

MEET PHILIPPA



Philippa Hurley

When you next phone the office your call is likely to be answered by the newest member of our sales team, Philippa Hurley.

Philippa has recently joined us after travelling and leading groups through southern Europe (she says Barcelona is her favourite city in the world) and working as a consultant

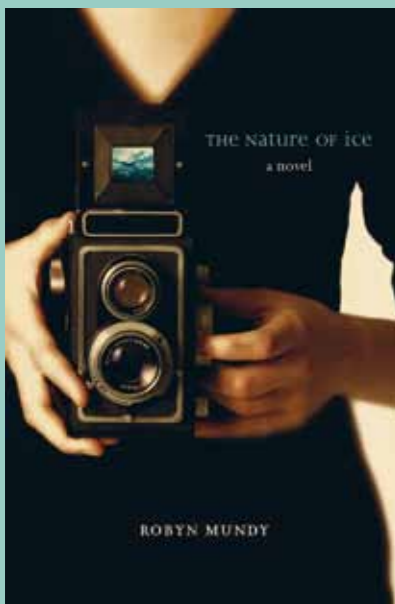
booking and developing special interest tours to destinations such as the UK, Europe, the Middle East and Egypt.

The passion for travel took hold early and Phil decided to explore the world, living and working in California, North America and the UK and visiting many countries including Cambodia, Thailand, Central Europe, Russia and Mongolia.

"I'm very excited about working for Aurora Expeditions with their strong commitment to developing new adventure destinations and expedition style of travel," she said. "I love remote and wild places, so it's a great pleasure to be able to talk to people about them all day."

Somehow we have managed to entice her to settle down with us for a while, so give her a call for a chat and enquire about our new and exciting range of expeditions in 2010.

ROBYN'S ANTARCTIC LOVE AFFAIR



Many of our passengers will be familiar with Robyn Mundy, who works with Aurora as an Assistant Expedition Leader on our Antarctic, Arctic and Scotland voyages.

Robyn has channelled her passion for Antarctica and polar history into a book, *The Nature of Ice*, which will be published by Allen & Unwin in September.

The story weaves a vivid recreation of Douglas Mawson's

ill-fated 1911-14 Australasian Antarctic Expedition into the contemporary story of a woman coming to terms with the end of her marriage. Featuring iconic photographs by Frank Hurley, it is both a love story and a polar adventure story which vividly brings the extraordinary landscape of Antarctica to life.



SCHOOL DAYS IN PNG

On our expedition to Papua New Guinea this year, Aurora Expeditions co-ordinated the donation of hundreds of school books to a secondary school on Karkar Island.

Passengers and staff were treated to the magnificent spectacle of a colourful sing-sing and feast in a stunning tropical location, and all agreed it was one of the most rewarding of all our special days in Papua New Guinea this year.

The day began with a Zodiac ride to the black sand beaches of the island, where everyone was greeted by scores of smiling locals and inquisitive kids. The island's beauty is bewitching, with a backdrop of steep, jungle-covered volcanoes, while the coastal plains are like something out of a postcard with thousands upon thousands of coconut palms all around. There were a huge number of boxes to unload from the ship, all filled with books for the school. Aurora worked closely with past passengers, David Keating, who founded the Karkar Secondary School back in 1969, and Barry Miller, who tirelessly ensured so many books were donated this year.

After receiving a hero's welcome when visiting Karkar last year, David spent much of his time on his return to Australia collecting books for the school's library.

After our superb greeting the locals began the long process of unloading the books from the Zodiacs. They then proudly showed us around the school before assembling for a wonderful sing-sing. Expedition leader, Gary Miller, then had the privilege of nailing in the sign for the newly named 'David Keating Library'.

It was a memorable experience for everyone present and we are very proud to be able to contribute to this cause.

Papua New Guinea continues to create a lasting impression on us and everyone we take there, and we look forward to returning to the delightful islands of PNG next year.

Aurora Expeditions has two voyages to Papua New Guinea planned for next year departing in November and travelling from Cairns to Rabaul and vice-versa. For further information or to book your place call us on 1800 637 688.



