



## CRUISING TO THE HEART OF NATURE

*It was a great honour to attend the Sydney Premiere of Happy Feet in December, as I had never been to one before. Instead of red carpets they were blue. Mist wafted about as we sipped blue drinks and champagne – how exotic. The audience was peppered with children who sat entranced, captivated by Mumble the penguin and his adventures. We stayed right till the end to watch Aurora Expeditions slide by on the credits and felt very proud to have been a part of such a mammoth undertaking.*

*The environmental message of the film also brought home to me the effects of environmental change on the polar regions and our responsibility to play a part in reducing green house gases. We have been slowly working away and logging Aurora's carbon footprint so we can look at ways to make our business even more environmentally friendly. It is most important to Greg and I to do our bit.*

*The BIG news is that we have secured the 100 passenger ice-strengthened ship Marina Svetaeva and have some exciting plans for using her in the future. First up, we will return to Deep Antarctica. With a similar feel to Polar Pioneer, but with space for helicopters and the strength to explore the remote and icy lands due south of Australia and New Zealand, Svetaeva fits the bill and we invite you to join us in this endeavour and come and marvel at the ice, the animals, the space and the silence of this unique part of Antarctica.*



*Margaret Mortimer*  
Aurora Expeditions

## DEEP ANTARCTICA – THE ROSS SEA

Aurora Expeditions is thrilled to announce the re-introduction of our program to the Ross Sea. We believe that *Marina Svetaeva* is the best safe, comfortable helicopter-equipped vessel to embark on expeditions to this mesmerising area. We were most impressed with *Svetaeva's* stability at sea and ice breaking ability when we last ventured to this part of the world in 2005/06 and now, with some recent modifications improving the ship further, we are once again excited at the prospect of another crossing of the Southern Ocean.

Inspired by the explorations of Mawson, Scott and Shackleton, we have two voyages planned for *Svetaeva*, departing from Hobart and Bluff (NZ) in January and February 2008.

The **Historic Huts & Antarctic Heroes** voyages, weather and ice permitting, will take us back in time to the historic huts of Scott and Shackleton. We also hope to visit massive Adélie penguin colonies, enjoy dramatic views of the Trans-Antarctic Mountains, sail past the towering Ross iceshelf, and if we are very lucky take helicopter flights to the extraordinary spectacle of the Dry Valleys.

On both voyages we plan to call in at two or three sub-Antarctic islands – oases of land teeming with royal, king and other penguins, several species of albatross, snorting elephant seals and frisky fur seals.

We're now finalising our brochure for these voyages. Contact us on 1800 637 688 or email [auroraex@auroraexpeditions.com.au](mailto:auroraex@auroraexpeditions.com.au) for further information or to reserve your spot – we expect berths to fill fast.



Adventure awaits in Deep Antarctica

## ARCTIC ON THIN ICE

New research shows that global warming could leave the Arctic without ice during the summer as early as 2040. According to modelling done on supercomputers by a team of US scientists from the National Snow and Ice Data Centre, sea ice may begin retreating four times faster than at any time in the observed record. This will leave only a small amount of perennial sea ice along the north coasts of Greenland and Canada and they predict most of the Arctic basin would be ice-free each September.

Aurora's expedition staff in the Arctic report a noticeable change in the extension of sea ice year to year and also the visible retreating of glaciers in both Spitsbergen and Greenland. To date, polar bear sightings on our recent expeditions have been very good but we wonder how much longer this can continue when their hunting grounds are shrinking at such a rapid rate.



DAVID MANNIX

Polar bear off the Spitsbergen coast

## PHIL LAW

Greg and Margaret recently received a letter from their old friend Dr Phil Law. Phil has a close association with Aurora Expeditions, having joined us on voyages to South Georgia and Mawson station over the years. The founding father of the Australian Antarctic Division, Phil oversaw the mapping of 6000 kilometres of Antarctic coastline and more than 1.3 million square kilometres of new territory. Now aged 93, Phil continues to lead a full and remarkable life. He has been keeping busy dispersing his historically important archive material between libraries and museums throughout Australia and, with great reluctance, recently cut back his tennis games from three times a week to once! We wish Phil good health and the best of luck with his archiving project.

