

IN THE WAKE OF SCOTT & SHACKLETON

on board HERITAGE ADVENTURER

2 February - 1 March 2025



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Day 1

Sunday 2 February 2025

Queenstown

Our In the Wake of Scott and Shackleton adventure began in Queenstown, New Zealand's world-famous alpine resort town, as we arrived from around the globe. We checked into our accommodations and met fellow guests and some of our expedition team in the lobby. Later that evening we gathered to enjoy dinner with the strangers we hope will soon become friends – our fellow adventurers.

Day 2

Monday 3 February 2025

Queenstown to Bluff and departure

At breakfast, we had the chance to reconnect with those we met at dinner or meet new fellow travellers, before heading out to explore this iconic adventure town. We could be seen all over the waterfront, in the gardens and mall, doing last-minute shopping or checking the birdlife along the lake shore.

After lunch, we enjoyed a scenic transfer through the pastoral countryside of Southland to Bluff Harbour to board our beautiful new home for the upcoming adventure, *Heritage*

Adventurer. We scattered to explore, then came together for the lifeboat drill and introductory briefings. Hotel Director Erik introduced us to life aboard, and Expedition Leader Cheli told us what to expect on our excursions and introduced the expedition team – more than 20 experts who will help us get the most out of our expedition.

It was during the Zodiac briefing that we cast off and entered the open ocean. Shortly thereafter we had our first chance to sample the delights provided by the galley and dining room staff. On the way, we stopped to sign up for the Zodiac groups that will be used to organise our upcoming excursions – becoming Crabeaters, Emperors, Orcas and Wanderers. We headed to bed dreaming of the adventure ahead.



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Day 3

Tuesday 4 February 2025

Snares Islands

We awoke to gentle conditions in Ho Ho Bay on the eastern side of Northeast Island in the Snares. As we admired the view, the kayakers geared up and the Zodiac groups prepared for their cruise. The kayakers had a great paddle from the heart of the bay, up to the 'Penguin Slide'. The rest spread out and Zodiac cruised along the east coast of Northeast Island. It was such fun to watch the other Zodiacs while also soaking in the wildlife spectacle.

The endemic Snares Crested Penguins were in every cove and cranny, busy going to and coming from, their nests up in the forest. There were rafts of them in the water and many porpoising around us. Seeing them popping out of the water onto the rocks, or diving in, offered plenty of amusement. New Zealand Fur Seals and Sea Lions were posing on the rocks and swimming in the sea.

The air was full of birds, notably the Buller's Albatross, Sooty Shearwater (Titi), Cape Petrels, Antarctic Terns, and Brown Skuas. The nests of the Buller's Albatross on the cliffs were easy to spot. We wove in and out of the caves and tunnels along the coast getting close to all the wildlife and the tree daisies, hebe, megaherbs and other flora too.

After lunch, we made a ship's cruise of the Western Chain before heading back into the open ocean, on our way to Enderby Island. Because we would make our first landing there,

we thoroughly cleaned all our outerwear before having it inspected by the expedition team. We wanted to be sure not to pack any pests or spread diseases. With time at sea, we started our education programme. First up was Matt D with Into The Geography of the Subantarctic Islands. On this expedition, there will be so much to learn and so much to do.

The evening's highlight was the Captain's Welcome Cocktails where Captain Jacek introduced the heads of departments of the ship's crew and hotel team – even more capable people, working hard to make this voyage special. His toast was “to the weather” which he said was our responsibility, while they looked after everything else. We had done very well on our first day in charge. The special menu for the Captain's Welcome Dinner followed in the dining room.



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Day 4

Wednesday 5 February 2025

Enderby Island

The morning found us in the lee south of Sandy Bay at Enderby Island in the Auckland Island group. At the briefing, we were presented with our options and picked our activity. The all-day walkers collected their lunches and landed first. Next away were the kayakers, followed by the biggest group, the Zodiac cruisers.

The cruise was along the basaltic columned cliffs of Enderby Island, and across the narrow gap to Rose Island, with excellent sightings of Hoiho/Yellow-eyed Penguins, Auckland Island Shags, flightless Auckland Island Teals, Antarctic Terns, Titi /Sooty Shearwaters, Kākāriki/Parakeets, Pipits, and even a moulting vagrant Gentoo Penguin. The kayakers were dropped at the shores of Rose Island for an exploration of the coast. Their highlight was entering a cave that turned into a tunnel. The Enderby Circuit walkers headed across the boardwalk to the Northern Cliffs. They continued around the coast for good encounters with Auckland Island Teal, Hoiho, New Zealand Sea Lions and more.

The rest of us walked along the boardwalk while Southern Royal Albatross soared overhead. At the cliffs, there was the opportunity for a rest on the bench overlooking the cliffs, or to visit the nesting Light-mantled Sooty Albatross. The superb flowering of the Southern Rātā was a captivating feature of all the walks. Back at the beach, the Penguin Highway was active, the New Zealand Sea Lion pups were a delight, and there were other vagrant visitors – a King Penguin and an Elephant Seal from Macquarie Island.

As *Heritage Adventurer* relocated further south into Port Ross it was announced that we had a chance for one more landing. The Ngāi Tahu representatives, Kara and Rachael, had permission to collect harakeke/flax and could take a group along. We signed up and a lottery decided the lucky landers. We stepped off at the site occupied by the village of Hardwicke in the 1850s to walk through the Rātā to the cemetery and Victoria Tree. There was so much history and culture in such an evocative place.



