number of moulting penguins, lots of **south polar skuas** with their large chicks, a couple dozen **Antarctic fur seal** bulls lounging on shore, and a fantastic glacier with an associated lateral moraine to investigate. As expected, Laurence was positioned up at the glacier to help interpret its glaciology, and Gary was out roaming around the penguin colonies. We had free rein on this uncrowded beach so everyone revelled in the ability to take a long walk and have a personal experience of Antarctica.



One of the hidden gems of the landing was the extent of lichens, mosses, and algae—and even **Antarctic hairgrass** in the environment. Unlike the seemingly lifeless Dry Valleys that we visited a couple of weeks before, this spot was positively teeming with life. Conditions were still very mild, so another 3 and ½ hours on shore was the go for most. As a little final treat, we all had a Zodiac cruise among some nearby icebergs and brash ice to view the front of the glacier, as well as an **Antarctic shag** colony and a resting **crabeater seal** on a small iceberg. What a day. What a day. But not entirely over yet.



After dinner (which was just a bit later than usual) we were starting our navigation through The Gullet. It's a fairly narrow navigation, winding through a passage studded with small islands and,



on this particular night, lots of small to medium-sized icebergs. It wasn't long before it was completely dark, so many of us watch the magical navigation lit by the two bright spotlights shining out over the bow as we dodged the larger icebergs and pushed through lots of smaller ice. The Bridge even called Gary up after 01:00 to collect a poor **southern fulmar** from the front of Deck 6, who had become dazzled in the lights and landed on the deck. It made for a short night, because according to our recap, we would be flying in the morning. Those who did not stay up late to watch the dazzling ice show undoubtedly spent the night dreaming of flying.









## Day 27 - March 14<sup>th</sup> 2023: Lallemand Fjord and Crystal Sound

Writer: Laurence Dyke

08h00 GPS position: 67°53.6'S / 066°49.9'W

Wind: NE 5 • Sea State: Calm • Weather: Cloudy • Air Temperature: -0.5°C

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We woke to the excellent news that we had made it through The Gullet overnight; this is the narrow passage leading between Marguerite Bay and Crystal Sound, and is hemmed in against smaller islands by the bulk of Adelaide Island. Overnight the Bridge Team had passed through a maze of icebergs, growlers, and bergy bits, and we woke at the entrance to Lallemand Fjord. This difficult and daring feat of navigation had allowed us to take the short-cut up the coast and gave us an extra day of activities.

As dawn broke many of us were up already, on the Bridge, and on the outer decks, taking in the soft early morning light as it draped over the magnificent range of mountains spread out around us. The scenery was very different to anywhere we have been so far; every pinnacle, every piece of land was completely inundated with glacier ice. It had snowed heavily overnight, and the decks were temporarily closed as they were treacherously slippery until they had been cleared. This blanket of snow had also coated the surrounding mountains; creating the most delicate flutes and pillows as the snowflakes had tumbled down the cliff faces.



Sara had clearly made an inspired choice for today's operation; the weather was fantastic. A high ceiling of broken cloud made for amazing light, just a few wisps of lower cloud clung to the peaks, and there was not a breath of wind. The plan for today was to make a scenic helicopter flight over the fjord, and among and around the ice-covered mountains.

After breakfast we watched the hustle and bustle of the pilots, engineers, and ship's crew as they readied the helicopters and flight deck for action. Before long we heard the whine of the turbine on Quebec, and the exciting sound of the engine spooling up and the blades beginning to turn. The scout flight took off to assess conditions and to find an interesting and safe route to fly. In no time at all they were back with positive news; conditions were as perfect as they looked and we would start with flights immediately. Even better, as this was a scenic flight, we would only fill the co-pilot and window seats, so everyone would have both incredible views, and opportunities to take amazing photos and video too!



Whilst we waited for our turn most of us were on the outside decks, particularly Deck 7, which afforded great views of all the helicopter activity, as well as far-reaching vistas down the fjord. When our groups were called, we dressed and headed to the makeshift departure lounge (The Bar), and then, with a gulp of excitement, we were handed ear defenders and on our way to the helicopter pad. Boarding the idling helicopters, buffeted by the downdraught from the rotors spinning just feet above our heads, we were helped into our seats, and then the moment of lift-off!

The flight was absolutely stunning; first we headed up and out of the fjord, gaining height, and really getting a sense of how big this landscape is. Then, suddenly, we dived, circling lower and lower around a huge iceberg, cleaved apart by the deep blue chasms of crevasses and the newly-forming rifts. From our aerial viewpoint, we could see the enormous foot of the iceberg underwater; the bright white fading to blue as it disappeared out of sight into the depths of the



fjord. We then veered and flew low and fast through a maze of icebergs, then lifted a little to fly right along a glacier front. Hundreds of **crabeater seals** were resting on the plates of sea ice along the front of the glacier, unfazed by our fleeting presence above them. Next we headed inland, and began a huge loop over the one of the calving glaciers at the back of the fjord. From here we could see the distant sunny peaks of the spine of the Antarctic Peninsula, and it was even possible to see the blue skies over the Weddell Sea beyond the peaks. The pilots had saved the best until last, and after a few more circuits, swoops, and dives, we found ourselves hovering over a mid-sized tabular iceberg, slowly descending over a patch of snow maybe 50 metres from the edge. Before we really had time to realise, we had touched down! And there we remained for 30 seconds, marvelling at the ability of both the pilots and these awesome machines in getting us to places which few could even imagine. A landing on an iceberg!



Then, after roughly 20 minutes aloft, it was back to *Ortelius*, and we stepped out onto the deck, full of joy, and with wide grins plastered on our faces. The enthusiasm was infectious and we looked for it on the faces of our fellow passengers as they returned.

By mid-afternoon the flying had finished and the ship headed north, aiming for a landing at Port Charcot. As we headed out into Crystal Sound the weather abruptly deteriorated into snow, cloud, and 45 knots of northeasterly wind. Clearly Sara had made some excellent decisions for our operations today!







## Day 28 - March 15<sup>th</sup> 2023: Port Charcot, the Lemaire Channel, and the Peltier Channel

Writer: Chloe Power

08h00 GPS position: 65°06.5'S / 064°02.1'W

Wind: Calm • Sea State: Calm • Weather: Broken Cloud • Air Temperature: 0°C

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We awoke in the blissfully calm waters just near Booth Island, where grounded icebergs sat peacefully, and snow-capped mountain peaks towered over us. We could see why this place was referred to as the 'iceberg graveyard' – there were a myriad of icebergs dotted all throughout the bays. There, in the distance, we also spotted our sister ship, *Plancius*, and we waved from afar as she cruised southward. The morning's activities comprised of a Zodiac cruise around the beautiful bergs and a landing at Port Charcot—named after the French Antarctic explorer Jean Baptiste Charcot, a French polar scientist and medical doctor who led the French Antarctic Expedition from 1903 until 1905. This tiny, sheltered harbour was used as their overwintering base and their ship, the *Français*, was frozen in the ice, but safe from being crushed. From here the team of sailors and scientists explored and surveyed the area around them.



The Zodiac cruises perhaps saw an average of 100 photos of icebergs per person, for we were utterly amazed at the scope, shape, texture, and hues of these majestic chunks of ice. Laurence was in his element, beaming from the beauty of magnificent ice archways, golf ball-like indentations and jagged ice teeth resulting from submarine melt processes. Nearing our memory card capacities, we spotted some wildlife. A lone male **Antarctic fur seal** hauled out on a boulder, happily snoozing, a **crabeater seal** also snoozing on a small chunk of ice, and numerous **gentoo penguins** porpoising through the water. **Kelp gulls**, **skuas** and **Antarctic terns** soared above, and we often heard sounds from the glaciers cracking and calving off.

Ashore at Port Charcot was an equally incredible scene. We were first greeted by **gentoo penguins** right at our landing site, curious and cute as they scrambled up and down the slippery rocks. Further up the slopes were remnants of their colony—some had fledged, some were still



moulting, and the chicks were starting to gain their independence. We also spotted some very young chicks, some still being brooded by their parents, and some still quite small and vulnerable. We wondered about the time of season, about winter soon approaching, sea ice reforming, and whether these chicks would fledge in time. Nature is harsh, and timing is everything down here.



We were lucky enough to spot a new species of penguin for our list—the funny-walking **chinstrap penguin**! It was an entertaining sight, watching the **gentoos** and **chinstraps** fumble around on the ice, and head down the icy slopes back into the water, treading very carefully so as not to fall over. We also spotted some **southern giant petrels** which included a white morph variety, and some **snowy sheathbills**—a white bird that somewhat resembles a polar ‘chicken’.

The history lovers got a glimpse of the remnants of the magnetic hut from the Charcot expedition, and a cairn at the peak of the snow slope which made for a great leg stretch and an amazing view over the iceberg graveyard and the mountains in the distance.

About halfway through our voyage, we had received some good news—we had run out of hot chocolate a few days prior. We had become so reliant on the warm milky goodness after cold days out on deck, or after activities, that we had managed to guzzle our entire supply. However, little did we know that during our landing a Zodiac from *Plancius* had come to our rescue and delivered us a restock! The news soon spread, and we were ecstatic.









Back on board and after lunch, we prepared for our scenic navigation through the incredible Lemaire Channel—a narrow passage 11 kilometres long and just 1600 metres wide at its narrowest point that cuts between towering peaks of mesmeric beauty. This channel has been nicknamed ‘Kodak Gap’ due to its sheer photogenic beauty and we could sure see why. We were welcome by 4 logging **humpback whales** at it’s entrance, peacefully snoozing at the surface, and we also spotted **crabeater seals** on ice floes and swimming through the water. It truly was a dream scene for both photographers and wildlife spotters alike. Nearing the closure of the passage were two famous basaltic towers reaching an elevation of 747 metres above sea level. The mountains are named ‘Una’s Peaks’ after Una Spivey, a secretary in the Governor’s Office in Stanley, on the Falkland Islands during the 1950’s.



We continued cruising through the gorgeous Peltier Channel to our destination of overnight anchor off Port Lockroy, where dinner was served, but with a twist... Tonight, was an outdoor BBQ out on deck, full of scrumptious food made by the amazing kitchen team and with free drinks from the Bar! We braved the weather as snow started to fall, and the festivities continued as some of us started a dancefloor. Soon, we had almost half the ship dancing into the night to disco tunes under the Antarctic night sky. It was utter bliss, and a wonderful way to finish off an amazing day on the Antarctic Peninsula. I mean how often can you dance to disco in the snow in Antarctica?!



