

Antarctic Explorer

Aboard *MV Greg Mortimer* | 06 – 16 February 2022





Frei Station, King George Island

DAY 1 | Sunday 6 February 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 62°11.994' S

Longitude: 058°55.293' W

Course: 008.8°

Speed: 0.1 knots

Wind Speed: 10 knots, gentle breeze from W

Barometer: 1013

Air Temp: 0°C

Explore. Dream. Discover.

—Mark Twain

The Aurora Expeditions Team were at hand to welcome you to King George Island. After the plane, with its lovely chinstrap penguin design, touched down on the black gravel runway, we led you over the 2km path towards the beach. Here, a few gentoo penguins splashed in the shallows and preened on the shore – a lovely beginning to our adventure.

Frei and Bellingshausen Stations on King George Island are our first ‘taste’ of Antarctica. Although much of King George Island is glaciated, this bay is an area of contrast, for here the terrain is stripped bare by the frequent high winds, revealing a stark volcanic landscape that has its own allure with small rocky towers and plugs. This will be the last time in over a week that we see anything in the way of civilized activity. It is a bustling little harbour, a small town really, with other ships going about their business, plenty of happenings on shore including an Antarctic marathon being run by staff from the two bases.

The South Shetland Islands and King George Island were the first to see human activity in the 1820’s, not from exploration or scientific study, as many of the stations do now, but as an economic endeavour in sealing. Seal skins were hugely profitable, and as the common story goes, humans hunted the seals to near extinction and the industry went bust. Thankfully fur seals are in a full rebound today, and in the late Austral summer, are often seen in streams making their way from South Georgia Island to the South Shetlands.

Once onboard and settled into our comfortable staterooms, welcome drinks in the Elephant Island Bar and a scrumptious buffet dinner in the restaurant were served.

It was a busy evening with onboard briefing and safety drill. Understandably it can take some days to become accustomed to ship life, but it took almost no time before there was a buzz of excitement.

We can only imagine what it took to reach the ship from your homes in this new age of travel. But finally, we were all together onboard, with those challenges behind. Together we total 67 passengers from 16 different countries, along with the 16 Expedition Tseam and our ship’s crew from around the globe. We hope you are as excited as we are about exploring this incredible environment together.



Deception Island

DAY 2 | Monday 7 February 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 62°11.963'S

Longitude: 058°55.331'W

Course: 319.1°

Speed: 0.4 knots

Wind Speed: 20 knots fresh breeze from N

Air Temp: -3°C

Barometer: 1019

A wonderful feeling to be able to cast off and head for our goal at last.

—Roald Amundsen, *The Amundsen Photographs*, edited by Roland Huntford, 1987

It was a busy morning today as we prepared for our first landing in Antarctica. Specialist activity briefings for the kayakers, divers, snorkellers and photographers were somehow fitted in amongst the compulsory IAATO & Zodiac briefings. Between briefings, we found time to swap Aurora jackets and muck boots to achieve the best fit, and the kayakers, divers and snorkellers found time to get fitted with their dry suits and watercraft.

This flurry of activity was completed by lunchtime, in anticipation of our afternoon landing at the famous and historic Deception Island. Around 10,000 years ago, this massive volcano erupted in an enormous explosion that created the giant caldera into which we sailed this afternoon. From the outside, this island appears to be typical of the other large islands of the South Shetlands but when the first explorers entered through Neptune's Bellows, they found the island to be a hollow ring: hence the name Deception Island. They considered calling it Doughnut Island until they realised that doughnuts hadn't been invented yet.

We entered the volcano just after lunch, passing close by the impressive red and brown cliff face of Neptune's Bellows, then turning to starboard to enter Whalers Bay. There, the rusting machinery of the whaling industry and the collapsing buildings of the British base (creatively named 'Base B') reminded us of this island's rich history. Whalers Bay is named for the Norwegian whaling station that operated there from 1906-1931, processing thousands of great whales into the oil that was so much in demand in Europe. By 1931, the local waters had been depleted of whales and the whaling industry concentrated its efforts around South Georgia. In 1928, Australian adventurer Hubert Wilkins flew the first flight over Antarctica from Whalers Bay, using the hanger located at the western end of the bay. Then in 1944, Britain established a series of bases along the Antarctic Peninsula and at Deception Island as part of Operation Tabarin, to prevent Germany from claiming the peninsula. After the war, Base B became a scientific station, and remained so until an eruption in 1969 caused a mud slide (or lahar, for you geologists) which half-buried the whaling station and scientific base, and led to the evacuation of the site.

Deception Island is still an active volcano, as evidenced by the sulphurous odour and the geothermally-heated water seeping from the sand at the water's edge. There was so much to see here, as people spread in all directions to view the historical ruins, marvel at the destructive forces of the volcano, take in the views from some high vantage points or enjoy the antics of the Antarctic fur seals. However, as sometimes happens in Antarctica, the

weather changed dramatically during our visit and we were hit by furious winds that whipped-up the seas and created some wild sandstorms. Returning to the ship became an adventure, as we each experienced our own battle through the sandstorms, into the bucking Zodiacs, across the tumultuous bay and back to our wonderful, warm, dry ship. Thank you to the skilled Zodiac drivers, boat handlers and ship's crew for getting us all home safe and sound: and ready for a new adventure tomorrow!



Melchior Islands

DAY 3 | Tuesday 8 February 2022

Position at 0600			
Latitude: 64°27.886' S	Course: 336.1°	Wind Speed: 25kts Strong breeze from S	Air Temp: 0°C
Longitude: 062°54.105' W	Speed: 8 knots	Barometer: 1007	

Yet I believe firmly there is a tract of land near the Pole, which is the source of all the ice spread over this vast Southern Ocean.

