

IN THE WAKE OF SCOTT & SHACKLETON

on board HERITAGE ADVENTURER

2 February - March 1 2023



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Day 1

Thursday, February 2

Queenstown, New Zealand

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

Lao Tzu

Our expedition *In the Wake of Scott & Shackleton* began as we arrived in Queenstown. Checking-in at our accommodation we enjoyed a first dinner together where we met our fellow adventures and some of our expedition team. The evening served as a wonderful opportunity to appreciate how so many of us, all from different parts of the globe, could share our mutual excitement for our upcoming adventure.



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Day 2

Friday, February 3

Embarkation in Bluff, New Zealand

"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

We boarded *Heritage Adventurer* in the afternoon with high spirits ahead of our voyage of a lifetime to the Subantarctic Islands and the Ross Sea region of Antarctica. The weather in port was mostly sunny and breezy. After getting settled in, we participated in a lifeboat drill. Next we all gathered in the Aft Lounge on Deck 5 where expedition leader Cheli and hotel manager Erik gave us an overview of the vessel and the voyage to come. We were also introduced to our expedition team and met executive chef Guenter and maître d' hotel Israel to discuss any dietary requirements. Dinner was served in the Dining Room at 1930 and we set sail after midnight.



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Day 3

Saturday, February 4

The Snares, New Zealand

“Man cannot discover new oceans until he has the courage to lose sight of the shores.”

Andre Gide

We spent the morning at sea. After breakfast, we joined Cheli and the expedition team in the Aft Lounge for a briefing about the use of the ship's Zodiacs and biosecurity measures for going ashore during the voyage. We were excited to learn about the plans for the afternoon at The Snares. Later we attended a presentation by Gus and Lou entitled 'Everything Snares', an informative introduction to our first destination of the voyage.

After lunch we arrived at The Snares under mostly sunny skies. The wind was light but an easterly swell obliged the Captain to position our trusty expedition vessel off the southwest corner of North East Island, the main island in the archipelago. The Zodiacs were lowered and we carefully boarded them with the help of the drivers and crew at the gangway. As landings are not permitted on these ecologically sensitive islands, we were taken on a Zodiac cruise close of these incredible nature reserves. We drove first through the gap between North East Island and Broughton Island and then north alongside spectacularly sculpted granite rock formations. Our drivers expertly maneuvered through large swells to get us finally to Hoho Bay, where we found calm waters teeming with wildlife. We were delighted to find large numbers of Snares Crested Penguins roosting close to the water's edge. Other seabirds such as Antarctic Tern, Cape Petrel, Sooty Shearwater and Buller's Albatross were also abundant. We enjoyed observations of New Zealand Fur Seals on rocks and Hooker's/New Zealand Sea Lions in the water. In the lush vegetation we saw forest birds such as the unique all-black Snares Tomtit.

After leaving the wildlife bonanza at Hoho Bay, we proceeded north to the Penguin Slide, where another colony of Snares Crested Penguins could be seen leaping in and out of the huge swells that lashed a smooth, steep slope of granite which the dauntless penguins climbed to reach their nesting area in the forest high above. We proceeded back to *Heritage Adventurer* with flocks of albatross and petrels flying low overhead and feeding on large schools of fish all around us.

After we were all back on board, we sailed away via the five rocky islets of the Western Chain, where we saw many more albatross and other seabirds in flight. Before dinner we were briefed by Cheli about our plans for tomorrow at the Auckland Islands.



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Day 4

Sunday, February 5

Enderby Island, Auckland Islands, New Zealand

"Only a fool tests the depth of the water with both feet"

African proverb

We arrived this morning at the Auckland Islands, the largest of New Zealand's Subantarctic Island groups and anchored in the protected waters of Port Ross, in the north of the archipelago. The weather was overcast with patches of fog and drizzle.

Today we had the choice of three activities on and around Enderby Island. Seasoned hikers could enjoy a full-day hike known as the Enderby Circuit, around the island's eastern coast and then along a boardwalk crossing the centre of the island. Another way to spend all day ashore was to opt for the shorter there-and-back hike to the island's northern cliffs via the boardwalk. At 0800, those of us on either of the full-day options collected packed lunches to take with us. The groups on the longer and shorter hikes departed the ship at 0900 and 0930, respectively, and were taken by Zodiac to Sandy Bay, on the south side of Enderby Island, to start our adventures. The third option, for those of us not wishing to spend the full day ashore, was to take a two-hour Zodiac cruise at 1000 and then to go ashore at 1400 after lunch on board *Heritage Adventurer*.

Those of us on the Zodiac cruise encountered a variety of birdlife, including the endemic Auckland Islands Shag. Flying all around us were Giant Petrels, Brown Skuas, Southern Royal Albatross, Light-mantled Sooty Albatross, Antarctic Terns and Red-billed Gulls. In the water, we had a rare sighting of Rockhopper Penguins and enjoyed the company of Hooker's/New Zealand Sea Lions swimming alongside the Zodiacs. As a special treat, we landed at the abandoned historical settlement of Hardwicke on the main Auckland Island.