## Day 29 - March 16<sup>th</sup> 2023: Damoy Point, the Neumayer Channel, and the Gerlache Strait

Writer: Tennessee Blackmore

08h00 GPS position: 64°49.5'S / 063°32.0'W

Wind: Var. 2 • Sea State: Calm • Weather: Broken Cloud • Air Temperature: 0°C

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Day broke on the 16<sup>th</sup> March, and Sara's dawn chorus at 06:30 roused *Ortelius* from its slumber. The early risers were treated to a magnificent first light, softly illuminating the freshly snow coated black volcanic peaks that surround our next landing site, Damoy Point. This would be the first act in a day of mesmerising geological wonder...



As breakfast was served, the Expedition Team ventured ashore to prepare an extensive circular walk. Between 1975 and 1994 Damoy Point was a vital air-link between the outside world and Rothera Research Station, the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) main base on the Antarctic Peninsula. To facilitate this a small hut was constructed in November 1975, perhaps the world's most remote airport arrival and departure lounge, but sadly no duty free... Today the hut is preserved and maintained by the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust and has recently been repainted its original colour; 1970s orange.

For the energetic, seeking to blow away the cobwebs, there was a steep ice walk up to the former runway. It is here the legendary red Twin Otters of BAS, a twin engine aircraft that still provides the logistical backbone for Antarctic Operations, would land on a glacier runway overlooking the natural harbour. As the first people ashore began the ascent, the weather dramatically changed, and soon fluffy, over-sized snowflakes descended upon us. As visibility diminished, many would join me in the hut before heading off to meet with Gary overlooking the busy **gentoo penguin** colony. As the morning progressed the weather began to lift, offering the



patient and hardy an inspiring view of the surrounding mountains which form an amphitheatre around our landing site.



Back onboard, lunch ready and waiting, we begin our passage to the whale spotting paradise of the Gerlache Strait. To get there we must first navigate through the breath-taking majesty of the Neumayer Channel. Although less well known than the Lemaire Channel, it is its equal in splendour. As the mighty *Ortelius* turn northeast, the clouds parted, and we stood together, agog at a place where the sea met with rock and ice that together reached for the heavens on both port and starboard sides. Icebergs of every conceivable form and size were present. All of us dazzled by the iridescent sheens of blue. The channel, first named Roosen Channel by Eduard Dallmann's German Expedition in 1873–74, was later explored by Adrien De Gerlache onboard *Belgica* during his 1897–99 expedition. The channel is named in honour of the famed scientist Georg Von Neumayer.



Still dazed by the wonders of the Neumayer Channel, we effortlessly pass into the Gerlache Strait and are immediately treated to commanding view of the Antarctic Continent stretching off to the horizon. Then suddenly, Gary spots a **leopard seal** lounging on an iceberg close to the ship, dozens of us peered over the portside to view it as we passed by quietly. The **leopard seal** raised its head and disinterestedly returned to its slumber. Shortly after we were treated to a frenzy of **humpback whale** activity. Blows were seen in every direction, as were tail flukes, and pectoral fins. Some surfaced a close distance to the ship. The 'show man of the sea' had not disappointed as the warm austral sun beat down on the deck of *Ortelius*.

As we stood basking in the afternoon sun, news suddenly broke of a rescue mission. Two unfortunate passengers onboard another ship, the *Roald Amundsen*, needed to return to the port of Ushuaia after breaking their shoulder having just left South America a few days earlier. *Ortelius* would ride to the rescue and promised to deliver them safely back to Ushuaia on our scheduled arrival date, the 20<sup>th</sup> of March. Excitement reached fever pitch, many flocked onto the



outside decks to get a closer inception of this 'other ship', the 499 passenger *Roald Amundsen*. After collecting our Dr Eugene with one of their Zodiacs, the two latest additions to the *Ortelius* compliment walked up the gangway and were onboard. Setting course for Deception Island we watched the sun set on the Gerlache Strait; setting the horizon ablaze with oranges, golds, and of course, the deep blue of the ice and the Antarctic sea.



## Day 30 - March 17<sup>th</sup> 2023: Telefon Bay, Deception Island and the South Shetlands

Writer: Chris Long

08h00 GPS position: 62°57.3'S / 060°37.8'W

Wind: SW 2 • Sea State: Smooth • Weather: Clear • Air Temperature: +1°C

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We awoke to a clear sky and light winds and the *Ortelius* carefully slid in through Neptune's Bellows, avoiding the treacherous Ravn Rock (Raven Rock), and into the sheltered harbour that sits within the Deception Island caldera. The sun rose on the volcanic cliffs that surround the island and the two stations, one from Spain, and one from Argentina came into view. We headed for the northwest corner and anchored off Telefon Bay. This would be the site for this morning's landing.



After breakfast the announcement was made and the first Zodiacs headed ashore. A few minutes later we landed on the black sandy beach. The contrast in scenery from our recent voyage through the ice- and snow-covered Antarctic was crazy. Here, on Deception Island the landscape is mostly black, mostly from the lava sand, whilst higher up there is some snow remaining from winter, and a couple of small glaciers.

We set off to stretch our legs inland along the marked trail. After about 1 km we came across a huge crater-like rim that was the eroded remnant of an ash cone formed during the most recent eruption. This cone has been eaten away over the years by the action of the nearby glacier and the meltwater stream it produces. We could walk almost up to the glacier face, stopping just a few metres short of the cliff in case of ice fall. If we listened carefully, we could even hear the



sound of running water, falling pebbles, cracking ice crystals, and a tiny trickle of water which flowed down into the valley below.



The hike continued up a ridge line above the glacier and along another wide gravel ridge all the way back to the beach near where we landed. On the beach was one lone **Weddell seal**,



completely relaxed and basking in the sunshine. Every now and then it would be joined by one or two **gentoo penguins** that would stand on the beach for a short time before heading back to sea.

Did someone say polar plunge???

Yes, that's right! Off came our clothes, and it was time to celebrate our amazing trip with a good old swim in the frigid 1 degree waters of the Antarctic. Around 30 of us jumped in with screams and shouts of terror and enjoyment. Needless to say, much fun was had by all regardless, if that individual actually swam, or just enjoyed the spectacle from the warmth and safety of shore.

Back on the ship we had a long hot shower and some lunch and then it was straight back out on deck for a ships cruise of Whalers Bay. Here we looked on in awe at the size of the whale blubber tanks and rendering boilers. They tell the story of the horrific slaughter of thousands upon thousands of whales in the early 1900s. After a turn to port the captain lined the ship up with the narrow Neptune's Bellows, and we slid, once again, back out into the open ocean. Our course was now set for Ushuaia and slowly the last sight of Antarctica slid out of view below the southern horizon behind us. It's finally time to move to warmer lands!







## Day 31 - March 18<sup>th</sup> 2023: The Drake Passage

Writer: Laurence Dyke

08h00 GPS position: 60°16.0'S / 063°53.4'W

Wind: NW 6 • Sea State: Moderate • Weather: Fog • Air Temperature: +3°C

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We awoke in a familiar world; the ship rocking mildly from the swells, although this time it was from the open ocean of the Drake Passage, the final ocean crossing in this epic trip. The weather was benign; a light breeze from the west, and broken cloud with some sun.

After breakfast, Gary gave his lecture 'Fur, Fat, Feathers, and Friendliness: Coping with a Freezing Environment'. He talked about all the different adaptations that penguins and pinnipeds have developed to live in the extreme cold of Antarctica. Most animals have a healthy layer of insulating fat which keeps them warm when in the water, but there are also a number of behavioural strategies, such as huddling together, which allow animals to share warmth and get protection from the worst of the wind. The animal life of Antarctica is spectacularly well-adapted to the cold; these adaptations allow life on the fringes of the great white continent not only to survive, but to thrive.



Next up was Chris, talking about his extraordinary childhood growing up as part of the remotest family in New Zealand. His family of four live in a small bay on the coast of Fiordland, two days walk from the nearest road, and completely isolated from the outside world. Chris talked us through the practicalities of living totally off-grid, but also, more deeply about the incredible and unique experiences he and his family have had over the years and how that has resulted in a strong connection to the natural environment.



As soon as Chris finished, Sara called us down to the Lecture Room on Deck 3 to return our trusty rubber boots and helicopter cards; it's sad to think that we won't need these again, and it really feels like the end of the trip is just around the corner.

After lunch Sara gave a great presentation on 'Marine Threats'. She talked about different ways that the marine environment around Antarctica, and further afield, is being impacted by the activities of humans. This ranged from fishing, to pollution, and of course, climate change. She highlighted some of the work that is being done to both identify and understand these threats, but also talked about the initiatives which are being developed to mitigate them.

Just before dinner was the daily recap. Sara presented the program for tomorrow, and showed that the weather looks like it will deteriorate as we approach the coast of South America. Albert ran through all the logistics of disembarkation, then we had the much-anticipated results from the photo competition. The submitted photos had been playing on the screens in the Bar for much of the last two days, and we had all had an opportunity to vote for our favourites. There were 9 finalists in each of the three categories. Antonio's photo of Mt. Erebus and pancake ice in soft morning light won the 'landscape' category. Karen's excellent photo of Martin, our Third Officer, checking the radar screen won the 'people' category. Claire won the 'wildlife' category with a stunning image of a **snow petrel** in flight, underlit by the setting Antarctic sun. And finally, Antonio won again, taking the overall prize with his beautiful photo of a **gentoo penguin** parent and chick. The latter also took the overall prize; a beautifully illustrated t-shirt from DAP, complete with Quebec on the back.



## Day 32 - March 19<sup>th</sup> 2023: The Drake Passage

Writer: Laurence Dyke

08h00 GPS position: 55°55.3'S / 065°19.1'W

Wind: WNW 8 • Sea State: Rough • Weather: Rain • Air Temperature: +2°C

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This morning sea conditions were a little bumpy, but not at all bad compared to some of the storms we have sailed through. Sara woke us up, and, bleary-eyed, we headed for the Bridge to see how we were getting on. Overnight, *Ortelius* had again made great progress, and we were well over halfway across the Drake Passage; it looked like we might just be able to outrun the worst of the weather bearing down on Cape Horn later today.

Our day progressed much like other sea days, packed full of activities. Straight after breakfast Chloe gave a really interesting presentation about the 'gateway cities' that lead to Antarctica, and how these places are shaped by their relative proximity to the last great continent. Each of the main cities (Ushuaia, Punta Arenas, Cape Town, Hobart, and Christchurch) are very different from each other, and each serves a slightly different function. Some are primarily logistics hubs, whilst others, like Ushuaia, are tourist destinations in their own right.