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Day 5

Thursday 6 February 2025

At Sea en route to Macquarie Island

Happy Waitangi Day. First up this morning were Kara and Rachael introducing themselves. They taught us a waiata, a Māori song, and helped us use some of the harakeke they had collected at Hardwicke to weave baskets and flowers. As *Heritage Adventurer* continued to travel through moderate seas, Matt J gave us An Introduction to Southern Seabirds.

Following lunch and between our landings at Enderby and Macquarie Islands, we were required to thoroughly clean and have our gear inspected, for bio-security reasons. In honour of Waitangi Day, the ever-responsive galley team served a traditional New Zealand afternoon tea. A bit later, Steve shared some stories and images from his involvement in Southern Right Whale and pest eradication research in the Auckland Islands.

Soon it was time for a recap and a briefing on the plans for our time at “Macca”. Included were the waiata from the morning and the gifting of 3 woven baskets to *Heritage Adventurer*. These were accepted by Captain Jacek with a hongi (a traditional greeting involving a nose press) and a song of his own in Polish.

Afterwards, we enjoyed dinner and made sure to be well-rested for tomorrow’s adventure.





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Day 6

Friday 7 February 2025

Macquarie Island

Overnight we felt the motion of the ocean and sure enough, there were whitecaps in the morning with a stronger wind. Thanks to the work of the fantastic team on board, our landing and Zodiac cruise at Sandy Bay went ahead as scheduled. We took the excursions in turn and were split into two groups, with half ashore and half cruising before swapping over.

Walking up the beach from the landing was like entering some strange new world. We were surrounded by colour, life and noise and never knew where to look next. Turning to the right led past the rocky lagoon and into the court of the King Penguins. We followed the coast to reach the colony with many birds having brood pouches over their feet, and a few chicks in the mix. Some of the remainders were a bit scruffy due to moulting, but others were in full, colourful plumage. They were truly living works of art.

At the landing spit were piles of Elephant Seals, which led into the hustle and bustle of King and Royal Penguins on their landing beach. We carefully crossed the Royal Penguin highway admiring and laughing at the busy little birds as they went about their daily business. The culmination was reached with the climb onto the foreshore, through the non-flowering megaherbs, to the viewing platform for the colony. The noise made talking difficult, but words would have failed to describe the scene. The fledging chicks were surrounded by the adults squabbling or greeting mates in an absolute circus of action. Our

time flew by.

During the Zodiac cruise we came past the Rockhopper Penguins; viewed the activity on the beach from the seaside; and explored the rocky coast offshore from the King colony. We were all buzzing with discussion at dinner after a fabulous day.



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Day 7

Saturday 8 February 2025

Macquarie Island

Our breakfast transit north to Buckles Bay was interrupted with the approach of the resident pod of Orca. Our Captain halted *Heritage Adventurer*, and we took the opportunity to marvel at these inquisitive creatures as they appeared several more times during our stay at Macquarie Island.

We went ashore in groups enjoying ideal conditions – flat calm, light wind and occasional sunshine. We were greeted by the station staff and explored the area of The Isthmus, from climbing Razorback Ridge to the historic digesters and to the research station on the bustling west coast beach.

Right at the landing we were greeted by a few Subantarctic Fur Seal pups – the embodiment of adorable. They were also a hopeful sign that the re-population of Macquarie by fur seals is accelerating after being wiped out in the early 1820s and not seen for 135 years.

Our track took us past many moulting Southern Elephant Seals, including a couple of big males. We saw Gentoo Penguins in good numbers by the station and on the west coast beach. Groups of King Penguins wandered over to check us out at the landing, where we noted the unusual rocks, Macquarie being formed from oceanic crust.

Light-mantled Sooty Albatross were soaring along the cliffs as we admired the view and stunning megaherbs from Razorback Ridge. Giant Petrels, Macquarie Shags, and Brown Skuas were patrolling the west coast. It was a magnificent morning which we all thoroughly enjoyed.

Back on board our trusty expedition vessel for lunch, we journeyed south to Lusitania Bay for a Zodiac cruise. Conditions remained ideal and we approached the largest King Penguin colony on the island. Even more than at Sandy Bay, the birds were all around us in the water on board and during the Zodiac cruise. It was thrilling to see the rusting digesters surrounded by the giant colony and know that the turbulent past is truly past.

We re-boarded *Heritage Adventurer* and headed for Hurd Point, the southernmost part of Macquarie Island and the home to the island's largest Royal Penguin colony. There, 'the Captain's Big Zodiac' took us close to the surf along the shore for great views of the rugged coastline.

The announcement came that we would make a slight detour to visit the Bishop and Clerk Islets – a first for Heritage Expeditions. When we arrived, the abundance and variety of seabirds attested to the importance of even the tiniest specks of land in the vast Southern Ocean. It was a fantastic farewell to our two near-perfect days at Macquarie Island.



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Day 8

Sunday 9 February 2025

At Sea en route to the Ross Sea

The clear skies and the sun's activity had us getting a 'Bing Bong' in the small hours of the morning. We headed for the outer decks, especially the Observation Deck, for a glorious Aurora Australis. The light was visible to the naked eye as it shifted around the sky, and many got excellent colourful photographs.

The calm seas allowed the education program for the sea days to kick off with Steve Bradley helping us to improve our Travel Photography. Next up was Kate with information on how our photographs can contribute to Citizen Science Projects. During lunch, we were treated to observations of a pod of Dusky Dolphins astern of *Heritage Adventurer*.

The first-afternoon activity was the showing of Episode 1 of *Forgotten Polar Hero*, a Norwegian documentary about Carsten Borchgrevink and the Southern Cross Expedition. Also featured were the conservation efforts of the Antarctic Heritage Trust (AHT) on Borchgrevink's Hut at Cape Adare. In the next step toward Antarctica, we were called to the Bistro, to collect the blue parkas that will keep us warm in the frozen south. John wrapped up the lecture programme for the day with his talk *In the Wake of Scott: The Discovery Expedition and the Start of the Heroic Age*.

