

SGNZ2018
PELAGIC AUSTRALIS SOUTH GEORGIA EXPEDITION OCTOBER 2018

Pelagic Australis Team:

Edd Hewett	Captain & EL
Charlotte Bainbridge	First Mate
Simon Van Dam	Crew

Shackleton Traverse Team:

Gary Kuehn	Expedition Leader
Llewellyn Murdoch	Mountaineering Leader
Dan Phillips	Mountaineering Leader
Bruno Geldermans	Team Leader
Nevan Jefferies	Team Leader
Hamish Laird	Team Member
Lizzie Craddock	Team Member – logistics coordinator
Allison Swintz	Team Member

The following is a report of the movements of the SGNZ2018 Pelagic Australis South Georgia Expedition at South Georgia.

This report does not repeat lists or procedures used which are outlined in the Expedition Application edited and submitted by Skip Novak: Pelagic Australis Expedition Application - V10. Our activities on South Georgia had no major changes to this submitted application.

As per our application, our travel was “on snow to reduce impact and assist efficiency” (I estimate over 90% on snow). We completed a variant of the Shackleton Crossing and traveled “the South Georgia coast from *Pelagic* enjoying the natural environment on day trips from our comfortable yacht base”. We chose, instead of overnight expeditions, opportunistic day ski trips in style “similar to those done by the Jim Blyth group in 2014”.

This report is not a scientific document and does not describe flora and fauna seen on the expedition.

Notes:

- We received exemplary positive support from the Pelagic Crew which created a great team environment for accomplishing our objectives and managing risks.
- The staff at Grytviken and KEP were welcoming, helpful and encouraging while ensuring we were up to standards to protect the environment. This coupled with our expeditions members previous experience in South Georgia/Antarctica as well as New Zealand/Tasmania made adhering to the standards an easy requirement.

- The weather was very favorable and in conjunction with being allowed to land prior to checking in at KEP assisted our expeditions success particularly with our variant of Shackleton's Crossing.
- Shore parties always had 2 forms of communications with Pelagic: VHF and Iridium satphone or InReach. Since Pelagic's Iridium system could only accept calls, not texts, we left Hamish's Iridium on board so the crew could receive our InReach texts.
- Edd provided an onboard checklist we used prior to group departure to understand route, comms and any anticipated changes. Groups pre-planned splits in groups regarding gear and leadership and always had plans "B" and "C" for weather, routes, pick-ups, etc. Our team created a second "shore barrel" which was used with multiple drop locations, or alternatively groups carried enough with them for contingencies.

Chronological Log

The following is a chronological log which if one wanted more weather, sea state or *Pelagic* details, it could be viewed in conjunction with the Log of the *Pelagic Australis*. (Date [yyymmdd], Wx = weather, M= Members condition, N= Location of night/sleep)

181024

Sailing eta to NE side of SG still Thursday

Saw first ice. Large tabular berg ~2.5 nm at 8 am.

Got Wx from Megs, Lucy and gibs all in agreement. Email received from Skip to Edd that included suggestions for us.

Wx: BRK, SW 10-20, S-1 for 20 min, 1003

M: all but Dan up for ice. All ok albeit tired from S ocean yacht travel. All will perc up with land, good food, drink, exercise.

N: Pelagic at sea

181025

Sailing and prep for departure from Possession/Assistance bay. 30 knots with gust to 50 so at 1400 aborted plan and going to Prince Olaf Bay for a day trip. Again, it was too windy to land. Excellent Charlie salad dinner, Bruno desert, whiskey and board games.

Wx: S-1, BRK, S-SW 25-50 in Possession Bay.

M: AS on antibiotics for query strep throat

N: Pelagic anchored in Prince Olaf Harbour

181026

Up at 3:30. Very windy so a delay start. Group looking at maps and thinking of ideas. Group discussion for day. Changed time +2hrs. Plans developed = A: Brighton beach for Shack traverse start; B: Prion island, Salisbury Plain wildlife and ski.

Dan, Bruno and I switched the plan to B due to temps, group size and # people to look after with little time/margins for error.

Beautiful day as winds eased and South Georgia magic of wildlife and mountains were revealed. At Salisbury Llew, Dan, Nev and Gary skied while others remained on the beach with wildlife.