Gary then gave a fascinating presentation about his time overwintering at Mawson Station. He spoke of the practicalities of living in one of the remotest places on earth, and enduring extreme cold, but we also got a sense of how much Gary had enjoyed it. The darkness, cold, and incredible winter light are part of what makes overwintering so special, an experience few on this Earth have had.





After lunch we could feel the motion of the ship starting to change, and hour-by-hour, it got calmer—we were now in the lee of the land, and before long we could see the first islands of the southernmost point of South America. The seas were absolutely full of life; **black-browed albatross**, **sooty shearwaters**, **giant petrels**, and **imperial shags** could be spotted on all quarters, and as we entered the mouth of the Beagle Channel we could also start to see **South American sea lions**, **Magellanic penguins**, and even some distant **dusky dolphins**, all frolicking in the wake of *Ortelius* as we plowed into a solid 40 knot headwind.

The land around us was an assault on the senses, here, after 30 days without, were verdant green forests, draped across the surrounding hillsides. The distant peaks had a dusting of fresh snow, and everywhere was the pervasive and delightful smell of land, and of rich and varied life.

As we got further into the channel, a solemn moment approached, the helicopter pilots and engineers had packed their bags and were ready to fly back to their home bases. We all crowded into the Bar to say the fondest of farewells to the people who have helped make this the trip of a lifetime. Shortly after, we heard the turbine on Quebec spooling up, and within a few moments she lifted off the aft of *Ortelius*, and up into the gusty skies. Within just half an hour, all three machines were airborne, and as Quebec, Victor, and Sierra each took off, they dipped their rotors in farewell, and did one last low-level fly-by of the Bridge—the pilots and mechanics clearly enjoying themselves right to the end.



This evening we had a special recap; a toast to our incredible voyage. Both Sara and Captain Per gave heartfelt and emotion-laden speeches—we could sense that this has not been an ordinary trip; even these veterans of Antarctica have been deeply-touched by our experiences.

The final event of the day was the viewing of the much anticipated slideshow, put together by Vide. It was magnificent; there were so many moments of awe, of wonder, and of beauty. But Vide had not just captured the moments, but also the essence of this trip; the emotional journey we have all been through, and the lasting impressions it has left on all of us.





**Day 33 - March 20<sup>th</sup> 2023: Ushuaia, Argentina**

**Writer: Laurence Dyke**

**08h00 GPS position: 54°51.4'S / 068°02.9'W**

**Wind: WSW 7 • Sea State: Smooth • Weather: Broken Cloud • Air Temperature: +10°C**

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This morning we woke with more than a tinge of sadness; it's time to leave *Ortelius* and her crew and staff behind—this rugged little ship, and the people on her have been our home and our family for the last 32 days. Despite the bustle of disembarkation, we took a moment among the activity to reflect on the incredible things we have seen, the amazing places we have been, and the wonderful people we have met along the way.

We headed to the Dining Room for one last breakfast, and a chance to say a final goodbye to the lovely waiters and waitresses. Pretty soon Sara announced that the buses to town and the airport had arrived, and we made our way to the gangway for the final time.

We stepped onto the blustery quayside, and back into the real world. Some of us are homeward bound, but many will continue on, for further adventures. Regardless, the experiences and connections that we have found on this, the most epic of expeditions, will remain with us for the rest of our lives.

Thank you all for travelling with us on this voyage, for your enthusiasm, support, and good company. We very much hope to see you again in the future, wherever that might be!



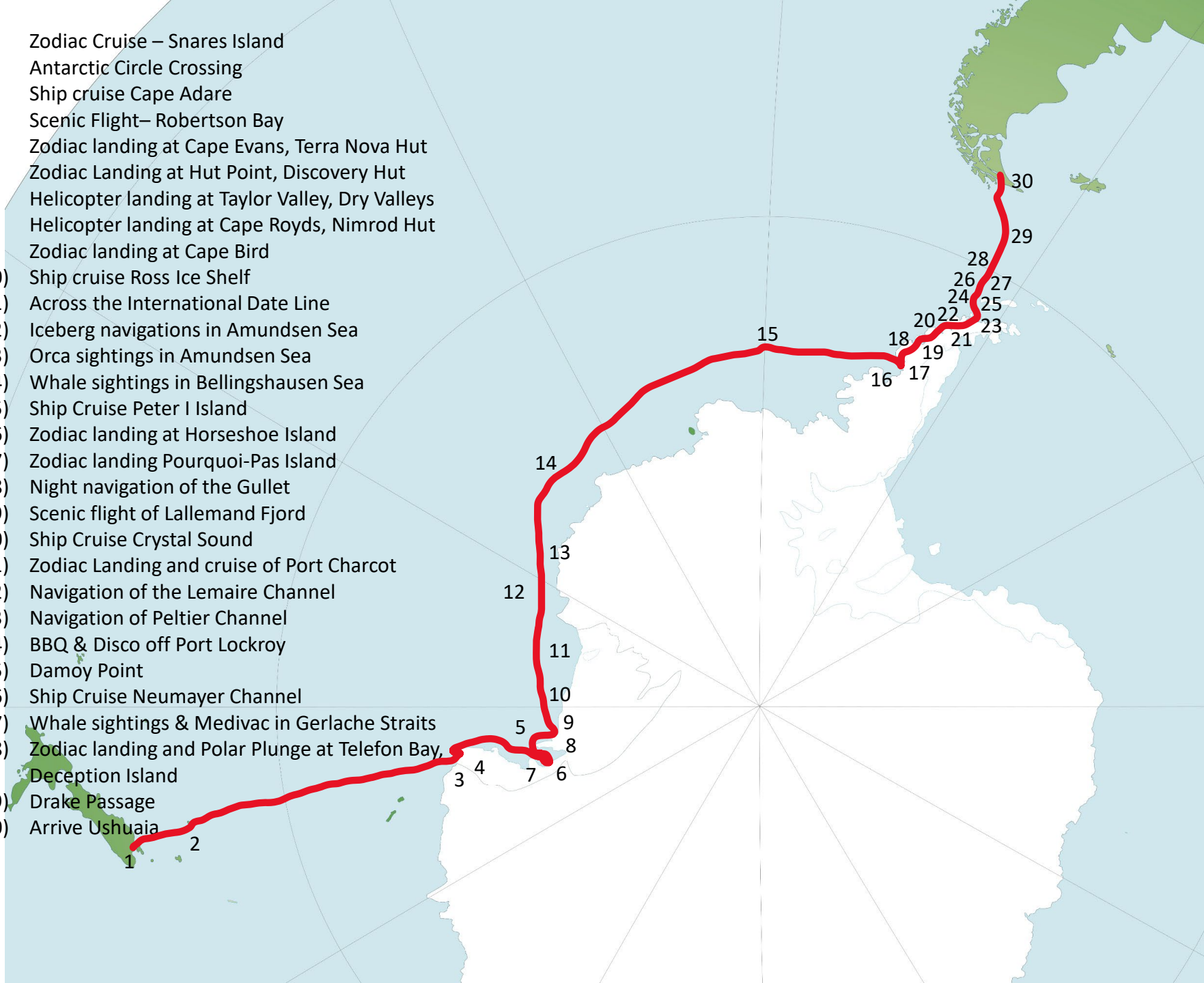
On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Per Andersson, Expedition Leader Sara Jenner, Hotel Manager Albert Don, and all the crew and staff of M/V *Ortelius*, it has been a pleasure travelling with you.



Total distance sailed on our voyage: 6,209 nautical miles  
Southernmost position: 77°51.09'S, 166°37.60'E



- 1) Zodiac Cruise – Snares Island
- 2) Antarctic Circle Crossing
- 3) Ship cruise Cape Adare
- 4) Scenic Flight– Robertson Bay
- 5) Zodiac landing at Cape Evans, Terra Nova Hut
- 6) Zodiac Landing at Hut Point, Discovery Hut
- 7) Helicopter landing at Taylor Valley, Dry Valleys
- 8) Helicopter landing at Cape Royds, Nimrod Hut
- 9) Zodiac landing at Cape Bird
- 10) Ship cruise Ross Ice Shelf
- 11) Across the International Date Line
- 12) Iceberg navigations in Amundsen Sea
- 13) Orca sightings in Amundsen Sea
- 14) Whale sightings in Bellingshausen Sea
- 15) Ship Cruise Peter I Island
- 16) Zodiac landing at Horseshoe Island
- 17) Zodiac landing Pourquoi-Pas Island
- 18) Night navigation of the Gullet
- 19) Scenic flight of Lallemand Fjord
- 20) Ship Cruise Crystal Sound
- 21) Zodiac Landing and cruise of Port Charcot
- 22) Navigation of the Lemaire Channel
- 23) Navigation of Peltier Channel
- 24) BBQ & Disco off Port Lockroy
- 25) Damoy Point
- 26) Ship Cruise Neumayer Channel
- 27) Whale sightings & Medivac in Gerlache Straits
- 28) Zodiac landing and Polar Plunge at Telefon Bay, Deception Island
- 29) Drake Passage
- 30) Arrive Ushuaia



ROSS SEA ODYSSEY, Bluff, New Zealand to Ushuaia, Argentina aboard M/V Ortelius, 2023