Meanwhile, the 'long hikers' among us enjoyed the varied scenery and wildlife of Enderby Island's rugged coastline from a different perspective. On the southern shore of the island, we enjoyed close viewing of a large colony of Auckland Islands Shags with many curious juveniles. On the north end of the island, we had a view over Derry Castle Reef, where a ship of that name wrecked in 1887. Here we also enjoyed observations of Yellow-eyed Penguin/Hoiho. Continuing counterclockwise around the island, we hiked along the top of the Northern Cliffs, where we appreciated the fury of the ocean as it lashed the base of the cliffs and sent sea spray high into the air as we navigated sea lions lounging on rocks and in meadows.

The 'short hikers' spent an amazing day enjoying the flora and birdlife along the boardwalk. This option gave us plenty of time to contemplate the beauty and resilience of nature, which is thriving after the removal of all invasive land mammals from the island. At the Northern Cliffs we had great viewings of Light-mantled Sooty Albatross soaring along the edge of the land. Along the boardwalk, which was also the last section of the long hike, we enjoyed observing Southern Royal Albatross nesting and gamming in lush native vegetation, which included everything from megaherbs to liverworts.

In the rata forests and meadows surrounding Sandy Bay, where all three groups met in the afternoon after our separate adventures, we spotted numerous Red-crowned Parakeets along with Tui, Bellbird, Tomtit, Fantail and New Zealand Pipit. The final two hours of the landing were filled with wildlife-watching and photography, as many Yellow-eyed Penguin/Hoiho crossed the meadow between the forest and the sea. We were all back on board *Heritage Adventurer* by 1900 to celebrate an amazing day.



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Day 5

Monday, February 6

At Sea (Waitangi Day)

Toitū te marae a Tāne-Mahuta, Toitū te marae a Tangaroa, Toitū te tangata

Māori proverb

"If the land is well and the sea is well, the people will thrive"

Today we had a comfortable day at sea on our way to Macquarie Island. Our educational program began at 0900 with a

presentation by Niall entitled, 'Introduction to Birds of the Southern Ocean'. At 1100, we joined our on board photographer Richard for 'Photography 101'. After lunch we all participated in the biosecurity procedures required for our anticipated landing at Macquarie Island tomorrow. At 1430, we crossed into Australian territorial waters. The birders among us appreciated the overcast conditions for photographing some rarely seen seabirds, including Antipodean Albatross and Antarctic Shearwater.

At 1630, we joined Cheli in the lounge for a briefing about tomorrow's plans. Also at this time, as it was Waitangi Day, we were treated to traditional Kiwi chips and dip, as well as discounted New Zealand beers. This was followed by a presentation from Agnès about penguins. At 1845, we were invited back to the lounge to join Captain Denis Rada, who officially welcomed us on board, introduced himself and his senior officers, and raised a glass to toast the start of our voyage. We then enjoyed a particularly delicious Captain's Welcome Dinner in the restaurant.



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Day 6

Tuesday, February 7

Macquarie Island, Australia

"One can't be angry when one looks at a penguin"

John Ruskin

This morning we arrived at Macquarie Island, Australia's prized Subantarctic possession supporting one of the highest concentrations of wildlife in the Southern Ocean. The entire island is a nature reserve and part of a World Heritage Area. We had calm and mostly sunny weather for our morning landing at Buckles Bay. On shore, we were taken in guided groups to the various points of interest. We walked across The Isthmus to a sandy beach on the western side of the island, where we encountered huge Southern Elephant Seals lazing in the tussock grasses and on the beach. Along with abundant Brown Skuas and Giant Petrels, we spotted Gentoo Penguins, which we had not seen before. Some of us also climbed the stairs to a platform on Razorback Hill. From there we had an excellent view of the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE) station and historic Wireless Hill.

During lunch *Heritage Adventurer* repositioned to Sandy Bay, on the east side of Macquarie Island a few miles south of Buckles Bay. We were greeted ashore first by throngs of regal King Penguins, whose calls could be heard up and down the entire beach. Next we noticed great numbers of smaller Royal Penguins, many of whom looked rather shabby in the midst of their weeks-long moulting process. Finally we encountered literal piles of Southern Elephant Seals who were also undergoing their annual moult. Among all this wildlife, there were two points of particular interest. The first was the King Penguin breeding colony at the northern end of the beach. Here we could see some adults had eggs resting on their feet, hidden in brood pouches. The other highlight was the Royal Penguin colony, accessible by a boardwalk and some stairs leading up the verdant hillside to a viewing platform. The sight and sound of thousands of tightly packed penguins was a spectacle to behold. Toward the end of the landing, a change in weather brought increasing clouds, cold wind and rain, as well as a rainbow.

Back on board the warm ship, as we sailed south along the east side of the island, we passed Lusitania Bay, site of the largest King Penguin colony in this part of the Southern Ocean. In the midst of a hundred thousand penguins, we glimpsed the rusting remains of 'digesters' once used to render penguins into oil during a bygone era of ruthless wildlife exploitation on the island. As we passed Hurd Point, the southernmost point of Macquarie Island and the site of a large Royal Penguin colony, we bid farewell to the Subantarctic and set a southbound course to Antarctica.



