

A Voyage to Antarctica

Daily Log

January 8th – 17th 2003

Akademik Ioffe

This specially designed scientific research vessel was built in Finland in 1989 for the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of Oceanology. The ship was named after Akademik Abraham Ioffe, a nuclear physicist with the Russian Academy of Sciences, who went on to head a research institute in St Petersburg. The Akademik Ioffe was specifically designed and built to transmit and receive long distance submarine acoustics, and is capable of "silent ship" operation to assist acoustic research. The Akademik Ioffe often performs research in tandem with an identical sister ship, the Akademik Sergey Vavilov. The Akademik Ioffe is now owned and run by the P.P. Shirshov Institute of Oceanology, which is the primary oceanographic research institution in Russia.

Port of Registry: *Kaliningrad, Russia*
Built: *1989 in Rauma, Finland*
Length (LOA): *117.04 m*
Breadth: *18.28 m*
Draft: *6.09 m*
Gross Registered Tonnage: *6,450*
Engines: *5,000 kW diesel, twin engine, twin propeller, and 600 kW bow and stern thrusters*
Ice Class: *KM*L1 (1) A2, Canadian Type B*

Akademik Ioffe Crew List

| Name | Rank |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Leonid Sazanov | <i>Captain</i> |
| Sergey Gafykin | <i>Chief Mate</i> |
| Andrey Dmitriev | <i>Second Mate</i> |
| Aleksey Orekhov | <i>Third Mate & Navigator</i> |
| Gennadiy Yelisseyev | <i>Chief Engineer</i> |
| Alexander Shmatov | <i>Passenger Mate</i> |
| Anatoliy Popov | <i>Boatswain</i> |

Peregrine Staff Onboard the Akademik Ioffe

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| David McGonigal | <i>Expedition Leader</i> |
| David Willmott | <i>Assistant Expedition Leader</i> |
| Sarah McClelland | <i>Program Co-ordinator / Assistant Hotel Manager</i> |
| Aaron Lawton | <i>Kayak Guide</i> |
| Cathy Lawton | <i>Hotel Manager</i> |
| Carolina Mantella | <i>Bartender</i> |
| Kirk Powers | <i>Chef</i> |
| Katie Weeks | <i>Chef</i> |
| Jack Sayer | <i>Antarctic Specialist</i> |
| Jacques Sirois | <i>Antarctic Specialist</i> |
| Sean Stephen | <i>Antarctic Specialist</i> |
| Ray McMahon | <i>Antarctic Specialist</i> |
| Adrian Trus | <i>Zodiac Driver</i> |
| T Paul Reid | <i>General Assistant</i> |
| Andrew Mulcahy | <i>Expedition Physician</i> |

January 08, 2003

USHUAIA

54°48'S 68°19'W

Ushuaia once again proved itself a city of differing weather, many of us experienced a warm balmy day interspersed with the odd cold snap and warm wear was donned and changed at regular intervals. After travelling from different parts of the globe we assembled quayside and boarded the Akademik Ioffe shortly before 4 pm. Cabins were quickly assigned and many of us took the opportunity to familiarise ourselves with ship lay out and life. Cabins not rooms, decks not floors and port and starboard. A buffet and briefings followed, expeditioners, hotel and presentation staff were introduced and we soon got to know the lifeboat drill.

Around six pm lines were cast and the ship spun on a dime and we set sail for Antarctica. Krill swarms were spotted by the eagle-eyed and the presence of large numbers of shags and other seabirds gave a good indication of the rich feeding grounds here. A short and well-conducted muster drill was carried out and dinner followed. As things started to settle to a more ship borne style we were brought back to reality by a few words on Drake preparation. Our pilot would leave the ship in the early morning and we would make our turn south for the Southern Ocean.



In the mean time we took some time out on deck to watch for Black browed albatross and the sighting of Dusky dolphins for a fleeting moment rewarded some.