Wx: -8C, 1005 RS, 30kts, grips showing easing over next 2 days and swinging S to NW

M: all good AS still on antibiotic course to finish. DP re-flare tooth - 2nd course antibiotics?

N: anchored Prince Olaf

181027 (note: from 27th times are Kiwi SG time zone +2 hours from Stanley time which "centered" our 16 hours of daylight)

Left anchorage @ 0600. Depart Possession Bay / Assistance Bay 0830 west side ascending

"Shackleton Gap" and traversed E to the Murray Snowfield to the N of pt. 331 and James Nunatak. From the last 3 days of strong S/SW snow transport, we observed many natural, <20 cm, wind slab avalanches to size 2 below ridges and on steep faces lee S. Lunch break before Razorback in the lee of pt. 751 of the Trident.

Razorback entered between spot heights 661 & 666. It was skied in sticky snow by 5 members. Bruno and Nev managed pulks. Dan roped on foot with Lizzie & Hamish. In retrospect crevasse hazard would have been less, snow quality and stability better and an easier fall line for the pulks had we traveled N of 661.

After a break at the bottom we continued to 415m SW of Caird Nunatak where at 1800 we set up camp and enjoyed the calm evening to cook and eat an outside dinner.

Wx: Moderate SW winds eased by noon and clouds diminished (BRK tended SKT).

M: All good. Lizzie sore RT ribs from fall on plateau. TR Voltarin effective in current management.

N: tents

181028

0530 up and 0830 departed to Fortuna Bay. Had a lunch break before break wind ridge.

Champagne celebration on the beach with the crew from Pelagic, seals, terns, kings and ducks.

On board and motored to an anchorage good for NW at Huskvick Harbour. Crossing team cooked soufflé roast veg coleslaw and lemon pie dinner.

Wx: calm then from mid-day light W winds shifted to NW and picked up to moderate while Mid and high-level clouds moved in from the W.

M: good, pleased, tired

N: Pelagic @ Huskvick Harbour in Stromness Bay

181029

0700 up and 0800 departure for Fortuna Bay to do the last leg of Shackleton's Traverse.

1130 departed with a short walk from the beach to snow. Had a lovely warm skin up and corn ski down with walk down the flats to meet Pelagic at Stromness. Departed 1430 for Grytvicken. Arrived and docked at 1800. Visited Shackleton's grave.
Wx: @ 0800: light NW, no overnight rain, +4 C, 1015, SKT. The day remained warm, calm with SKT sky and sea fog.
M: All good, happy and tired. Most napped a bit on the way to Grytviken
N: Pelagic @ Grytvicken

181030

Relaxed start. 1000 Steve check in with SG government. Then museum-post office, lunch, and ideas for further exploration from photos and records at Grytvicken. 1600 BAS KEP visit.

Wx: 1009 FS, BRK to OVC, NW(S- easing), still no rain but looking threatening

M: All good; Lizzie sure her RT rib(s) broken, and Hamish heard them break (fall on 181027). KEP Dr. to be asked if possible and alternative is continued "light duties" with TR Voltarin and strapping.

N: Pelagic @ Grytvicken

181031

Relaxed start. Raining lightly. Departed Grytvicken with full fresh water and team clean and essential laundry done. Motored to head of Nordenskold Gl. in Cumberland Bay East to investigate access for Mount Paget and other ski objectives. Motored to Neumayer Gl. area of Cumberland Bay West investigating access to Three Brothers, Konig Gl., Busen and Lewis Peninsula Region. Glacial retreat at least 2 nm past yacht's charts and 1 nm past downloaded satellite images on Gaia.

Dan & Llew to do a climb on Bothers with 1 tent overnight while rest of group will be in a couple of shore and/or ski parties. A second overnight barrel/duffel has been created.

Wx: Light steady rain in AM with NW (M-S) OVC; rain eased and sky progressed BRK to SKT with cloud/fog remaining on peaks as winds shifted S1/4. While in Cumberland W wind pulses from the S off the plateau would vary from 0-5kt to 40-50kt. While finding suitable anchorage winds variable W/ some E & NE (L).

M: All good; Lizzie ribs still sore but in general better after a good previous night sleep.