		February												March																			
BIRDS	Latin name	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	1	2	3	3(2)	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Emperor Penguin	<i>Aptenodytes forsteri</i>												X	X	X													X					
King Penguin	<i>A. patagonicus</i>																																
Gentoo Penguin	<i>Pygoscelis papua</i>																												X	X	X		
Adelie Penguin	<i>P. adelaie</i>									X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X									X	X	X				
Chinstrap Penguin	<i>P. antarctica</i>																												X		X		
Eastern Rockhopper Pe	<i>Eudyptes filholi</i>			X																													
Snares Crested Penguin	<i>E. robustus</i>		X																														
Erect-crested Penguin	<i>E. sclateri</i>			X																													
Royal Penguin	<i>E. schlegeli</i>																																
Yellow-eyed Penguin	<i>Megadypotes antipodes</i>			X																													
Magellanic Penguin	<i>Spheniscus magellanicus</i>																																
Snowy Wandering Albat	<i>Diomedea exulans</i>																																X
Antipodean Albatross	<i>D. antipodensis</i>																																
Southern Royal Albatro	<i>D. epomophora</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X																									X
Northern Royal Albatro	<i>D. sanfordi</i>	X																															
Black-browed Albatros	<i>Thalassarche melanophrys</i>					X	X	X	X														X	X	X						X	X	X
Campbell Albatross	<i>T. impavida</i>			X																													
Grey-headed Albatross	<i>T. chrysostoma</i>						J																										
Salvin's Albatross	<i>T. salvini</i>																							X							X	X	
Auckland Shy Albatros	<i>T. steadi</i>	X	X	X	X	X																											
Southern Buller's Albat	<i>T. bulleri</i>		X	X	X	X																											
Light-mantled Albatros	<i>Phoebetria palpebrata</i>			X	X		X	X	X														X	X	X						X	X	
Cape/Pintado Petrel	<i>Capense capense</i>		X		X			X	X	X								X				X	X	X	X	X					X		
Antarctic Petrel	<i>Thalassoica antarctica</i>								X	X	X						X	X	X	X	X	X				X							
Snow Petrel	<i>Pagodroma nivea</i>								X		X	X					X	X	X	X	X							X					
Greater Snow Petrel	<i>P. confusa</i>								X																								
Southern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialoides</i>								X	X		X					X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Northern Giant Petrel	<i>Macronectes halli</i>		X	X	X			X	X																								X
Southern Giant Petrel	<i>M. giganteus</i>									X	X	X									X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Blue Petrel	<i>Halobaena caerulea</i>																						X								X	X	X
Fairy Prion	<i>Pachyptila turtur</i>	X	X																														X
Slender-billed Prion	<i>P. belcheri</i>																																
Antarctic Prion	<i>P. desolata</i>				X	X	X	X	X	X												X	X	X								X	
White-headed Petrel	<i>Pterodroma lessoni</i>			X	X	X	X	X	X																								
Mottled Petrel	<i>P. inexpectata</i>																																
Soft-plumaged Petrel	<i>P. mollis</i>				X																												X
Sooty Shearwater	<i>Puffinus griseus</i>	X	X	X	X		X	X	X																								X
White-chinned Petrel	<i>P. aequinoctialis</i>			X	X	X	X		X																								X
Wilson's Storm-Petrel	<i>Oceanites oceanicus</i>									X	X	X																					
Fuegian Storm-petrel	<i>O. chilensis</i>																									X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Black-bellied Storm-Pe	<i>Fregetta tropica</i>			X				X																							X	X	
Grey-backed Storm-pe	<i>Garrodia nereis</i>																																
Imperial Cormorant	<i>Phalacrofax atriceps</i>																																X
Antarctic Shag	<i>P. bransfieldensis</i>																										X	X	X	X	X		
Campbell Shag	<i>P. campbelli</i>			X																													
Campbell Teal	<i>A. nesiotis</i>			X																													



[illegible]

MAMMALS		Latin name	February										March																			
	17		18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Humpback Whale	Megaptera novaeangliae							X													X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Fin Whale	Balaenoptera physalus																		X			X	X		X							
Sei Whale	B. borealis																															X
Antarctic Minke Whale	B. bonaerensis							X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X							X	X	X			
Killer Whale	Orcinus orca											X						X														
Antarctic Killer (type A)	Orcinus species																				X											
Antarctic Killer (type B)											X																					
Ross Sea Killer (type C)	Orcinus species								X	X																						
Hourglass Dolphin	Lagenorhynchus cruciger																														X	
Arnoux's Beaked Whal	Berardius arnuxii							X																								
Beaked Whale-	Cuvier's or Grey's																														X	
Antarctic Fur Seal	Arctocephalus gazella																						X			X		X	X	X		
New Zealand Fur Seal	A. forsteri		X	X																												
Hooker's Sea Lion	Phocarcos hookeri		X	X																												
Southern Elephant Sea	Mirounga leonina																					X										
Crabeater Seal	Lobodon carcinophaga												X					X							X	X	X					
Weddell Seal	Leptonychotes weddellii											X	X	X	X										X	X	X	X	X			
Leopard Seal	Hydrurga leptonyx																									X		X				
		Depart Bluff	Snarcs Island	Campbell Island	At Sea-rough conditions	At Sea-rough conditions	At Sea-rough conditions	At Sea	At Sea-Crossed Antarctic circle	Cape Adare-Robertson Bay-pack ice	At Sea-rough-Possession Is in distance	At Sea-Approaching Ross Island	Cape Evans and Hut Point	Taylor Valley	Cape Royds and Cape Bird	Ross Ice Shelf near Cape Crozier	At Sea Ross Sea	At Sea-Amundsen Sea	At Sea-Amundsen Sea	At Sea	At Sea	At Sea	Peter I Island	At Sea	At Sea	Horseshoe Is-Porquol Pas Is	Laillemard Fjord-Scenic Fit	Port Charcot-Lemaire-Peltier	Danoy Pt-Gerlache Strait	Deception-Telidon Bay	Drake Passage	Drake Passage-Beagle Channel-Ushuaia

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# Sara Jenner – Expedition Leader

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For as long as Sara could remember she has had a passion for travel and searching for the wildest and most remote places on earth.

Back in the UK when she was only 10, she remembers trading in her favourite pink bicycle for the money to start her travel fund. Every birthday and Christmas she added a little more in the kitty and finally, at 18 she realised her dream of diving at the Great Barrier Reef! At that point the travel addiction was born. Ever since Sara has been travelling the globe in search of wild and remote places and has spent many

months volunteering on wildlife conservation projects in a bid to help some of our most iconic and endangered species.

Sara's love of wildlife and the great outdoors has taken her to all seven continents and she has travelled extensively in the polar regions including the Antarctic Peninsula, Falklands, South Georgia, Spitsbergen, Greenland, Iceland, Baffin Island and Canadian High Arctic. Returning to the UK, Sara used this knowledge to work in the travel industry as a polar specialist for several years, until the travel bug hit again, when she decided to swap life on the land for a life at sea and joined the Oceanwide Expedition Team in 2016.

During 2020-2021 she worked extensively on a leopard seal identification project and took the opportunity to fulfil a lifetime dream of visiting South Georgia in winter by working on the M/V Pharos, which is deployed by the South Georgia Government as a fishery patrol vessel.

Sara is a keen wildlife photographer and when she is not wrapped up warm in the polar regions she enjoys working as a photographic guide in Botswana, on the beautiful Chobe River and Okavango Delta, so really has a life of two halves.



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# Allan White – Assistant Expedition Leader

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Allan was born and raised in the Falkland Islands. He's a fifth generation Islander, and a descendant of one of the original British colonists in 1840. His higher education was completed in England, after which he embarked on a military career.

He joined the British Army aged 17. After serving in West Germany for two years during the Cold War period, he completed deployments in Northern Ireland, Cyprus as a United Nations peace-keeper, and with British Forces South Atlantic Islands. He left the Army to settle back in the Falklands.

While working as a Port Agent, Allan worked with the late Lars-Eric Lindblad, the inspirational pioneer of the small ship expedition cruising concept. He encouraged Allan to become a Zodiac driver and go to sea for a year. Twenty eight years later, he's still at it. His voyages have taken him all over the world, with particular focus on the Polar regions. His travel experience ranges from 90° North to 76° South.

In the Falklands, Allan and his wife owned and operated their own tourist lodge for over a decade. More recently they managed a privately owned island, where they were the sole residents for almost 5 years, with thousands of albatrosses, penguins and seals for neighbours.

Allan is an experienced guide and Zodiac driver, with a keen interest in natural history and polar exploration. He lives in the Falklands capital Stanley, with his wife Jacqui and their Labrador Bosun.

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# Tennessee Blackmore – Expedition Guide

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From the UK, Tennessee is a historian and expedition specialist with an infectious enthusiasm for the human history of the Southern Ocean. He is an elected Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and Royal Anthropological Institute.

Tennessee began his career expeditions aged 18 in the sweltering rainforests of Borneo and remote outposts in the Himalayas before finally heeding a lifelong call South in the footsteps of great polar pioneers.

He is presently writing the first dedicated biography of Sir James Clark Ross, a project Tennessee began in 2017. This new biography tells the stranger-than-fiction career of arguably Britain's greatest polar explorer and investigates the critical influence of Inuit culture on Ross's successful polar endeavours.

Having been greatly inspired by tales from the heroic age of exploration, Tennessee is deeply fascinated by the personalities and character dynamics behind the iconic figures of the era.

Aside from polar exploration history, Tennessee has worked on a range of projects as a historical consultant specialising in the Falklands War. He recently conducted year-long research on the Falklands Air War, interviewing over twenty-five British and Argentinian veterans.

Having worked in Polar Tourism since 2018, his greatest passion is connecting people with tales of endurance and misadventure in the places those stories unfolded.



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# Vide Brandt - Expedition Guide

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As long as he can remember Vide has been fascinated with the remote regions of the world, and the polar regions in particular.

The first time he disembarked the airplane in Ny-Alesund on Svalbard in 2001, he felt home. After several more visits to his family that resides there, he purchased a one-way ticket in 2007 and decided to call the high arctic home. He will live there forever.

Photography, camping and hiking are his great hobbies. Polar wildlife and history are his great obsessions. After

spending all his free time out in the Arctic wilderness for over 7 years he took the natural decision to enter the guiding & expeditions business.

Working for several years in the field he has been a leading guide on long snowmobile tours, ice caving trips, and various RIB operations in west Spitsbergen. Many months have been spent as a polar bear guard, and fieldworker on natural history documentary productions. After spending a few northern autumns & winters operating dive boats on diving expeditions with Killer Whales he started dreaming of the great Southern Ocean, and the frozen continent.

Being a Svalbard resident, he is fully immersed in the Arctic lifestyle. Workdays and days off are spent relatively similar in the great outdoors, on snow and sea ice during the winter and at sea or in the mountains during the summer. Periods without work are generally spent in a canoe or hiking in the great forests of Scandinavia. Polar bug or not, he still loves green trees.

By luck & fate he was granted the privilege of joining the Oceanwide Expeditions team in Antarctica in 2019. You will find him working as a generalist lecturer, often in the camping team and of course as a zodiac driver and purely as a Polar Guide.

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# Laurence Dyke – Expedition Guide

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Laurence is from Cornwall in the far southwest of the UK and grew up on the coast, never far from the water and boats.

Laurence has a background as a geographer with a special focus in glaciology, a choice inspired by seeing a glacier up close for the first time in the Austrian Alps.

For the last 7 years he has worked in science, both in the UK and Denmark, working to understand how and why huge glacier systems in Greenland have changed in the past. Understanding how

the cryosphere has changed is crucial for predicting what will happen in the future.

Laurence first visited the Arctic in 2010 whilst undertaking research for his PhD and was immediately captivated by the wild landscapes of the high latitudes. His subsequent research has taken him on numerous expeditions to remote areas of Greenland, Svalbard, and Arctic Canada.

