



RCC PILOTAGE FOUNDATION

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SOUTH SHETLAND ISLANDS

PETE HILL

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AND THE ANTARCTIC PENINSULA

NOËL MARSHALL

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The RCC Pilotage Foundation is grateful to Pete Hill and Noël Marshall for describing their experiences during cruises to these waters. These separate accounts overlap in the Shetland Islands. This can best be seen in the Contents page of this interactive publication.

Caution

These notes have been prepared by the authors on the basis of the information they were able to obtain in the course of their individual visits to the areas described. In particular, soundings shown reflect the route taken by the author and the absence of soundings does not indicate that depths are necessarily safe. The notes are in no way comprehensive and refer only to the conditions encountered at the time of the visits. Any plans are simply sketches and do not represent the results of a survey of the places referred to. They should be used with extreme caution. The RCC Pilotage Foundation and the authors have published these notes in the hope that they may be of some help to mariners but the safety of a vessel depends ultimately on the judgment of the skipper who should assess all information, published or unpublished.

To the extent permitted by law, the RCC Pilotage Foundation and the authors do not accept liability for any loss and/or damage howsoever caused that may arise from reliance on information contained in these pages.

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Yachtsmen heading for the Antarctic Peninsula will first reach the South Shetland Islands after crossing the Drake Passage. Skippers should note the advice and cautions in the two Introductions and only attempt the voyage in a well found vessel and with a strong crew. They must be totally self contained and physically and mentally strong enough to cope with the harsh environment and fast changing conditions of these isolated waters.

South Shetland Islands



Neptune's Bellows, Deception Island, looking north

Introduction

The South Shetland Islands form the south side of the Drake Passage and lie 480 miles south east of Cape Horn. They are separated from the Antarctic peninsula by the Bransfield Strait. The group extends for 270 miles in an ENE/WSW direction from Clarence and Elephant islands in the east to Low and Smith islands in the west. They are mainly volcanic in origin and lie at the west end of the Scotia Ridge. The north side of the islands have many islets, rocks and reefs extending off them, but the south side is generally clear. The islands lie along the main track of the depressions and the winds are equally westerly and easterly, depending which side the depression passes.

In an average year the islands are largely ice free from late December until late March, but ice

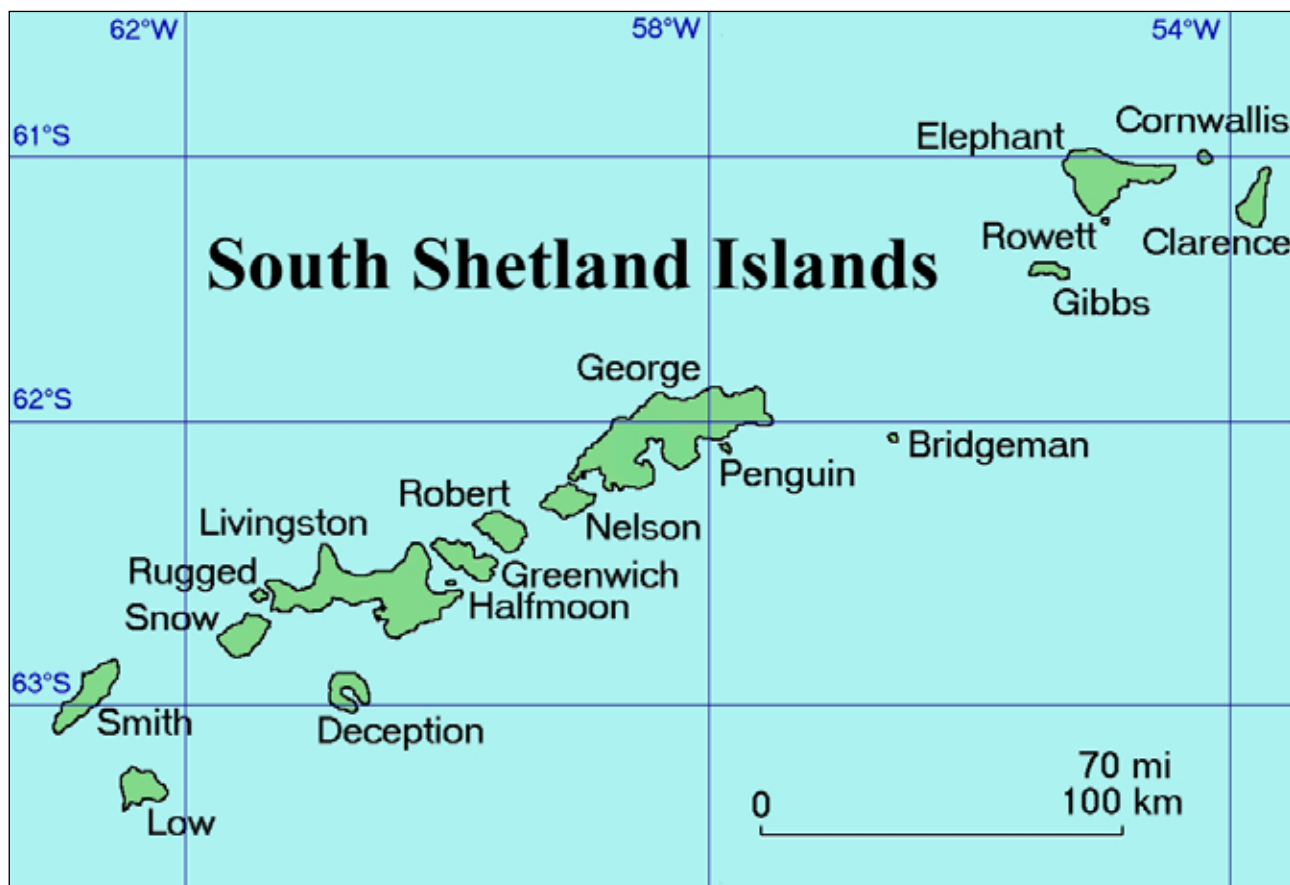
conditions can vary enormously from year to year.

Because of the easy access in summer months and the sheltered anchorages, there are many national bases here. Not surprisingly, the good anchorages often have a base ashore.

Essential reading for visiting the area is Southern Ocean Cruising by Sally Poncet and Jerome Poncet.

Warning

The following notes are merely a little information that may be of help to fellow mariners. They are in no way comprehensive and represent only one brief visit in the conditions encountered at the time. The chartlets drawn are nothing more than sketches and in no way represent a survey of the coves and bays. Use them with extreme caution. I have purposely not given any waypoints as these tend to give an unrealistic accuracy to these notes.



Elephant Island

Emma Cove

61°04'S 55°19'W



Looking NNE from the landing beach

Description

A semicircular bay at the NW corner of Elephant Island, with good shelter from the east. The bay provides protection from NNW through E to SSW. But is wide open to the west.

Approach

When approaching Emma Cove from the west take care to pass south of West Reef, which lies six miles west of Cape Lindsey, and is two miles wide. From the north it is possible to pass east of West Reef, between the reef and the rocks off Cape Lindsey. These rocks extend about half a mile off the cape.

Cape Lindsey is the western tip of Elephant Island and forms the north side of Emma Cove. It has above and below water rocks extending approximately half a mile westward from its end. The south side of the cove is an unnamed narrow promontory, which separates the cove from Mensa Bay. There are islets and rocks extending westward from this point approximately half a mile.

