
Return to Antarctica! – BOOK NOW

The Waterhouse Club's Expedition to the Antarctic Peninsula: In the Footsteps of Rymill and Wilkins, 19 February to 3 March 2019

Following the success of our Orion expedition to Antarctica in 2012, this is your formal invitation and booking form for the Club's expedition to the Antarctic Peninsula in 2019.

We have already received expressions of interest from 87 members and friends for the 92 berths available. We thank you for this extraordinary response, and you have been allocated berths.

The Club has been given exclusive access by One Ocean Expeditions to book this voyage, and to receive an early bird discount, for a limited time.

We now need you to confirm your booking and to forward your non-refundable deposit to the Club office by Wednesday 19 July 2017.

Overview

This is a unique and special opportunity to explore an area of the Antarctic Peninsula below the Antarctic Circle explored by two South Australians - John Rymill who led the British Graham Land Expedition (BGLE) between 1934 and 1937, and Hubert Wilkins who pioneered Antarctic aviation in the region in 1928. It is an area rarely visited by others.

Rymill and Wilkins were both born in regional South Australia, and both played key roles in the latter part of the Heroic Era of Antarctic exploration. However both are relatively unknown, possibly because their expeditions were largely successful and did not involve stories of extraordinary survival.

Hubert Wilkins pioneered flights at both poles. Having been to Antarctica with Shackleton in 1921 and made the first fixed-wing flight across the North Pole in 1928, Wilkins led two expeditions to Antarctica with aircraft in the summers of 1928/29 and 1929/30. The earlier expedition was to the Antarctic Peninsula and were the first flights conducted in Antarctica. From a base on Deception Island, Wilkins made exploratory flights to the south over Graham Land which he thought was an archipelago.

The BGLE led by John Rymill was arguably the last expedition of the Heroic Era, and one of the last to be privately sponsored. Rymill and his party used the three-masted sailing ship *Penola*, as well as a single-engine de Havilland Fox Moth aircraft for exploration. Ashore they used both dog teams and motor sledges. The expedition was very successful, carrying out air survey photography and mapping of 1600 km of the Graham Land coast and determining that it was a peninsula, not an island as Wilkins had thought. Rymill named Penola Strait, and other features also carry names associated with South Australia.

We will visit Deception Island and other sites before pushing south to Marguerite Bay below the Antarctic Circle where the BGLE had bases. Very few ships travel this far south each season.

More information on the BGLE can be found at:
<http://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/museum/exhibitions/bgile/>

Our Expedition Ship

Our ship will be the *Akademik Sergey Vavilov*, operated by One Ocean Expeditions, operating out of Vancouver in Canada. The ship was purpose built for research in polar regions. She is spacious and modern, has excellent stabilisation, an important consideration in the Southern Ocean, and is designed to be extremely quiet. The ship is fully air-conditioned and we can expect to be comfortable at all times. More information on the ship can be found in the accompanying factsheet.

What else do we do?

On the way south we will visit numerous locations and view stunning landscapes and very special wildlife including penguins, seals and whales.

Subject to weather, we hope to leave the ship every day by Zodiac for shore visits to view wildlife, historical sites and operating bases, as well as to cruise among sea ice.

Each day before dinner, with the bar open, we will learn what has been seen that day and enjoy stimulating discourse with our Museum scientists and One Ocean's expedition team.

How Do We Get There?

The expedition commences in Punta Arenas in the far south of Chile, and we will need to assemble there the day before (18/2/19). It finishes in Ushuaia in the far south of Argentina. Expeditioners will need to make their own travel and accommodation arrangements to and from these ports. The direct route is from Melbourne or Sydney to Santiago in Chile and onwards to Punta Arenas. Return is from Ushuaia in Argentina through Buenos Aires to Santiago and back to Melbourne or Sydney. As a guide, the cost including direct, economy class airfares should be approximately \$3,000.

It will not be possible to book air travel until early in 2018, 12 months prior to departure. In due course One Ocean will recommend an agent in Adelaide with experience in travel to and accommodation in these destinations to assist expeditioners with their bookings. Expeditioners are not obliged to use this agent and may make their own arrangements, although some group price advantage may be available.

The Weather and Sea Conditions

The February timing has been chosen for a reason. At the end of summer, the sea ice has had more time to melt and dissipate before reforming in the autumn and winter. This means that we have the best chance of being able to reach our goal destination below the Antarctic Circle.

Outside air temperatures are expected to be around zero at that time, but you will be kept comfortable. All expeditioners will have the use of polar clothing and other equipment supplied by One Ocean.

Sea conditions along the peninsula can be expected to be calm as much of our sailing will be in protected waters. Also, as we fly from Punta Arenas to King George Island to meet the ship initially, we will cross Drake Passage by sea only once - on our return to Ushuaia.

Our Scientists

We will be accompanied by Peter Rymill (son of John Rymill), and Mark Pharaoh, Senior Collections Manager of the Australian Polar Collection at the Mawson Centre of the SA Museum. Peter and Mark will explain and develop for us the history of the BGLE and Hubert Wilkins' expeditions as we proceed down the peninsula.

