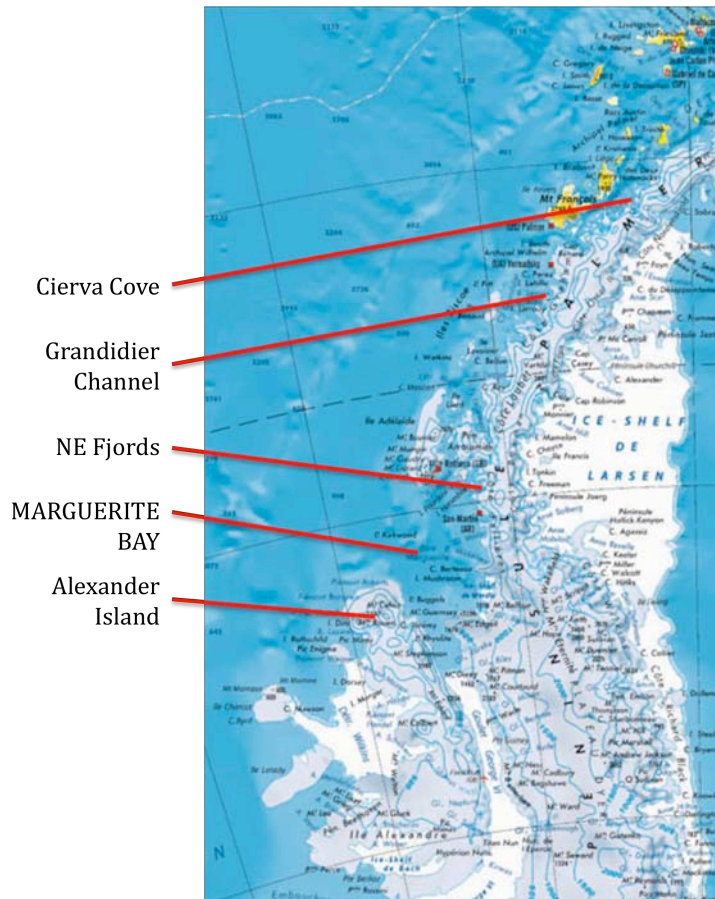


EAGLE SKI CLUB ANTARCTICA EXPEDITION 2012

Expedition Overview

This is a yacht-based mountaineering expedition to Marguerite Bay, which lies south of the Antarctic Circle on the Antarctic Peninsula. Being so far south, this is an area that few yachts have reached, and, other than Research Stations personnel, few people have skied and climbed here.

Based on board the yacht '*Spirit of Sydney*', the aim is to land at several places around Marguerite Bay and in the inner fjord system around Pourquoi Pas Island, from where various tours and summits may be attempted. The mountains range from 500m to 1800m in height (straight out of the sea), giving a complete range of objectives of all lengths and difficulty. Although they are not high in altitude, the heavily glaciated nature of these mountains make them a fantastic venue for ski tours. The aim is to do several multi-day tours from the yacht, plus day-tours when the opportunity arises, with the aim of reaching easier summits (up to alpine AD).



Marguerite Bay is usually free of ice at this time of the year. If the amount of ice is unusually large and we are unable to access Marguerite Bay we shall attempt to reach the nearest accessible location to the north (north end of the Grandidier Channel; Cierva Cove). If the amount of ice in southern Marguerite Bay is unusually low we may attempt to reach Alexander Island. More detailed information on each area is given below. From ice-charts and satellite images we will know before we set sail from Argentina which area will be accessible.

Dates

28 December – 1 February 2012 on the yacht. I suggest that people arrive at least 1 day earlier and depart on or after February 3. For those that arrive early, there are some lovely Scottish-sized peaks above Ushuaia, with several small glaciers, and the opportunity for some ski touring.

Number of Days

35 on the yacht. This gives sufficient time to reach Marguerite Bay, and flexibility to grab weather windows and deal with changing sea ice conditions.

Number of Places

6 (Plus Darrel, Phil, Cath)

Cost

£9000 (ex-Ushuaia)

n.b. If, for whatever reason, we are unable to sail, charter costs will be refunded in full.