—Captain James Cook, January 1775

It was very Antarctic this morning, misty and overcast, but the location was perfect for a Zodiac cruise around this icy realm. We donned our warm clothes, took 3 steps into the Zodiac and headed out on a mission of exploration around the Melchior Islands.

Fur seals lined the snowy slopes near the Chilean base and Antarctic terns sat high on ice edge as a few chinstrap penguins basked on a rocky outcrop. Glaciers reached down to the water’s edge, and we marveled at the intricate details of a nearby iceberg. Finally, the clouds parted and the sun hit the icy sculpture illuminating the white icy giant against a mountainous backdrop. It was our first real taste of Antarctica and the frozen landscapes we had come to see.

Heading down the Gerlache strait we watched for whales while taking in the sheer magnitude of ice that blankets the continent. Suddenly the captain alerted us to the presence of orca as we slowed the ship to do some impromptu whale watching. These majestic creatures emerged from the depths as a spray from their blow lingered in the rough seas around us. A pod of several killer whales close to the ship, had everyone abuzz with excitement.

Inside the warm comfort of the ship, John K delivered his lecture the “Charismatic Megafauna” of the Antarctic Peninsula, blending perfectly his fantastic knowledge with a great sense of humour which made for a fun, entertaining lecture. Meanwhile Nigel Danson’s photography group enjoyed a very informative session in the lecture theatre, and emerged from the room excited to put their new knowledge into practice.

Our next stop was uncertain as winds howled and seas rose, it was looking very Antarctic outside as we continued the search for a port of refuge. But the high winds and rough seas made for some amazing photo opportunities as a select few braved the elements and stood out on the deck in 45 knot winds to capture the power of the Southern Ocean.

The ever-changing Antarctic environment can inspire. And the one thing we all share is a sense of adventure. I think you will agree that each new day brings a new surprise and allows us to step out of our comfort zones. I look forward to the days to come and the new stories of our Antarctic adventures.



Jougla Point, Lemaire Channel, Petermann, Pleneau Island

DAY 4 | Wednesday 9 February 2022

Position at 0600			
Latitude: 64°51.461'S	Course: 282.9°	Wind Speed: 12 knots, moderate breeze from N	Air Temp: -2°C
Longitude: 063°51.883'W	Speed: 3.5 knots	Barometer: 1010	

I watched the sky a long time, concluding that such beauty was reserved for distant, dangerous places, and nature has good reason for exacting her own special sacrifice from those determined to witness them.

—Admiral Richard E Byrd, Alone, 1938

The sky is blue, the sky is blue!

We woke to a stunning day on the Antarctic Peninsula, blue skies, calm seas and an incredible mountainous landscape. Time before breakfast was spent out on deck to capture the morning light and take in the warm rays we'd be waiting for.

Jougla Point in Port Lockroy, was our first port of call, which lies on the west side of Wiencke Island in the Palmer Archipelago.

Not only were we excited to observe the well-preserved site 'Base A' that is home to the planet's southernmost operational post office but also encounter over 1000 pairs of breeding gentoo penguins crammed onto Jougla Point, as well as around 25 breeding pairs of Antarctic cormorants.

Our wonderful postman Howard kindly took our postcards ashore which will endeavour to be delivered to family and friends around the world in the months ahead.

The blue group were first to land, while the yellow group took two zodiacs for a cruise to capture Snow White and the Seven Dwarves amid the beauty that surrounded her. An Antarctic minke whale joined porpoising penguins as sounds of crackling sea ice kept us intrigued.

Back onboard a delicious lunch was served as we started our way South through the iceberg-filled passage of the Lemaire Channel. Steeps cliffs stretching 11 km long and just 1600 metres wide at its narrowest point was an experience to remember!

With ice shifting and an afternoon landing at Petermann Island becoming possible, it was time to set foot on our most southerly point of the trip and witness three of Antarctica's brush-tailed species of penguins coexist. Kayakers spent time with a bunch of crabeaters seals hanging out to the left of the Argentine station. The divers and snorkellers caught a glimpse of the 90 percent of the iceberg that hides below the surface. The scalloped

patterns of deep blue and pure white are a spectacle that would convert anyone into a polar snorkeller. Those who ventured into the freezing water emerged later with nothing but smiles.

For a day too good to end there, it was decided by David to head out for a Zodiac cruise after dinner at Pleneau Island, known as an iceberg graveyard. Six Zodiacs carrying 41 eager expeditioners relished in the evening light before darkness loomed, prompting the captain to safely navigate us back north in time for our next adventure.



Cuerville Island, Neko Harbour

DAY 5 | Thursday 10 February 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 64°38.611'S

Longitude: 062°48.909'W

Course: 066.9°

Speed: 6 knots

Wind Speed: 5 knots, light air from E

Barometer: 1017

Air Temp: -1°C

The glacier surface was like an ocean in torment. As far as the eye could see, serrate ridges and giant furrows were aligned parallel with the abrupt rock walls of the valley. Between them lay endless fields of crevasses.

—Charles Swithinbank

We woke to the voice of our fearless leader David, revealing the day's plan to us. Rubbing the sleep out of our eyes, stretching our sleepy bones and getting up, some of us discovered that we couldn't see a thing of the outside world. Thick fog surrounded the ship up until 8 am. Some of the early risers used that opportunity to take amazing photographs. As the fog lifted, we were surprised by stunning mountain views all round us. Cuerville Island and the surrounding area came to light, the sky turned blue and the water turquoise. Our two groups headed for breakfast with a view.