Anchorage

Enter Emma Cove midway between the two points and head towards a small stream running down the scree slope at the south side of the cove. Note that there is a larger stream at the north. The beach at the head of the cove is divided into two by a small headland, off which some rocks extend. Anchor off the stream on the south beach in about 8m. The holding appeared to be good.

Remarks

The cove is surrounded by black scree cliffs which give a rather foreboding atmosphere. Some swell was coming into the cove and landing was not possible on the beach but the landing shown on the sketch chartlet was just about tenable. A few fur seals, elephant seals and Gentoo penguins ashore.



Bay north of Cape Lookout

61°16'S 55°11'W

Charts BA 3205 Arg H710



Looking south

Description

An open bay about one mile north of Cape Lookout providing shelter from the SSW through W to NNE. The bay is completely open to the east and south.

Approach

The approach is straightforward. Cape Lookout and Rowett island are conspicuous and this bay is close north off a glacier.

Anchorage

Anchor south of the terminal moraine in about 11m.

Remarks

The ease of landing will depend on the swell. If there is too much to land on the beach try crossing the terminal moraine. The deepest part is to the east of the rocks in the middle.

Ashore

There is pleasant walking with a few fur seals, elephant seals and Gentoo penguins. This would be a good place to anchor to wait if you wish to avoid a cruise ship visiting Cape Lookout.

Elephant seals



Cape Lookout Cove

61°17'S 55°12'W

Charts BA 3205 Arg H710



Looking SE

Description

A small cove to close west of Cape Lookout and protected on the south side by Rowett island. Good shelter from all but SE winds.

Approach

Straightforward approach from the east. From the west and south pass south and east of Rowett island. The beacon on Cape Lookout is not conspicuous.

Anchorage

Enter the cove midway between Cape Lookout and Rowett island. Anchor off the beach in about 10m. The cove is small enough to take lines ashore if required.

Remarks

Land as convenient on the boulder beach at the north side of the cave. There is a large Chinstrap penguin colony ashore with other associated birds. Also Fur and Elephant seals. Cruise ships call here. There is a narrow passage between Rowett island and the spur of land forming the west side of the cove. There is a drying rock in the middle of the narrowest part. This cove is a delightful spot.

Elephant seals wallowing with Chinstrap penguins and chicks behind



Gibbs Island

Cove close to The Spit

61°29'S 55°26'W

Charts BA 3205 Arg H710



Looking ESE

Description

A small cove on the south side of Gibbs Island giving shelter from the S through W to ENE.

Approach

The approach is straightforward from the south side of the island. Head towards The Spit, The cove is close west of it. The Spit is a narrow boulder isthmus joining the two parts of the island towards the east end.

Anchorage

Anchor in about 8m off the snow slope.

Remarks

Land on the beach at the foot of the snow slope and also on The Spit, swell permitting. Ashore there is a large chinstrap colony. Well worth a visit.

Leopard seals on icefloe



King George Island

Mersey Spit and Penguin Island

62°05'S 57°52'W

Charts BA 3205 1774 Chile 14000



Looking south

Description

Mersey Spit and Penguin Island forms the east side of King George Bay. The bay between Mersey Spit and the Three Sisters rocks provide shelter from W through N to NNE. An anchorage off the NE side of Penguin Island gives protection from the SW quadrant.

Approach

The approach is straightforward passing to the east of Penguin Island.

Anchorage

Anchor NE of Mersey Spit in about 7m. If the wind goes south of west, Penguin I will provide protection from the wind but the ice from King George Bay, passing north of the island may well cause problems in this anchorage. In this case shift berth to Penguin Island. Anchor in about 9m at the north end of the shingle beach. Conversely, if the wind is in the NW, better shelter from ice will be NW of Mersey Spit.

Remarks

A large part of the land around Mersey Spit is ice free and consequently there is good walking ashore. Land on the beach as convenient. A few seals ashore. Penguin Island is also ice free and good walking. Here is a popular stop for cruise ships. The trail up to the crater rim is marked! There is a Chinstrap colony, as well as Giant Petrels and Antarctic Skuas nesting. Well worth a visit.

Note

A shallow spit joins Penguin Island to Mersey Spit. There are rocks off both points. China Moon crossed over it into King George Bay. I passed midway in the channel and found a minimum of 2m. The water was very murky and it was impossible to see if there were any rocks. I

would certainly not recommend this passage, but if it is attempted then do so in calm conditions with no swell and a rising tide.

The crater, Penguin Island



Potter Cove, Maxwell Bay

62°15'S 58°41'W

Charts BA 1776 Chile 1407 1410



Looking north

Description

Potter Cove, at the SE side of Maxwell Bay (called Bahia Fildes on Chilean charts), provides shelter from winds from virtually all directions and is regarded as one of the best anchorages in the South Shetlands.

Approach

The 196m high Three Brothers peak, which is conspicuous, stands at the east side of the entrance to the cove. If approaching from the east, take care to avoid the rocks and shoals extending 2M from the SE entrance to Maxwell Bay. Once round these rocks keep at least half a mile from the eastern shore as you approach the cove. The NW shore, at the entrance to the cove, should also not be approached too closely. Approaching Maxwell Bay from the SW avoid the rocks and shoals extending 1.5 miles west of Butchart Point, the SW point of Maxwell Bay.

Anchorage

With winds from E through S to WSW, the best shelter is found off the base, at the S side of the cove. Anchor in about 5m. In northerly winds, better shelter will be found off the north shore of the cove close west of the end of the glacier. Anchor in about 6m, appeared to be good holding. Take great care to sound around the anchorage because there are some drying rocks close south of this anchorage. Ice from the glacier could be a problem.

Remarks

Jubany is an Argentine scientific base. Land on the beach by the base. Much of the land to the west of the base is ice free, but take care to avoid the SSSI along the west and south shore of the Potter peninsular.

Helicopter landing site, with Three Brothers Peak behind



Ardley Cove, Maxwell Bay

62°2'S 58°55'W

Chart BA 1776 Chile 1407 1410



Looking east

Description

Ardley Cove lies in the NW corner of Maxwell Bay. It provides good shelter from all winds except those from the eastern quadrant.

Approach

See Potter Cove for Approach to Maxwell Bay. Except close to the shores of Maxwell Bay the only obstruction to avoid in the bay are the Ras Rocks, lying in position 62°13'S 58°51'W. Pass north of Ardley Island and the rocks close NE of it.

Anchorage

Becerra Island lies at the head of Ardley cove. A shallow spit runs from it, in NW direction, to the shore. The least depth on this spit is 0.4m. The best anchorage will be found by passing north of Becerra I, and anchoring north of the spit in about 3 or 4m. SW of the spit the bottom is deeper, much of it between 10 and 20m.

Remarks

Land at the head of the bay off the bases. The Chilean base President Frei is at the south end of the beach. To the north of it is the Russian base Bellinghauser. The Chileans run an air service to Punta Arenas and it should be possible to organise a flight. They also have a post office, open 2 days a week. This is the major Chilean base. The Russians have recently built an Orthodox Church on the hill overlooking their base

Russian Orthodox chapel close to Russian base, Bellinghauser



Roberts Island

Coppermine Cove

62°23'S 59°40'W

Charts BA 1776 1774 Chile 1405 1406



Description

Coppermine cove lies at the west end of Roberts Island and on the NE side of the English Strait (separating Roberts I. from Greenwich I.) This cove gives shelter from the N and E.