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Day 7

Wednesday, February 8

At Sea

"I have seen the sea when it is stormy and wild; when it is quiet and serene; when it is dark and moody. And in all its moods, I see myself."

Martin Buxbaum

Today was a full day at sea in fine weather. Our educational program began with 'Antarctica Unveiled', an introduction to Antarctica by our historian John. Later, we joined Agnès for 'Antarctica: the Great White Continent', which focused on the natural history of Antarctica. Petrels, shearwaters, albatross and skuas could be seen from the fore and aft decks of the ship.

After lunch we had a chance to watch seabirds or to take a nap as the ship gently rocked in the waves. In the afternoon, a large pod of Long-finned Pilot Whales offered excellent viewing opportunities as they passed close by the ship. Afterward, we joined Julia in the lounge for a presentation on ocean currents before an informative recap about the previous days' events and another incredible dining experience.



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Day 8

Thursday, February 9

At Sea

“How inappropriate to call this planet Earth when clearly it is ocean.”

Arthur C. Clarke

We crossed 60 degrees south latitude, the geopolitical boundary of Antarctica, at 0736 in the morning. We spent the rest of the day continuing our steady progress south toward the White Continent in calm conditions. At 0900, we joined Samuel in the lounge for his presentation, 'Introduction to the Ross Sea'. Later we heard from AI, who works for the Antarctic Heritage Trust as program manager for the Ross Sea Heritage Restoration Project. He shared a presentation about the challenges of

conservation work at Cape Adare.

After lunch, the expedition team distributed our parkas, which we will use during our time in Antarctica. Indeed, even though the weather was fine, one could notice the temperature dropping while outside on deck. This coincided with our crossing of the Antarctic Convergence, the official geographical boundary of the cold Southern Ocean.

For those of us wanting a different kind of amusement, board games were provided in the cosy Observation Lounge on Deck 7. At 1600, we were treated to a special afternoon tea with cakes and other delicacies. This was followed by a Team Trivia Quiz, where quizmaster Ian tested our recollection of what we had learned so far in lectures and recaps about the Subantarctic Islands.

At 1800, we entered a particularly productive stretch of water. There, in addition to flocks of prions and shearwaters, we spotted another pod of Pilot Whales close to the ship. Then, just as we had all gathered on deck, a group of Hourglass Dolphins made an appearance. We all marvelled at their beauty and at our great luck in seeing these elusive creatures. After another recap and another delicious dinner, we gathered for a screening of the documentary, *Forgotten Polar Hero*, about polar explorer Carsten Borchgrevink, the first man to set foot on the Antarctic continent.



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Day 9

Friday, February 10

Balleney Seamount and Balleny Islands

"The risk one runs in exploring a coast in these unknown and icy seas is so very great that I can be so bold to say no man will ever venture farther than I have done and that lands that may lie to the South will never be explored."

Captain James Cook, 1774

Today we were thankful for another day of calm conditions. The first iceberg of the voyage was spotted on the horizon in the early morning. Our first lecture of the day was provided by Ian, who gave his presentation 'Introduction to Cetaceans of the Southern Ocean'. Later we joined our fellow travellers and researchers Regina, Rikki and Colin to learn all about the Ross

Sea Region Research and Monitoring Programme. We also received an International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO) briefing and underwent biosecurity procedures in preparation for our arrival in Antarctica.

After lunch, we enjoyed sunny weather on the open decks. As we passed by enormous icebergs, we started getting the feeling we had truly arrived in Antarctica. A few new species of birds, including Southern Fulmar, Snow Petrel and Wilson's Storm Petrel, welcomed us to their Antarctic home. The Captain had set a course for the Balleny Islands, a chain of icy islands north of the Ross Sea. Before reaching those, we passed over the Balleny Seamount, a landform that rises abruptly from the depths but does not reach the surface. Here, in upwelled waters rich with nutrients and plankton, we hoped to see whales. We were not disappointed. First to appear were groups of Humpback Whales, some of which were as curious about us as we them. The whales stunned us with their playfulness right next to the bow, close enough that we could hear their tremendous exhalations over the din of excited chatter on the outer decks. We also enjoyed sustained viewing of a Sperm Whale which was a lifetime first for many guests. Among all this cetacean action, birders noticed a surprising abundance of rare Blue Petrels.

Soon after leaving the Balleny Seamount, we spotted ice-clad Young Island, the northernmost of the Balleny Islands and our first sighting of land in Antarctica. After dinner, as we approached, we spotted several dozen Orcas in front of the ice cliffs that fringed the island. Later, at midnight, with the Balleny Islands in view, we all gathered on the top deck to celebrate the crossing of the Antarctic Circle. In the dusky light we drank hot chocolate with Baileys Irish Cream while Cheli gave a speech in remembrance of early polar explorers. We later took an oath to advocate for the conservation of Antarctica and its wildlife.