Travelling across the Southern Ocean, the occasional larger swell kept us on our toes and the dance floor was temporarily closed to seating, but with suitable caution, and "one

hand for the ship”, no damage was done. The sea shop was open for supplies and souvenirs before the routine of recap, briefing, dinner and dessert. We gladly accepted the opportunity for an early night to prepare for the adventure ahead.



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Day 9

Monday 10 February

At Sea en route to the Ross Sea

We awoke to calm seas as we continued towards the Ross Sea. As a result, the education programme, and the mealtimes, were well attended – feeding both body and mind. First up was the end of the first iceberg guessing competition, almost before it started. A beautiful tilted tabular berg broke the ice for our voyage. Shortly before lunch, a much larger berg was circumnavigated, and others were seen in the distance.

After breakfast, John educated us on the second part of the Heroic Age history, In the Wake of Shackleton: The Nimrod Expedition. Our preparations for Antarctica continued with an IAATO briefing and a bio-security check.

As we were getting ready for Neil to resume the programme after lunch with his talk Ice, Ice, Baby several Fin Whales were spotted, and our Captain turned *Heritage Adventurer* for a closer view. Neil's look at the different types of ice was followed by an Afternoon Tea on the High Seas, featuring Swedish Pancakes, during which a few of the True Young Explorers introduced themselves. Casey gave the final presentation of the day, appropriately on the Cetaceans of Antarctica.

Forgotten Polar Hero continued after dinner. It was fun to learn more about this relatively unknown expedition as we neared the site where they had spent the first winter-over on the Antarctic continent. Both dinner and the documentary were interrupted by whale sightings with Humpback, Minke and Fin Whales being sighted in good numbers.



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Day 10
Tuesday 11 February 2025
Antarctic Circle and Balleny Islands

The early morning saw a light snowfall, and an abundance of whales from the evening before with Humpbacks and Orcas swimming close to *Heritage Adventurer*.

We then got the call that the crossing of the Antarctic Circle was imminent. We gathered on the Pool Deck with the rugged Balleny Islands and many icebergs cloaked in fog as a backdrop. The expedition team appeared in extravagant costumes – krill, Neptune and surf lifesavers! After the horn blew, we took the pledge to signify our commitment to protect the wild south and received the Mark of the Penguin. With the business done, the fun started with pool plunges, fish kissing, hot cocoa and vodka, selfies, group photos, and more. A snowman appeared on the bow (was the resemblance to Chief Officer Ulf merely a coincidence?). As we continued south, along the otherworldly cliffs and glaciers, the fog cleared and our encounters with cetaceans continued with feeding Humpback Whales on the port side.

It seemed that crossing the biological, political, and geographical boundaries of Antarctica had brought on Antarctic weather conditions because as *Heritage Adventurer* dropped anchor off Sabrina Island, the temperature was near freezing with heavier snow falling. Despite this, conditions allowed for a Zodiac cruise and kayak paddle. We were soon on the water observing the Adélie and Chinstrap Penguin colonies, resting Weddell Seals, and extraordinary scenery. In a very rare occurrence, Kate and her assistant, Captain Jacek, landed on Sabrina Island using her permit to enter the ASPA (Antarctic Specially Protected Area) and collect penguin bones. There have only been a handful of landings here, and perhaps 40 people ashore on Sabrina before them!

Back aboard, the excitement continued. The remainder of the True Young Explorers introduced themselves during afternoon tea before John continued the history series with *In the Wake of Scott: The Race to the Pole – Part 1*. Afterwards, we were off to the Observation Lounge for Steve Bradley's Phone Photography Workshop.

As always, several interesting topics were covered in the recap before we caught up with friends to discuss the day over dinner. Still, there was more, as Part 3 of *Forgotten Polar Hero* was screened after dinner. Our expectations for the start of our visit to Antarctica had been exceeded, but anticipation for our arrival at the continent continued to build.



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Day 11
Wednesday 12 February 2025
At Sea en route to Cape Adare

Our good run with sea conditions continued overnight, with just enough light snow to leave a small accumulation on the outer decks. After a leisurely sleep-in and late breakfast, we gathered in the lounge for Neil G's presentation on the workings of the Antarctic Treaty System, answering "No" to Antarctica: A Lawless Frontier? Kate followed with a talk sharing her research and related work in Adélie Penguins: Past, Present and Future.

As the day passed, the snow became thicker on the decks and in the air, the sea and air temperatures dropped, and the clouds closed in. It was the perfect opportunity to catch up on some sleep for the upcoming days without sunsets.

We may have slept but the weather did not. As we continued to near the coast, it turned into a full-on blizzard with heavy snow powered by 40+ knots of wind. Undeterred, Neil, Bertie and Jane gave their joint presentation on Fisheries Management in the Southern Ocean. During which, drift ice was encountered, and Cape Adare came in to view off the starboard bow. The weather had cleared enough to get a bit of visibility, but the wind continued to strengthen. The snow from the sky was replaced by snow blown from the cliffs as we approached Ridley Beach and got our first look at the hut built by Carsten Borchgrevink and the Southern Cross Expedition in 1899. We were unable to land in the 60-knot gusts, but still, it was wonderful to see the place in these wild conditions. It gave us something of an understanding of the challenges faced, and met, by these men.

We dove south into Robertson Bay to find lee, without much success. At the briefing, Cheli explained that our best shot was to hang here for a possible Zodiac cruise and eventually land as the forecast was for easing winds. As a bonus, after dinner, those watching the completion of *Forgotten Polar Hero* became the first group to watch it within sight of Duke of York Island.