Approach

Approaching from the SE is straightforward. Coppermine Cove is identified by the conspicuous 3 peaks of The Triplets, just over 1 mile SW of the

cove. Note that only 1 mile NW of the cove are the narrows of the English Strait, which have strong currents and overfalls.

Anchorage

On entering the cove the soundings decrease rapidly from over 1000m to 20m. Anchor in about 5m.

Remarks

Ashore is a small Chilean scientific base. It is only manned in the summer and the party of five are studying plant biology. Note that the SSSI starts close west of the buildings.

Chilean summer base



Greenwich Island

Iquique Cove, Discovery Bay

62°29'S 59°40'W

Charts BA 1774 Chile 1405 14270



Looking west

Description

Iquique Cove lies on the eastern side of Discovery Bay (Chile: Bahia Chile). The cove is completely land locked and provides complete shelter. It is very tricky to enter the cove.

Approach

Approaching Discovery Bay from the English Strait is straightforward. When approaching the cove keep well west and south of the Bajo Torro reef which extends 650m out from the Peninsula Guesalaga (the NW side of the cove. Entering the cove is difficult. It is shallow and there are rocks. The large scale Chilean chart, 14270, is wrong with regard to the entrance. Once south of the Bajos Torro Head for the south side of the Guesalaga Peninsular until the northern tip of Gonzalez Island bears 094° Magnetic.

Head towards the northern tip on this heading until very close to the island. A beacon on the south end of Boris island should be identified. Head towards the beacon on a bearing of 030° magnetic. Before getting too close to Boris I., when about in the middle of the channel between Boris I. and the Guesalaga peninsular, turn to port to enter the inner part of the cove.

The route used by the Chilean Navy to enter the cove is to approach the east end of Gonzalez Island on a bearing of 100° Magnetic and then hug the NW shore of Gonzalez I. until the beacon on Boris I. bears 030° Magnetic. I left the cove by this route and had a minimum depth of just over 4m. This route is not as straightforward as the first one described. I would strongly recommend that the route in should be reconnoitred by dinghy. At the very least go in very cautiously, on a rising tide, near high water and very slowly.

Anchorage

Once in the inner part of the cove, anchor in the middle in about 5m. When visited in 2004 I used a mooring close to Boris I. As the Navy are leaving it may well be missing in Future. Land at the jetty or on the beach.

Remarks

In 2004, the Chilean Navy were evacuating the base. Its future is unclear.

Apart from the base there is little of interest ashore.

Crabeater seal



Livingston Island

Half Moon Island

62°38'S 59°55'W

Charts BA 1774



Looking east

Description

On the east shore of Livingston Island is Moon Bay, facing McFarlane Strait. Half Moon Island lies in the SE corner of Moon Bay. It provides excellent shelter except from the east.

Approach

Approaching from the east, keep clear of the Rugged Rocks which extend NW of Renier Point, the eastern extremity of Livingston Island. Off both points of the entrance to the crescent shaped bay (of Half Moon I.) lie rocks, so give both a reasonable berth.

Anchorage

Anchor west of the base in about 5m. Note the rocks shown on the sketch chart to the south of the anchorage. Land on the pebble beach in front of the base.

Remarks

A seasonal light is exhibited on the SE point of the island, but it is not to be relied upon. Also on the SE point is a Chinstrap rookery and on the beach below it is a slowly decaying clinker built boat. This is a popular stop for cruise ships. Well worth a visit.

Chinstrap penguin feeding chick



Deception Island

Baily Head

62°58S 60°30'W

Charts BA 3202 1776 Chile 1402



Looking east

Description

An anchorage close north of Baily Head, which is the eastern extremity of Deception I. Good shelter from westerly winds.

Approach

The approach is straightforward. Baily Head and the Sewing Machine Needles rocks are conspicuous.

Anchorage

Anchor off the shingle beach in about 9 m. In strong westerly winds willywaws come off and around Baily Head. These can be avoided by anchoring about 0.5 miles north of the Headland. The best landing is on the beach, in the corner by the headland, close to a stream.

Remarks

Up the valley of the stream is a large Chinstrap rookery. This is a popular stop for Cruise ships

Stream and Chinstrap penguin rookery



Whalers Bay

62°59S 60°32'W

Charts BA 3202 Chile 1402



Looking south

Description

Inside the crater, just past Neptune's Bellows, Whalers Bay lies at the SE side of the crater. It provides shelter from the north and east but the holding is reported to be poor.

Approach

Neptune's Bellows is the entrance channel to the crater and the approach from the south is straightforward. In the middle of the channel lies Ravn Rock, with 2.4m over it. This is best avoided by keeping to the northern half of the channel, which is deep. There 280m between Fildes headland

and Ravn rock. The rock is also covered by the red sector of the Collins Point light. Neptune's Bellows is named for the strong gusts that often blow through the channel which may well make tacking through difficult. Once past Fildes Point head into Whalers bay, there are no obstructions.

Anchorage

Anchor off the head of the bay to the west of the whaling factory. The bottom rises rapidly close to the shore. Anchor on the shelf in about 4m. The bay has a reputation for poor holding. Land on the beach.

Remarks

It is very interesting ashore with the remains of the BAS base, hangar and Beaver 'plane which were damaged and abandoned in the 1969 eruption. There are also the remains of the whaling factory, On the beach to the south of the factory are piles of oak barrels and a whale flensing (blubber removal) boat. This is a popular stop for cruise ships. Well worth a visit.

remains of factory at Whalers Bay



[illegible]

Antarctic Peninsula

Introduction

A trip to Antarctica in your own boat is likely to prove the cruise of a lifetime, but involves a lot of homework.

Visitable areas

In yachting terms 'the Antarctic' means the islands flanking the Antarctic Peninsula, probably with a landing at one of the few accessible points on the Continent itself - just to prove that you were there! The season runs from November to March. At present the visitable area is largely confined to the west side of the Peninsula because the break-up of the Larsen Ice-shelf has filled the Weddell Sea with so much loose ice that even cruise ships are rarely going there.

Tourism

Visitors by private yacht constitute a tiny fraction of the annual total. In the 2006/07 season 55,000 tourists landed from cruise ships in the Peninsula area, many of them at up to ten different places. In 2003 the total number of landings was estimated at 104,000 and has certainly risen substantially. Alongside this, a fleet of about 15 charter yachts make trips with 6-10 'guests' during the season; and a total of perhaps a dozen private yachts visit in any one year.

Antarctic trips tend to start and finish in Ushuaia. Cruise ships go directly across the Drake Passage but most small craft stop in Puerto Williams in order to collect a Chilean *zarpe* which enables them to shelter in Chilean anchorages on the way to or from the Drake Passage if necessary (It often is). The normal visitor beat stretches along the Bransfield and Gerlache straits between the spine of the Peninsula to the east and the chain of islands to the west. Hitherto the bulk of visitors have not gone south of the Argentine Islands (65° 15'S). Only nine of the 79 sites described in the *Oceanites Compendium* (a guide produced in collaboration with the cruise industry – see book section below) lie south of here.

Few cruise ships go further. Some charter yachts do so, in particular those hosting climbers, divers, and others with specialist interests and deep pockets; likewise a sprinkling of fortitudinous private yachts. The constraints are various: Conditions are harsher, the charts are less accurate or non-existent, safe anchorages are few and, above all, the ice

conditions are unreliable so that access may become impossible and schedules likely to be disrupted. With the march of global warming, the last obstacle shows signs of literally melting away and the tourist area seems certain to extend.