Budget Includes

- Yacht travel from Ushuaia to the Antarctic Peninsula (and back!).
- Life-jacket and tether.
- All yacht-based food and drink (including wine and beer). Basic food items can be taken from the yacht for shore-trips (e.g. pasta and rice), but we'll need to bring some specialist food, such as freeze-dried meals, from the UK.
- Port fees.
- Permits.
- Use of sea kayaks and sea kayaking clothing (great if the weather is too poor to climb!).
- Accommodation in Ushuaia - I will rent a cabin in Ushuaia for members to stay in and sort kit etc. for 2 days at the start and a day at the end.

Budget does not include

- Personal travel and climbing insurance
- Travel to/from Ushuaia
- Food in Ushuaia
- Yacht clothing

Flights

Several airlines, such as British Airways and Air France, fly to Buenos Aires. From here fly to Ushuaia with Aerolineas Argentinas.

Deposit Required

£500

About the Organiser

Phil Wickens has extensive experience of travelling, skiing and climbing in Antarctica. He spent 2 winters and 3 summers working from the British Base, Rothera, on Adelaide Island. He was also leader of the 2010 Alpine Club Antarctic Expedition, which summited 8 mountains (5 of them first ascents), and the 2005 British Antarctic Expedition, which climbed and skied peaks on Anvers and Wiencke Island from the yacht *Gambo*. He has also spent the past 4 years, and 31 voyages, working as an Antarctic guide and lecturer on small expedition ships.

Marguerite Bay: Northeastern Fjord

The fjords at the north-east end of Marguerite Bay provide a relatively sheltered venue where we hope to find good yacht anchorages. The fjords give good access to glaciers on the Antarctic Peninsula, Pourquoi Pas Island, as well as numerous smaller islands. The mountains here have excellent ski touring potential, being more gentle, and easier and safer to access, than the mountains north of the Antarctic Circle.

Map of NE Marguerite Bay, showing Mt Rendu (top) and Dogs Leg Fjord (lower).



Of particular interest are the peaks at the head of Dogs Leg Fjord, and around Mt Rendu (unclimbed) on the Arrowsmith Peninsula. It is hoped that the latter can be approached from the vicinity of the Jones Ice Shelf (which has collapsed).

Western end of the Arrowsmith Peninsula (from W)



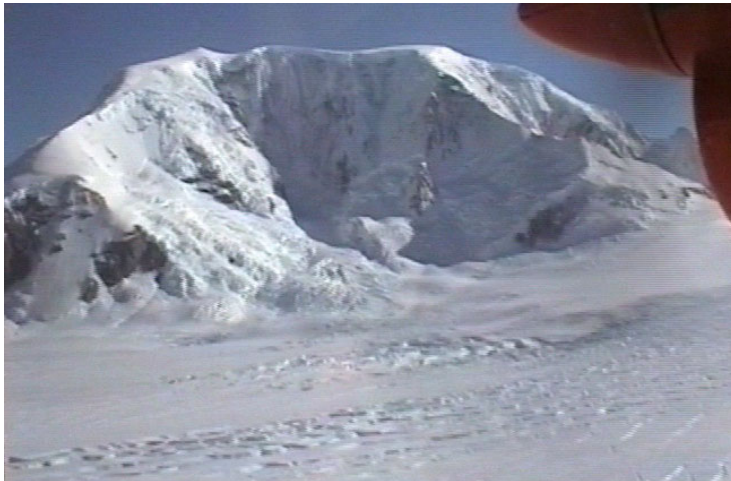
Northern Arrowsmith Peninsula (from W)