We had experienced true Antarctica at both the Balleny Islands and Cape Adare and were excited to see what would come next.



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Day 12

Thursday 13 February 2025

Robertson Bay

Heritage Adventurer spent the overnight hours cruising in Robertson Bay. When we awoke, it was to dramatic views of glaciers, cliffs and mountains with the light snow serving to emphasise the folded layers in the rock. With a bit of blue sky and patchy sunlight emerging, it was a feast for the photographers.

Cheli announced that the wind remained too strong to land at Cape Adare in the morning, so we cruised south toward the head of the bay to check possibilities for other activities. Meanwhile, there was time to engage our minds and our eyes as Neil Nightingale and Karen Bass presented on natural and human survival in the polar night in *The Toughest Winter on Earth*.

Through lunch and the early afternoon, conditions were variable based on our position. Later in the afternoon, we navigated back to Cape Adare to compare reality with the forecast for further planning. Unfortunately, the swell on both sides of the small beach was too big to allow a landing. We cruised into the bay while John closed the book on Scott with *In the Wake of Scott: The Race to the Pole – Part 2*. Another check on the beach showed that waiting wasn't helping and due to the forecasted conditions not improving, Expedition Leader Cheli made the call to head south.

As we turned the corner around Cape Adare, we experienced these conditions for

ourselves. The winds that we had missed in the 'screaming sixties' had caught up with us in the normally 'silent seventies'. *Heritage Adventurer* pressed on straight into the gale, which slowly subsided overnight, as we headed for our next destination.



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Day 13

Friday 14 February 2025

Coulman Island

Happy Valentine's Day! Enjoying breakfast, we made good progress and arrived at the pack ice at the north end of Coulman Island. Emperor Penguins were spotted in the distance, so our Captain sailed *Heritage Adventurer* into the pack. We made steady progress until the two birds were directly off the port bow. The bow deck was opened and we carefully descended for a great view, with a bonus of a nearby Crabeater Seal. It was an impressive demonstration of the capabilities of *Heritage Adventurer* and her crew. We turned out of the thick pack but soon returned to view a further three of the regal birds. The setting was so majestic that an impromptu group photo was taken.

We continued south along the eastern edge of the pack ice looking for an area with room between the floes to explore. This was found off Cape Ann at the southern tip of the island. Here we launched the Zodiacs for a cruise and the kayaks for a paddle. The ice was broken up and moving slowly in the large, long-period swells. A Leopard Seal was observed alongside additional Emperor Penguins in the distance. Much of the sea was covered in pancake and brash ice, a sign that the re-freeze of the sea had already begun. The clear patches reflected the sky and landscape in an ever-shifting pattern as the swell passed under us, while the Snow Petrels passed above us. Magic.

We enjoyed a Valentine's Day dinner, as love was in the air! This provided an opportunity for an exciting discussion about our day of adventure.



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Day 14

Saturday 15 February 2025

Franklin Island / Ross Ice Shelf

The sea conditions remained moderate as the temperatures became more Antarctic, dropping to reach -5°C with a sea temperature of -1.5°C . In the morning, *Heritage Adventurer* was just offshore from the rugged cliffs and glaciers of Franklin Island. We watched as the scout Zodiacs were launched and explored the beaches for a landing site, which were found to be unsuitable. Onward south toward the Ross Ice Shelf was the call.

Along the way, we were entranced by Robyn's personal experiences as a scientific researcher in *A Year with Emperors*. Neil G followed with a more general view of the topic in his presentation on The Importance of Antarctic Science.

Just around lunchtime the first glimpses of Ross Island, starting with Mount Terror and Mount Erebus, came into view. With time available, a table tennis table appeared on the dance floor, spawning friendly competition.

As we reached the Ross Ice Shelf the temperature reached -12°C , so, with the 20-knot wind, the decks were no place to linger, but rather to be visited quickly from the shelter of the Library, Bridge or Lounge. The sheer scale of the place, and the interplay of ice, cloud,

mist, sun and shade was as breathtaking as the weather. Our Captain took us close to the edge before approaching Cape Crozier for views of the Adélie Penguin colony, and to remember 'The Worst Journey in the World'.

During the transit, we enjoyed a visit from a large pod of Orca. We heard from Cheli at the briefing the next few days would be busy with landings, hut visits and more in McMurdo Sound. Every day on this expedition has been exciting from start to finish with unique experiences, and we are still going south.



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Day 15
Sunday 16 February 2025
Cape Bird / Scott Base

Having spent the night offshore from Cape Bird, we were all set for an early start. We launched our Zodiacs at 0800 hours, taking us to the pebbly beach for our first landing in Antarctica. The beach and foreshore were populated by Weddell Seals and Adélie Penguins in all stages – downy chicks, fledging chicks with punk hairdos, moulting adults and normal adults. The South Polar Skuas also had chicks – theirs were almost fully fledged and just at the point of taking flight. The adult Skuas patrolled the skies. We had free roam within the designated area, including climbing past the research hut to a stunning overlook of *Heritage Adventurer* and the beach. From there we looked across the Royal Society Range of the Transantarctic Mountains glistening in the sun. The temperature was cold, but with the light wind and patches of sunshine, we enjoyed ourselves.