All activities: snorkelling, diving and kayaking started to get ready, followed shortly after by the rest of our expeditioners. The paddlers set out towards Cuerville Island, weaving through large and small icebergs and had as always, the best of times. The ship had to anchor a 20 minute paddle away from the island due to the large number of bigger icebergs in the bay. Once we made it to the island, we decided to go around the right-hand side of it and circumnavigate it. Just coming around the first bend we saw a beautiful large wooden yacht at anchor. A first for most of us was to see a Zodiac with a water-skier zipping around between the bergy bits. After our circumnavigation of the island, we had a little time left to visit the huge gentoo penguin colony before our return to the ship.

The snorkellers had a blast as well zipping about in their Zodiac around Cuerville Island. They found a good spot to get their faces wet in beautiful turquoise waters near some small icebergs and took some good photos climbing a small flat ice sheet.

Everyone made it back on board in time for lunch. Just after a short cruise the ship arrived at Neko Harbour, and it was nothing short of unreal. The sun was shining upon us through clear skies and onto hundreds of small bergy bits and full-size icebergs. After setting anchor we all went full steam ahead on zodiac cruises, snorkels, and kayaking. The bay was teeming with humpback whales. Everyone got to enjoy and see them from up close for a good amount of time. The kayakers somehow decided to set a new speed record and paddled at 4.5 kn for 2 km, not the best idea on a sunny day in dry suits, as they tend to turn into sweat suits!

Back on board after this amazing outing, we immediately readied ourselves for the polar plunge. As always, all participants enjoyed it and were rewarded with bragging rights and a needed shot of vodka. The crew prepared a delicious BBQ on the top deck in the sunshine, surrounded by stunning views. Perfect to finish off this delight of a day.



Polar Plunge

DAY 5 | Thursday 10 February 2022



Portal Point, Cierva Cove

DAY 6 | Friday 11 February 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 64°27.700'S

Longitude: 061°052.335'W

Course: 078.9°

Speed: 3.3 knots

Wind Speed: 12 knots, moderate breeze from N

Barometer: 1009

Air Temp: -3°C

This morning dawned to a misty, overcast day as we made our way towards Portal Point. We dropped the zodiacs at 8:40 am and landed at Portal Point with snow falling to add to the atmosphere. There, we were greeted by chinstrap penguins on our arrival, and a couple of fur seals resting on the rocks up on the bluff offering great photo opportunities. A Weddell seal lazed close to the beach on the snow, seemingly unfazed by our presence.

Thankfully the mist and cloud cover cleared for a while and the snow-capped peaks could be seen in the distance, looking majestic against the lightening grey sky. After an hour or so, Zodiac cruises commenced. As our boats wove a path between the icebergs, we found more resting fur seals, and the occasional chinstrap penguin diving through the water. Then came a sighting of humpback whales about 800 metres to the stern of the ship, and what a show they put on, rising together as they fed and tail flukes lifting out of the water, sometimes in tandem together. By this time it was snowing pretty heavily, adding to the magical sight we were seeing.

Back on board, everyone was still buzzing after our morning encounter. It was time to warm up and enjoy a delicious lunch as we made our way onwards to our next adventure.

At 3:00 pm we dropped Zodiacs again and headed to Hydrurga Rocks. Snow falling lightly and an active swell added to the excitement as we made our way into the rocky bay and the chinstrap penguin colonies. Fur seals were in abundance, lying on the rocks and playing in the surf amongst the waves in one of the shallow bays. An elephant seal was relaxing on a rocky beach and further up, Weddell seals chilled on the snow covered plateau. Wilson storm petrels put on acrobatic displays in the air. Everyone took in the sights as they walked around exploring the area.

Pink faced sheath bills paraded around the higher snow areas and skuas swooped sometimes low overhead to land on the rocky outcrops. On the way back to the ship fur seals swam at the sides of the channel and there was the chance to visit a couple of icebergs in the vicinity. The evening was rounded off by a fantastic dinner, and brilliantly informative, fun briefings given by David our Expedition Leader, with an amazing talk given by Dot about Fun Facts of Antarctica. Time for everyone to grab a drink at the bar and enjoy the incredible lighting and views as we sailed south down the Gerlache Strait.



Icebergs

Up to 4 billion tonnes of ice is released from the icecap into the southern ocean every year. white, slab-like 'tabular' icebergs, which form from ice shelves, can be several hundred kilometres long. Bergs from valley glaciers are smaller, denser and contain ice that's flowed under pressure from distant inland sources, having taken many thousands of years to reach the sea. the age of air trapped in bergs when the ice formed can be calculated from the flow rate of the parent glacier. Scientists analyse this air to chronicle changes in atmospheric gases over the millennia.



Paradise Harbour, Gerlache Strait

DAY 7 | Saturday 12 February 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 64°49.473' S

Longitude: 063°00.771' W

Course: 112.7°

Speed: 3.7 knots

Wind Speed: 5 knots breeze, light breeze from E

Barometer: 983

Air Temp: -3°C

Life in not measured by the breaths we take.

But by the moments that take our breath away.

—Author unknown

We woke to find our world soft and grey. Dense fog enveloped our ship as we sailed along in a glassy sea. We could see only meters as David's morning call roused us from our slumber to our next day. His cheerful morning banter assured us that good times were ahead despite having woken to life inside a cloud.

As we sat and enjoyed our breakfast the mist began to clear and we beheld mesmerising glimpses of stunning mountain vistas surrounding us. Our destination today was called Paradise Harbour. It truly lived up to its name, a paradise of staggering white mountains with jagged peaks soaring to a crystal blue sky. It was a sight to behold.

Quickly, and for one final time, we changed into our now familiar expedition clothes. Soon we were skimming across the glassy water towards a rocky shoreline. We landed and clambered up rocks and onto the glistening white snow. Beneath our warm boots, the snow crunched in the morning frost as we made our way from the water's edge.