There are a good number of places throughout the Peninsula area which are designated by international agreement as sites of scientific interest to which access is limited or forbidden. Depending greatly on the actual route, a round trip from Ushuaia to the Vernadsky base in the Argentine Island will be in the region of 1500 to 2000 miles. A more ambitious trip southward, say to Marguerite Bay, would add around 500 miles. Once in Antarctic waters most of the sailing will be by day. Allowing a week each way for the journey to and from the Peninsula it does not make much sense to plan for a trip of less than a month, or a week or two longer if you want to see how far south you can get or want a good reserve of 'bad weather' time.

All of which said, when conditions permit and time is available a cruise in the south of the area is correspondingly more rewarding than a visit confined to the north. And you can have the place to yourself. (In January, 2007 *Sadko* saw only one other visitor – a small charter yacht – in the 11 days she spent between Vernadsky and the Antarctic Circle).

Formalities

Activities anywhere south of 60°S are regulated by a far-reaching series of international agreements known collectively as the Antarctic Treaty System. Citizens of States party (in practice more-or-less everybody) require the authorisation of their own government to visit the Treaty area. Even among serious governments there is a wide difference of approach to this requirement. Some appear to do no more than register the intended voyage, while others may make searching enquiries about the vessel and the experience of the crew. The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office require six months notice. The procedure involves a sequence of questionnaires (20 pages in all, plus supporting documentation) concluding with the requirement to register your humble sailing trip as a 'British Expedition to Antarctica' with a formal announcement to that effect in *The London Gazette*. There is no direct charge but the *Gazette* announcement costs £80.

With luck the result will be the issue of a bound 'permit'. And applicants are warned that proceeding without a permit or breach of a permit condition 'IS A CRIMINAL OFFENCE PUNISHABLE BY UP TO TWO YEARS IMPRISONMENT AND/OR AN UNLIMITED FINE'. Reference: www.fco.gov.uk. Look for *Guidance for Visitors to Antarctica*.

Emergencies; Search and Rescue

It is highly unlikely that insurance can be obtained for the yacht itself in Antarctic waters. But responsible governments are now insisting on insurance cover for the rescue of crew members, somewhat along the lines of that required by the Norwegians for a permit to visit Spitzbergen. But there is an important difference: Nobody actually administers Antarctica, despite the pretensions of a number of governments including HMG, and there are no Search and Rescue (SAR) services as such. However during the season, at least in the northern part of the Peninsula area, there is a light rain of cruise ships and a drizzle of Naval, scientific and supply vessels from various countries, plus a few yachts. With any luck one of these craft might be within reach to respond to a distress call, with the consequent likelihood of a 'human salvage' claim or a demand for the reimbursement of costs. Further south is a different matter. When the cruise ship Explorer sank in November 2007, could the 150 people on board have been rescued if she had been at the southern end of Crystal Sound, no matter what insurance was in force? So what prospects for a small yacht?

In the 2007-2008 season, an American yachtsman guaranteed in advance the necessary funding for a rescue flight to be made by the small Chilean airline, DAP. But DAP fly only into the Chilean base in the South Shetlands, so this arrangement would seem to solve only part of a problem if it arose elsewhere on the Peninsula.

This appears to be a grey area. Meanwhile, for what it is worth, in 2006 members of Sadko's crew obtained insurance which satisfied the Foreign Office through the British Mountaineering Federation and from International Health Insurance, Danmark, a/s Palaegade, DK-1261, COPENHAGEN K Tel: 45 33 15 30 99. Fax: 45 33 32 25 60. e-mail: ihl@ihl.com

The following list of other specialist Brokers for travel insurance was supplied in 2006 by agents who had not themselves been able to help:

Aon Risk Services - 01703 225616

Agency Underwriting Ltd - 01206 577770
Bordengate Insurance - 08456 580560
Crispin Speers Ltd. - 0207 480 5083
Harrison Beaumont Ltd - 01993 700200
P J Hayman & Co Ltd - 0845 602 0020
Hiscox PLC - 0207 448 6000
IMG Europe Ltd - 01273 384925
MRL Insurance Direct - 0870 870 4401
Norwich Union - 01603 622 200
West Midland Brokers - 01432 268 301
Perry, Gamble Ltd. - 01404 830 100

Politics

Argentina, Chile and the United Kingdom each claim triangular areas ('sectors') stretching to the South Pole which overlap and cover the bulk of the Peninsula area. The Antarctic Treaty provides that no new claims to sovereignty in the area may be advanced. It also states that while nothing in the treaty shall affect existing claims, no activities taking place there shall serve to support an existing claim. This does not seem to inhibit a good deal of activity which can have little purpose other than to assert national presence. For example the Argentines and the Chileans each purport to administer 'their' sector as if it were physically part of the motherland, and it seems that most citizens of the two countries believe that the Peninsula is indeed a normal province of their country. HMG is not so well placed. It may surprise even some readers of these notes to know that the area concerned is a United Kingdom Overseas Territory, with senior officials of the Foreign Office acting as the territory's Commissioner and Administrator. *The Times Atlas*, with touching patriotism, styles these areas 'British Antarctic Territory', 'Chilean Claim', 'Argentine Claim' (author's italics).

There is a lighter side to this gallimaufry: If you visit an Argentine base built on 'British' territory in a British-registered vessel should you fly an Argentine courtesy flag? Throughout her 2007 cruise Sadko flew only the 'Antarctica' flag (a silhouette of the continent) from the starboard cross-trees. During the visit to their Jubany base the Argentines were charming to us but remonstrated with our (Chilean!) Spanish-speaker about our alleged discourtesy in failing to fly an Argentine courtesy flag. A similar point had been made when we earlier visited a Chilean base. Both of them evidently meant it seriously.

Sources of Information

Books

Antarctic publishing is currently a growth industry, but here are some recommendations:

General

- The first essential reading is *Antarctica*, in the Lonely Planet series. Aimed principally at the commercial tourist but providing an outstanding introduction to all aspects of a visit to the Continent. Includes a reading list.
- *The Crystal Desert* by David G Campbell. Informative description of, and reflections on, many aspects of the Peninsula area by literate scientist. Fascinating.
- *Southern Lights*. John Rymill, readable account by the leader of the small and highly-successful British Graham Land Expedition, 1934-37.
- *Below the Convergence*. Alan Gurney. Somewhat discursive but well-selected anthology of accounts of journeys in search of Antarctica up to the mid-19th century.

Wildlife

- *Antarctica, A Guide to the Wildlife*. Tony Soper, Bradt Travel Guides. Excellent introduction to the subject. More specialist books are:
- *Birds of Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego and Antarctic peninsula; the Falkland Islands and south Georgia*. E Couve and C Vidal, Editorial Fantastico Sur, Punta Arenas, Chile. Serious ornithologists' field guide. Parallel text Spanish/English. (Available in Ushuaia)
- *Marine Mammals Patagonia Antarctica*, Ricardo Bastida-Diego Rodrigues, Vazquez Mazzini Editores, Argentina. English edition 2005. ISBN 987-9132-11-4 (Available in Ushuaia)

Nautical

There is as yet no yacht-cruising guide to the Antarctic. Some useful information will be gleaned from the recent Admiralty Pilot (2003, and again under revision), but there are three works which are of serious help in deciding where it is interesting and feasible to go, and what to expect:

- *The Oceanites Compendium*: Essentially a travel industry/NGO publication aimed at tour operators and environmental monitors, with voluminous statistics about their activities. But is a useful resource because it includes potted descriptions of 79 established 'Visitor Sites' (and statistics about a total of 275!) in the Peninsula area.