Among One Ocean's staff on board we also expect to have Peter Shaughnessy, Honorary Research Associate at the SA Museum who is a specialist on seals and sea lions with vast experience in Antarctica involving many visits during his distinguished career.

In addition, One Ocean's regular team of expedition leader and on-board specialists will provide expert commentary on the extraordinary topography, environment and wildlife.

Outline of Our Itinerary

A fuller description of the voyage itinerary is included in the accompanying trip notes from One Ocean: "Antarctica Deep South 2018/19".

One Ocean's web site also gives an excellent overview of the locations and activities we can anticipate. To complete your understanding of the offering, please refer to <https://www.oneoceanexpeditions.com/voyages/antarctica-deep-south>. A night camping on the ice and sea kayaking will be available (*at extra cost*) for those more intrepid souls. Information about how to book for these options will be available later in 2018.

Voyage Fares

One Ocean's fares for the 2018-19 season have just been released. They are slightly higher than the 2017-18 prices previously provided as guidance, but that is primarily because an extra day has been added to the itinerary. We will now spend 12 nights aboard rather than 11. The additional day provides us with more time to explore the extreme southern region, and also provides some contingency if required due to weather or ice conditions.

One Ocean is offering a \$1,000 early bird discount to the list prices, which brings prices back almost in line with 2017-18 figures. This discount is only available during July 2017.

The total fares for our voyage are set out in the table attached, as well as cabin type and berth allocation, share arrangements and the A\$ non-refundable deposit required for each person or group.

Cabin types were allocated in order of receipt of expressions of interest. Most expeditioners have been allocated their preferred cabin type, but where that has not been possible we have made contact directly to explain and confirm the allocation.

One Ocean operates in US\$. However, the Club will collect deposits in A\$ at its bank's exchange rate on July 11th, and will arrange the transfer to One Ocean in US\$ thereby removing the need for members to handle foreign exchange.

A 20% non-refundable deposit in A\$ is required with your booking to be received in the Club office by 19th July 2017.

The Waterhouse Club, and therefore the Museum, benefits from the expedition via the commercial arrangement with One Ocean. One Ocean is being very supportive of the expedition for which the Club is extremely grateful.

Terms and Conditions

The deposit will be transferred to One Ocean to secure your berth and will be non-refundable unless an alternative expeditioner takes up the vacancy (refer to One Ocean's Terms and Conditions on their Passenger Booking Form and Passenger Ticket Contract).

Please note that One Ocean requires you to sign the Passenger Booking Form and the Passenger Ticket Contract and this Contract is between you and One Ocean. The Waterhouse Club is acting only as a facilitator of this expedition and not in the capacity of an agent for One Ocean.

Your outstanding balance of the US\$ fares will be payable to the Club in A\$ by 1 October 2018. The A\$ balance will be recalculated from the US\$ balance at the exchange rate prevailing at that time, and may differ from the A\$ balance figure estimate shown in the accompanying table.

If there is significant movement in exchange rate between collecting funds and forwarding to One Ocean involving a loss to the Club, the Club reserves the right to invoice expeditioners for the difference.

Travel Insurance Requirements

You are required to arrange your own travel insurance. One Ocean's Terms and Conditions in their Booking form and Passenger Ticket contract require you to have travel insurance cover for Antarctica including medical evacuation as stated. Additionally, you need to assure yourself that such cover is available to you before paying your non-refundable deposit.

NEXT STEPS – YOU NEED TO ACT NOW!

As you have previously registered your interest in this expedition please proceed as follows:

If you have decided not to proceed please let us know immediately by return email.

Otherwise, please complete the following three documents and return with your non-refundable deposit to the Club office by no later than Wednesday 19 July 2017.

1. The One Ocean Passenger Booking Form – attached.

2. The One Ocean Passenger Ticket Contract – attached.

You will see that the above forms can be completed and “signed” electronically. Once completed, save it with your name such as “OOE Passenger Booking Form Joe Bloggs” if you intend to return it by email.

3. The Waterhouse Club Payment Form – attached

Determine your A\$ deposit figure for the cabin type you have been allocated by reference to the attached table.

Complete the Payment Form and return with the One Ocean forms (see 1 and 2 above) to ensure receipt in the Club office by 19 July. Options for payment of non-refundable deposits are set out on the payment form.

Any berths not secured by non-refundable deposits by close of business on 19 July 2017 will be offered to new applicants.

The Club will confirm receipt of your deposit and your cabin type allocation.

You will receive further communications and information from One Ocean in due course.

If you would like to talk to me about any aspect of this Expedition please call me on 0417 664 754, or email me on mmuzz2@bigpond.com. Alternatively, if I am not available, please contact Antony Simpson on 0407 715 562 or email asimpson537@gmail.com, or Margie Heylen on 0419 818 166 or email margheylen@adam.com.au.

I look forward to you joining me for this once in a lifetime opportunity.

Mark Mussared
Expedition Leader