We had landed near an abandoned Argentinean research station called Brown Base. The orange painted buildings were surrounded by gentoo penguins who had made the station a rookery. Some of us sat by the station and observed these gentle and earnest creatures going about their day, repairing stony nests and warming themselves in the sun. The juvenile penguins looked suitably awkward as they molted, shedding downy feathers that floated in the morning breeze.

The hardy amongst us climbed up and up a well-trodden path in the snow up a small peak. The top was narrow and fell steeply on all sides. Before us, the tranquil waters of Paradise Harbour were set with all manner of exquisite icebergs that seemed like jewels set in a sea of turquoise. Only when our determined and stealth kayaks glided by the bergs did we appreciate the scale that lay at our feet.

Returning to the Zodiacs we embarked on a final cruise amongst the very same icebergs that we had seen from above. Now the bergs towered about us, and we felt small and vulnerable. Stunning glaciers awaited us and Antarctica turned on a very special day for us.

Before we knew it we were returning to the ship for a well earned rest and some lunch. During the afternoon, we

slowly steamed out of Paradise Harbour and back into the Gerlache Strait for a longer ship cruise and some whale watching.

Evening found us embarking on our first taste of the rolling swells of the daunting Drake Passage. Many of us were nervous about this passage, having read and heard many stories about the crossing. As we had dinner and evening fell, the ship began to roll and move as she motored through grey foaming seas. We drifted to sleep to the movement of the ship as she rocked us in our beds.

Yet another day filled with memories of the glistening sights of a sun filled Antarctica.



Drake Passage

DAY 8 | Sunday 13 February 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 61°51.662'S

Longitude: 064°09.895'W

Course: 112.7°

Speed: 12.5 knots

Wind Speed: 3025 knots, strong breeze from WSW

Barometer: 999

Air Temp: -1°C

There is a certain unease tonight. What does the Drake Passage have in store for us? Crossing the roaring forties and screaming fifties by ship from Patagonia can be serene, on wide, slow swells. Or it can be a nightmare, on seas so kinetic that you have to brachiate from handrail to handrail and adapt to knee-buckling extra Gs as the ship rises, and near weightlessness when she falls.

—David G. Campbell

It just seems like yesterday when we landed at King George Island, at a Chilian Frei station where we started our amazing adventure.

The first impressions many had when our plane's wheels touched down on the gravel landing strip was that it was a desolate, unhospitable, isolated and barren place. And, what an area of contrast; volcanic landscape, frequent high winds and a surprisingly bustling multi-national small city and a harbour.

Speaking of contrasts, after our spectacular few days in the Antarctic Peninsula we again find ourselves in an isolated, unhospitable and baren place here in the Drake Passage!

But is it really that barren?

The Drake Passage is considered one of the most treacherous voyages for ships to make. Currents at its latitude meet no resistance from any landmass, and waves top 12 meters (40 feet), hence its reputation as "the most powerful convergence of seas".

No significant land sits at the latitudes of the Drake Passage. That is important to the unimpeded flow eastward of the Antarctic Circumpolar Current, which carries a huge volume of water through the passage and around Antarctica.

The passage hosts whales, dolphins and seabirds including albatross, petrels, shearwaters, prions and fulmars plus heaps more! And cetaceans that have been seen in the Drake are humpback, fin, sei, southern right, sperm and blue whales, hourglass dolphin, southern right whale dolphin and many more.

So, the Drake Passage is extremely rich and a very productive body of water!

In preparation for our crossing lots of conversations took place, consulting the latest meteorological charts and

weather reports to choose the best route and time to make our crossing as close to a 'Drake Lake' as possible.

Helping enjoy our time during the passage, we have been entertained and educated with many talks and workshops, like the citizen science sea birds survey with John and Dot, where we spotted two stunning albatrosses, Antarctic prions and many Wilson storm petrels.

We also learned about the incredible 'Whales' with Isabelle, 'Seabirds of the Drake Passage & Antarctic Peninsula' with John Kirkwood and a mind-blowing technical lecture on 'Photographing the Night Sky' with Alyn Wallace.

Get ready to be rocked to sleep and for our safe arrival in the Beagle Channel!



Drake Passage, Cape Horn

DAY 9 | Monday 14 February 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 56°49.083' S

Longitude: 066°43.183' W

Course: 339.9°

Speed: 13.2 knots

Wind Speed: 25 knots, strong breeze from W

Barometer: 1012

Air Temp: 4°C

We awoke this morning to some more rocking and rolling on the Drake Passage. However, by late morning we approached Cape Horn and conditions started to ease. Cape Horn is the southernmost point of the Americas.

The classic documentary 'Around Cape Horn', from the great age of sail was shown in the Lecture Theatre. Filmed in the days when safety was a matter of self-preservation whilst climbing seventeen stories high to secure sails as the seas raged all around.

As we approached the entrance to the Beagle Channel bird life was in abundance, so John called for our Citizen Scientists to once again gather on the outside decks to record the type and number of birds sighted over two thirty-minute periods, one with the yellow group, the other blue group. Sightings included a wandering albatross, black browed albatross, sooty shearwaters, juvenile Imperial shags and giant petrel. In addition to birds there were sightings of a humpback whale, Antarctic fur seals and a Magellenic penguin.

Several kilometres into the Beagle Channel we took our pilot onboard during very windy conditions. Amazingly the crew on the pilot boat were not secured by lines to the boat, they just held on for dear life! The remainder of the afternoon was spent cruising along the channel, passing Puerto Williams on the Chilean side of the channel and a couple of hours later Ushuaia on the Argentinian side.