January 09, 2003

Day/date/time: 09/01/03 at 0600
Lat/long: 56°15'S 65°24'W
Sunrise/sunset: 0452/2216
Location: At sea, sailing towards Antarctica
Barometer: 992 hPa
Wind speed/direction: 14 metres per second @ 267°
Air temp: 5.5°C
Sea temp: 7.7°C
Russian Word of the Day – Pree-v-yet - Hello

***“For sheer downright misery, give me a hurricane, not too warm, the yard of a sailing ship, a wet sail and a bout of sea sickness”
Apsley Cherry Garrard***

The pilot departed the ship late evening last night and many of saw him step gingerly from ship to tender as we cruised on at 13 knots. The morning heralded stronger winds and an open sea with a reasonable roll, it was probably this reasonable roll that kept some in bed longer than others. Perhaps it was the slumbering effects or just plain motion sickness. Despite it, the turnout grew stronger and many raised their heads for the morning activities. Staff and trip familiarization, and Ray talking about some of his exploits in Antarctica took up some of the morning, but an unscheduled whale sighting really made the day. Luckily the presence of some large baleen whales was enough to convince the bridge crew to investigate and we were rewarded with some Sei whale and Fin whale sightings. Their speed through water was noted as the Fins departed but the Seis seemed less skittish. Bird life was fleeting at times but Pintadoes were the most persistent and consistent. Wandering and Royal Albatrosses also graced us with their presence.



Lunch was well attended, hunger driven in some cases! After lunch, Sean showed us some slides and explained about the different types of whales that we hope to see (and already had!), and Jacques talked about the seabirds of the southern ocean. The wind dropped during the day, and we lost some of the big birds, but there was still a lot of wildlife around the ship, including more marine mammals.

Many attended the wine tasting in the library or joined Caro in the bar for happy hour before dinner, and after dinner, Ralph and Jon treated us to a presentation on digital image manipulation.

January 10, 2003

Day/date/time: 10/01/03 at 0600
Lat/long: 60°35'S 61°25'W
Sunrise/sunset: 0406/2222
Location: Approaching Antarctica
Barometer: 986 hPa
Wind speed/direction: 13 metres per second @ 72°
Air temp: 0.1°C
Sea temp: 3.2°C
Russian Word of the Day – Dob-raye ootra – Good Morning

“I now belong to a higher cult of mortals, for I have seen the Albatross”
Robert Cushman Murphy

After a calm night, we woke to a cloudy day with smooth seas and little wind. Almost everybody seemed to make it to breakfast, or at least down for a cup of tea or coffee in the lounge. The morning presentations were David talking about photography and Lynn discussing penguin lifestyles and habits, but the second session was more than happily interrupted by Sean, who found a pod of lounging orquals. The Captain came up to the bridge to watch the show, and the officer and helmsman did a great job of staying close to the whales, without disturbing them, for at least 20 minutes.

After lunch, land was spotted at about 2pm, but it was a small speck on the horizon. By the end of the talks, land and several icebergs were clearly in view, and a few stragglers on the bridge were treated to an extremely rare sighting of a pair of Cuvier’s Beaked whales and, later in the afternoon, a few humpbacks moving slowly towards Antarctica.

In the late afternoon, we attended the mandatory IAATO and zodiac briefings between watching icebergs, islands and wildlife while we made our way further south to the Antarctic continent itself. There were plenty of chinstrap penguins, fur seals and pintadoes accompanying us through the calm water.



Antarctic Fur Seal

January 11, 2003

Day/date/time: 11/01/03 at 0600
Lat/long: 64°33'S 62°32'W
Sunrise/sunset: 0412/2230
Location: Cuverville Island
Barometer: 989 hPa
Wind speed/direction: 1 metres per second @ 333°
Air temp: -0.4°C
Sea temp: 2.3°C
Russian Word of the Day – Dob-raye dyen – Good Afternoon

“An Antarctic Expedition is the worst way to have the best time of your life.”