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Day 10

Saturday, February 11

At Sea

“And now there came both mist and snow and it grew wondrous cold; and ice mast high came floating by as green as emerald”

Samuel Taylor Coleridge – *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

We spent the day at sea in calm conditions on a course that brought us ever closer to the Antarctic mainland. In the early morning we were in the vicinity of rugged Sturge Island, the southernmost of the Balleny Islands. Later, we encountered

more Humpback Whales and several huge icebergs. Some of the icebergs had flocks of Antarctic Petrels resting on them.

At 1000 we joined John for a presentation about the Discovery Expedition, Robert Falcon Scott's first expedition to Antarctica. Afterward we watched the second part of the documentary, *Forgotten Polar Hero*. We had a free afternoon until 1700, when we joined Chris for his presentation 'Time to Krill' about krill in the Southern Ocean. After recap and dinner, we enjoyed an incredible sunset reflected in calm waters.



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Day 11

Sunday, February 12

Cape Adare and Colbeck Bay

"...feelings of indescribable delight upon a scene of grandeur and magnificence far beyond anything we had before seen or could have conceived."

Captain James Clark Ross, log entry, 1842

We spent the morning at sea on approach to Cape Adare. Our educational program started with Kate, who gave her presentation 'Adélie Penguins and Climate Change: Past, Present & Future'. This was followed by a screening of the third part of the documentary *Forgotten Polar Hero* about Carsten Borchgrevink and the restoration of his historic *Southern Cross* hut.

We arrived after lunch at Cape Adare, the prominent cape which marks the northern end of the Ross Sea and is home to the largest Adélie Penguin colony in the region. From the outer decks, we enjoyed beautiful scenery of snowy mountains and icebergs as we approached the cape through bands of drift ice. We were thankful to have calm and sunny weather at this location, which is known for difficult conditions. The foreshore at Ridley Beach was strewn with huge blocks of ice called 'push ice'. Despite this, the scout party managed to find a suitable place to land us with Zodiacs.

Once ashore, we were welcomed to the continent by South Polar Skuas. We were also delighted to find plenty of plucky Adélie Penguins, though we were told many of the adults and chicks had already left after a successful nesting season. Without so many penguins in the way, we could wander more freely throughout the area. Most of us made our way in small groups to Borchgrevink's Hut, where we diligently cleaned our boots before entering this historic building, the oldest in Antarctica. We also looked at the nearby ruins of a hut built by Captain Scott's Northern Party. For those of us who were interested, Al gave a tour of the camp used by the restoration workers. We also had plenty of time to explore the grounds and to photograph penguins and ice along the beach. As we made our way back to the ship in the Zodiacs, some of were treated to the sight of a Leopard Seal in repose on an ice floe.

Over dinner we sailed through Robertson Bay, where we enjoyed views of icebergs with the magnificent Admiralty Range in the background. At the southern end of Robertson Bay, we entered Colbeck Bay. Here we had the rocky mainland to the south, Duke of York Island to the north, and the enormous Murray Glacier to the west. After dinner, we boarded the Zodiacs and enjoyed a cruise. From the water, we witnessed bizarrely folded metamorphic rock in the high cliffs of Duke of York

Island and stunning blue ice cliffs along the face of the glacier. Cruising along the mainland coast, we discovered an Emperor Penguin, as well as a number of Weddell Seals.



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Day 12

Monday, February 13

Possession Island and Cape Hallet

“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

This morning we arrived at Possession Island, the place where James Clark Ross came ashore and took possession of the region for Queen Victoria in 1841. Icy conditions at the steep, rocky beach made for a challenging landing. Therefore, some of us opted to go Zodiac cruising instead of going ashore. Cruisers saw amazing examples of columnar basalt on the island and Adélie Penguins on icebergs. Some of us also had the thrilling experience of driving through archways in nearby small islands, while others observed Minke Whales near the ship.

Those of us who went ashore had the opportunity to walk along the ice-strewn beach or to climb up into the volcanic hills,

almost reaching the highest point on the island. Perfectly clear skies and unlimited visibility made for excellent viewing of the Admiralty Range and numerous icebergs in the surrounding waters. We also appreciated the antics of many Adélie Penguins still in the area after the height of the nesting season. The birders among us were excited to see several large flocks of Antarctic Petrels, amounting to an estimated 16,000 birds, flying high overhead to some unknown destination.

The plan after lunch was to explore the area around Cape Hallett. As the cape itself was surrounded by impenetrable pack ice, a suitable area was selected for a Zodiac cruise. Again we had sunny weather and calm conditions for a magical afternoon of exploration along the margin of the pack ice. We encountered almost every kind of ice imaginable, including vast expanses of beautiful pancake ice. In the sturdy and capable Zodiacs operated by experienced drivers, we were able to witness the crushing power of ever-shifting sea ice at eye-level in comfort and safety. Some of us spotted Crabeater Seals on ice floes. Looming over the icy scene was Mount Herschel and many other towering, glaciated mountain peaks. After dinner, as we left the area on a southerly course, we enjoyed an incredible sunset reflected in freshly formed grease ice on gently undulating seas.



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Day 13

Tuesday, February 14

At Sea (Valentine's Day)

"To wives and sweethearts; may they never meet!"