Adam Gibbs from our Photographic Group conducted a photo review in the lecture theatre. This was followed by a presentation by Expedition Team member Dot, titled 'Lesser known Pioneers of the Antarctic.' We all know the names Shackleton, Scott and Mawson but what about so many others who were heroes during the early days of Antarctic exploration like, Wild, Crean, Wilson and Bruce. Followed by a presentation from Expedition Team member John Kirkwood, titled 'Oceanography and Ice.' Looking at why Antarctica is the coldest continent on earth, how the currents affect the continent, life under the ice, and ice itself!

A relaxing evening, pre-dinner drinks in the Elephant Bar then onto the restaurant for a delicious dinner.

Crossing the Drake Passage has taken us several degrees north, instead of the 10 pm sunset we have become accustomed to over the past week, darkness was upon us by 9.15 pm. A clear indication our journey is coming to an end.

But not just yet, we have another day cruising through the Chilean Fjords, taking us through to Punta Arenas.



Chilean Fjords

DAY 10 | Tuesday 15 February 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 54°43.618' S

Longitude: 071°21.783'

Course: 270.8°

Speed: 10.8 knots

Wind Speed: 25 knots, strong breeze from NW

Barometer: 1002

Air Temp: 4°C

It's hard to believe it's our last day together on the *Greg Mortimer*! It seems like only yesterday we were flying into Frei Station and getting blown away at Whalers Bay. So much has happened over the past few days, and as we transit through the Chilean Fjords and the Straits of Magellan, we are reminded of just how amazing our trip has been!

Throughout the day, we listen to lectures & briefings, fill our stomachs with delicious meals, share numerous photos and exchange contact information with our new friends. Navigating through the fjords, the dramatic landscapes leave us breathless — snowy peaks, waterfalls, glaciers, and trees line our route towards Punta Arenas. Ample photos are taken on the outer decks as we cruise through clouds of rain and sun creating rainbows that lead us north towards safety... a true rainbow connection.

During our Captain's Farewell, we toast to our amazing guests, crew, and staff. We applaud David's impressive animated plane and ship, marking our voyage through the Antarctic Peninsula. Our polar plungers, kayakers, divers, and SNORKS become honorary members of their prestigious Antarctic societies, and we end the evening with our slideshow. Watching the slideshow, the memories of our time dodging wind storms, soaking up the sun, cruising with orcas & whales, sitting with penguins & seals, sculpted blue icebergs, and the beautiful dramatic landscapes, become vivid in our heads.

Realising just how lucky we are to have shared in this experience, we gather at the bar for one last drink to toast our epic expedition! Safe travels home, friends! We hope we meet again on another adventure!

Here's a little farewell, inspired by rainbows

The Rainbow Connection:

Written by Paul Williams & Kenneth Ascher

Sung by Kermit the Frog

Why are there so many songs about rainbows
And what's on the other side?
Rainbows are visions but only illusions
And rainbows have nothing to hide
So we've been told and some choose to believe it
I know they're wrong wait and see

Someday we'll find it, the rainbow connection
The lovers, the dreamers, and me

All of us under it's spell,
We know that it's probably magic!

Have you been half asleep and have you heard voices?
I've heard them calling my name.
Is this the sweet sound that calls the young sailors?
The voice might be one in the same
I've heard it to many times to ignore it:
It's something that I'm supposed to be

Someday we'll find it, the rainbow connection
The lovers, the dreamers, and me!



Punta Arenas

DAY 11 | Wednesday 16 February 2022

Position at 0600

Latitude: 53°13'S

Longitude: 070°51'W

Course: 012.3°

Speed: 3.9 knots

Wind Speed: 15 knots, moderate breeze from W

Barometer: 1018

Air Temp: 4°C

Disembarkation at 7.30 am.

Aurora Expeditions thanks you for joining us aboard *MV Greg Mortimer* to Antarctica. We hope to see you on the high seas again some day!



Kayaking Log

By Frank Witter

Kayak Masters: Frank Witter

Number of Paddlers: 5 Total Paddle Outings: 8 Total Distance Paddled: 42.9 km

Paddlers:

Daniel Boyle	Bryan Cockrell	James Smith
Diann Boyle	James Riley	

Day 2 pm: Deception Island - Whaler's Bay: Distance 1km

We arrived at our first stop after King George Island. Paddling in the caldera is usually a good way to have our first outing of the trip. The wind was up but still okay to go out and paddle within Whalers Bay. We only made it from the ship to the old boilers on the beach before the wind unexpectedly picked up and we had to go ashore and cancel the paddle. Everyone got ashore and was able to explore the bay before we all had to return to the ship in Zodiacs.

Day 3 am: Melchior Islands & Ship Cruise

The wind looked favourable for a paddle coming into the islands but once we were on anchor it picked up and we had to opt out to do a Zodiac cruise instead. The sun peaked out during our cruise and treated us with some amazing light.

Day 4 am: Port Lockroy / Jougla Point: Distance 4.5km

The Captain anchored right in front of Base A. The sun was shining, the water was flat, and the promise of an amazing paddle was just a kayak launch away. First, we paddled a little down the channel past Jougla Point to check out some icebergs. We made our way back towards to anchorage to visit the penguin colony and the whalebones scattered there. On the way we heard the all too familiar sound of a whale blow. We spotted it right away and paddled towards it. A minke whale, it swam around us, and enjoyed the whale's presence for a few minutes before it took off.

Day 4 pm: Peterman Island: Distance 4.6km

To our surprise we found very little ice in front of the station and were able to go for a paddle. It was cloudy with a little bit of rain and low winds. Moving along the shore and watching the penguins is always a true delight. We kept going south to the nearby smaller rocky islets, weaving in and out between rocks and beautiful icebergs that ran ashore in the shallow waters. We circumnavigated one of the rocky islets and encountered five crabeater seals near our kayaks. We stopped and watched them float, play, dive, and come up right next to us. What amazing creatures. The wind now started to pick up again and we decided to head back to the ship.