AURORA EXPEDITIONS 2009/2010 JOURNEY CALENDAR

Dates	Code	Destination	Activities
9-27 Nov 2009	ASG35	South Georgia & Antarctic Peninsula, Ushuaia to Ushuaia	Kayaking
27 Nov - 7 Dec 2009	ANP66	Antarctic Peninsula - Spring Voyage, Ushuaia to Ushuaia	Kayaking, camping, climbing
7-18 Dec 2009	EAP23	Antarctic Peninsula - Climbers/Kayakers, Ushuaia to Ushuaia	Kayaking, camping, climbing
18-28 Dec 2009	ANP67	Antarctic Peninsula Christmas Voyage, Ushuaia to Ushuaia	Kayaking, camping
28 Dec - 7 Jan 2010	ANP68	Antarctic Peninsula New Year Voyage, Ushuaia to Ushuaia	Kayaking, camping
7-25 Jan 2010	ASG36	South Georgia and Antarctic Peninsula, Ushuaia to Ushuaia	
25 Jan - 5 Feb 2010	ANP69	Antarctic Peninsula and Weddell Sea, Ushuaia to Ushuaia	
5-16 Feb 2010	ANP70	Across the Circle, Ushuaia to Ushuaia	Diving
16-27 Feb 2010	EAP24	Across the Circle with Divers, Ushuaia to Ushuaia	Diving
27 Feb - 18 Mar 2010	ASG37	South Georgia - Shackleton Odyssey, Ushuaia to Ushuaia	Alpine Crossing
31 May - 10 Jun 2010	KIM36	Kimberley Coast, Broome to Broome	
11-21 Jun 2010	KIM37	Kimberley Coast, Broome to Broome	
21 Jun - 1 Jul 2010	KIM38	Kimberley Coast, Broome to Darwin	
12-25 Jun 2010	SCOT7	Wild Scotland	Kayaking
25 Jun - 8 Jul 2010	NCS01	Norwegian Coastline & Spitsbergen	Kayaking
8-18 Jul 2010	SVAL25	Circumnavigation of Spitsbergen	Kayaking
18-28 Jul 2010	SVAL26	Circumnavigation of Spitsbergen	Kayaking
28 Jul - 10 Aug 2010	GRN17	Jewels of the Arctic	Kayaking
26 Aug - 8 Sep 2010	WRA2	Russian Far East	Kayaking
8-26 Sep 2010	KAM4	Russian Far East	Kayaking
3-15 Nov 2010	PNG06	Cairns to Rabaul	
15-27 Nov 2010	PNG07	Rabaul to Cairns	



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GOODBYE IS ONLY THE BEGINNING

Dear Aurora Family,

Many of you may have heard that Margaret and I have sold Aurora Expeditions. Selling the business was a very big deal for us. It was our baby, and has been our life for the past 13 years. It is a great little company and has been successful in sparking an environmental awareness in a lot of people.

For some time, we have wanted to take more time out, to spend time in the wilderness and be with family and friends. We feel confident that we have left the company in good hands, and that our original aim - to share our passion for the world's wildest and most extraordinary places - will continue in the spirit in which it was created.

We will still take great interest in the company's operations and hopefully take people like you on expeditions to the far corners of the earth. We will possibly lead the last two Polar Pioneer Voyages of the 09/10 season, the Across the Circle, Above and Below diving voyage and the Shackleton Odyssey. We'd love you to join us!

In the meantime we're off to climb mountains and catch up with our rapidly growing grandchildren. We thank you for your wonderful friendship over the years and the unbelievable adventures we have shared.

Go well on your journeys.

Greg & Margaret Mortimer



Greg and Margaret Mortimer

LISA AT THE HELM

We are pleased to welcome Lisa Bolton as Aurora Expeditions' new Chief Executive Officer.

Prior to joining Aurora, Lisa held various roles with Qantas and Carnival Australia (P&O Cruises).

"Nine months ago I sat across the table from Greg as he interviewed me for a job with Aurora. I heard how he and Margaret had started this company more than a decade ago, and as I listened to him speak passionately about the places they visited and the type of people who travelled with them, I knew more than ever that this was the company I wanted to work for," says Lisa.

"I have heard so much about the 'Aurora Family' and I can assure you that I'm committed to maintaining the legacy that Greg and Margaret started. Every one of our passengers is a part of that and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible when you pop into the office, or travelling with you on one of our voyages."



Lisa Bolton

STUDIES IN ANTARCTICA



Alex Piekutowski takes time out to enjoy some fun on the ice.