Apsley Cherry Garrard

The excitement of arriving in Antarctica meant that many of us were awake very early in the morning and those people were rewarded with glowing light on the snow and channels. By breakfast and our normal wakeup time, the clouds had come down to meet the tops of the mountains, and a glassy calm sea, disturbed only by porpoising penguins, surrounded us. Shortly before breakfast we entered the Errera Channel and on our starboard bow lay Cuverville Island, the destination for the morning landing. The island, a 252 metre tall lichen and moss covered rocky hill on one side, is home to about 5,000 pairs of gentoo penguins plus gulls, terns, sheathbills and skuas. Great zodiac and kayaking conditions gave us an easy baptism in Antarctica. A rocky shore and split penguin colonies allowed us to explore the areas with ease. Quite a few people were feeling the need for some exercise after two days at sea and followed Sean to the summit, while others just enjoyed the penguins in their colony, watching them come and go.

The day was bright, but clouds and fog were coming down the mountains around us, making the photography stunning and moody. After exploring the land, most went for a zodiac cruise, and were enjoying the icebergs when Dutch found a very friendly Minke whale that performed for everybody for over an hour.

A junior in its class, it was happy to swim amongst the zodiacs and kayaks. It spy hopped regularly and its rolling

and acrobatics gave everyone the chance to view all parts of a baleen whale up close. By 12:20 it was time to head back to the ship and enjoy our back deck BBQ. No one had told the Minke whale and he played amongst the zodiacs as they were hoisted back on to deck. Wow!



We cruised down the Errera towards Andvord Bay and two Humpback whales seemed oblivious to our presence. Dutch then livened up proceedings with the camping brief. The blue barrel awaited as did Neko Harbour at the head of Andvord Bay.

By 3:30 we were in a position to take to shore again and make our true continental landing. At Neko Harbour was a small Argentine refugio surrounded by a gentoo penguin colony perched on rocky outcrops below a rounded glacier. The whole place was surrounded by glorious scenery, with mountains and huge jagged glaciers all around, some of which treated us to spectacular calvings, with huge chunks dropping into the bay. It was starting to snow by the time we got ashore, but that didn't stop many from climbing up to the glacier behind the penguins with Sean and Aaron.



Most people got a good look at penguins swimming, either at the landing beach, or down at the bathing beach, where large numbers of penguins were constantly coming and going. Cloud slowly came down off the glacier, creating some neat lighting effects on the mountains and icebergs around us. Most went cruising, and found seals in amongst the ice, which began moving very quickly as the wind came up. Back on board, we joined Carolina for drinks before dinner, then afterwards, we had a champagne toast to the 7th continent and Antarctica in all its colours. Many seemed quite relieved to learn that camping had been called off for the night, due to very strong winds. After checking out a possible second camp site, which also proved to be too windy, the officers repositioned the ship to overnight in the shelter of the Neumeyer Channel.

January 12, 2003

Day/date/time: 12/01/03 at 0600
Lat/long: 64°52'S 63°39'W
Sunrise/sunset: 0320/2220
Location: Paradise Harbour
Barometer: 968 hPa
Wind speed/direction: 24 metres per second @ 76°
Air temp: 0.4°C
Sea temp: 1.2°C
Russian Word of the Day – Dob-raye vyech-yeer – Good night

"The first view of Antarctica is always an iceberg. It may be a monolith hovering on the horizon, a barely discernable spectre looming out of the mist, or perhaps a sun-spangled, dazzling icon marking the gateway to this new world. It will undoubtedly be icebergs that leave the most lasting impressions on the imagination of visitors.."

Mark Jones- Wild Ice

Even in the shelter of the Neumeyer Channel, the winds came up overnight, and most of us slept through hurricane-force winds. When we woke we were relieved not to have chosen the camping option; without doubt it would have involved an abandoned campsite and little sleep. The wind was gusting up to 50 Knots as we left the area of the Neumeyer Channel and it was clear the Lemaire Channel would not be a good location to dodge fast moving ice bergs, and after some hasty planning we headed to Paradise Bay and the slightly calmer waters of the nearby area. The whole area was spectacular; mountains and glaciers, islands and icebergs everywhere. Minke whales entertained us on the way and soon the Argentine Station Admiralante Brown was in sight. This small station, built deep in the back of Paradise Bay, had not been used for several years, and is now occupied by a small colony of gentoo penguins, who live around, and in some cases under, the buildings.