Laurence is also a passionate advocate for polar science, when time allows he produces videos and articles about research from Greenland and the wider Arctic. Laurence lectures in glaciology and geography.



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# Michael Green – Expedition Guide

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He has always loved the Sea and so joined the Navy as soon as he left School. In the Navy he became a diver and have enjoyed diving and instructing all over the world.

He joined Oceanwide Expeditions three years ago as a dive guide and have led and guided both in the Arctic and the Antarctic. He loves both equally. Antarctica is one of the most special places on this planet in my opinion.

He is in his third year of a photography art degree and love seeing your photos they are all fantastic and capture

different aspects of what we are going to see.

If you need any help with your camera or your photos just ask. White balance is a favourite as our cameras aren't used to an all-white background.

He looks forward to helping you get the most from your holiday so please don't be frightened to ask any questions you may have.

His only tip for your trip is to take the time to look, then see and most importantly think.

The nicest moments are when you can be quiet and relaxed, stop listen to the silence and think where you are. Not many people get to do what you are doing so savor every second.

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# Chris Long – Expedition Guide

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Chris grew up as a part of New Zealand's remotest family two long days hike from the nearest road at a place called Gorge River, on the South Islands West Coast, New Zealand.

His family lives as self-sufficiently as possible in a small cabin surrounded by the jungled rainforest, the rough rugged coastline, and an emerald green river. Most of their food came from a huge vegetable garden or was fished from the ocean. This wild untouched natural corner of New Zealand was Chris's home for the first 17 years of his life, until, one day, he set out to explore

what the rest of the world had to offer.

Since leaving Gorge River Chris has set out to see, explore and experience as much of the globe as possible. This constant search for adventure has seen him travel to over 60 countries on all seven continents. Along this journey, he spent two full summer seasons living and working as a field trainer at Scott Base, a New Zealand research station in Antarctica, as well as multiple voyages to the Ross Sea and East Antarctica.

Chris is also no stranger to the arctic. He once sailed the notorious northwest passage across the top of Greenland, Canada, and Alaska and spent much of the covid pandemic living with 150 husky dogs in Tromso, northern Norway, enduring two long cold dark arctic winters training for long distance dog races.

Since recently returning to New Zealand, he has published an autobiography and is training for his commercial fixed-wing pilot's license.



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# Daniel Martig – Mountain Guide

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Dan grew up in the Swiss Alps, and has lived in New Zealand for over 30 years. Born in a Swiss mountain village, he's spent his life exploring the mountain ranges, rivers, oceans and wilderness of Europe and the South Pacific, and guiding people who want to share the life-changing experiences only to be found in wild places.

Antarctica is the ultimate wilderness - a place that feeds the soul and lifts the spirit. Dan is looking forward to his second season of guiding for Oceanwide in a place that most people only dream

of visiting, and helping you experience an extra-ordinary landscape and environment.

Dan is an internationally qualified mountain guide and sea kayak guide. His years of professional guiding experience and his friendly, practical, down-to-earth nature will ensure you'll have a memorable time exploring Antarctica.

Dan's approach to life is holistic – he lives a sustainable life on a small property in New Zealand's South Island and believes in living in harmony with the natural world.

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# Gary Miller – Expedition Guide

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Gary's love of the polar regions began over 40 years ago when he studied polar bears in Churchill, Manitoba for his MA in Zoology.

He also studied bowhead whales and gray whales in Alaska and Mexico, and then desert bighorn sheep in Arizona for a PhD in Ecology.

His life moved south when in 1986 he began research on Antarctic penguins and skuas. Starting with 6 summers of research on Ross Island, deep in the Ross Sea, he has visited Antarctica in 31 of the past 34 years - including 10

summers and a winter at research stations studying South Polar Skuas and Adélie, Gentoo, Chinstrap, Royal, King and Emperor Penguins.

For the past 25 years Gary has joined ship-based tours where he enjoys sharing his knowledge, enthusiasm and experience with passengers from all over the world. In that time his trips include 6 tours through the Ross Sea and other parts of East Antarctica.

Gary is one of the most experienced naturalist/guides working today.



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# Chloe Power – Expedition Guide

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Chloe is a marine scientist turned high school science teacher and thinks of science as just ‘measurable magic’.

Chloe believes that enthusiasm and passion are key qualities in communicating science, which can hopefully make it more enjoyable and digestible for conservation efforts.

Her background is undergrad studies in marine biology at Southern Cross University in the Northern Rivers region of NSW Australia - where she focused on intertidal zones and mollusc ecology. She then completed

a master's in marine and Antarctic science at the University of Tasmania in Hobart where she studied plankton communities and the effects of sea ice on Antarctic food webs.

Chloe travelled down to Antarctica in 2018 with Antarctica New Zealand where her obsession for the ice began, and she well and truly caught the ‘polar bug’. She has guided in the Kimberley region of north-western Australia, the Antarctic Peninsula, the Subantarctic Islands and the Ross Sea.

Chloe also delves in a bit of social science, with a focus on connections between the Antarctic Gateway Cities and in her role as the Hobart representative for the ‘Antarctic Youth Coalition’ which aims to inspire and educate youth on Antarctic related matters.

When Chloe is not telling off teenagers on how to use a Bunsen burner correctly, you’ll find her in the ocean - surfing, diving, or fossicking through the intertidal zone for ocean treasures. She can’t wait to explore this incredible part of the world with you.

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## Eugene Wong – Ship's doctor

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Growing up in London, UK, Eugene graduated from medical school at the University of Cambridge in 2015. He subsequently moved to Canada and completed a residency in Family Medicine at the University of Toronto in 2018.

He now spends most of his working life travelling to small and isolated communities throughout Canada, living in each place for a month at a time. He predominantly works in Northern Ontario and the Territories, including a significant amount of time above the Arctic Circle in the Northwest Territories.

Though he occasionally works as an Emergency Physician in larger hospitals around Toronto, Eugene relishes the challenge of providing comprehensive care in rural and remote settings, and typically manages patients in the outpatient clinic, the Emergency Department and inpatient hospital ward.

With a focus in Emergency Medicine, he has a special interest in cold weather Wilderness Medicine as well as prehospital Point-of-Care Ultrasound, and always travels with a handheld ultrasound device wherever he is working.

When he is not working in the far reaches of Canada, Eugene likes to catch up with his friends and family in Toronto. He is also a licensed pilot and owns a 1977 Cessna R172K and plans to fly himself to the Bahamas one day. As an avid backpacker, he has been fortunate enough to visit over fifty countries with some of his favourites being Iran, Bolivia and Bhutan.





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

*Welcome aboard the M/V Ortelius!*

**17<sup>th</sup> February 2023**  
**Day 1 – Embarkation, Bluff**

Please make yourselves at home in your cabins and check you have received all your luggage!  
Tea/coffee is available in the Bar located on Deck 6.

### **PLEASE LISTEN FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 16:45+/- Ship safety briefing, in the Lecture Room (Deck 3 forward). Attendance to this is **MANDATORY**.
- After the briefing the emergency alarm will be sounded, and you will need to go back to your cabin and get your life jacket. All guests will go to their **MUSTER STATION** which is either the Bar (Deck 6) or the Restaurant (Deck 4). Please check your cabin room card to see which station you are assigned to. If you are assigned **Lifeboat 1** you will muster in the Bar and if you are **Lifeboat 2** you will muster in the Restaurant.
- 17:45+/- The Hotel Manager and Expedition Leader will do a welcome briefing, to orientate you to life on board and explain the plan for the forthcoming days. This will take place in the Lecture Room (Deck 3, forward).
- 18:45+/- The Expedition team will hand out your rubber boots. You will be called deck-by-deck to the Lecture Room, so please listen to announcements. Bring your thick socks to find the best-sized boots for you!
- 19:00 Buffet dinner in the Restaurant on Deck 4.
- 20:15 Please join Sara for the **MANDATORY** IAATO and Zodiac briefing in the Lecture Room, attendance will be checked. Plans for tomorrow will also be explained.

*Please note that tonight we will be sailing into the open sea. Take your seasickness medication before you really feel the movements of the vessel, the doctor will be available in the bar after dinner to assist.*

*Make sure that all your belongings are put away safely and that doors and drawers in your cabin are tightly closed. Walk slowly on the ship, always use one hand for yourself and one for the ship and beware of your fingers because of doors slamming!*



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**18<sup>th</sup> February 2023**  
***Day 2 – Snares Island***

06:00	Wake-up call
06:30-07:30	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant, Deck 4
07:30+/-	We hope to take you for a Zodiac Cruise at Snares Island, please listen to announcements for exact timings.  <b>Please ensure you lifejacket is correctly fitted before approaching the boarding area on Deck 4 by reception.</b>
12:00-13:00	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.
13:15+/-	During the course of the afternoon you will be called deck by deck for the MANDATORY Biosecurity in preparation for our landing at Campbell Island. When called, please bring all your outer garments, bags, boots etc. that you plan to use in the New Zealand Sub Antarctic Islands for the Expedition Staff to check.  Please ensure everything is clean before proceeding to the Lecture Room and ensure you have signed the self-declaration form.
17:30	Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for staff introductions, this will be followed by a Captain's Cocktail, a toast to the forthcoming voyage and a look at plans for tomorrow at Campbell Island.
18:30	Dinner is served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.

*Remember: walk slowly on the ship, never rush. Keep one hand for yourself but at least one hand for the ship. Shut all doors firmly and keep fingers away from door frames.*

***“One of the gladdest moments in life, me thinks, is the departure upon a distant journey to unknown lands. Shaking off with one mighty effort the fetters of habit, the leaden weight of routine, the cloak of many cares, man feels once more happy... a fresh the morn of life.” Sir Richard Burton, 1856***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**19<sup>th</sup> February 2023**  
***Day 3 – Campbell Island***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
10:00	Chris invites you to the Bar for an Introduction to the History, Campbell Island.
12:00-13:00	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
13:30+/-	<p>After lunch we hope to take you ashore at Campbell Island, please listen to announcements as to exact timings.</p> <p>Please follow the boardwalk and wildlife guidelines that were given in the briefings. Remember the boardwalk is very narrow, uneven, and slippery in places, please take caution. The walk is about 6km round trip (3km uphill and 3km downhill), only do as much as you feel comfortable doing.</p>
17:45	Daily Recap in the Bar.
18:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant. (Starter and main course will be plated and there will be a cake buffet waiting for you in the bar when you get back from your Zodiac cruise.
19:15+/-	After dinner, we hope to take you for a Zodiac cruise at Campbell Island.