We set course for Hut Point taking us down the west coast of Ross Island, giving superb views of Mount Erebus and allowing pass-bys of Cape Royds, Cape Evans, Discovery Hut and McMurdo Station. We rounded the corner to approach Scott Base, with our goal was to tour the TAE (Trans-Antarctic Expedition) hut, also known as Hillary's Hut, and see the Pou whenua Te Kaiwhakatere o te Raki (Navigator of the Heavens). We landed at an ice foot and walked near Scott Base, which was a thrill. The TAE hut was full of artefacts from the late-1950s, giving many of us a taste of our childhoods. The Pou whenua helped us reflect on the achievements of Polynesian exploration, and the Scott Base signs provided

ample opportunity for prove-you-were-there photos.

From there we achieved our furthest south point of 77°54.76S before cruising along the ice edge for an abundance of Orca and Emperor Penguin sightings in the golden light.



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Day 16**Monday 17 February 2025****Cape Royds / Discovery Hut**

Mount Erebus greeted us as we made our way into Backdoor Bay at Cape Royds for a visit to Shackleton's Hut, which Ernest Shackleton had built for the Nimrod expedition in 1907. We landed at a small beach and walked across the sparkling black lava hills, through the bright morning sunshine, to the hut tucked into a little valley by the frozen Pony Lake. The Adélie Penguin colony was nearing the end of the breeding season, but a number of them remained home to welcome us.

The hut was full of reminders of the expedition, featuring Shackleton's signature, the wheel and garage for the first motorcar in Antarctica, plenty of tins of food, woolly socks, and more. Before, or after, the walk and visit we were treated to a barbeque on the back deck in the beautiful sunshine.

After we finished at Cape Royds, the anchor was lifted, and we sailed to Hut Point to visit Scott's Discovery Hut. Even though the distance covered was short, the conditions we found were far different. The temperature was well below freezing with a strong wind blowing. Happy we could shelter in the lee of the hut for some time while waiting, the full effect was experienced on the walk out to Vince's Cross. In the hut, we marvelled at the expertly conserved artefacts from the many expeditions that used it as a waystation for the sledging journeys.

After another exciting day, *Heritage Adventurer* returned for a second cruise along the ice edge where we enjoyed the midnight sun and were again provided an absolute feast of wonderful wildlife visits.



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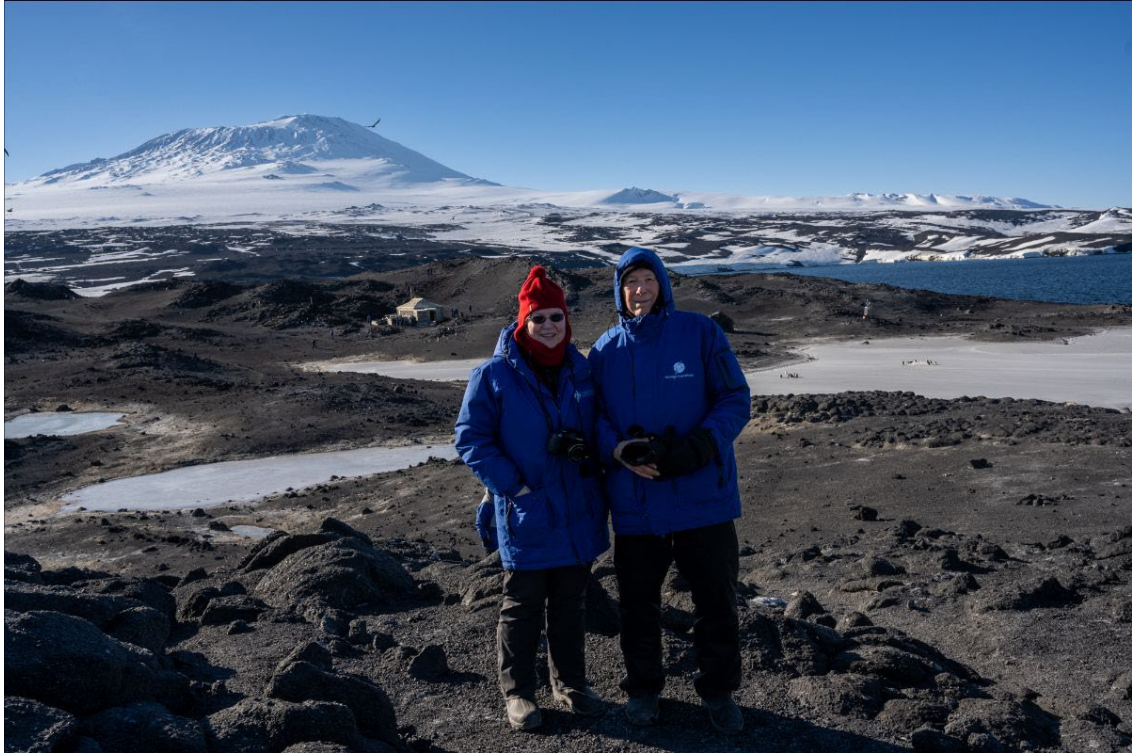
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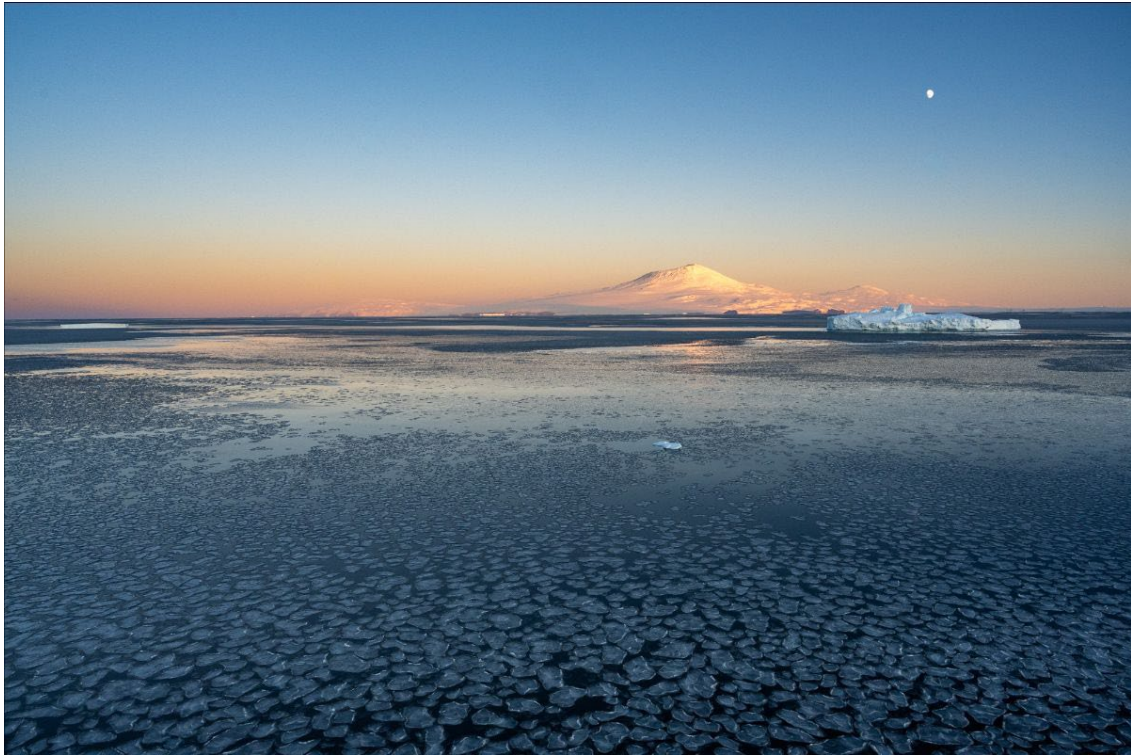
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Day 17