N: Pelagic @ S side Jason Harbour in Cumberland West

181101

Boat motor on at 0500. Llew & Dan dropped at 0700 for access to Brothers. Climb was out of condition (wet avalanches at 0900) so they skied a bowl and got picked up at 1600. Ski group (Gary, Bruno, Nev, Ali, Hamish) organized and was dropped at the S front of Konig Gl. @ 1000. Admiralty Peak Ski of NE shoulder and Gary, Ali and Nev continued onto E Cornwall Pk. Pelagic had busy day with Neumayer Gl. front calving viewing in between drop offs and pickups @ S Konig (Bruno and Hamish), Copestake Peak point (Llew & Dan), N Konig (Gary, Nev, Ali). Depart Cumberland W Bay at 0500 for Godthul Bay arrived 1800 and iceberg in anchorage so moved to Cobbler Cove. Anchored 1830.

Wx: 1010 RS, CLR, Frost on boat, inversion with OBS sea fog while motoring into Cumberland W Bay. Sea fog to 80m asl and burned off by 1045. Light easterly developed, and thin high cloud encroached from W. Radiation was high with solar slopes wet, shady slopes remained frozen.

M: All good. Exercise today was a relief for most from overeating!

N: All on Pelagic @ Cobbler Cove.

181102

0545 rising for 0645 Bruno & Lizzie shore walk. Llew, Nev & Gary ski over 440 col and up a sub peak W of Black Peak (807) to get a view of Paget access. Great corn skiing on descent to Reindeer Valley and rough surf and fur seal pick up at the far W side of Godthul Bay. Hamish & Ali skied to the same 440 col and returned to Cobbler.

Pelagic departed 1300 for Drygalski Fjord.

Wx: 1015 S, Sea fog to 250m in am and 8/8 cirrus, no precipitation

M: All good.

N: All on Pelagic @ Larson Harbour.

181103 Saturday

Larson Harbour zodiac cruise to see Weddell Seals, terns feeding in the kelp areas, rock shag, elephant and fur seals, skua and snow petrel (Lizzie & Gary w/ Ed; Bruno and Nev w/ Simon; Hamish, Llew, Dan w/ Ed & Charly). 1100 Cruise in Drygalski until 1245 then head towards Doubtful Bay and get gribbs for weather to plan next few days (next 3 look good, through Monday). Doubtful has moraine which in most places is too shallow for Yacht to cross. Simon, Lizzie, Hamish and Gary had a precursory look with some soundings. At 1800 we departed and checked out Green Harbour, past Smaaland Cove. Green Harbour was too deep to anchor. Totally amazing setting! Continuing around Cape Disappointment. Note: We would like to check out Rogged Bay (where Gerome will no longer anchor) and Smaaland Cove. Topo map lack of data and lack of good sat images adds uncertainty. Anchored at 1830 at Trollhul at base of Graae Gl.

Wx: 1008 S, OVC mid and high levels, wind est. E(L-M) as Larson is awesome shelter. Wind increased slightly midafternoon from E/SE and sea fog reduced visibility.

M: All good.

N: All on Pelagic @ Trollhul

181104 Sunday

At Trollhul at base of Graae Gl.

Zodiac cruises with Llew, Ali and Gary and a second with Hamish, Lizzie, Nev & Bruno. All back onboard 1030. A rest and games day until another Zodiac wildlife viewing & photography 1800 by Simon, Lizzie, Hamish, Llew, Ali, Dan.

Wx: 1008 S, BRK cleared to SKT about the peaks and sea fog off the coast. Forecast 15 SE but NE katabatic 20-30 prevail locally decreased late afternoon/early evening.

M: All good.

N: All on Pelagic @ Trollhul

181105 Monday

Departed Trollhul 0615 to check out Rogged Bay (where Gerome will no longer anchor). Simon, Hamish, Lizzie & Gary did a zodiac cruise with some soundings (2.4 m the shallowest at estimate close to high tide with current outflow). Of particular interest was the number of young male elephant and fur seals in the bay. We continued on to Smaaland Cove for a beautiful setting for breakfast. We subsequently cruised back around the East and up the North side - swell prevented good anchor spots prior to Ocean Harbour. Shore excursion before dinner for Ed, Gary, Hamish, Llew, Ali, Lizzie and Nev.

Wx: 1004 FS, OVC sea fog only?, NE (L), frost o/n due to clear sky, mild temps today.

M: All good.