## NEW OFFICE STAFF

With our new ship secured and some exciting destinations on the cards, we need more help to make this happen! We have been fortunate enough to hire two outstanding individuals for our sales and marketing team.

**Janine Ferguson** is well known among the Aurora family, having travelled with us a number of times. Her wealth of experience in Antarctica and the High Arctic make Janine perfectly qualified for her new job as a sales consultant. In July she will be on yet another expedition with Aurora, this time on our new Norway voyage.

**Ben Alexander** recently graduated with a Business Marketing degree from QUT in Brisbane. Ben has just moved to Sydney after spending some time travelling in the Americas and will take on the role of Marketing Assistant, helping the team with our general marketing, advertising and PR activities.

## HAPPY FEET



The animated movie *Happy Feet* successfully took the world by storm recently, culminating in an award for best animated feature at the Oscars. We here at Aurora Expeditions are proud to have been involved in many aspects of the movie's production and helping set the environmental message of the film.

As far back as 1999, producer Bill Miller approached us for advice on the project and joined us on one of our Antarctic voyages. During the following years, many of our staff were heavily involved as the film started to take shape. Dr Gary Miller, one of Aurora's key naturalists, was hired to advise the filmmakers and animators about penguin behaviour and even donned a motion capture suit that allows humans to be animated as penguins!

Meanwhile, Aurora's Howard Whelan was a key figure in the film's development and Tashi Tenzing and Kieran Lawton worked as consultants as filming took place on the Antarctic Peninsula on a vessel organised by Aurora. The Aurora team was instrumental in choosing the locations that form the backdrop of the film. These spectacular environments are places that we regularly visit on our Antarctic voyages such as the dramatic mountains south of the Lemaire Channel and the stunning landscapes surrounding Cuverville Island.

We are visiting a number of these film locations on our 07/08 Antarctic voyages. So if you're looking for adventure (and penguins!) come along and join us on the trip of a lifetime.

## STAFF PROFILE – ROBYN MUNDY

Antarctica first enticed Assistant Expedition Leader Robyn Mundy when she read *This Accursed Land* by Lennard Bickel as a twenty-year-old. Bickel's biography of Australian polar explorer Douglas Mawson and the 1911-14 Australasian Antarctic Expedition fuelled Robyn with a fascination for the ice that led to her travelling to Antarctica in 1996. For the last decade Robyn has been working with Aurora Expeditions on polar adventures.

Together with naturalist Gary Miller, Robyn lives in Perth, Western Australia. Recently Robyn successfully completed a PhD in Creative Writing, which comprised an Antarctic novel, as well as an essay on Frank Hurley's photography.

Robyn's research into the diaries of the AAE included visits to archival libraries in the UK and Australia as well as the assistance of long-time Aurora passenger Gabrielle Eisner from Switzerland. For the first time, Gabrielle translated the full diary transcript of Xavier Mertz, Swiss ski expert and dog handler on the AAE.

In the summer of 2003-04, Robyn worked as a research field assistant on a skua study at Australia's Davis Station, and in December 2005, took part in Aurora Expeditions' Deep Antarctic voyage to Mawson's Hut. Arriving at Commonwealth Bay in picture perfect conditions, she found it easy to share Douglas Mawson's favourable first impression of the place – seconded by Captain John King Davis as 'a veritable oasis.'



Robyn and emperor penguin

GARY MILLER

## MEASURING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT



COLIN MONTEATH

Using the expertise of Aurora expedition leader Peter Malcolm, Aurora has completed the process of mapping our environmental footprint both in the office and on our voyages. Working in conjunction with renowned environmental expert Bertram Deurr from the non-profit organization Climate Positive, our aim is to understand and take action on the ways we contribute to climate change. Peter has examined all aspects of a voyage and has completed a carbon count for each of our expeditions.

We hope to embark on a program to both reduce our carbon emissions and offset them with practical contributions. Our aim is to offset 100% of our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by purchasing renewable energy certificates that are invested in renewable energy projects. Over and above this, we are investigating investing in indigenous forest restoration projects that will absorb 0.3 tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> for each tonne we offset. Importantly, this

will make us climate positive as opposed to climate neutral.