Tuesday 18 February 2025

Cape Evans

We enjoyed a sleep-in to prepare for the mid-morning start for our day at Cape Evans . This is the hut built for Scott's ill-fated Terra Nova expedition, where he started the journey to the South Pole from which he and 4 others never returned. It has been the focus of the intense conservation efforts by the Antarctic Heritage Trust. Now we had the chance to experience it for ourselves.

The impression made by the hut was powerful. Every corner is filled with history. The thousands of artefacts are placed to bring the story of these men, and their stay here, to life. Each of us had our favourite, from the Emperor Penguin on Scott's desk to the bicycle hanging on the stable wall. We all took home unique memories.

As if this day was not enough on its own, the visit was followed by the Polar Plunge. The brave, or perhaps the foolish, prepared themselves and jumped into the below-freezing sea. No one remained in for very long! The whirlpool bath and sauna were popular refuges, before getting seated in the dining room for dinner. The buzz and energy were palpable.

As we started our return to the north, we had a fun Q&A session with the expedition team in the Observation Lounge. Afterwards, some of us gathered in the Deck 5 Lounge and aft deck to bid farewell to McMurdo Sound, Ross Island and Mount Erebus. What a day.



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Day 18

Wednesday 19 February 2025

Drygalski Ice Tongue / Terra Nova Bay

Our overnight voyage toward the Drygalski Ice Tongue was through gentle seas. We awoke to breakfast with this vast floating glacier on the port side. As we neared the land, in Relief Inlet, two scout Zodiacs were launched. They soon determined that the floating ice was safe and were shuttled over to walk for an hour on the ice. For company, we had both Adélie and Emperor Penguins. We also enjoyed a Zodiac cruise, observing the Emperor Penguins at the ice edge as a couple of them walked over to get a closer look at us. It was a classic demonstration that there is never a dull moment on a Heritage Expeditions adventure.

As we continued north into Terra Nova Bay the conditions changed rapidly. From the total calm of our walk, we were suddenly in 50-knot winds in a sea covered in whitecaps and spray. Thankfully, we were back on the comforts of *Heritage Adventurer*. We took the opportunity to sail by the Chinese Qinling Station and Inexpressible Island.

As we passed the Italian station, Mario Zucchelli, the conditions had eased. At the German Gondwana station and nearby South Korean Jang Bogo Station, a scout was made for a landing. The swell was too large to land, so we boarded the Zodiacs and kayaks to explore the area from the sea. Among the highlights were the large ice cliffs with jagged features and subtle colours.

As normal on this voyage, we enjoyed dinner with the evening hours spent in good company.



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Day 19
Thursday 20 February 2025
At Sea / Cape Hallett

While we slept, *Heritage Adventurer* sailed north through gentle seas and overcast skies. The morning's programme began with Neil G telling the heroic story of the Ross Party of Shackleton's Trans-Antarctic Expedition. We remembered the piles of seal blubber and difficult living conditions for these men at the Discovery and Cape Evans Huts, and reflected on their suffering to lay the depots for the crossing party that never arrived. Just as Robyn was about to start her talk *Fur, Fat and Feathers: Coping in a Freezing World*, the call came from the Bridge of Blue Whales ahead. *Heritage Adventurer* diverted to approach both Blue and Minke Whales for some wonderful sightings before Robyn completed her talk. From then, as we approached Cape Hallett, we had many more cetacean visits.

At Cape Hallett the push ice and swell prevented a landing, so we were again off in the Zodiacs or kayaks for time on the water in the ice. As the cape is the site of an Adélie Penguin colony, many of them were seen on the land and the ice floes, along with numerous Weddell Seals. Combined with the splendid mountain and glacier scenery, they made for a very enjoyable outing.