Antarctic masters student Tom Berli and Marina Svetaeva

Last season Aurora was pleased to be able to assist the first students undertaking the University of Tasmania Master of Antarctic Science degree on one of our voyages to the Ross Sea. Students Alex Piekutowski and Tom Berli spent five weeks on *Marina Svetaeva* studying tourism and zoology projects arranged through the International Antarctic Institute.

Alex researched passengers' awareness of Antarctic environmental issues and changes in attitudes as well as interests and concerns related to conservation and tourism management in the pre and post-Antarctic experience.

"I wanted to conduct research in Antarctic tourism because in a place as politically and ecologically unique as Antarctica, social and biological studies can be difficult to separate," he said.

Tom studied zooplankton and did basic biodiversity estimates.

While there was a lot of work involved during their time onboard, the students were able to take a little time out for some fun as well. They were helicoptered to the tongue of the Mertz glacier and even managed a game of soccer on the ice.

THE FUTURE OF ANTARCTIC TOURISM

Aurora is a founding member of the International Association of Antarctic Tourism Operators (IAATO), the peak body that advocates and regulates safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic.

Greg and Lisa recently attended IAATO's 20th annual meeting in Providence. One of the major topics of discussion was developing a strategic vision for the future of Antarctic tourism.

Since the beginning of the Antarctic tourism industry in 1969, the number of tourists in Antarctica has grown from a few hundred to more than 34,000 last year (2008/09 season). With this year being the 50th Anniversary of the Antarctic Treaty, the member nations outlined a set of general principles that included: all tourism activities being conducted in accordance with the Antarctic Treaty and its Protocol on Environmental Protection; tourism having no more than a minor or transitory impact on the environmental, intrinsic natural wilderness and historical values of Antarctica; and, as far as practicable, all Antarctic Treaty Parties to ensure that tourism activities are regulated in a proactive and consistent way. In addition, all commercial tourism organisations operating in Antarctica will be encouraged to co-operate with each other to co-ordinate tourism activities and share best practice on environmental and safety management issues.

The future growth of tourism will be monitored, managed and controlled and priority will be given to activities that focus on the enrichment and education of visitors about the Antarctic environment and its protection. Visitors will also be encouraged to travel with experienced organisations that have demonstrated their commitment to the principles of the Antarctic Treaty.

Aurora Expeditions has always been dedicated to maintaining the highest possible standards of environmentally responsible and safe travel in this remote, wild and delicate region of the world, and will continue to be closely involved in future discussions on these issues.



VALE PETER MALCOLM

It is with much sadness that we farewell our long-time friend, Peter Malcolm, who recently passed away after losing his battle with cancer. Many of our passengers will have travelled with Peter on one of the many Antarctic expeditions he led for us over the years and will know that we called him 'Peter Positive' because he never failed to look at the bright side of every situation.

Pete lived a full and rich life doing what he loved – leading Antarctic expeditions; working with disadvantaged youth; being a champion for environmental and social change, as well as being a devoted husband to Davini and father to his five children, who he adored. Pete changed the lives of many people and had a very deep impact on everyone he met and worked with.

We will miss him dearly but know that his spirit lives on in the many people he has inspired to follow their passions and live life to its fullest potential.

STAFF PROFILE – DR CLIVE STRAUSS, ANTARCTIC MEDICAL PRACTITIONER



Dr Clive Strauss is one of our team of experienced and enthusiastic expedition doctors who cares for passengers on board our ships.

Clive is currently wintering in Antarctica working for the Australian Antarctic Division as Antarctic Medical Practitioner (commonly known as 'The Doc') at Casey Station.

"Working in the Antarctic fulfils a dream that started in the 1980s when I was a medical student in Cape Town. I was hoping to work at the SANAE base one day, but that never happened as I moved to Canada," says Clive. "Home is Vancouver Island, which is now my base for the expedition medicine which I love to do. The gods were certainly smiling, or perhaps a little crazy, but here I am at Casey Station.

"Having worked in the Canadian north certainly prepares one well for working in the freezer, but the remoteness of the Antarctic cannot be surpassed. That makes for a unique set of medical challenges, thousands of kilometres away from the nearest referral hospital. I'm kept pretty busy looking after

the health needs of the winter expeditioners and maintaining the extensive array of medical equipment we have here on the base.