Day 5 am: Cuverville Island: Distance 7.2km

We woke up to dense fog outside and weren't sure if we were able to go for a paddle today, but at 8 am all of a sudden the fog lifted and revealed the stunning scenery around Cuverville in all its glory.

The paddlers set out towards Cuverville Island, weaving through large and small icebergs and had as always, had the best of times. The ship had to anchor a 20 minute paddle away from the island due to the large number of bigger icebergs in the bay. Once we made it to the island, we decided to go around the right-hand side of it and circumnavigate it. Coming around the first bend, we saw a beautiful large wooden yacht at anchor. A first for most of us was to see a Zodiac with a water-skier zipping around between the bergy bits. The huge cliffs on the left side of the island are stunning to paddle under. After our circumnavigation of the island, we had a little time left to visit the huge gentoo penguin colony before our return to the ship.

Day 5 pm: Neko Harbour: Distance 6.5km

This amazing day kept on giving. Arriving at Neko Harbour brought excitement to everyone, as this would be our first continental landing. On the way into the anchorage, we spotted numerous humpbacks and weren't disappointed. Just a few hundred meters away from the ship, we saw a sleeping humpback and got a chance to watch it without anyone else around. What magic to watch a whale sleep. Two other humpbacks were a little more active just a kilometre or so away. We decided to go and have a look. We arrived there fairly quickly and enjoyed the show for a good hour or so. After that we wanted to set foot onto the continent. Somehow and for unknown reason, we paddled at a speed of 4.5 kn for two kilometres, setting a new speed record.

Day 6 am: Portal Point: Distance 7.7km

Again on the way to our anchorage, we spotted humpback whales from the ship and anticipated that we would be able to see them from up close in the kayaks. We set out to find them. We searched for a good hour around the ship, and a little further offshore around some larger icebergs, but there was no sign of them in sight. We paddled back towards shore, followed it along Portal Point and kept going past it into a nice, protected lagoon. On our way back to the ship, we heard on the radio that the bridge called they saw two humpbacks of off the port side of the ship. We got our racing gloves on and paddled as fast as we could toward where we spotted them in the distance. Unfortunately, weren't able to keep up with them as they were moving away from us. but we got a few good glimpses of their flukes from a distance.

Day 6 pm: Hydrurga Rocks: Distance 3.6km

Our last paddle for this trip, but undoubtedly a stunning one. Just as before on Cuverville Island, we arrived in fairly dense fog, but were spoiled with unforgettable views once it lifted, just before we set out to paddle. Just as we launched our kayaks and started paddling, we were lucky to witness a huge chunk of ice fall off one of the nearby glaciers, creating a small wave that even reached us, several hundred meters away from where it broke off. We made our way along the shore and past Brown Station. From there, we went across the bay to a smaller penguin colony in a little island below one of the towering mountains surrounding us. We landed and enjoyed some time with the gentoos there. The paddle back to the ship took us through a maze of ice and bergy bits. A fantastic way to end our last paddle.



Snorkel Log

By Liz MacNeil

Snorkel Guide: Liz MacNeil

Number of Snorkels: 7

Total Outings: 6

Snorkellers:

Michael Aw

Chris Gawronski

Paul Harrison

Shona MacDonald

Hayley Peacock-Gower

Colin Salter

Remi Vacher

Day 4 am: Port Lockroy / Jougla Point

What an absolutely beautiful day for our check-out snorkel at Jougla Point! Sunny skies, glassy water, wildlife, and picture-perfect peaks reflecting into the surrounding bays. After some time Zodiac cruising and hanging out with penguins, it was time to finally get into the water. After getting all geared up, we found the crystal-clear water beautiful and perfect conditions for our snorkel. Everyone did great and stayed in the water until the last possible minute!

Day 4 pm: Petermann Island

After traveling down the Lemaire Channel, we arrived at Petermann Island. Not everyone was keen to snorkel, but everyone wanted to join us on the SNORK Zodiac. Zodiac cruising, we followed an elusive humpback who teased us through the ice and led us to a beautiful deep blue iceberg where we had quite the photo shoot. Forgetting about the whale, we went to shore to check out the adelies and gentoos, and then made our way to a nearby bay, where we hoped to snorkel with the gentoos. Chris and Colin did their best to see the gentoo penguins as they jumped in and out of the water, and Colin saw a leopard seal swim under Chris. Smiles all around as they got back on the zodiac... a definite mark in the win column!

Day 5 am: Cuverville Island

As the fog lifted, the sunshine emerged, and it was another beautiful day in the neighborhood. As we loaded up the Zodiac, we were six strong and ready to see what we could find. "This is where I leave you..." Liz said, as she unloaded the SNORKS onto an ice floe... it was so much fun watching everyone play and pose for photos, and Michael won the award for best seal impression. Going ashore, there were many gentoos waiting for us, and as we loaded the Zodiac again, we motored over to a beautiful clear bay full of ice growlers. In the water, we snorkeled around the ice, climbed on top of it and some even jumping off... what a fun and beautiful morning!

Day 5 pm: Neko harbour

The sun was still shining as we motored into Neko Bay Harbor for our first continental landing and humpback

whale experience. Zodiac cruising, we spent time with the humpbacks, watching them feed and taking photos. We also saw some of the most beautiful blue icebergs, so we couldn't help taking our time getting to shore. Once on shore, we were able to check off another continent as some took their time and others met up for a snorkel. As the SNORKS were on the shore, Liz did a little bit of recon in order to find a great snorkel site. What an iceberg! The aquamarine color coming from underneath the water almost looked tropical, but we knew it wasn't. As we got geared up we were able to get up onto the iceberg and have a little fun jumping into the water. The conditions were perfect and with the sun shining on our faces, Chris and Remi decided to try and swim back to the ship (next to the safety Zodiac, of course)... they made it about halfway before time ran out, but had they had the time, they totally would have made it!