We are passionate about this project and encourage you to find out more on how you can help us combat global warming but like you, we are feeling our way into this brave new world. Visit [www.climatepositive.com.au](http://www.climatepositive.com.au) to measure your personal carbon footprint and view ideas on how you and your family can reduce and offset your emissions.

## MID-WINTER CELEBRATION – HOBART

This year we have decided to combine our Mid-winter celebration with Hobart's Antarctic Mid-winter Festival. The Festival is an annual event in Hobart and features a diverse range of events for all ages and interests. Held between **15th-24th June**, the Festival aims to showcase the wonders of Antarctica through science, film, photography, music and art. At 2pm on Sunday 24th June, Aurora Expeditions has a special group booking for the '**Amundsen Afternoon Tea & Tour**' to be held at the Hadley's Hotel. This is a chance to hear the story of renowned polar explorer Roald Amundsen, his connection with Hadley's Hotel and Hobart.

Cost is \$15 per person, please call Ben on 02 9252 1033 or email [ben@auroraexpeditions.com.au](mailto:ben@auroraexpeditions.com.au) to reserve your place.

## KAMCHATKA AND BEYOND IN 2008

The rich wildlife and magnificent landscapes of Far East Russia have beckoned us for many years. Many of our past passengers have urged us to explore this remote wilderness area and now, with our ship *Svetaeva* ready to go, we are pleased to announce a series of voyages to this region departing in August & September 2008.

We are currently researching itineraries for **Kuril Islands, Kamchatka Peninsula** and **Bering Strait/Arctic Ocean** expeditions. We invite you to come along and be one of the first to experience this rarely visited and spectacular wilderness area for what will be a truly unique experience.

Give us a call on 1800 637 688 or email [auroraex@auroraexpeditions.com.au](mailto:auroraex@auroraexpeditions.com.au) to register your interest.



DARREN JEW

*Aurora will be the first Australian company to operate voyages to Kamchatka*

## EXPEDITION LORD HOWE



IAN HUTTON

After two successful expeditions in 2006, our close friend Hayley Baillie from Capella Lodge is offering two more of these inspirational holidays during 2007. The two, week-long programmes depart September 8 and 16 and will be led by legendary Lord Howe naturalist Ian Hutton. Activities include nature walks, snorkelling, bird watching and an excursion to Ball's Pyramid. Expeditioners will stay in the luxurious surrounds of Capella Lodge, Lord Howe's premium boutique accommodation. Prices start from A\$5,100pp ex Sydney. Give us a call on 1800 637 688 or email [auroraex@auroraexpeditions.com.au](mailto:auroraex@auroraexpeditions.com.au) for a brochure.



*Striding up to the lookout on Mt Eliza*

## WEBSITE – NEW FEATURES

The Aurora website has some fantastic new features to check out. During each of our voyages, passengers contribute daily notes, pictures, illustrations and other material toward a **voyage log** that is sent to them upon their return home. We now have logs from some of our most recent expeditions available to download online. Because our passengers write them, not only will the logs give you an insight into life on board an Aurora Expeditions voyage, they will also provide a personal and unbiased opinion of our unique style of travel.

We have compiled some of our best images from previous voyages for our new **photo gallery** section – just in case you needed further inspiration to travel with us! We have added pages

on our **travel agent services**, with information on how Aurora can book your flight, hotel and tour extensions in conjunction with your cruise. Our **Polar Pioneer** ships page has also been updated with great new cabin pics and layouts and for the tech-heads we have a **Where is Polar Pioneer?** page, with a world map showing the real-time position of Polar Pioneer at any of our far-flung destinations.

Check out the new features at

[www.auroraexpeditions.com.au](http://www.auroraexpeditions.com.au)

## NEW KIMBERLEY BROCHURE



The wild beauty of Mitchell Falls

PHOTO LEN ZELL

We've just released our new 2008 Kimberley Coast brochure and we encourage you to join us as we immerse ourselves into the wild natural diversity and cultural wonders of the Kimberley. The ebb and flow of massive tides dictate our travels and our inquisitiveness may lead us in unexpected directions. Whether exploring the shoreline, swimming in lily-fringed rock pools fed by cascading waterfalls, or visiting ancient rock art sites, with a flexible itinerary, your days will be filled with exploration and adventure. Voyages depart June 2008 and prices start from A\$6,200pp. Give us a call on 1800 637 688 or email [auroraex@auroraexpeditions.com.au](mailto:auroraex@auroraexpeditions.com.au) for a brochure.