"Of course there are other duties, such as water quality testing, medical research, hydroponics and kitchen 'slushy' duty to name a few."

The expeditioners recently held their Mid-Winter Dinner, which Clive says was an amazing extravaganza and an experience that he will always remember.

"After a fabulous dinner by our chef and opening our mid-winter's presents we were entertained by the local Casey band, 'Ice Elated' (get it?). This was followed by the traditional 'Mid-Winter Swim'.

"Fear not, I did NOT jump into the water for the 'mid winter swim', but rather chose to observe my fellow expeditioners from the ice edge; after all, someone has to be the Doc!"

Clive will return from the frozen south early next year and we look forward to him joining us back on board in 2010 and hearing his stories about his year on the ice.

MID-WINTER DINNER

It is an Aurora tradition to celebrate the Antarctic mid-winter. This year our event was held at the Melbourne Aquarium where we toasted the longest night by candlelight amidst the king and gentoo penguins of the venue's new Antarctica exhibit. It almost felt like we were actually there, without the 20°C below temperatures that is!

Guests heard the courageous story of Cystic Fibrosis sufferer Melissa Middleton, who travelled with us last season, and from one of our most popular naturalists, Dr Roger Kirkwood, who has wintered in Antarctica studying emperor penguins. It was great to catch up with old friends again and share our Antarctic memories.



Kris Madden, Lisa Bolton, Roger Kirkwood and Marjalein Kirkwood



Sue Halliwell, Colin Smith and Robyn Animer



Cameron Berkman, Melissa Middleton, Elisha Mont and Fiona Twyford



Marie Bacon and Margaret Mortimer

WALKING WITH WANDJINA



Jo in front of the Wandjina Warriors at low tide



Cooling down on a hot Kimberley day

Our sales manager, Jo Schuetz, recently travelled on one of our voyages to the incredible Kimberley. Shipping News recently caught up with her to seek her impressions of this ancient world lost in time.

Was the Kimberley what you expected?

I've come to expect the unexpected on an Aurora voyage – but this trip totally surpassed anything I imagined. Our country is so diverse. Everyday we landed at a new site that offered something completely different – from rocky islands to murky mangrove rivers to stunning coral reefs.

Was there a particular special moment that stands out?

Seeing the natural sandstone pillars at Langgi known as the 'Wandjina Warriors' was very special. We navigated the narrow gorge in our aluminium excursion vessel 'The Explorer' at high tide – but were unable to land. Later that day we returned for pre-dinner drinks on the beach. By this time the tide had turned and we were able to walk amongst the warriors. It's just amazing to experience the difference and discover what was underwater just hours before.

What were your top three highlights?

It's hard to narrow it down to just three, but I'd have to say the Lacepede Islands, Montgomery Reef and the Kunmunya Walk were my favourites.

The Lacepedes because it is the largest breeding site in the Kimberley for green turtles, and an estimated 17,000 pairs of brown boobies live there. The fluffy white chicks look like they stepped right out of Sesame Street.

When the tide drops at Montgomery Reef, raging torrents of water cascade from the top of the reef like waterfalls. We witnessed miles of surrounding reef slowly rise out of the ocean, another incredible gift from the Kimberley.

You need to have a good level of fitness to complete the 9-kilometre Kunmunya Walk. This was a highlight because we visited the place where our expedition leader, Mike Cusack, and his wife, Susan, spent a year as Australian Geographic's first wilderness couple. It was great to hear Mike's stories as we clambered up creek beds and through the tall grasses.

What's a typical day like on a Kimberley voyage?

Our days are determined by the tides, so each voyage is different. We would always start the day at sunrise. After breakfast we would board the Explorer to either make a landing or cruise through the twisting waterways. Some days we would take a packed lunch or return to the ship for a buffet lunch. The afternoons were either filled with lectures or a different landing site. At the end of each day we would all gather in the lounge to share our stories.

What was your lasting impression of the Kimberley?

The colours – definitely the spectacular colours – and the reflections in the water were just extraordinary.

Aurora has three voyages to the Kimberley in 2010. For further details or to obtain a copy of our new Kimberley Coast 2010 brochure, contact us on 1800 637 688 or email auroraex@auroraexpeditions.com.au