N: All on Pelagic @ Ocean Harbour

181106 Tuesday

Up at 0700 light rain. 0900 Simon took Gary, Llew and Nev to shore for a ski on S aspect of one of the 807m peaks. Above 200m asl precipitation was snow. Pick up and back on board 1200. Sit down lunch with Lizzie addressing group. Games and photo logging afternoon. Simon, Nev, Hamish and Bruno went to shore on the southern side 1500-1900.

Wx: 996 FS, OVC some sea fog and high-level cloud, light precipitation with snow above 200m asl, Variable (L).

M: Lizzie ribs re-aggravated possibly from rowing yesterday. Others all good when boat is not at sea.

N: All on Pelagic @ Ocean Harbour

181107 Wednesday

0500 engines on and motor to St Andrews Bay and anchor off Jacks Point. 0700 most up and Simon with Lizzie, Nev and Hamish to shore. All others to shore and Nev & Gary for quick ski up Mount Hunt. Gary then went up towards the other ski group and was distracted by great skiing on the way at mid Fusilier Mountain. Llew, Dan, Ali, Bruno and Hamish head up to N side Heaney glacier and to col west of Fusilier Mountain. On the ski down Bruno and Hamish continue to the Beach and the others (Llew, Ali, Dan) head up the same drainage/peak with Gary for a high lap. Simon joined Nev for Mount Hunt and east ski exploration. Everyone enjoyed plenty of animal beach at St. Andrews Bay through the day including Edd and Charley. All on board and motor on at 1700 to transit to Grytvicken. Arrival 2130.

Wx: 998 S, SKT although CLR overhead (could over plateau with W/NW (M), coastal mtns and anchorage light & variable), fine

M: all had great day

N: All on Pelagic @ Grytvicken

181108 Thursday

Slow start today some up at 0700 others by 0830. 0815 Cruise ship entered into Harbour. Museum, post office visit and ski/gear wash. Our first inclement outside day. Llew, Dan, Ali and Nev walked to Helicopter. Bruno had a walk later and traded for cream for desert. Our exit and remaining island visits/skiing was reviewed.

Wx: 998 S @ 0700 then FR to 980 by 1200 and 970 S at 1900. Am high OVC some mid-level cloud that lowered by 1000. High winds overnight in morning only occasional gusts calm at sea level from 1000 until 1900 when gusts resumed. No precip overnight. Light rain from 1000 turned moderate and became snow at sea level at 1200 then turned back to rain.

M: Lizzie ribs moving when on & off Pelagic, Sarah at Grytvicken visitor center told *Le Lyrial* cruise ship EL that we may need some medical help. 1100 Lizzie went onboard for Dr. consult and possible xray. 1300 Lizzie returned with hamper of fruit and veg. She had 4 xrays by their emergency doctor who could not determine if the ribs were broken near the sternum but said "no air or blood" and recommended she not get a cough or cold.

N: All on Pelagic @ Grytvicken

181109 Friday

Most up at 0530 for a local ski before motor sailing. Nev, Gary, Llew, Ali, Dan ski around Thatcher Peninsula. Clockwise by Gull Lake and from the south through a col between Petrel and Hodges Peak (Ali and Dan returned to Grytvicken) others continued up Peak 534 and then Mount Duse (12.3 km 990m). Began motor sail at 1145 and arrived Rosita at 1900.

Wx: 970 S until late afternoon RR to 980 @1900. BRK am to mostly OVC by 1000. Some snow squalls above 100m. WSW (L-S, gusty) and while sailing WSW 20-40kt.

M: all good although during sail Bruno, Dan, Ali sea sick (decreasing severity)

N: All on Pelagic @ Rosita Harbour, N of Ram Head, Bay of Isles.

181110 Saturday

Most up at 0530 for a look (Ali, Gary, Nev, Hamish) on conditions for a ski. Up anchor 0600 and began motor sailing. Games and tidy up including packing zodiac (no landing today) for crossing to Stanley.

Wx: 0600 982 RS to 986 @ 1900; 20-40kt reduced @1900., S-1, OBS to BRK intermit.;

M: Lizzie, migraine no sleep and vomit last night; recovered for dinner. Others good and up by anchor in Elsehul.

N: All on Pelagic @ Elsehul (far W South Georgia main island)

181111 Sunday

Engines on 0530. Anchor up and departing for Stanley at 0600.

181116 Friday

Arrival at Stanly dock 0040 tied up to *Ocean Tramp*.