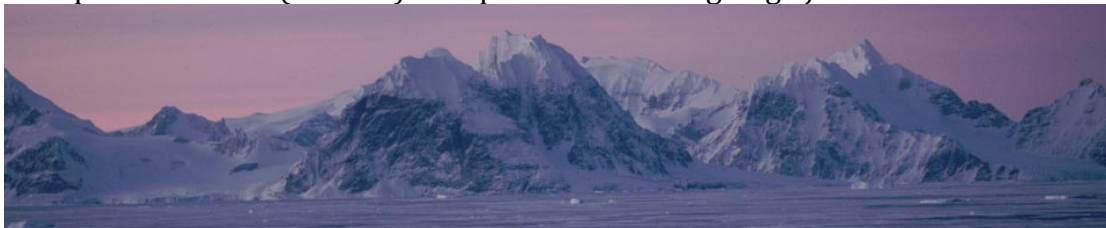
Southern Arrowsmith Peninsula (from W), including Mt Rendu (highest peak, right of centre)



Mt Rendu SE Face



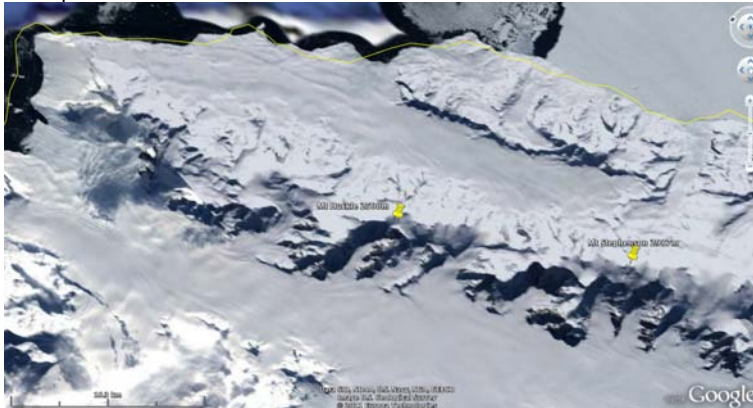
Pourquoi Pas Island (from W). The peaks behind Dog-Leg Fjord are behind.



Southern Marguerite Bay

No private expedition has visited this area. It is commonly inaccessible due to heavy ice, but in recent years access would have been possible. If there is very little ice we shall attempt to reach the northern end of Alexander Island and the area surrounding the entrance to King George VI Sound.

Mt Stephenson and Mt Huckle on Alexander Island.



The highest peak on Adelaide Island, Mt Stephenson (2987m), has not been attempted, and should be accessible from a small rocky point to the north-east of Mt Huckle (also unclimbed). There are numerous other peaks in the area that should be possible on ski, with potential landing sites on the north coast.

The eastern entrance to King George VI Sound is guarded by Mt Edgell (1675m). Access to this and the surrounding attractive peaks should be possible from rocky landings on coast to the immediate north.