***“I now belong to a higher cult of mortals, for I have seen the albatross.”***

***- Robert Cushman Murphy***



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**20<sup>th</sup> February 2023**  
***Day 4 – Heading South***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Gary invites you to a lecture about Sea Birds of the Southern Ocean.
11:15	Laurence invites you to the Bar for his presentation titled 'High Latitude Bathymetry: exploring the world beneath the waves'. Understanding how the oceans are mapped, and how little we know about them.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
16:15	Sara invites you to the Bar for a presentation about Penguins.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.

***"I find the greatest thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as is which direction we are moving. To reach the port of heaven, we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it, but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor."***

***- Oliver Wendell Holmes***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**21st February 2023**

### ***Day 5 – Approaching the Antarctic Convergence***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:30	Tennessee invites you to the Bar for a lecture titled 'In Search of Terra Incognita James Cook's Second Voyage of Discovery'.
11:30	Chloe invites you to the Bar for a presentation about Pinnipeds of the Antarctic and Sub Antarctic.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
13:45	On popular demand, we are going to offer a short presentation in the Bar about Macquarie Island - What you missed!
16:15	In preparation for our visit to Cape Adare there will be the first screening of the four-part series about the Carsten Borchgrevink Expedition (1898-1900) in the Bar. The M/V Ortelius was integral to the production of the movie. Each part is only 45 minutes long.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
20:30 +/-	Vide invites you to the Bar for the first of the storytelling sessions with the Expedition Team, so come and grab yourself a drink in preparation for an evening of light entertainment.

***"....it must be remembered that the men whose desires lead them to the untrodden paths of the world have generally marked individuality."***

***- Ernest Shackleton***



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

22nd February 2023

### *Day 6 – Crossing the Antarctic Convergence*

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Chris invites you to the Bar for his presentation about Crested Penguins, focusing on the research his sister lead on the species around the South of New Zealand and the Sub Antarctic Islands.
11:15	During the course of the morning you will be called deck by deck for the <b>MANDATORY</b> IAATO Biosecurity. When called, please bring all your outer garments, bags, boots etc. that you plan to use in Antarctica. Please ensure everything is clean before proceeding to the Lecture Room and ensure you have signed the self-declaration form.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
16:15	There will be the second screening of the four-part series about the Carsten Borchgrevink Expedition (1898-1900) in the Bar.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
20:30 +/-	Allan invites you to the Bar for a personal storytelling session, so come and grab yourself a drink in preparation for an evening of light entertainment.

***“the ocean is a wilderness reaching around the globe, wilder than the Bengal jungle, and fuller of monsters.”***

***- Henry David Thoreau***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**23rd February 2023**

### ***Day 7 – Heading towards the Antarctic Circle***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	There will be the <b>MANDATORY</b> IAATO and Helicopter Briefing in the Lecture Room, attendance will be checked.
11:30	Michael invites you to the Bar for a presentation about Kathleen Scott – The Crazy Life of being the Wife of a Polar Explorer.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
14:00	<p>After lunch, you will be called to the Bar by Activity Group for the <b>MANDATORY</b> Helicopter Drill. Please listen to announcements.</p> <p>We will gather you in groups of either 4 or 5 people, at which point you will be escorted to the Heli deck. Please dress warmly, wear your Zodiac red lifejacket and bring your helicopter key card and signed declaration form.</p>
16:15	There will be the third screening of the four-part series about the Carsten Borchgrevink Expedition (1898-1900) in the Bar.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
20:30 +/-	Dan invites you to the Bar for a personal storytelling session, so come and grab yourself a drink in preparation for an evening of light entertainment.

***“For sheer downright misery give me a hurricane, not too warm, the yard of a sailing ship, a wet sail and a bout of sea sickness.”***

***Apsley Cherry-Gerrard, who sailed south with Captain Robert Falcon Scott***



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**24<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

***Day 8 – Crossing the Antarctic Circle***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Tennessee welcomes you to the Bar for a presentation titled 'Pilgrims of The Ocean: James Clark Ross's voyage to Antarctica 1839-43'.
11:15	Sara invites you to the Bar for a presentation about Photography in the Polar Regions.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
16:15	There will be the final screening of the four-part series about the Carsten Borchgrevink Expedition (1898-1900) in the Bar.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
20:30 +/-	Gary invites you to the Bar for a personal storytelling session, so come and grab yourself a drink in preparation for an evening of light entertainment.

***"A journey is a person in itself, no two are alike. And all plans, safeguards, policies and coercion are fruitless. We find after years of struggle that we do not take a trip, a trip takes us."***

***- John Steinbeck***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**25th February 2023**

### ***Day 9 – Robertson Bay and Cape Adare***

- 07:45 Wake-up call.
- 08:00-09:00 Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
- 09:15 Vide invites you to the Bar for a presentation titled 'Lincoln Ellsworth – flying over the ice'.
- Please head out on to the outside decks and enjoy views of the Antarctic Continent as we sail into Robertson Bay.
- 12:00-13:00 A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
- We hope to do a scenic flight at Robertson Bay, please listen to announcements for exact timings. As you appreciate, helicopter operations take a significant time, so please be patient.
- As and when your group is called, please proceed to the Bar, ensuring you have your numbered helicopter card with you and clearly visible. Please dress warmly, in waterproof clothing and with your Muck boots. On arrival in the bar, we will deactivate both canisters in your lifejacket.
- We will be starting with activity Group 5 and working upwards in the following order 6,7,8,9,1,2,3,4.
- 19:00 Daily Recap in the Bar.
- 19:30 Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
- After dinner we will anchor off Cape Adare so you will be able to see the historic hut of Casten Borchgrevink.

***“Glittering white, shining blue, raven black, in the light of the sun the land looks like a fairy tale. Pinnacle after pinnacle, peak after peak, crevassed, wild as any land on our globe, it lies, unseen and untrodden.”***

***- Roald Amundsen***



## **Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey**

**26th February 2023**

***Day 10 – Heading along the Borchgrevink Coast***

06:30	Wake-up call.
07:00-08:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:00	Laurence invites you to a lecture about Glaciers and Glaciation in the Bar.
10:30	Gary invites you to the Bar for a presentation about the Life of Adelie Penguins - based on years of research he has carried out on this incredible Antarctic species
12:00-13:00	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
15:00	Activity Group 1 are invited to join Martin our Third Officer in the Bar, where he will take you upstairs for a Bridge tour, where he will explain how navigation works onboard the M/V Ortelius. We hope to offer this to each group during the voyage. The bridge will be closed to all other guests between 15:00-16:00.
16:15	Tennessee welcomes you to the Bar for a presentation titled 'Discovery 1901-1904: Return to Ice'.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.

***"I was sitting foremost in the boat, and jumped ashore as the boat struck, saying 'I have then the honour of being the first man who has ever put foot on South Victoria Land'."***

***-Carsten Borchgrevink***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**27th February 2023**  
***Day 11 – Deep into the Ross Sea***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Chloe welcomes you to the Bar for a presentation about 'Whales of the Southern Ocean'.
11:15	Vide welcomes you to the Bar for a presentation titled 'The Antarctic Treaty and the dreams of mining'.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.  Activity Group 2 are invited to join Martin our Third Officer in the Bar, where he will take you upstairs for a Bridge tour, where he will explain how navigation works onboard the M/V Ortelius. The bridge will be closed to all other guests between 15:00-16:00.
16:15	Michael welcomes you to the Bar for a presentation about Herbert Ponting and his Photographs
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
20:30	Chris invites you to the Bar for a personal storytelling session, so come and grab yourself a drink in preparation for an evening of light entertainment.

***Human effort is not futile, but man fights against the giant force of nature in a spirit of humility."***

***- Sir Ernest Shackleton***



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**28th February 2023**

### ***Day 12 – Cape Evans and McMurdo Sound***

06:00

Wake-up call.

08:00-09:00

Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.

We hope to offer a landing at Cape Evans, the exact timings will be dependent on our arrival time.

We can only have 40 people in the ASPA (Antarctic Specially Protected Area) at once and 8 people in the hut, so please be patient and dress warmly.

Please remember no backpacks, monopods, tripods or walking sticks in the hut. Please dry your boots and clothing well before entering and remember to sign the visitors book before leaving.

We will call **Activity Groups 1-4** first and 1 hour later we will call **Activity Groups 5-8**. Please do not approach the gangway until you are called.

13:30-14:30

A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.

After lunch we will sail into McMurdo Sound, where we hope to get views of McMurdo Station, Scott Base and possibly Mount Erebus, depending on visibility. We should also see 'Discovery Hut', used in the Antarctic Discovery Expedition of 1901-04, led by Captain Robert Falcon Scott, later used by Sir Ernest Shackleton during the 1907-09 Nimrod Expedition.

19:00

Daily Recap in the Bar.

19:30

Dinner is served in the Restaurant.

***"Such extremity of suffering cannot be measured. Madness or death may give relief. But this I know: we on this journey were already beginning to think of death as a friend."***

***- Apsley Cherry-Garrard, on his winter journey to Cape Crozier***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**1st March 2023**  
**Day 13 – Dry Valleys**

06:30	Wake -up call.
07:00-08:00	<p>Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.</p> <p>We hope to take you ashore at Taylor Valley, please listen to announcements for exact timings.</p> <p>As and when your group is called, please proceed to the Bar, ensuring you have your numbered helicopter card with you and clearly visible. Please dress very warmly, in waterproof clothing and with your Muck boots. On arrival in the bar, we will deactivate both canisters in your lifejacket.</p> <p><b>We will be starting with activity Group 8 and working backwards down to Group 1.</b></p> <p>Your allocated time ashore will be dependent on weather conditions and the flight time from the ship to the landing site.</p> <p>Your group will be given a time to be back at the landing site for their return flight to the ship.</p> <p>For those not wishing to land, we will offer a scenic flight instead, at the end of the landing operations.</p>
12:00-15:00	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant, Deck 4. Please go, when called.
19:00	Join the Expedition Staff in the Bar for recap!
19:30	Dinner is served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.