## CAMPBELL ISLAND SNIPE

As part of our ongoing environmental commitment to our destinations, Aurora assists scientists researching topics where our activities may have an impact. For each new member of our **VIP Club** (passengers who have made two or more journeys with us) we make a contribution to our research fund.

Last year we provided transport aboard *Marina Svetaeva* for a small team heading to Campbell Island, a sub Antarctic island 700km south of New Zealand. The team's purpose was to research the status of the Campbell Island snipe. Only discovered in 1997, recent reports had indicated that the snipe had returned to Campbell Island from nearby Jacquemart Island (where the original sighting was made), after Campbell Island had undergone a rat eradication program in 2001.

Their first task was to teach Percy, a 3-year-old English setter, what snipe were. Percy is a Department of Conservation certified bird-locater dog, but had never encountered snipe. During our stop on Enderby Island, Percy underwent training and proved his ability as a snipe dog, finding 5 birds at a rate of about one every 7 minutes of searching.

The research revealed very encouraging news, with Campbell Island snipe present in unexpectedly large numbers. Before arriving, the team expected to encounter fewer than 10 birds, and thought that one bird in the hand would be a success. In the end, they had 31 sightings (only 2 that they would have seen without Percy's help), and caught 17 birds including 5 chicks and the discovery of the first ever Campbell Island snipe nest.

We intend to visit Campbell Island on our Ross Sea trips this season and will of course be keeping an eye out for any snipe during our walks.



PHOTO JAMES FRASER

Researcher Colin Miskelly with a bird in the hand

# AURORA EXPEDITIONS 2007/2008 JOURNEY CALENDAR

Dates	Destination	Ship	Options
4–14 June <b>2007</b>	Kimberley Coast Broome–Broome	<i>Coral Princess</i>	Kunmunya hike, helicopter sightseeing
15–25 June	Kimberley Coast Broome–Broome	<i>Coral Princess</i>	Kunmunya hike, helicopter sightseeing
23 June – 3 July	Wild Scotland	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Kayaking
25 June – 5 July	Kimberley Coast Broome–Darwin	<i>Coral Princess</i>	Kunmunya hike, helicopter sightseeing
3–13 July	Wild Scotland	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Kayaking
13–26 July	Across the Arctic Circle; Scotland, Norway, Spitsbergen	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Kayaking
26 July – 5 August	Spitsbergen Circumnavigation	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Diving, kayaking
5–15 August	Spitsbergen Circumnavigation	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Kayaking
15–28 August	Spitsbergen, Greenland, Iceland	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Kayaking
28 August – 10 September	Iceland, Greenland, Spitsbergen	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Kayaking
9–27 November	Falklands, South Georgia, Antarctic Peninsula	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Kayaking
27 November – 7 December	Antarctic Peninsula Spring	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Climbing, camping, kayaking
7–18 December	Antarctic Peninsula Climbers & Kayakers	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Climbing, camping, kayaking
18–28 December	Antarctic Peninsula Christmas	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Camping, kayaking
28 December – 7 January	Antarctic Peninsula New Year's Trip	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Camping, kayaking
7–25 January <b>2008</b>	Falklands, South Georgia, Antarctic Peninsula	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	
9 January – 2 February	Ross Sea	<i>Marina Svetaeva</i>	Helicopter flights
25 January – 5 February	Antarctic Peninsula & Weddell Sea	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	
3 February – 27 February	Ross Sea	<i>Marina Svetaeva</i>	Helicopter flights
5–16 February	Across the Circle	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	
16–27 February	Across the Circle	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Diving
27 Feb–17 March	Antarctic Peninsula, South Georgia	<i>Polar Pioneer</i>	Alpine crossing



DAMON SMITH



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