Day 6 am: Hydrurga Rocks

Hydrurga rocks was a fascinating landing – we circumnavigated the island, checking out the wildlife and icebergs, before landing at the main landing site. We were greeted by Weddell, fur, and elephant seals, who weren't really bothered by our arrival. Exploring up the island, the chinstrap penguins were still very active in their rookeries, with some moulting chicks crying out for their parents to feed them. After spending some time ashore, we ventured down towards a very calm and sheltered bay where the water was crystal clear and full of limpets, different species of kelp, and fur seals on land. A wonderful end to our day.

Day 7 am: Paradise Harbour

What an amazing way to end our trip with another bluebird day at Paradise Harbour. Zodiac cruising, we were the first ones out taking advantage of our time — shag cliffs, tidewater glaciers, glassy waters, and breathtaking reflections. We were definitely spoiled! During the landing, the SNORKS represented by making it all the way to the top of the mountain for the stunning views and a group shot. In the water, we found some really beautiful brash ice and growlers to snorkel around and climb on. It was a perfect final snorkel. On the way back to the ship, we got a call about a leopard seal on ice, so of course we had to go see it. What a great way to end our week of snorkeling.

Thank you all for making this week amazing and keeping the STOKES level high!



Bird and Mammal Sightings

Bird Species	06 – 16 February 2022										
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Gentoo Penguin	●			●	●		●				
Chinstrap Penguin	●		●			●					
Adelie Penguin				●	●						
Macaroni Penguin											
Magellanic Penguin									●		
Unidentified Penguin (swimming)											
Wandering Albatross								●	●		
Royal Albatross											
Black-browed Albatross	●						●	●	●	●	
Grey-headed Albatross		●							●		
Light-mantled Sooty Albatross								●			
Giant Petrel sp. (Northern or Southern)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
Antarctic Petrel											
Cape Petrel		●									
Snow Petrel											
Antarctic Fulmar (=Southern)		●	●	●							
Blue Petrel											
Grey Petrel											
Prion sp. (probably mostly Antarctic)								●			
White-chinned Petrel											
Sooty Shearwater									●	●	
Great Shearwater											
Wilson's Storm-petrel	●		●	●	●	●	●				
Black-bellied Storm-petrel											
Imperial Cormorant (= South American)									●	●	●
Antarctic Cormorant	●		●	●		●	●				

Bird Species	06 – 16 February 2022										
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
American Sheathbill (Snowy)	●					●	●				
Chilean Skua									●	●	
Brown Skua	●	●		●	●	●	●				
South Polar Skua							●				
Kelp Gull	●		●	●	●		●				●
Dolphin Gull											●
Tern (probably mostly Antarctic)	●		●	●	●	●	●				
South American Tern									●	●	●



Mammal Species	06 – 16 February 2022										
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
South American Sea Lion										●	
South American Fur Seal										●	
Antarctic Fur Seal				●	●	●		●			
Southern Elephant Seal						●					
Crabeater Seal				●							
Weddell Seal		●	●			●	●				
Leopard Seal				●		●	●				
Minke Whale					●						
Sei Whale											
Fin Whale											
Humpback Whale		●	●	●	●	●	●		●		
Southern Right Whale											
Orca			●	●					●		
Long-finned Pilot Whale											
Unidentified Whale									●		
Hourglass Dolphin											
Peale's Dolphin										●	
Dusky Dolphin									●		









Expeditioners:

Michael Aw	Brigit Jager	Michelle Pugh
Diann Boyle	Cathy Jenkins	Graham Roberts
Daniel Boyle	Julian Jenkins	Wendy Russell
Bruce Carnegie-Brown	Corey Johnson	Mike Salter
Jane Carnegie-Brown	Dave Jones	Colin Salter
Bryan Cockrell	Kathy Jones	Linda Scroggins
Peter Danckaerts	Chris Lesslie	Shanhari
Nigel Danson	Rob Lesslie	Sivagnanasundaram
Cuca Diaz	Bill Lindahl	Janet Smith
Roberto Diaz Gonzalez	Kathy Lindahl	James Smith
Chris Escott	Mark Lindquist	Josephine Sullivan
Carl Fredrickson	Meijing Liu	Remi Vacher
Kelly Fredrickson	Raoul-Alexander Lorenz	Helen Vo
Willi Gaier	Shona Macdonald	Alyn Wallace
Steve Gangwisch	Joe Machale	John Wasenko
Peter Gantenbein	Minnie Machale	Clara Witt
Chris Gawronski	Susan Meyer	Pete Wright
Adam Gibbs	Hayley Peacock-Gower	Riley Wyatt
Francine Gingras	Jane Perrins	
Rebecca Goldman	James Popsys	
Patti Goldman	Greg Powell	
Gabor Gyori	Vladimir Preysman	
Paul Harrison	Irene Preysman	
Lucas Horrobin	Erik Pronske	
Bobbi Iles-Wasenko	Maria Pronske	

Expedition Team:

Expedition Leader: David Berg
Assistant Expedition Leader: Isabelle Howells
Expedition Trainer: Howard Whelan
Naturalist: John Kirkwood
Activity Manager: John Weir
Lead Kayaking Guide: Frank Witter
Diving Master: Pete Szyszka
Snorkeling Guide: Liz MacNeil
Photography Guide: Scott Portelli
Expedition Guide/Historian: Dot Robertson
Expedition Medic: Scott Thompson
Onboard Exp Manager/Expedition Guide: Justine Bornholdt
Onboard Expedition Manager: Rosie Leaney
Onboard Expedition Manager Trainee: Anne Oeyasaeter
Zodiac Master: Sergei Hincu
Mudroom/Shopkeeper: Reza Rusooly