Traditional British Naval Toast

Today was a day at sea in very calm conditions. The interior of the ship was adorned with Valentine's Day decorations. The captain had set a course directly to McMurdo Sound, in the southern reaches of the Ross Sea. Our plan was to visit the historic huts before the sea froze for the winter. The first presenter of the day was Samuel with his lecture about James Clark Ross. Chris was next with an informative talk about Antarctic Seals. After lunch, we watched the fourth and final episode of *Forgotten Polar Hero*. This was followed by John's presentation about Ernest Shackleton's Nimrod Expedition.

The day also gave ample opportunities for viewing wildlife such as Emperor Penguins and Weddell seals on ice floes. As we approached Ross Island in the late hours of the day, we encountered hundreds of Antarctic Minke Whales and some Orca as the sun was setting behind Mount Erebus.



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Day 14

Wednesday, February 15

Cape Royds, Ross Island

"For a joint scientific and geographical piece of organisation, give me Scott; for a winter journey, give me Wilson; for a dash to the Pole and nothing else, Amundsen; and if I am in the devil of a hole and want to get out of it, give me Shackleton every time."

Apsley Cherry-Garrard

Overnight we encountered drift ice, where penguins and seals were seen by early risers, as we rounded Cape Bird on Ross Island. By midmorning we reached our destination in McMurdo Sound. It was another clear and calm day for our landing at Cape Royds. The Captain nosed our ship right into the fast ice in Backdoor Bay, facilitating a short Zodiac shuttle to the landing site. Once ashore, we walked about one kilometre over hilly, rocky terrain to Shackleton's hut.

Having been painstakingly restored by the Antarctic Heritage Trust, the hut looked very much as it would have looked when

occupied by Sir Ernest Shackleton and crew during the British Antarctic (*Nimrod*) Expedition in 1908. We entered the hut in small groups for an up-close examination of the many everyday items used by the polar explorers. John, our polar historian, was there to elucidate what we were seeing. Upon exiting the hut, we were able to explore the area. Walking paths led to views of Pony Lake and to a nearby Adélie Penguin colony, the southernmost in Antarctica. We enjoyed sublime views of Mount Erebus, the stratovolcano responsible for the volcanic landscape all around us.

After the all-day landing, we sailed south into the heart of McMurdo Sound. At its southern extremity, we sailed through new ice already a few centimetres thick. Finally, after dinner, the Captain 'parked' *Heritage Adventurer* for the night at the edge of what remained of last winter's fast ice. Here we enjoyed views of McMurdo Station and Mount Erebus as magical evening sunlight cast long shadows across the vast expanse of solid ice. Those of us who ventured on the outside decks braved temperatures of -10°C , made colder by the chill of a moderate breeze.



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Day 15

Thursday, February 16

Hut Point, Ross Island

"Yesterday and today have been two fine days. Yesterday especially the colours of sky and sea and glacier were wonderful, far surpassing anything I ever saw before. I will not make an attempt to describe this, for I could not possibly convey an accurate impression of these splendours..."

Diary entry, Alexander Macklin, surgeon, Shackleton's *Endurance* expedition

Today we had overcast skies and cold conditions (-13°C with wind chill of -21°C) for our landing at Hut Point. Once ashore, we bypassed a docile Weddell Seal and headed directly for the Discovery Hut. The hut was built by Robert Falcon Scott's National Antarctic (*Discovery*) Expedition in 1902 and was an important staging post for every subsequent heroic-era expedition. Again, we entered the hut in small groups and marvelled at the living conditions of these hardy polar pioneers. After our time in the hut, we were able to wander around the area. Climbing up the hill behind the hut afforded views of nearby McMurdo Station, America's sprawling research and logistics hub in Antarctica.

We spent the afternoon on board the ship, breaking fresh ice along the old fast ice edge, where we were parked last night. The weather had improved significantly and we enjoyed sunny skies and calm air for our afternoon of wildlife viewing. We had high hopes, but none of us could have anticipated the wildlife spectacle that unfolded before us. All along the fast ice edge, we spotted groups of Emperor Penguins, each with dozens of individuals, amounting to hundreds of penguins. These groups were assembled around holes in the new ice, which they used to access rich feeding waters below. As we approached for closer inspection, we saw the penguins were not alone. The holes around which the penguins were congregated were also being used by dozens of Orca, who could be seen lunging and spy-hopping in the small pockets of open water.

The Captain cautiously parked the ship next to a breathing hole with large numbers of penguins and Orca. Many of us got amazing photos of penguins and whales together, each seeming to regard the other with curiosity and amusement. In time, the penguins also became interested in the ship and waddled over to investigate us in groups of a dozen or more. They entertained us with their antics: tobogganing on the glassy ice, jumping in and out of the water, even striking courtship poses and singing right next to the bow of the ship. Every now and then an Orca or Minke Whale would surface in the nearby breathing hole. We spent hours at this spot and even sat down for dinner with the Emperors visible through the restaurant windows. At 77° 51.919' S, this was the southernmost point of our voyage. Finally, at 2230, we backed out of the ice with penguins following in our channel and a beautiful sunset on the horizon.