Another delayed, but well-earned and delicious, dinner was followed by a social hour in the lounge.





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Day 20

Friday 21 February 2025

Colbeck Inlet / Cape Adare

Overnight, we travelled north through the still gentle seas to arrive at the southern end of Robertson Bay, opposite Duke of York Island in Colbeck Inlet. We pulled up into the drifting brash ice and launched the Zodiac and kayaks for an exploration. While underway, a pod of Orca was sighted at the mouth of the inlet. They approached, giving the kayakers, and some of the Zodiacs, a memorable encounter. At the end of the bay, next to the glaciers, we landed at a small rocky beach sharing it with Emperor and Adélie Penguins, Weddell Seals, an Elephant Sea, and even a moulting Royal Penguin. We climbed the slope to enjoy panoramic views over the bay.

In the afternoon, we attempted again to land at Cape Adare – this time successful. It was an amazing experience to spend more time in the first building erected in Antarctica, and the home to Carsten Borchgrevink and the men of the Southern Cross Expedition.

With that our time in the Ross Sea came to an end, but what a time it has been. *Heritage Adventurer* set a course for Campbell Island, and we looked forward to a few days at sea.



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Day 21

Saturday 22 February 2025

At Sea en route to Campbell Island

We continued sailing north in calm seas and light winds. We knew we would not be idle on this voyage, even while at sea. There was plenty to occupy us, starting with a Mega Recap covering a variety of topics from the previous few days. Later, John invited us for A Taste of the Heroic Age. He showed a short clip of Scott and the polar party manhauling, and preparing dinner in their tent, before we had a chance to sample foods created from genuine Antarctic recipes – fruit cake, sledging biscuits, pate and hoosh. At the same time, we tried our strength by stepping into replica manhauling harnesses and dragging heavy weights ‘to the pole’ and returning. Throughout the morning, especially with a group of playful Humpbacks, the cetacean show continued.

After lunch we joined Jane and Bertie for a Conversation: Life as a Fisheries Observer in the Southern Ocean, before we gathered to bid on the auction items that will become treasures mementoes. In a session of laughs and competition, we bid generously to help fund the work of the Antarctic Heritage Trust and the Crew Welfare Fund. We were proud to learn that we had raised US\$12,500 for the AHT and US\$1,600 for Crew Welfare.



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Days 22 & 23

Sunday 23 & Monday 24 February 2025

At Sea en route to Campbell Island

We started our days at sea with Neil Nightingale and Karen Bass' exploration of the connectedness of our world in Antarctica, our Planet, and Us. Next up, we selected our single best image and took our chance to submit it in one of 5 different categories in the Great *Heritage Adventurer* Photo Competition. Then, sadly, the time had come to return our trusty, warm blue parkas, marking another step toward the Subantarctic. After lunch, this message was reinforced as we had our final bio-security inspection of the voyage in preparation for our landing at Campbell Island.

Kara and Rachel gave us an introduction to the origins, history and meaning of Pounamu/Greenstone, and displayed some of their merchandise. The sea continued to build over dinner so that when the expedition team called us back to the lounge (a.k.a. the Royal Terror Theatre) for the farcical comedy *A Ticket Of Leave*, the rollers and movement of the stage added to the hilarity. It was fun to see the team playing the parts of the original *Discovery* crew with silly costumes and sillier actions. We laughed and laughed.

We enjoyed hearing from the True Young Explorers, Andrew, Claudia, and Tom presented their Antarctic-related topics. The second-morning talk was from Neil G, Living and Working in Antarctica, on life in the research stations. After lunch Lindsay got us re-focused on the Subantarctic Islands with his personal history of Campbell Island Pest Eradication. The 97 entries in the photo contest drew a crowd to the monitor outside Reception all day. There were so many choices of great images from the adventurers.

At the briefing, Cheli explained that we would have 3 days in the Subs – 2 at Campbell Island and 1 in the Auckland Island group. Our options for cruises and walks were explained and we signed up for our choices. Our after-dinner entertainment continued with Captain Jacek presenting the film *Selma – Furthest South*, about the small Polish yacht that holds the record for sailing further south than anyone else.



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Day 24

Tuesday 25 February 2025

Campbell Island

Our morning destination at Campbell Island was a ship cruise to North Cape and Bull Rock to marvel at Campbell Albatross nesting high on rugged cliffs. Captain Jacek took us in close for fantastic views of what is now a rookery brimming with large grey fluffy chicks. These young will fledge at the end of winter, with most of the parents out foraging and returning periodically to feed their ever-hungry young. The air was a theatre of wings belonging to many species, including Grey-Headed Albatross and Sooty Shearwaters. These magnificent creatures glided by as we poured out on deck to admire and take photographs.

Heritage Adventurer sailed back down the coast and turned into Perseverance Harbour. At the helm, under close supervision from Captain Jacek, were Jean and Slaven, winners of the Heritage Huts auction bid to captain *Heritage Adventurer*. With our Captain again in charge, we anchored off Beeman Base in sunshine and building winds.

First away were our hardy kayakers, powered by a lively tailwind. Others enjoyed a Zodiac cruise to the head of the harbour, going ashore at Tucker Cove and Camp Cove to visit historic highlights from the pastoral era, and Campbell Island's solitary Sitka Spruce that

has claimed the Guinness Book of Records' title as the 'World's Loneliest Tree'. Along the way, we observed an assortment of wildlife including New Zealand Sea Lions and their playful pups, Campbell Island Flightless Teal (once thought extinct, Heritage Expeditions founder Rodney Russ was involved in their rediscovery 50 years ago), Antarctic Terns, Campbell Island Shags, Black Backed and Silver Gulls and Mallards.