Published in 2003 by Oceanites Inc. PO Box 15259, Chevy Chase, MD 20825, USA. On sale in Ushuaia in book and CD format.

- Secondly there is a collection of assorted sketch plans and notes circulating in photocopy among the charter skippers in Ushuaia, termed *Borrowed Notes* in this paper. Versions vary but key information about anchoring conditions and resources for about 50 credible stopping places are covered. Many of the items are very scrappy but the collection is invaluable. Some of the charter skippers are jealous of this material but it is strongly recommended to enquire discreetly for someone willing to lend a copy for photocopying.
- Thirdly is *Southern Ocean Cruising* by the very experienced Jerome and Sally Poncet. A second edition was published in November 2007 by Environmental Research and Assessment Ltd, CAMBRIDGE, England (www.era.gs) on the initiative of, and apparently at the expense of, the British Foreign Office. It includes a good description of relevant sections of the Antarctic Treaty system and the role of the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO), together with general advice, especially about conduct ashore in this delicate environment, and a generous list of sources of information including web sites. The book is made available by the Foreign Office to those applying to them for visitor permits, and it may be purchased for £12.99 from the Scott Polar Research Institute, Lensfield Road, CAMBRIDGE CB2 1ER, ENGLAND.
- For the area of Ushuaia and the route as far as Cape Horn, detailed guidance is available in: *Chile*, by Andrew O'Grady, published by the RCC Pilotage Foundation and *Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego*, by Mariolina ROLFO and Giorgio ARDRIZZI, Editrice Incontri Nautici, ('the Italian book')
- There is also a recent publication entitled *Antarctica: Navigation Guide/Guia de Navigation*, by Artura de la Barrera Werner (adwerner@emol.com), published by Litogar S.A. ISBN 956 291 671-5. The book has parallel Spanish/English text and covers the whole of Antarctica. From very brief acquaintance, it appears to be part-way between an HO pilot book and a small boat guide. User reports required.

[A general word about the charter fleet: Although the skippers are generally friendly and/or helpful with some one detects an underlying disapproval of amateur yachts. This is understandable if they fear

that less-experienced and less well-equipped visitors will get into trouble and have to be assisted by them; or that there will be a serious incident which would draw unwelcome attention to yachts in general. The latter point because there is a suspicion on the dockside in Ushuaia that a number of governments, and probably the IAATO, regret that any small craft go south. But it is difficult to take seriously the complaint I have heard that visits by a tiny handful of private yachts are undermining the charterers' market].

Some websites (there are dozens)

www.fco.gov.uk Foreign and Commonwealth Office (for official publications and applications for a permit to visit)

www.spri.cam.ac.uk Scott Polar Research Institute

www.antarctica.ac.uk British Antarctic Survey (BAS)

www.ukaht.org The United Kingdom Antarctic Heritage Trust

www.lonelyplanet.com Useful for links to other sources

<http://70south.com> somewhat untidy site but with lots of useful reference material

www.polarnews.com *Polar News*

Charts

The Peninsula is an area where, for once, it is worth having the best charts available. Coverage is provided by both the British Admiralty (13 charts) and the DMA (16). The pattern of coverage and the scales used are different and it is worth looking carefully at the two catalogues. (Note in particular that south of 66°S until you get to Marguerite Bay the two relevant BA charts are on the scale of only 1:500,000 and the three DMA charts are at 1:200,000). Probably the most important thing is to have the latest published chart, from whichever source. New editions do not appear frequently so this should not be too costly. Where one exists (e.g. the recent BA chart 3575 for the area around the Argentine Islands) it can be a striking improvement on its predecessors.

Apart from the sheets of 'Plans' (BA 1774 and 3213; and DMA 29107) and insets on four others, most of these charts are at scales between 1:100,000 and 1:500,000 and are accordingly of precious little help for small boat pilotage. Hence the importance of the informal material referred to above.

N.B. The author of these notes has not had the opportunity to compare the above Anglo-Saxon charts with the available Chilean and Argentine charts.

Weather; forecast facilities

The weather on the Peninsula is a function principally of the depressions which stream across the south Pacific Ocean and funnel into the Drake Passage, as part of the circumpolar flow. The procession is erratic and influenced by a number of factors, including movements of the South Pacific 'High'. The prevailing winds are of course westerly, but the winds most feared by small boats are the – happily rarer – strong easterlies, swirling off a depression to the north.

With a good HF set the radio weather faxes transmitted from Valparaiso by the Chilean Armada are commonly readable as far south as the Antarctic Circle. With the exception of one evening transmission, they are situation reports rather than forecasts but read consistently they provide a good idea of how the weather is developing. There are also Chilean ice charts but since they are only updated weekly they are of less value.

For a true forecast up to five days ahead there are the Buoy Weather reports and Grib Files receivable as automated e-mails. The latter offer more comprehensive coverage. Although they are computer-generated models they are frequently updated and are usually very near the mark.

To supplement this 'Bob', (Bob McLeod) an amateur meteorologist and radio HAM in the Falklands, was in 2006/7 kindly running a service for yachties who checked in with him. (at 1000 and 2200 UTC, on 3.790 MHz LSB, with 7.044 MHz USB and 14.130 MHz as alternate frequencies) He offered pre-digested forecasts for specified positions on demand. His equipment is excellent and he was often able to provide relays for our daily 'sched' with the Patagonian Cruisers Net (see below)

Patagonian cruisers net

This is a long-established English-language yachtie radio net, currently run by Wolfgang, a German yachtsman who has settled near Villarica in Chile. The net operates on a maritime HF channel (8.194 MHz) daily at breakfast time (1300 UTC) and is a valuable source of information, companionship and occasional emergency assistance. Most participants are on boats sailing somewhere along the coast between Uruguay and Valdivia in Chile, but they are encouraged to continue to take part if they leave for Antarctica: strongly recommended. The further south, the more erratic the reception and the greater the use of 'relay', but Wolfgang tries to get a daily position and 'safe and well' report from everybody.

Practical Matters

Assistance in Ushuaia

Recommended contact: 'Ushuaia Logistics' is a small agency run by Roxanna Diaz Selby which provides assistance of all kinds to visiting yachtsmen. Roxanna, who speaks excellent English, also French, helps in obtaining supplies, arranging for repairs and services, dealing with the Authorities, and will run errands and provide general advice. Roxanna has recently also been appointed as the 'Port Officer' of the Ocean Cruising Club and the 'Cruising Station Host' for the Seven Seas Cruising Association. E-mail: rox@xaxero.com; Phone: (02901) 433364; Mobile: (02901) 156000264

The boat

The yachts taking charter guests to the Antarctic are made of metal, often aluminium, have swing keels and retractable rudder(s), enclosed dog-houses, thick insulation above the waterline, central heating, mast steps and/or ratlines; and various other features such as installed drums for shore-lines or separate water tanks for drinking and domestic water. Few amateur yachts are likely to match this. Nor, for a one-off visit, is it all necessary. A number of well-found GRP boats have been safely to the more frequented and better charted areas in the north.