Other vessels in the same predicament had studied their charts and on occasion we crossed paths. By late morning we were ashore and enjoying a short walk and exhilarating slide down the hill behind the station. Everyone then took to the zodiacs for a short tour of the glacier face and shag colonies and a lone leopard seal, before we avoided the worst of the rain and boarded the ship in time for the Mexican buffet. As we enjoyed a warming meal we relocated to the Errera Channel and our second proposed landing of the day, Danco Island. Even before zodiacs were lowered, Humpback whales were spotted and this focused everybody's efforts to get on the water. The zodiacs



quickly came in to their own as we all had the opportunity to observe these graceful marine mammals up close. The whales also drew us towards a second great sight; a large tabular berg releasing a waterfall of melt water. The blue hues made the bursting dam even clearer but we kept our distance. The whales had little interest in our activities and so we watched them move towards the Gerlache Strait.

After the great show, we turned our attention back to our landing at Danco Island, a low island with more gentoo penguins and a small British hut. Those who came ashore were rewarded with Weddel seals on land and the chance to observe the comings and goings of the resident gentoos. On the return, some of us witnessed

a flock of Wilsons storm petrels dancing on the water and then it was back to ship and more sheltered waters.

Camping was planned. After dinner, doubts were cast aside and stable weather allowed a shore trip back to Admiralante Brown and a campsite was established by Dutch, our camp boss, overlooking Paradise Bay. Frantic excavations and pitching of tents and bivouac bags (waterproof swags to the Australians) followed and by 10:30 we had the semblance of a camp including our bright blue short drop, view included at no extra cost.

January 13, 2003

Day/date/time: 13/01/03 at 0600
Lat/long: 64°52'S 62°53'W
Sunrise/sunset: 0417/2220
Location: Paradise Harbour
Barometer: 977 hPa
Wind speed/direction: 8 metres per second @ 304°
Air temp: 2.3°C
Sea temp: 2.7°C
Russian Word of the Day – Dob-raye vyech-yeer – Good night

"A journey is a person itself; no two are alike. And all plans, safeguards, policies and coercion are fruitless. We find after years of struggle that we do not take a trip; a trip takes us."

John Steinbeck

After some persistent drizzle in the early hours some decided the lure of the ship was a better option and soon the camp was packed and the taxi rank was operating to full capacity. Aaron and Sean the smiling and enthused drivers well for 3 am they were enthused!

Cathy's rosy cheeks greeted us as we came back to the ship, and many took the opportunity for a hot shower or power nap before breakfast. By 7:30 it was clear conditions were going to allow us a chance to navigate the Lemaire Channel. Shortly before nine we started down and fortunately ice conditions allowed a clear run, with some dodging of big bergs. An up to date ice report courtesy of the Royal Navy heralded good news for the afternoon too. Once again zodiacs and kayaks hit the water and landings started at Peterman Island. This low domed island, just south of the Lemaire Channel, had an Argentine hut in the small bay interestingly named Port Circumcision by the Charcot expedition, who also erected the cairn on the top of the hill in 1909. We used two landing sites within the bay as brash ice threatened to cut one off, but by the end of the landing the ice had moved again, and both were useable. The landing area was the location of the southern most colony of gentoos, but it was the Adelies, further up the hill,

and the Blue eyed shag colony, that really grabbed our attention. Around 1,000 breeding pairs of Adelies were spread out on the higher reaches of the island and quite a few Antarctic shag nests were clustered around the cliff edge, and all of us enjoyed the opportunity to observe the different behaviour of the Adelies; including their tobogganing techniques both up and down hill. Port Circumcision was also the site of T Paul and Ges' wedding, officiated by the Captain, and witnessed by several hundred gentoos in black tie.



Whilst we enjoyed our pasta buffet the ship relocated south towards the Argentine Islands and Vernadsky Station, our afternoon stop. This Ukranian station used to be the former British station of Faraday, sold for one pound in 1994. The base still carries out upper atmosphere studies and was instrumental in discovering the ozone hole.

By 2:30 we were on our way to Vernadsky, some of us to the main station and some of us to Wordie House and a tour round the tranquil channels around the station. Brash ice, sea ice and icebergs filled some of the channels where we found Crabeater and Weddell seals resting on the floes (is that all they do?) and even observed Chinstrap penguins in the distance. The paddlers were also rewarded for their efforts with a great close up view of a leopard seal.