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Day 16

Friday, February 17

Cape Evans, Ross Island

“The Emperor Penguin is not only a strange bird of great antiquity and rare intelligence, but, having lived for endless generations, he may have left behind him all the foolishness in which we humans today are involved and have acquired, in that germ-free and healthy atmosphere, a quiet philosophy, tolerance, a curiously open and interested mind and, above all, excellent hospitality and courtesy to others.”

Louis Bernacchi

This morning we found ourselves at Cape Evans, site of Captain Robert Falcon Scott's second hut. Built by Scott's British Antarctic (*Terra Nova*) Expedition of 1910–1913 and having been beautifully preserved by the Antarctic Heritage Trust, this is arguably the most famous and most fascinating of all the historic huts on our route. This hut is situated right on the beach, where we landed easily in calm conditions. We had already been fully briefed on the expedition's many historical feats, including Scott's ill-fated quest to be the first to reach the South Pole. So, instead of hearing John's interpretation, we had 15 minutes of 'quiet time' to appreciate the how these epic events were reflected in the thousands of artefacts on display inside the hut and stables.

After our time inside the hut, we were taken on a guided tour of the surrounding area, where many more artefacts and evidence of the expedition were preserved in the polar desert. After we had all finished our time ashore, Cheli invited us all back to visit the hut a second time. Many of us took this opportunity and said the experience was even more impactful the second time around. After we were all back on board, the ship stayed at anchor off Cape Evans until late in the evening. Those of us who stayed up past midnight witnessed a spectacular sunset as we navigated through dense pack ice around Cape Bird.



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Day 17

Saturday, February 18

At Sea

“At 0230 pm we came in sight of the Great Ice Barrier. Slowly it rose up out of the sea until we were face to face with it in all its imposing majesty. It is difficult with the help of the pen to give any idea of the impression this mighty wall of ice makes upon the observer who is confronted with it for the first time. It is altogether a thing which can hardly be described...”

Roald Amundsen – 11 January 1911

As we rounded Cape Bird on Ross Island for the third time, we enjoyed fine weather and fantastic views of ice-clad and smouldering Mount Erebus from the outer decks. At this time, our fellow guest David gave an informal talk about the Air New Zealand flight that tragically crashed into the mountain in 1979.

At 17:45 we all gathered in the lounge for the much-anticipated *Heritage Adventurer* Charity Auction to benefit the Antarctica Heritage Trust. Auctioneer Ian led the event and kept us entertained as we bid for prints, books, clothing, memorabilia and other collectors' items. Over US\$11,000 was raised for the Trust, plus a couple thousand more for the crew welfare fund. By the time the two-hour event was over dinner was ready to be served.



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Day 18

Sunday, February 19

Franklin Island

"The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails."

William Arthur Ward

This morning we found ourselves in thick pack ice under overcast skies heading north toward Franklin Island, where we

expected to arrive in the afternoon. Our lecture program began with John and his presentation about the lesser-known exploits of the Ross Sea Party during Ernest Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition. This was followed by a photographic presentation from our fellow guest and researcher Anthony, whom we had picked up at Hut Point, about his life and work at Scott Base. The afternoon was spent enjoying views of tabular icebergs, seabirds, Orca and Crabeater Seals.

After arriving at Franklin Island in the evening and an early dinner, we boarded the Zodiacs and were taken on a one-hour cruise along the coast. We explored two contrasting sides of the island. On one side we saw spectacularly eroded volcanic cliffs with vivid colours and bizarre rock formations. On the other we admired white and blue cliffs of ice decorated everywhere with gigantic icicles.



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Day 19

Monday, February 20

Coulman Island

"Antarctica left a restless longing in my heart beckoning towards an incomprehensible perfection forever beyond the reach of the mortal man. Its overwhelming beauty touches one so deeply that it is like a wound."

Edwin Mickleburgh, *Beyond the Frozen Sea*

We spent the morning in calm seas under clear skies on a course toward Terra Nova Bay. We sailed through vast expanses of fresh grease ice and photogenic pancake ice, indicating the Ross Sea would soon freeze over. The small window of exploration was closing for the season. Our educational program began with John, who presented the first part in his lecture

series, 'Race to the Pole' about the competing bids of Robert Falcon Scott and Roald Amundsen to be the first to reach the South Pole. This was followed by Samuel with an informative presentation looking at Emperor Penguins.

At noon we were briefed on the plans for the rest of our time in the Ross Sea. According to the latest reports, ice conditions in and around Terra Nova Bay were not favourable to attempt a visit there. Instead, we set a course for Coulman Island farther north. After lunch, we attended Al's presentation 'Life and Times of Scott Base' about his experiences working at the New Zealand Antarctic Station at Hut Point.

As we approached Coulman Island, we saw its shores were completely choked in ice. But our expedition leader Cheli had one more trick up her sleeve. After dinner, the Captain positioned the ship near a huge tabular iceberg and we were offered a polar plunge. Those of us who wanted to plunge ourselves into the icy waters of the Ross Sea donned our swimming customs and boarded a Zodiac tied to the gangway. After being securely tethered to the Zodiac, we jumped into the water, sometimes in pairs, for a brief immersion in 500-metre-deep water before climbing back into the Zodiac and running up the gangway to the warmth of the ship. The rest of us gathered on the open decks to watch the spectacle. After another gorgeous sunset, which cast the iceberg in soft pink light, we retired knowing it would likely be the last night in calm waters for several days.