Further south and/or off the beaten track one needs to think more carefully. In the light of hindsight this author would not again take *Sadko*, which has a strong aluminium hull but a fixed two-metre keel and an unprotected semi-balanced rudder, south of Vernadsky except in company with another yacht (as was, in fact, our original intention in 2007).

In any case some features are almost essential:

- A protected watch-keeping position by means of a deck-house, a partly-covered cockpit, or a deep rigid spray-hood;
- serious insulation of the hull and deck;
- a cabin heater, where a drip-feed diesel model is preferable to blown hot air. Although it requires a chimney and will often not work under way, it is far simpler and more reliable and does not consume high amperages every few minutes as the thermostat switches in and out. Remember that you will usually be at rest overnight.
- mast-steps and/or ratlines in order that a lookout may readily get aloft.
- double glazing (Good DIY kits sufficient)
- Blackout screening for windows/portholes also useful. (black cardboard sufficient)

Boat equipment: non-exhaustive list

Ground tackle

Have at least one anchor which is 'overweight' for the boat by standard norms, and of course an all-chain rode. This in preference to multiple anchors when this can be avoided. Opinions are divided about 'tandem' anchoring. Very few anchorages in Antarctica are safe in all conditions. If the wind changes direction unexpectedly and/or serious ice moves in you may need to make a rapid departure, if only across the bay.

Shore lines

Anchoring space is frequently limited and shore lines are the norm. Take at least four 100m lines in 18-20mm polypropylene with soft eyes in one end. Some people recommend fitting them in reels mounted on deck, if you have space to install them. But heavy-duty open weave bags, into which lines are flaked, can be moved around as needed and taken in the dinghy; also stowed below when cruising in waters where they are not required. In an emergency, 'free' lines can also be cast off from the boat more easily for later retrieval. Note that although floating lines are usually preferable, when there is much ice a nylon or polyester line which sinks clear can be of more use. So it is worth having one or two readily available.

The following tip is taken from the Pilotage Foundation Web Pilot on *South Georgia* by Andy O'Grady:

'Strong williwaws are common and can make life uncomfortable when the vessel is unable to swing into the wind. A way round this is to take the shorelines to the anchor chain and then let out chain until the lines are below the vessel. If using polypropylene lines (which are recommended as they float and collect less kelp) then they will need to be weighted close to the vessel to keep them from fouling the keel.'

- For attaching lines: at least **four wire stops** c 5m long and having eyes without thimbles (which get caught on rocks) spliced in both ends. One eye should be smaller so that it can be passed through the other. Chains for the same purpose are stronger but less convenient to handle. (*Sadko* used both).
- **Jumbo shackles** for use with above gear.
- A few **climbers' pitons and angle-iron ice/beach stakes** (and a hefty mallet). Not often used but

invaluable when there are no obvious rock holds.

- **A second tender:** Consider what you would do if a shore party's dinghy was swept away or damaged. (This is real: In 2006 a cruise ship had to rescue yachtsmen whose dinghy was savaged by elephant seals in South Georgia!)
- **Emergency shore package:** Depending on the extent of shore visits it may be wise to take ashore a waterproof bag containing survival blankets, first aid, food, water etc.
- If you already have **scuba gear** and there is space, of course take it. Otherwise **snorkelling kit**, with a **dry suit** or at least one **wet-suit** with helmet and gloves.
- **Communications:** Unless you already have several hand-held VHF sets it is worth getting walkie-talkies for contact with shore- and line-laying parties etc. But they need to be good ones which hold their charge and actually work up to their advertised range.
- **A sturdy brush** on a handle, suitable for scrubbing shore-detritus from boots before returning to the ship. (The good tour operators are meticulous about doing this)
- **Water funnels** of various sizes; and, say, 3-4m lengths of 20-25mm plastic pipe for filling water carriers from glacier run-offs.
- A **stout pile-board** and three or four motor tyres
- A **short-handled spade or shovel** may be useful; and is essential if you want to dig a hot-water pool in the sand at Deception Island, in the best tradition of cruise-ship punters!
- A **hand-held depth sounder** for sounding from the dinghy, and as a stand-by. To be without a working depth-sounder would be a very serious limitation.
- **Spares**, medical kit etc. No special requirements for the Antarctic beyond the obvious point that there is no way of obtaining anything which is not on board when you leave Puerto Williams.

Stores

Fuel

You may need a lot of it. It cannot even be assumed that it will be possible to go under sail out to or back from the Drake Passage. Once across the Passage there will be only limited opportunities for sailing and for the purpose of calculation it is best to assume that you will do the whole of the Peninsula sector under power. The cabin heater also consumes diesel. Most boats calculate that deck cans are necessary and if so it is worth confecting sturdy racks

to hold them. Good quality, large (20 or 30 litre) cans are not reliably obtainable in Ushuaia.

In Ushuaia there is no alongside re-fuelling practicable for a small vessel and diesel is normally collected in cans. It is often possible to do this jointly with another yacht so sharing the cost of the pick-up truck (flete). Alternatively, the YPF fuel company will deliver diesel in 40 gallon drums and Ushuaia Logistics can provide a portable electric pump and a long hose.

Water

on the dock in Ushuaia and Puerto Williams. Thereafter adequate fresh water will be obtainable from glacier melt. But the availability of suitable places, which obviously have to be uncontaminated by wildlife, is variable and every opportunity should be taken to keep the tanks full.

Victualling

Get almost everything in Ushuaia, and maybe top up in Port Williams (very limited fare). There is a huge ANONYMA supermarket on the outskirts of Ushuaia and several useful shops nearer at hand. Note that canned meat is unobtainable in South America (where most of ours comes from) but that excellent cuts of fresh meat can be vacuum-packed to order in convenient-size chunks. The shelf-life is nominally one month but if the packs are stowed against the hull in Antarctic waters this can be liberally interpreted. Some larger yachts also take whole lamb carcasses suspended in the rigging. The weak link is fresh fruit and vegetables. These are all brought to Ushuaia in containers, no doubt environmentally-controlled, and do not last as well as real fresh food when exposed to the natural world.

Personal kit: Some tips

- HD gumboots for shore-going (sea-boots too delicate, and their fussy soles collect grit and penguin goo) Cheap in Ushuaia. Get them big enough to leave space for heavy insoles.
- Waders, useful for choppy landings (also cheap in Ushuaia)
- A helmet-form fleece or quilted hat, i.e. covering the neck and ears and closing under the chin.
- A heavy fleece neck-gaiter, aka 'turtle neck', which is less bulky and more efficient than a scarf.
- In addition to heavy thermal underwear, extra-lightweight polypropylene wear which is very quick-drying has been found useful.
- Gloves: There is no ideal answer. Avoid lined waterproof gloves which never dry out. Try cloth-

backed industrial/DIY rubber or plastic gloves, worn over separate thin fleece, silk or cotton gloves. Get them both with and without gauntlets for different uses. Also some ski-type gloves (not leather) for dry conditions.

- Photography: A committed photographer will no

doubt need his SLR. But it can be a pest on shore trips in difficult conditions. Consider a compact camera which can be closed up and stuffed into a pocket with one hand. But if digital, beware the very small ones which are fiddly to hold and operate with cold hands.

Sadko's route



Plan by Acanthus Digital

Anchorage and Port Information

Places visited by Sadko in January-February 2007. Chart References are to the largest-scale charts for the places concerned published by the British Hydrographic Office or the DMA. The coordinates record Sadko's actual resting places.