***“An adventure is only an inconvenience rightly considered. An inconvenience is only an adventure wrongly considered.”***

***- G. K. Chesterton***



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023**  
***Day 14 – Cape Royds***

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 06:30       | Wake -up call.  |
| 07:00-08:00 | Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.<br><br>We hope to take you ashore at Cape Royds.<br><br>Please listen to announcements for exact timings and whether this will be by Zodiac or Helicopter which will depend on weather and ice conditions. |
| 13:00-14:00 | A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.   |
| 18:15       | Join the Expedition Staff in the Bar for recap!   |
| 19:00       | Dinner is served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.   |

***“Man can only do his best, and we have arrayed against us the strongest forces of nature.”***

***- Sir Ernest Shackleton***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023**  
***Day 15 – Ross Ice Shelf***

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 07:00       | Wake-up call.  |
| 07:30-08:30 | Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.<br><br>During the morning we will ship cruise along the Ross Ice Shelf, so we encourage you to join the Expedition Team on the outside decks to look for wildlife and enjoy the spectacular scenery.              |
| 12:30-13:30 | A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.  |
| 15:00       | Activity Group 3 are invited to join Martin our Third Officer in the Bar, where he will take you upstairs for a Bridge tour, where he will explain how navigation works onboard the M/V Ortelius. The bridge will be closed to all other guests between 15:00-16:00. |
| 16:15       | Allan welcomes you to the Bar for his presentation titled 'Sled Dogs; The Unsung Heroes of Antarctic Exploration'.   |
| 18:15       | Join the Expedition Staff in the Bar for recap!  |
| 19:00       | Dinner is served in the Restaurant.  |
| 20:30       | Michael invites you to the Bar for a storytelling session, so come and grab yourself a drink in preparation for an evening of light entertainment.   |

***“..... we might with equal chance of success try to sail through the cliffs of Dover, as to penetrate such a mass.”***

**- James Clark Ross about the Ross Ice Shelf**



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023** (For the second time!)  
***Day 16 – Crossing the International Date Line***

**We will cross the International Date Line overnight, please feel free to visit the bridge if you wish to witness this first hand.**

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Gary welcomes you to the Bar for his presentation about 'The Life of Emperor Penguins'.
11:15	Vide invites you to the Bar for his lecture about 'Roald Amundsen Part 1, the early years'.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
15:00	Activity Group 4 are invited to join Martin our Third Officer in the Bar, where he will take you upstairs for a Bridge tour, where he will explain how navigation works onboard the M/V Ortelius. The bridge will be closed to all other guests between 15:00-16:00.
16:15	Chris invites you to the Bar for a presentation titled 'Calling Antarctica home, my time working at Scott Base'.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
20:30	Tennessee invites you to the Bar for a storytelling session, so come and grab yourself a drink in preparation for an evening of light entertainment.

***"I tell you deliverance will not come from the rushing, noisy centres of civilisation. It will come from lonely places! The great reformers of history have come from the wilderness".***

***- Fritjof Nansen.***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**4th March 2023**  
**Day 17 – Ross Sea**

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Michael welcomes you to the Bar for a lecture about 'Diving in Antarctica- What the divers see'.
11:00	Please join Chief Engineer Aleksandr and Sara in the Bar for a lecture about the M/V Ortelius - how things work behind the scenes.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
<b>14:00</b>	<b>PLEASE NOTE: The clocks will move forward by 1 hour.</b>
15:00	Activity Group 5 are invited to join Martin our Third Officer in the Bar, where he will take you upstairs for a Bridge tour. Activity Group 1 please meet, behind the Bar outside for your tour with Michael about Diving operation on the Ortelius in the Polar Regions.
15:30	Activity Group 8 please meet at Reception for your ship tour. Activity Group 7 please meet in the Lecture room for your ship tour.
16:15	Tennessee welcomes you to the Bar for his presentation titled 'Nimrod 1907–1909: Journey to the Heart of the Antarctic'.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
20:30	The Expedition Team welcome you to the Bar for a joint storytelling session, about what they did during the Global Pandemic in 2020/21.

***"If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in the water, its substance reaches everywhere, it touches the past and prepares the future."- Loren Eisely***



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**5th March 2023**

### ***Day 18 – Heading towards the Amundsen Sea***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Please join Vide in the Bar for his lecture, 'Roald Amundsen, Part 2 – South Pole'.
11:15	Please join Chloe for her presentation about Antarctic Sea Ice and its Ecological Importance.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
<b>14:00</b>	<b>PLEASE NOTE: The clocks will move forward by 1 hour.</b>
15:00	Activity Group 6 are invited to join Martin our Third Officer in the Bar, where he will take you upstairs for a Bridge tour. Activity Group 2 please meet, behind the Bar outside for your tour with Michael about Diving operation on the Ortelius in the Polar Regions.
15:30	Activity Group 3 please meet at Reception for your ship tour. Activity Group 4 please meet in the Lecture room for your ship tour.
17:00	<b>Happy Hour in the Bar!</b>
17:30	There will be a Charity Auction in Aid of Antarctic Heritage Trust, there will be a selection of unique items and experiences to bid for, please give generously!
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
20:30	Storytelling from the guests – the more of you that contribute, the more entertaining it will be, so please bring your stories!

***“The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page.”***

***- St. Augustine***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**6th March 2023**  
***Day 19 – Amundsen Sea***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Sara invites you to the Bar for a presentation about Krill - The Cornerstone Species of the Southern Ocean.
11:15	Tenseness welcomes you to the Bar for his presentation 'Terra Nova 1910-19013: Scott of the Antarctic and Worst Journey in the World'.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
<b>14:00</b>	<b>PLEASE NOTE: The clocks will move forward by 1 hour.</b>
15:00	Activity Group 7 are invited to join Martin our Third Officer in the Bar, where he will take you upstairs for a Bridge tour.  Activity Group 3 please meet, behind the Bar outside for your tour with Michael about Diving operation on the Ortelius in the Polar Regions.
15:30	Activity Group 5 please meet at Reception for your ship tour. Activity Group 6 please meet in the Lecture Room for your ship tour.
16:15	Allan welcomes you to the Bar for a presentation about Helicopters in Expedition Cruising over the years.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
20:30	Dan welcomes you to the Bar for a storytelling session.

***“...but who wants to be foretold the weather? It is bad enough when it comes, without our having the misery of knowing about it beforehand.”***

***- Jerome .K. Jerome***



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**7th March 2023**  
***Day 20 – Amundsen Sea***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Michael welcomes you to the Bar for his presentation titled 'The Weather that killed Captain Robert Falcon Scott'.
11:15	Laurence invites you to his presentation 'Glacial Hazards: Climate Change in Glacial Environments'.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
14:00	<b>PLEASE NOTE: The clocks will move forward by 1 hour.</b>
15:00	Activity Group 8 are invited to join Martin our Third Officer in the Bar, where he will take you upstairs for a Bridge tour.  Activity Group 4 please meet, behind the bar outside for your tour with Michael about Diving operation on the Ortelius in the Polar Regions.
15:30	Activity Group 1 please meet at reception for your ship tour. Activity Group 2 please meet in the lecture room for your ship tour.
16:15	Please join Gary in the Bar for his lecture called, 'The Truth about Skuas', relating to the research he did on them on Ross Island.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
20:30	Movie Night in the Lecture Room (with popcorn) - We will show the animated, musical comedy 'Happy Feet', which Gary helped with the researching and making of.

***"If you would know the age of the earth, look at the face of the sea in a storm."***

***- Joseph Conrad***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**8th March 2023**  
***Day 21 – Amundsen Sea***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Tennessee invites you to the Bar for his presentation titled 'The Forgotten Side: Ross Sea Party of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition'.
11:15	Chris invites you to the Bar for his presentation titled 'Weather patterns and Forecasting in the Southern Ocean'.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
<b>14:00</b>	<b>PLEASE NOTE: The clocks will move forward by 1 hour.</b>
15:00	Activity Group 5 please meet, behind the bar outside for your tour with Michael about Diving operation on the Ortelius in the Polar Regions.
16:15	Sara invites you to the bar for her presentation about Killer Whales.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
20:30	The Pilots and Engineers from DAP welcomes you to the Bar for a storytelling session, based on the questions you have placed in the box.

***"People do not decide to be extraordinary, they decide to accomplish extraordinary things."***

**- Sir Edmund Hillary**



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**9th March 2023**  
***Day 22 – Approaching Peter I Island.***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Vide invites you to the Bar for Part 3 of his Roald Amundsen lecture - Post South Pole.
11:15	Gary invites you to the Bar for his lecture about the research he did on Diseases in Emperor Penguins.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
<b>14:00</b>	<b>PLEASE NOTE: The clocks will move forward by 1 hour.</b>
15:00	Activity Group 6 please meet, behind the bar outside for your tour with Michael about Diving operation on the Ortelius in the Polar Regions.
16:15	Allan invites you to the Bar for his presentation about his Early Season Icebreaker Voyage to the Ross Sea.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
20:30	Please join Helena Edelson for a storytelling session in the Bar about her adventures whilst sea kayaking the Inside Passage in the winter solo.

***"It's when you are safe at home that you're having an adventure. When you're having an adventure, you wish you were safe at home."***

***- Thorton Wilder***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**10th March 2023**  
***Day 23 – Peter I Island.***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
11:00	Chloe invites you to the Bar for her presentation titled 'The Australasian Antarctic Expedition – Douglas Mawson'.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
<b>14:00</b>	<b>PLEASE NOTE: The clocks will move forward by 1 hour.</b>
16:15	Laurence invites you to the Bar for his lecture about Antarctic Icebergs.
17:30	Daily Recap in the Bar.
	We hope to have our first sights of Peter I Island around this time, so we encourage you up to the bridge, or out on deck (if they are open) to enjoy the spectacular landscape of the remote and rarely visited island.
19:45	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.

***“Life is either a daring adventure, or nothing at all.”***

***- Helen Keller.***



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**11th March 2023**  
**Day 24 – Bellingshausen Sea**

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Captain Per invites you to the Bar for a storytelling session with him, this will be based on questions left in the question box beforehand.
11:15	Gary invites you to the Bar for his presentation about Sea Ice – looking at its formation, dynamics and means of navigating it.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
<b>14:00</b>	<b>PLEASE NOTE: The clocks will move forward by 1 hour.</b>
15:00	Activity Group 7 please meet, behind the bar outside for your tour with Michael about Diving operation on the Ortelius in the Polar Regions.
16:15	Tennessee welcomes you to the Bar for his lecture 'Pray for Shackleton: an end of an era'.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
21:00	<b>Happy Hour in the Bar, with half priced drinks, karaoke, and music!</b>

***"Sailors, with their built - in sense of order, service, and discipline, should really be running the world."***

***- Nicholas Monsarrat***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**12th March 2023**  
***Day 25 – Bellingshausen Sea***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Michael invites you to the Bar for his presentation titled 'Food in Antarctic Exploration.'
11:15	Vide welcomes you to the Bar for his lecture about 'The Swedish Antarctic Expedition; 1901-03'.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
16:15	Sara invites you to the Bar her presentation about Women in Antarctica.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.
20:30	Movie Night in the Lecture Room – a screening of Happy Feet 2.