Wordie House, the first British base, is now laid out as an informal museum to that era, holding many original supplies from when the base was built as part of Operation



Tabarin in the 1940's. After exploring the buildings, many took a quick stroll up the glacier behind the buildings for a great view back to the main base and all around the Argentine Islands. The base personnel were very welcoming and keen to show us their home, which includes the "best bar" in Antarctica. Vernadsky vodka was tasted by some and after a tour of the gift shop we hopped in zodiacs again and our two groups changed over between Vernadsky and Wordie House.

By 6:00 pm, we were all aboard and heading for the Lemaire Channel again, our next destination was further north, Deception Island in the South Shetland group. Before we entered the Lemaire we sighted Endurance, the British Ice Patrol vessel heading south through the Lemaire, and we gave way to them before we proceeded north. The Gerlache was reasonably calm and flat for us, and we made good time northwards overnight.

January 14, 2003

Day/date/time: 14/01/03 at 0600
Lat/long: 63°25'S 60°54'W
Sunrise/sunset: 0412/2208
Location: Bransfield Strait
Barometer: 979 hPa
Wind speed/direction: 7 metres per second @ 77°
Air temp: 0°C
Sea temp: 2°C
Russian Word of the Day – Kag-dee-la – How are you?

“To dine with a glacier on a sunny day is a glorious thing and makes feasts of meat and wine ridiculous. The glacier eats hills and drinks sunbeams..”

John Muir

Shortly before breakfast we were positioned outside Neptunes Bellows and the entrance to the caldera of Deception Island. At 08:30 we started the sail through and hugged the right side of the entrance to avoid Ravn rock. Humpbacks were also around the entrance, Whalers bay inside was calm and the steam rose up from the beach, today would be a good bathing day. After a short briefing and trip to shore we dispersed to various parts of the site. The BAS and whaling buildings were dilapidated and reflected their hard and unromantic use. This area would once have been a wash with whale blubber and oil and the bay filled with rotting scrots, the remains of the flensed carcasses. Many took the opportunity to stretch their legs and enjoy a wander up the hill with Lynn and Dutch, others climbed to Neptune’s Window or roamed the building and aircraft hanger.

The sighting of several humpbacks and glorious views of Livingston Island after lunch brought many out on deck or to the bridge, later a lone humpback breached several times in the distance and we then turned in towards Half Moon island. At this stage the lee of Livingston was lost slightly and it got a bit rougher, but, as planned, Half Moon was beautifully sheltered and it was an easy ride to shore after managing the swell at the gangway. Half Moon Island was a small, crescent-shaped island, with Camara Station, an Argentine base, about half way, and most of the wildlife packed into one side of the island. There was a small wooden boat on the beach, and the rocky outcrops were startlingly sharp and covered in bright orange lichens.

Once we had landed at Half Moon Island, the view of Livingston Island was spectacular, with the huge glaciers and snow-covered mountains glowing in the sunshine. The cloud that had been around in the morning lifted, and we were treated to a beautiful afternoon, with the clouds drifting off the surrounding peaks. We were surrounded by chinstraps from the moment we landed, and these noisy little penguins were everywhere on the island – up the cliffs, in the mud, on the

beaches. There were also a few gentoos, plus one lone Adelie visiting this chinstrap colony. Some people took advantage of the last chance to get some exercise by climbing the hill near the station with Cathy and Dutch, and later in the afternoon Jacques took a small group out for a serious leg-stretch to the far side of the island. Meanwhile, Sean, Lynn, Jack and most of the other staff members stayed near the landing beach, hanging around with the bulk of the penguins. We all enjoyed our last landing, spreading out to get some time alone with the wildlife, and to photograph the amazing scenery of the surrounding glaciers, orange lichens and jagged rocks, as well as the penguins and flying birds around us.



Chinstrap Penguin

We were all sad to go up the gangway for the last time, but happy to join Carolina in the bar for a drink before dinner, which turned out to be a fairly loud event. It was a good night, and most of us were tired, but we found the energy to stay up and watch Around Cape Horn, the video of the old sailing bark rounding the horn, narrated by the main character in a very laconic style long after the event.