1. Melchior Islands

Gamma Island

64° 19'.51S, 62° 58'.6 W

Charts: Inset plan on BA 3213 and DMA 29106

(Other possibilities recommended in NE wind are Andersen sound and the channel along the N side of Omega Island)

A favourite landfall/departure point because it offers secure shelter in most conditions, although it is somewhat open to NE swells. There are no local features of particular interest. Anchor off the dock in front of the Argentine base (not functioning in early January 2007) in c 8-10m. The creek is narrow between rocks and four shore-lines are recommended. Water available from stream off a snow bank at head of inlet.

Under spinnaker in the Drake Passage



2. Cuverville Island

64°41'.31 S, 62°37'.75 W

Charts: DMA 29122

The shelter among the low rocky islets is minimal but adequate. Icebergs lurk. The holding is not good. Lines can be taken to the eastern shore but the islets to the west are rather far. There are many penguin rookeries shown on plan in *Oceanites Compendium*.

3. Waterboat Point

64°49'.4S, 62°51'.3W

Chart: DMA 29122

Approach from N and anchor well into the bay on the E side of the Chilean base (hospitable staff; interesting visit) N of the isthmus, with 2 stern lines. A large gentoo penguin colony shares the base premises, apparently unconcerned. One can visit the protected historic site where two British scientists, Bagshawe and Lester, spent a year in 1921-22, living in a hut converted from a whaling ship's 'waterboat'.

The bay on the southern side of the isthmus is reported to be secure in N or NE wind. The east side of the anchorage is part of the Peninsula, making this one of the few sites at which visitors can walk on the Antarctic Continent.

Gentoo feeding chick



4. Almirante Brown (South)

64°54' S, 62°51'.47W

Charts: DMA 29122

Bay opposite Bryde Island round the corner south and east of the Argentine Base, re-opened in 2007. Enter by keeping close to v. prominent isolated rock on E side. Anchor in c 10m in the middle of a pool surrounded on three sides by towering steep-sided glaciers, with long lines to shore on N side and to line of rocks to S. Sheltered from all directions but because of surrounding mountains probably gusty in strong winds. Water from stream on point on N side of bay.

5. Vernadsky Base

65°14'.82S, 64° 15'.09W

Charts: BA 3575

This was formerly the British 'Faraday' base, which passed to the Ukrainians in 1998. Treacherous approach to anchoring places. Enter via Meek channel, turn south in front of rock with sign-post and curve round into channel immediately by the landing dock on the S side of the base. In 2007 there were two orange plastic buoys marking the channel. But there are still unmarked rocks to avoid. Go very slowly!

The favoured anchorage is in the secluded notch in Stella Creek. Otherwise in the E part of the bay by the station. Can be very gusty. Take lines from all four corners. NB the rocks are crumbly.

Call the base - indeed any other base - on the VHF well ahead so that they can arrange a visit to fit in to their work and with the invasions from cruise ships. Sadko's crew were invited over in the evening and the interesting tour of the former Faraday station ended in the bar with their home-brewed garyelka (a peppery vodka) The base-staff hold the key to the 'Wordie Hut', a restored British base from the 1940s, built on winter Island where the British Graham Land

Expedition (1934-37) made its base before moving south to Marguerite Bay.

6. Flounder Island

(Fish Islands)

66°01'.59S, 65°24'.19W

Inset plan 'Prospect Point'

on BA 3213 and DMA 29106

The inlet on the NW is open to the sea but is deeper and better-protected than suggested by the chart. It is easy to set a secure four-point tie with depth between 5 and 10m. Depending on the state of the tide, water may be collected from the low ice cliffs. NB: There may be a discouraging or prohibitive amount of ice; and it may move rapidly. There is a possible snow-climb on the overlooking hills, where charter-yacht punters go skiing.



Crossing the Antarctic Circle

7. Detaille Island

66°52'.07S, 66°47'.46W

Inset plan on BA 3213 and DMA 29106.

Striking situation. A former British base, abandoned "as was" in 1959 and now in a disgraceful state pending a decision whether to dismantle it or to restore it as a museum site. Meanwhile it offers a sad but fascinating visit.

In other than strong W or SW conditions the anchorage in 5-6m immediately below the base hut on the SW side offers good protection. Three lines

can be taken at normal angles ashore and a fourth to exposed rocks on the west side. In strong SW wind the anchorage in the bay N of the base below a small hut has been recommended. (66° 51.98'S, 66° 47.56'). But beware: the adjacent rock pools are shallow.

The ice conditions change rapidly. In January 2007 *Sadko* was beset for two days in the south side anchorage by floes of sea-ice which appeared overnight, but sailed off in open water the next day.

Skuas on Detaille





Sadko at Dettale, from seaward



Iced in at Dettale

8. Watkins Archipelago [?]

66°23'.8 S, 67°09'.5 W

Chart: DMA 29127

Largely uncharted waters. Recommended for adventurers with suitable boats.

There is a skein of closely-placed small islands, bulkier than would appear from the charts, between Watkins Island and Belding Island, with possible anchorages in the channels between them. Beware treacherous, uneven bottom. *Sadko* failed to find the spot recommended in *Borrowed Notes* but stayed peacefully in a notch on the N side of the most northerly channel to the E, below the wreckage of a - seemingly Polish - base. (GPS position above) Anchor

in the channel (holding not proven) and drop back onto four lines. Expect plenty of ice moving with the current. There is an excellent watering-place opposite the base on the south side of the channel.

There is safe exit northwards into the Pacific via the deep-water anchorage shown on the DMA chart, but proceed very carefully over shallow patches around the northern mouth of the channel between the small islands and Belding Island.

Caution: details extremely sketchy

9. Duchaylard Island

'Duff Cove'

(apparently so-called after the nick-name 'Plum Duff' for the 555m conical mountain towering above)
65°43'.71S, 65°05'.81W

Chart: DMA 29127

This is not a secure anchorage but offers shelter from about SW to NNE within a semi-circle of ice-cliffs, and is attractive in settled weather.

The slot recommended in *Borrowed Notes* between the low islet and the W shore may be unusable because of dangerous overhanging ice on the cliffs. *Sadko* preferred to anchor S of the islet (successful holding) in about 20 m and to take two stern lines to the islet. Pitons required. Beware of large waves from ice-falls when ashore. A limited ramble ashore can be had by taking the dinghy to the low isthmus to the NE.

10. Lippmann Islands

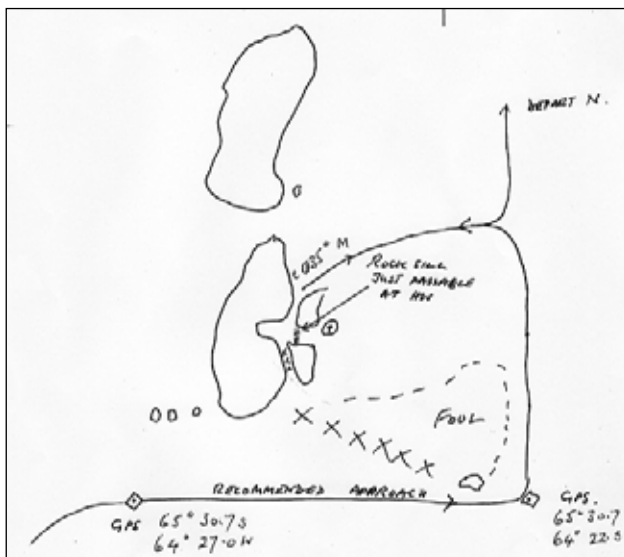
65°30'.51S, 64°24'.9W

Charts: DMA 29127

See plans based on arrival/departure waypoints and on survey of the anchorage by dinghy.