***"Neither nature nor art has partitioned the sea into empires. The ocean and its treasures are the common property of all men."***

***- John Adams***



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**13th March 2023**

***Day 26 – Horseshoe Island and Pourquoi-Pas Island***

06:30	Wake-up call.
07:00-08:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
08:00+/-	We hope to take you ashore by Zodiac at Horseshoe Island.  Please remember to bring a torch with you if you have one, to use whilst inside the historic hut.
12:00-13:00	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.
15:00+/-	We hope to take you ashore by Zodiac at Pourquoi-Pas Island.  Exact timings will be dependent on our arrival time, so please listen for announcements before approaching the gangway.
19:15	Daily Recap in the Bar.
19:30	Dinner is served in the Restaurant.

***“I have often had the impression that, to penguins, man is just another penguin, occasionally violent, but tolerable company when he sits still and minds his own business.”***

***- Bernard Stonehouse, Scott Polar Research Institute***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**14th March 2023**

### ***Day 27 – Heading North into Crystal Sound***

Overnight we hope to traverse North through 'The Gullet', which is the narrow channel that runs between the southern edge of Hansen Island and Adelaide Island, our progress will be dependent on the ice conditions.

07:45

Wake-up call.

08:00-09:00

Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.

During the day we will be looking for opportunities to do a scenic flight in or near Crystal Sound. Our activities will be determined by the ice and weather conditions so listen to announcements as the program may change at short notice.

If we can do a scenic flight, we will start with Group 4 and work downwards (4,3,2,1,8,7,6,5).

11:00

Activity Group 8 please meet outside behind the bar for your tour with Michael about Diving operation on the Ortelius in the Polar Regions.

14:00

Activity Group 7 please meet outside behind the bar for your tour with Michael about Diving operation on the Ortelius in the Polar Regions.

12:30-13:30

A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.

16:15

Tennessee welcomes you to the Bar for his lecture titled 'Exploring with Taste: French and Belgium Antarctic Exploration'.

18:15

Daily Recap in the Bar.

19:00

Dinner is served in the Restaurant.

***"An Antarctic expedition is the worst way to have the best time of your life."***

***- Apsley Cherry Garrard***



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**15th March 2023**

***Day 28 – Port Charcot and Lemaire Channel***

07:00	Wake-up call.
07:30-08:30	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
08:30+/-	We hope to take you ashore at Port Charcot for a landing, if the weather conditions allow we may incorporate a Zodiac cruise around the Iceberg Graveyard.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.  During the afternoon we will transit the Lemaire Channel, nicknamed Kodiak Gap, as it is considered one of the most photographic parts of the Antarctica Peninsula, therefore we strongly encourage you to enjoy this beautiful navigation from the outside decks.
16:15	Gary invites you to join him for his presentation titled 'Fur, Fat, Feathers and Friendliness: Coping with a Freezing Environment'.
18:00	Daily Recap in the Bar.
18:30	Dinner is served.

***“To anyone who goes to Antarctica there is a tremendous appeal, an unparalleled combination of grandeur, beauty, vastness, loneliness, and malevolence - all of which sound melodramatic - but which truthfully convey the actual feeling of Antarctica. Where else in the world are all of these descriptions really true?”***

***- Captain T. I. Sunter***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**16th March 2023**

### ***Day 29 – Damoy Point and Gerlache Strait***

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 07:00       | Wake-up call.   |
| 07:30-08:30 | Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.  |
| 08:30+/-    | <p>We hope to take you ashore at Damoy Point, Dorian Bay, discovered and mapped by the French Antarctic expedition of 1903 led by Charcot.</p> <p>Damoy Hut was established by the British Antarctic Survey in November 1975 and was used as a transit station for BAS staff and stores to be flown south from the skiway on the glacier above the hut to Rothera Research Station when sea ice prevented access by ship. It was last occupied by BAS in 1993. The Bahía Dorian Hut was established by the Argentine Navy in 1953 and has been used as an emergency refuge since.</p> |
| 12:30-13:30 | <p>A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant.</p> <p>After lunch we will navigate the Gerlache Strait, a fantastic area to spot whales, so we encourage you outside to help look for wildlife.</p>   |
| 16:15       | Please join the Expedition Team in the Bar for a Pub Style Quiz, questions about the voyage and team. Please think of a team name and bring a pen!  |
| 18:30       | Daily Recap in the Bar.   |
| 19:00       | Dinner is served in the Restaurant.   |
| 20:30       | Storytelling with the Expedition Team in the Bar.   |

***“As we sever connection with our fellow men to follow a mirage in the frozen south, the mind falls into reverie. Doubt, apprehension, inspiration, and determination come crowding. What tremendous events may transpire while we are locked away in the great white silence?”***

***- Frank Hurley***



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**17th March 2023**

***Day 30 – Deception Island, Telefon Bay***

- 06:15 Wake-up call.  
We will sail into Deception Island, we encourage you to be on the outside decks to enjoy this remarkable navigation. The caldera has a narrow entrance, just 230 metres (755 feet) wide, called Neptune's Bellows. Navigating a ship through the bellows can be very tricky, adding to the hazard is Ravn Rock, which lies 2.5 metres (8.2 feet) below the water in the middle of the channel. Remains of a shipwreck, a Norwegian whale catcher that hit Ravn Rock in 1957, can still be seen in the passage. We will then ship cruise into Whalers Bay, before proceeding deep into the Caldera for our landing at Telfon Bay.
- 07:00-08:00 Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.  
08:00+/- We hope to take you ashore at Telefon Bay in Deception Island. We plan to offer a polar plunge at the end of the activity, please wear your swimwear underneath your expedition clothing, we provide the towels.
- 12:00-13:00 A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant, Deck 4
- 16:15 Please join Allan in the Bar for his presentation about 'Antarctic Whaling'.
- 18:15 Join the Expedition Staff in the Bar for recap.  
19:00 Dinner is served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.
- 20:30 Storytelling in the bar with the Expedition Team.

**Please note that tonight we will be sailing into the open sea. Take your seasickness medication before you really feel the movements of the vessel. Make sure that all your belongings are put away safely and that doors and drawers in your cabin are tightly closed.**

***"When your feet are cold, cover your head."***

***- Inuit proverb***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**18<sup>th</sup> March 2023**  
**Day 31 – Drake Passage**

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Gary invites you to join him for his presentation titled 'Fur, Fat, Feathers and Friendliness: Coping with a Freezing Environment'.
11:15	Chris invites you to the Bar for his presentation titled 'From isolation to the world beyond, Growing up as a part of New Zealand's remotest family'.
12:15	Before lunch the Expedition Team will collect your rubber boots and your helicopter card in the Lecture Room, please ensure they are clean before returning them. We will call you when we are ready, please listen to the announcements.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.
16:15	Sara invites you to the Bar for her presentation about Marine Threats.
18:15	Daily Recap in the Bar and Photo Competition results.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.

***"We have probed the earth, excavated it, burned it, ripped things from it, buried things in it. That does not fit my definition of a good tenant. If we were here on a month-to-month basis, we would have been evicted long ago."***

***- Rose Elizabeth Bird***



## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**19<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

### ***Day 32 – Approaching the Beagle Channel***

07:45	Wake-up call.
08:00-09:00	Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant.
09:15	Chloe would like to invite you to her lecture about Antarctic Gateway Cities in the Bar.
11:15	Gary invites you to his lecture titled 'Living in Antarctica: Station Life over Winter at an Australian Station'.
12:30-13:30	A buffet lunch is served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.
13:45	Sara invites you to the Bar for a presentation about Oceanwide's other destinations.  During the afternoon we will be approaching the mainland and the entrance of the Beagle Channel, this can be a great area for seeing cetaceans and birdlife that we have not encountered on this voyage so far, therefore we encourage you to spend time out on deck.
18:00	Join the Expedition Staff in the Bar for Captain's Farewell Cocktails and a viewing of the slideshow.  A copy of the voyage slideshow will be available for collection from the Bar after dinner, please bring a USB or similar, or we can help airdrop it to Apple devices.
19:00	Dinner is served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.

***"One must never be in haste to end a day; there are too few of them in a lifetime."***

***- Sir Francis Drake***





## Ross Sea - An Antarctic Odyssey

**20<sup>th</sup> March 2023**  
**Day 33 – Ushuaia**

- 06:30 Wake-up call.  
Please ensure your luggage is outside your room before going to breakfast.
- 07:00-08:00 Breakfast buffet will be served in the Restaurant, Deck 4.
- 08:00+/- We invite those guests going straight to the airport to disembark. Please identify your luggage on the pier and ensure it is placed in the bus with you going to the airport.
- 08:15+/- We invite all other guests to disembark. You can either choose to take your luggage with you into town or you can place it in the luggage truck which will take it to a storage facility in Ushuaia, if you choose this option, you will need to pick your luggage up by 14:00.

From all the Expedition Team and Crew on board the MV Ortelius, we wish you safe onward travel, and thank you for sharing this incredible voyage with us. We look forward to sailing with you again in the future.

***“And the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.”***

***- Thomas Stearns Eliot (1888-1965), American-born British poet***

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# Vide Brandt - Expedition Guide

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As long as he can remember Vide has been fascinated with the remote regions of the world, and the polar regions in particular.

The first time he disembarked the airplane in Ny-Alesund on Svalbard in 2001, he felt home. After several more visits to his family that resides there, he purchased a one-way ticket in 2007 and decided to call the high arctic home. He will live there forever.

Photography, camping and hiking are his great hobbies. Polar wildlife and history are his great obsessions. After

spending all his free time out in the Arctic wilderness for over 7 years he took the natural decision to enter the guiding & expeditions business.

Working for several years in the field he has been a leading guide on long snowmobile tours, ice caving trips, and various RIB operations in west Spitsbergen. Many months have been spent as a polar bear guard, and fieldworker on natural history documentary productions. After spending a few northern autumns& winters operating dive boats on diving expeditions with Killer Whales he started dreaming of the great Southern Ocean, and the frozen continent.

Being a Svalbard resident, he is fully immersed in the Arctic lifestyle. Workdays and days off are spent relatively similar in the great outdoors, on snow and sea ice during the winter and at sea or in the mountains during the summer. Periods without work are generally spent in a canoe or hiking in the great forests of Scandinavia. Polar bug or not, he still loves green trees.

By luck & fate he was granted the privilege of joining the Oceanwide Expeditions team in Antarctica in 2019. You will find him working as a generalist lecturer, often in the camping team and of course as a zodiac driver and purely as a Polar Guide.