Senior Officers & Heads of Department:

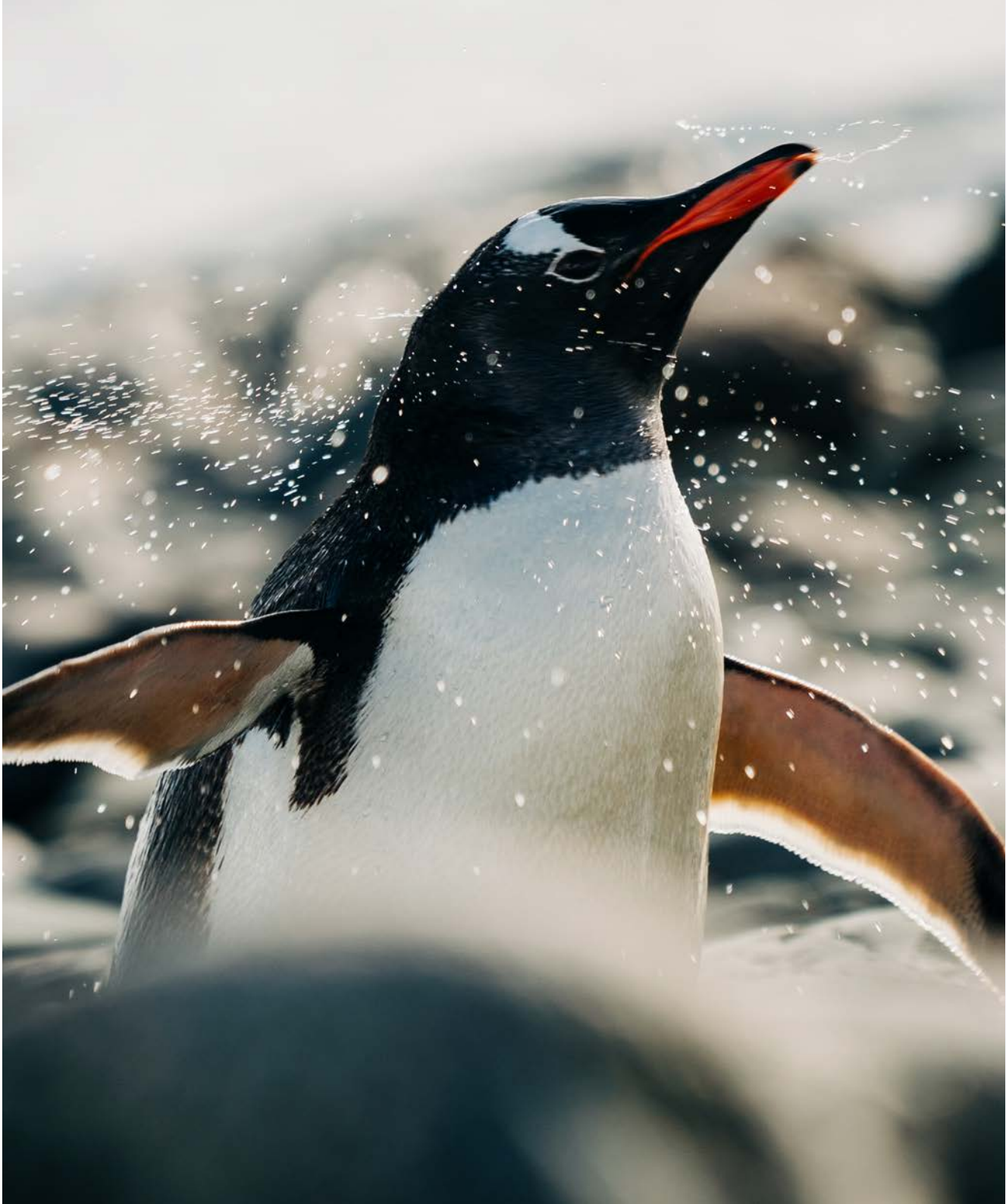
Master: Oleg Klaptenko
Chief Officer: Alexandru Taraoi
Safety Officer: Goran Goles
Second Officer: Sergii Voina
Bosun: Oscar Antonio Castejon Torres
Deck Cadet: Sander Magi
Deck Cadet: David Bote Martin
Ship Doctor : Ivan Savic
Ship Nurse: Susara Hendrika Mostert
Chief Engineer: Sergiy Melnyk
First Engineer: Warlito B. Verzosa
Hotel Director: Franz Wusits
F&B Manager: Miguel Cabanillas Alvarez
Chief Purser: Liza M erillo
Executive Chef: Pierpaolo Fadda
Sous Chef: Nellan Lewars
Head Waiter: Narendra Seeram
Hotel Controller: Rohmat Nurhidayat
IT Officer : Ihor Yesmienieiev
Receptionist: Kateryna Tauzhnianska
Receptionist: Marie Annecy Reynoird
Head Stateroom: Elieser Nunez Almendarez
Spa Manager: Alena Antonova
Able Seaman: Khenette Verzosa
Able Seaman: Petko Vladimirov Petkov
Able Seaman: Yevgen Kotuz
Able Seaman: Maksym Khlivniuk
Able Seaman: Joel Valdevieso Noble
Able Seaman: Giovanni Dela Torre

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Shanhari Sivagnanasundaran

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Nigel Danson	Susan Meyer	Scott Thompson
Steve Gangwisch	Jane Perrins	
Chris Gawronski	James Popsys	
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