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Day 20

Tuesday, February 21

At Sea

"I am hopeful that Antarctica in its symbolic robe of white will shine forth as a continent of peace, as nations working together there in the cause of science set an example of international co-operation."

Admiral R. E. Byrd, US Navy, 4 years before the 1961 Antarctic Treaty

We spent the day at sea, sailing east into the heart of the Ross Sea to avoid a monster storm farther north in the Southern Ocean. Subantarctic seabirds such as Light-mantled Sooty Albatross began to appear around the ship, much to the delight of the birders. Meanwhile, numbers of Antarctic species such as Snow Petrels began to diminish. Our educational program for the morning featured Regina with a comprehensive study of Type C Orca. This was followed by John with Part 2 of his lecture series, 'Race to the Pole'.

After lunch, at 1600, we were treated to a special 'Pancake Day' afternoon tea with crepes and ice cream in the lounge. This was followed by another Team Trivia Quiz presented by quizmaster Ian, who thoroughly tested our knowledge of Ross Sea wildlife, history and more. Afterward, we were warned that the sea conditions could be rough for the following days as we turned north and duly secured our belongings in our cabins.



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Day 21

Wednesday, February 22

At Sea

“And now to conclude. Is it worth doing? Ask any member of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition and you will receive the reply: “Yes; I wouldn’t have missed it for worlds” and “Would you go again?” “Rather!” Such is the call of the South!”

T. H. Orde-Lees. Diary of *Endurance* expedition

Today we continued our way north from the Ross Sea into the Southern Ocean. The seas were five metres with occasional eight-metre swells. The wind was about 35 knots. The motion on the ship was not too uncomfortable because the seas were on our stern. Skies were mostly sunny in the morning becoming mostly cloudy in the afternoon. As we passed the last of the icebergs, birdlife continued to be abundant.

The educational program started in the morning with John's presentation about the Antarctic Treaty. Next we heard from Kate with a presentation about Antarctica's rich marine ecology. After lunch we had the chance to attend a workshop on post processing from our photographer Richard, followed by a presentation from Agnès about icebergs. There was a commotion among the birders in the evening when a Sooty Albatross was spotted gliding among the Light-mantled Sooty Albatrosses behind the ship.



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Day 22
Thursday, February 23
At Sea

"It's just that there are some things women don't do. They don't become Pope or President or go down to the Antarctic."
Harry Darlington, chief pilot on Finn Ronne's 1946-8 Antarctic Expedition

We spent another day at sea going north in similar conditions as yesterday. In the morning we joined Regina in the lounge to learn about the Ross Sea Region Marine Protected Area. This was followed by a chance to get on the dance floor and to move our restless bodies to some music. Our dancing was exaggerated by the motion of the ship. Next we had a presentation by our fellow guest and researcher Ester, entitled 'Southern Marine Forests: From Small to Large'.

After lunch there was a screening of the film *The Last Ocean*, about the creation of the Ross Sea Region Marine Protected Area. Later, we gathered in the lounge to participate in a game show called 'How Well Do You Know Your Expedition Team?' where we had to guess which staff members did various surprising (mis)deeds.



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Day 23

Friday, February 24

At Sea

"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."

Today we sampled some of the Southern Ocean's power as we pinballed our way down the hallways to join Gus' presentation 'Castaways of Deadman's Road: Southern Ocean Shipwrecks'. Later we joined Konrad for 'No Life without Suffering: Medical and Philosophical Perspectives on the Dash to the Pole'. After lunch, conditions we were free to wait out the weather as we chose.



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Day 24

Saturday, February 25

At Sea

"In the whole of my experience as a seaman I have never encountered a part of the world where the weather and sea conditions generally are so uncomfortable."

Frank Wild, on the Southern Ocean

After a sleepless night for some of us, today was another day at sea in trying conditions. Most of us attended a presentation in the late morning by Lou about the underwater ecosystems of the Subantarctic Islands. After that we enjoyed the opportunity happy for the chance to relax in the lounge or library.



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Day 25

Sunday, February 26

At Sea

"Ships, especially little ships, have auras like people and houses. The aura is built up of many things. Human encounter is the main brace; add to this the company and shared experience, bad days and good, achievement and disappointment, even moments of danger. All this rubs off on the ship, growing with the places that she visits like richly coloured beads threaded with string."

Keith Shackleton, from *Ship in the Wilderness*

Today we spent almost all day at sea before reaching Campbell Island in the evening. In anticipation of this, we enjoyed two presentations in the morning about New Zealand's southernmost Subantarctic island. The first was by Gus 'An Introduction to Campbell Island', followed by Lindsay with an insight into the successful rat eradication program conducted by the Department of Conservation on the island. After lunch we followed the biosecurity procedures and returned our Antarctic parkas. Later we heard from our photographer Richard with his presentation 'Expressive Nature Photography'.