January 15, 2003

Day/date/time: 15/01/03 at 0600
Lat/long: 60°54'S 61°34'W
Sunrise/sunset: 0417/2210
Location: Drake Passage
Barometer: 988 hPa
Wind speed/direction: 8 metres per second @ 287°
Air temp: 1°C
Sea temp: 2.6°C
Russian Word of the Day – Spak-oy-n-iy noch-yee – Have a good watch

“Glittering white, shining blue, raven black, in the light of the sun the land looks like a fairy-tale. Pinnacle, peak after peak, crevassed, wild as any land on our globe, it lies, unseen and untrodden..”

Roald Amundsen

Some reported high seas overnight, while others slept through without noticing. By breakfast, it was quite calm, and it remained so, sunny with a bit of high overcast, most of the day. The winds were low enough that there were not many big birds around the ship, but most were happy that it was a good trade-off for a smooth crossing. In the morning, we resumed our presentations, and Jack told us a bit about Politics on Ice, while Ray continued his 1963 dog sledding trip, with some images and even some exhibits from the time.

After lunch, a Tourism forum was managed by Jack, Sean and Di, then after afternoon tea brought us the treat of some Hourglass dolphins. In the late afternoon, Ralph was kind enough to tell us a bit about how he came to be in Antarctica and the international media in general, reminding us of the 'real world', which we were just about to return to. Drinks before dinner flowed on into drinks after dinner, and there was a good turn out to watch Aaron's slide night about what Peregrine does in the Arctic. Many seemed to return to the bar after that, and Carolina had guests until after 4:00.

January 16, 2003

Day/date/time: 16/01/03 at 0600
Lat/long: 57°15'S 65°57'W
Sunrise/sunset: 0358/2205
Location: Drake Passage
Barometer: 996 hPa
Wind speed/direction: 8 metres per second @ 210°
Air temp: 3.4°C
Sea temp: 7.3°C
Russian Word of the Day – Das-vee dan-ya – Farewell

"Men wanted for hazardous journey, small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful. Honour and recognition in case of success..."

-Sir Ernest Shackleton's advertisement for crew of Antarctic Expedition

It was a bit of a slow-starting day, but Great White got us going with his "Who Am I" show. While the weather was still sunny and the seas were still calm, the winds had picked up a bit, and we had a few more Wandering and Royal albatrosses around the ship. We had been making good time, and we had Cape Horn as a vague smudge in our view by 10:30. In the morning, the students got a rude surprise in an unscheduled early morning class with Ralph in the forward end of the dining room, while the rest of us shared a question and answer session on adaptation to the southern ocean and Antarctica with Sean, Jacques and Lynn, and settled up accounts with Cathy and Sarah in the bar.



Before lunch, most of us were out and about watching the approach of Cape Horn, then after lunch, as it got closer, more and more of us came out on deck and up to the bridge to sight this famously dangerous part of the world, where we were briefly joined by some dolphins.

Rounding The Horn was a special treat, watching the birds soar and the waves crashing on the islands of South America. As we sailed west to east we all had a good look at the monument to the sailors who lost their lives and then the isolated Chilean base on the tip of the continent.

After lunch, we had ship's tours, getting to see the engine room and learn a bit about the loffe, as well as the voyage recap, going over where we had been and what we had seen in our all too short time down south. The Captain's dinner was a great evening, we all relaxed and enjoyed our last night on board, chatting and sharing a few drinks, plus getting a few more photos. It got properly dark for the first time since we left Ushuaia as we entered the Beagle Channel, and later we anchored and waited to pick up our pilot surrounded by smooth mountains covered with vegetation.

January 17, 2003

USHUAIA

54°48'S 68°19'W

Our last night on board was a calm one, and we sailed up the Beagle Channel, again back in the world of cars, buses, hotels and airports. The ship docked back at port, and we had an unfortunately early breakfast, and all slowly went our separate ways, sad to be parting, but also looking forward to the new adventures ahead.

Log Ends



Antarctic Tern