Mt Edgell



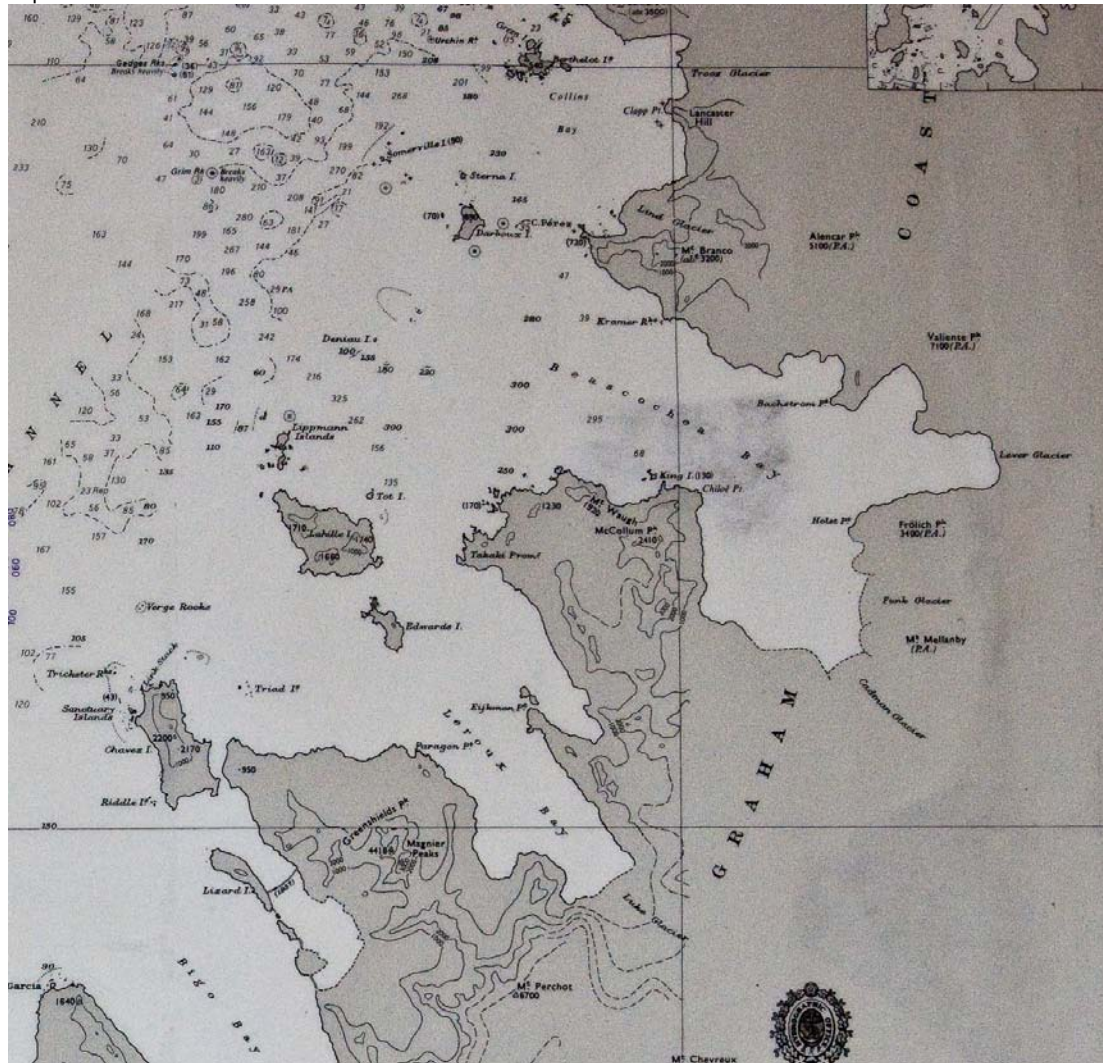
Mountains close to Mt Edgell



BACKUP PLAN A: Northern Grandidier Channel

If heavy ice prevents access to Marguerite Bay we shall focus on the unclimbed and unvisited mountains on the Antarctic Peninsula at the northern end of the Grandidier Channel. Mountains here include Mt Rio Branco, Valiente Peak and Mt Rouge.

Map of the northern end of the Grandidier Channel



Mt Rouge and the surrounding Mountains, viewed from the north.



About the Sailing



'Spirit of Sydney' is a 9-berth 60ft aluminium hulled yacht that was built for the 1986 BOC Challenge Race. She has been used for Antarctic sailing for 16 years and is skippered by Darrel Day and Cath Hew. It usually takes 3-4 days to cross the Drake Passage, and a further 2-3 days to reach Marguerite Bay. All expedition members will be expected to perform watch duties, assist with sailing, cooking and cleaning. Prior

sailing experience is not necessary as all necessary training will be given on board, though members should expect rough seas and cold weather. Spirit of Sydney is a member of IAATO (the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators).

Accident Plan:

In the event of an accident in which we are unable to address the situation using Spirit of Sydney we shall request assistance from other IAATO member vessels (there will be several ships in the area). The Chilean and Argentine navies also provide search and rescue co-ordination and some support, and emergency aircraft evacuation can be arranged from King George Island (South Shetland Islands). This, however, is very costly and weather-dependent, and in most cases yacht or ship evacuation is the preferred means of evacuation.

Permits

Darrel Day will arrange all necessary permits to visit Antarctica via the Australian Antarctic Division.

Further Information about the Yacht:

www.spiritofsydney.net

Expedition Organiser

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