The group walking on the boardwalk up to Col Lyall had a thrilling day with Southern Royal Albatross wheeling above in strong winds, and incredible observations of nesting Royal Albatross, including for the patient among us, a view of a proud parent with chick. Conditions were so enticing that some stayed out longer, arriving back to our trusty expedition vessel for a late dinner. A Voyage Quiz completed a big first day at Campbell Island.



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Day 25
Wednesday 26 February 2025
Campbell Island

With conditions picking up overnight, our Captain relocated *Heritage Adventurer* around a bend and closer to the opening of the harbour. Gale force winds continued throughout the morning, blowing over 50 knots and whipping up the harbour into spindrift. We remained warm and cosy, congregating in the lounge to enjoy an hour with Casey and Steve who in their 'How Big?' session, demonstrated the remarkable sizes of some of the species we have encountered. While Storm Petrels are tiny enough to fit in a hand, the mighty wingspan of albatross proved a stark realisation of just how huge these seabirds are.

Our True Young Explorers followed with their presentations in which they shared their work and studies across a breadth of conservation goals and AI possibilities. These 15 are truly an impressive and worthy addition to our voyage.

Over lunch, *Heritage Adventurer* returned to its anchorage close to the Beeman Hill base. From there we waited patiently in the hope of improvement, to no avail. At mid-afternoon, the decision was taken to leave our sheltered harbour and enter the Southern Ocean. We were warned that swells of 5+ metres were expected and therefore to secure our cabins, take whatever medications we needed, and keep "one hand for the ship". To emphasise the message, those on Deck 3 had their porthole covers fitted.

Despite the action outside the windows, the dining room was very full, with the excitement of the voyage continuing during dinner.

Day 26

Thursday 27 February 2025

Auckland Islands

The rough conditions improved through the night until we entered the sheltered waters of Carnley Harbour at breakfast time where *Heritage Adventurer* found sufficient lee from predator-free Adams Island to undertake a Zodiac cruise. It was a splashy ride, but the wildlife seemed to enjoy it as we saw Hoiho/Yellow-eyed Penguin, flightless Teal, New Zealand parakeet/kākāriki, Bellbird and more were observed. It was a graphic illustration of the positive effects of predator eradication.

For those remaining aboard, John told the tragic stories of the many shipwrecks in this group of islands, including the resilient crew of the *Grafton* who were wrecked nearby in Carnley Harbour and rescued 19 months later.

During lunch, and the ship cruise out of the harbour and north to Musgrave Inlet, we were entertained by a Southern Right Whale. By then the sky had cleared, the sun was out, and the sea was flat and calm. What a setting for the final operation of our expedition - Zodiac cruising and kayak paddling in the wild rugged beauty of the Subantarctic disguised as the Sub-Tropical – with playful New Zealand Sea Lion pups, Rockhopper Penguins and Light-mantled Sooty Albatross for company. Wow!

After a memorable experience, we returned to *Heritage Adventurer* inside for recap and

the prizes for the photo competition were awarded. By popular or Captain's choice, the winners were Wen Tao Zhou, Danylo, Kath, Jean, Petter and Lou.



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Day 27

Friday 28 February 2025

At Sea en route to Bluff

We continued our homeward journey through smooth seas, sunny skies and an absolute feast of seabirds trailing *Heritage Adventurer*. The aft decks were a photographer's paradise. Our transition back to the 'real world' continued as we were required to clean our muddy gear for the final time and return our Zodiac life jackets. Neil Nightingale and Karen Bass revealed some of their secret tips for filmmaking in their talk Making the Magic. The late morning highlight was a shared session with True Young Explorer Mitch sharing his videos, a catchup on our Species of the Day, and Rachel and Kara giving a glimpse of ongoing Ngai Tahu research in the Subantarctic. Our final High Tea on the High Seas was hosted by Chef, Gunther, and Hotel Manager, Eric, as they answered our many questions about how they produce the meals we have all enjoyed.

The evening entertainment was started by the Captain's Farewell Cocktails, with a chance to express our real appreciation to all the teams who have served us so well. Our Chinese contingent gathered to treat us to a serenade of the song *Jasmine*, with Jacek on the piano. Kara and Rachael joined the celebration with pounamu gifts for Cheli and Captain Sweet Potato, followed by a powerful haka. Finally, the blinds were pulled, and the lights dimmed, for Steve's wonderful Expedition Slideshow. How did he capture all the events and people of this expedition so well? This was truly a fitting celebration at the culmination of a marvellous journey.

The special Captain's Farewell Dinner was followed by one final gathering in the lounge before the inevitable need to retire to pack and sleep.

Day 28

Saturday 1 March 2025

Bluff

To steal a line from Ernest Shackleton: We have shot our bolt, and the tale is: 28 days; 8 of these at sea; 11 landings; 12 Zodiac cruises; 12 kayak paddles; 11 ship cruises; the furthest south of 77°54.76S; 4,915 nautical miles travelled; 5 historic huts visited; a walk on the sea ice; 10 penguin species; 10 albatross species; 48 other bird species; 11 cetacean species; 8 pinniped species; superb weather, sea and ice conditions; exceptional companionship; and uncountable smiles, laughs, and gasps of amazement.

Today was the day to farewell staff, crew and fellow adventurers after a marvellously intense journey, exploring these remote southerly islands. Sailing out of Bluff felt like a lifetime ago, with so many experiences and so much wildlife and wilderness, between then and now. We of the Heritage Expeditions' team have loved sharing our passion and knowledge with you. Thank you for travelling with Heritage Expeditions. We wish you safe

onward travels and joyful homecomings. Stay safe and may we see you on the high seas again someday.



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