We sighted Campbell Island around 1700. Soon we were in the lee of the island and we were grateful to have some relief from the conditions of the last several days. At 1730, we eagerly attended Cheli's briefing about tomorrow's planned activities. At 1800, we cruised by Bull Rock, where hundreds of Campbell and Grey-headed Albatross could be seen gliding over the gentle waves. Dinner was early to make time for a special event this evening: the *Heritage Adventurer Variety Show*, which started at 2030. While anchored in the placid waters of Perseverance Harbour, we were treated to more than two dozen acts from fellow guests and some very talented crew. There were original poems, songs and interpretive dancing. It was a fun and festive evening!



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Day 26

Monday, February 27

Campbell Island

“Christopher Robin was sitting outside his door, putting on his Big Boots. As soon as he saw the Big Boots, Pooh knew that an adventure was going to happen.”

A.A. Milne

After sleeping well at our anchor position in calm Perseverance Harbour, we awoke in anticipation of an exciting day at Campbell Island. It was a misty day with occasional rain, but this did not deter us. This was a chance to set foot on unknown land for the first time.

Today, like at Enderby Island, we had the choice of three activities on and around Campbell Island. The longest and most strenuous activity was a full-day guided hike known as the Northwest Bay Loop. Another way to spend all day ashore was to opt for the shorter there-and-back hike to Col Lyall via a boardwalk. At 0800, those of us on either of the full-day options collected our packed lunches to take with us. The groups on the longer and shorter hikes departed the ship at 0830 and 0900, respectively, and were taken by Zodiac to Beeman Cove, the site of an abandoned meteorological station. The third option, for those of us not wishing to spend the full day ashore, was a 'dual experience' with a two-hour Zodiac cruise at 0945 followed by a chance to go ashore at 1330 after lunch on board the ship.

Those of us on the Zodiac cruise were taken to places of historical significance such as Camp Cove, site of a solitary Sitka spruce tree known as the 'Loneliest Tree in the World'. We spotted a variety of birdlife, including the endemic Campbell Island Shag and the flightless Campbell Island Teal. In the various coves we encountered dozens of Hooker's/New Zealand Sea Lions, some of which swam very close to the Zodiacs.

Meanwhile, the Northwest Bay hikers among us had a challenging day of hiking through hilly, brushy terrain. From Beeman Cove we followed the shoreline to the head of Tucker Cove, where we started trekking inland. We climbed to the summit of a ridge, from which we had sweeping views of Northwest Bay through the mist. We descended to the water at Capstan Cove, site of a historical whaling camp. Some of us spotted the endemic Campbell Island Snipe along with many other birds. On our way back toward Perseverance Harbour, a strenuous hike was rewarded with viewings of Southern Royal Albatross nesting in the tussocks. We arrived at Camp Cove, where we were picked up by Zodiac, around 1700.

The Col Lyall hikers spent an amazing day enjoying the flora and birdlife along the boardwalk through the heart of the island. This option gave us plenty of time to contemplate the beauty and resilience of nature, which is thriving after the cessation of farming and the removal of pests from the island. On the upper reaches of the boardwalk we had incredible encounters with Southern Royal Albatross on their nesting grounds. Those of us interested in botany appreciated a healthy and diverse plant community, including orchids and megaherbs.

In the afternoon, those of us on the 'dual experience' arrived at Beeman Cove to explore the boardwalk, just in time to observe the albatross engaging in a fascinating courtship ritual known as gamming. We were all back aboard the ship by 1900, in time for another great dinner.



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Day 27

Tuesday, February 28

At Sea

“Could we see when and where we are to meet again, we would be more tender when we bid our friends goodbye.”

Marie Louise de la Ramée

Today was a day at sea on our way to Bluff. In the morning we had a briefing on tomorrow’s disembarkation procedures, followed by a presentation by Samuel about his time at Dumont d’Urville Station in East Antarctica. After lunch, at 1600, a special afternoon tea with scones and other delicious treats was served in the lounge. Afterward, hotel manager Erik and executive chef Guenter shared some information on the logistics of planning for a long Antarctic voyage. This was followed

by a question and answer session.

At 1815, Captain Denis Rada, his officers and our expedition team invited us to join them in the lounge for a Captain's Farewell Cocktail Party. Then, after a special Farewell Dinner, we all gathered in the lounge for the much-anticipated presentation of our voyage Slide Show by our photographer Richard. This was preceded by an emotional farewell speech by Cheli and a slideshow highlighting the humorous side of the expedition by Agnes, as well as contributions by fellow guests. After the show finished at 2200, many of us stayed in the lounge until late with a cocktail or two, merrily reminiscing about one of the greatest trips of our lives.

Day 28

Wednesday, March 1

Disembarkation in Bluff

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

T.S. Elliot

We arrived overnight at the port of Bluff, where we embarked on this adventure almost a month ago. We enjoyed one last breakfast before being cleared into New Zealand by customs officials on board. After 0800 we started to disembark and to board buses that whisked us off to our various destinations. We carried with us the memories (as well as thousands of photos) of one of the most authentic polar expeditions that one can take in the modern age - In the Wake of Scott and Shackleton.