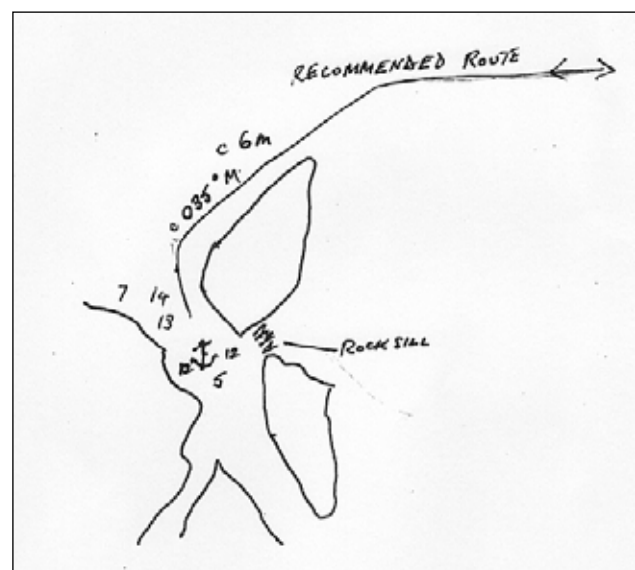
Useful pit-stop off the Grandidier Channel, in a rock-pool well-sheltered except from due E although there may be much ice.

Recent chart editions show the line of rocks and shallows reaching eastwards from the south of the islands. It appears that others have found their way through them and entered the anchorage over the shallow sill immediately E of the anchorage. But the route shown on the sketch is more comfortable.



Note: going north

The area west of the chain of islands from Splitwind Island to the southern end of Hovgaard inclusive is shown on the charts as 'Unsurveyed' but, with an eye on the depth-sounder, there is plenty of water for a coastal passage to the following two places, approaching from N or from S.



11. Hovgaard/Florence

65°06'.49S, 64°05'.01W

Charts: BA 3572 and 3575

The narrow gut between Hovgaard and Florence Island is well sheltered for almost any conditions, with plenty of places to take lines ashore. The E end is foul so enter from the west, passing S of the first rock shown into something of a pool and anchor in 5-6m. The shallowest depth found in the approach was 3m so the anchorage can probably be entered by most yachts at any stage of the tide.

In the SE corner of the bay to the N of Florence Island is an excellent anchoring spot where there are stainless steel bollards on both N and S shores. *Northern Light* wintered here in the 1980s. Abundant water for washing (only) from waterfall on Pleneau. Excellent rambles on Pleneau (penguin colony) and Hovgaard islands. Skiing possible.

12. Booth Island – Cholet

65°03'.68S, 64°01'.94W

Chart BA 3575

Just off the northern shore of Booth Island beneath the beacon is a good anchorage on Cholet, a crescent-shaped islet. The enclosed bay is longer and narrower than appears from the charts. There is 10m depth well into the anchorage and lines can be taken ashore from all corners. The open end of the bay is partly sheltered from SW by the N shore of Booth Island, but ice can come in quickly.

13. Port Lockroy

64°49'.4S, 63°28'.9W

(Inset plan on BA 3213 and DMA 29106)

A near-obligatory visit. This small former British base is run during the season by the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust as a visitor centre and museum with a working 'EIIR' Post Office. In normal conditions it is easiest to lie at anchor in the middle of the well-sheltered bay, somewhere near where the chart indicates 'Mud' in around 20 m. For more shelter, depending on the wind direction, there are established notches – not sampled by *Sadko* - in Alice Creek, at the S end of

the bay, and outside the bay in Dorian cove and E of Jougla Point.

NB: To visit the station from the bay go E of Doudier Island to the landing stage on the S side. (Access via the creek between the two islands is very rocky and involves tramping through a penguin colony) Contact the station in advance to arrange a visit because the cruise ship traffic is heavy (15,000 visitors in the 2006/7 season)

14. Enterprise Island

64°32'.4S, 61°59'.9W

Charts: BA 3566 DMA 29122

An excellent, all-weather way-station in the Gerlache strait. Approach from just S of E and tie alongside the decaying hulk of a whaling ship, with lines to the bollard and/or rocks on shore, if there was much swell. Antarctic Terns think that they own the wreck, but there is little other wild-life. The wreck itself is interesting industrial archaeology and a limited ramble on the beach is possible.

15. Deception Island

Chart: BA 3202 (But beware: outdated editions do not show the changes to the shoreline following more recent volcanic activity)

Massive volcanic crater lake. The original centre of commercial activity and exploration in the Peninsula area. Although much of the past has been destroyed in volcanic eruptions, the *Oceanites Compendium* identifies five sites of historical or wildlife interest. Entry through Neptune's Bellows: the following GPS point S of South East Point will enable one to pick up on the entry directions in the Admiralty Pilot: 62° 59.7'S, 60° 31.3'W.

Caution: Ravn rock (unmarked) lies just south of the channel and was struck by a cruise-ship in February 2007. If in doubt tend to starboard. Shelter should be found somewhere in the crater in almost any conditions; the most secure recommended bolt-hole being Telefon Bay in the north-east corner. (Not visited by *Sadko*)

Whalers Bay

62°58'.96S, 60°34'.04W

An open anchorage with good holding. Although it is well-sheltered from the sea the wind can whistle down from the surrounding mountains. The sea-bed shallows well offshore so anchor in say 20m in case of a wind-shift. Remains of whaling and scientific stations; good walk up to 'Neptune's Window'.



Crabeater seal

Pendulum Cove

62°56'.19S, 60°36'.05W

Four miles further north, has more shelter and good holding. But swinging space is limited, indicating shore lines or a second anchor in unsettled weather. In both anchorages volcanic pools on the shore can be enlarged to provide hot paddling/bathing!

16. Potter Cove

King George Island

62°14'.15S, 58°40'.5W

Chart: Inset on BA 1774

Excellent shelter in the bay. Good holding in 10-15m behind the point on the E entrance, in front of the Argentine 'Jubany' base. The base's reputation for hospitality was amply justified in 2007 with pressing invitations to meals, showers, laundry facilities, and access to their fresh water supply. Otherwise there is little for the tourist because the site is adjacent to a Protected Area and wandering around is not allowed.

Access is straight forward. The following approach waypoint in the entrance to the bay favours the western shore in order to clear foul ground on eastern side: 62° 14.5' S, 58° 40.5' W

18. Elephant Island

Point Wild, 62°06' S, 54°52'W

Chart: DMA 29104 Sketch map 18

For those interested in the history of Shackleton's expedition, a visit to the spot where 22 of its members survived for four months in 1916 is a compelling pilgrimage. Shore-access is difficult and the *Oceanites Compendium* indicates that the norm is to sight-see from a Zodiac off-shore.

The 'beach' is a fringe of rounded boulders. Landing is possible on the rare occasions when one or more of these rocks can be used as a landing stage during gaps in the surf. Wet suits or waders recommended.

17. Admiralty Bay

Ezcurra Inlet

62°10'.15S, 58°34'.48W

Chart: Inset on BA 1774

(GPS positions appear to be about 0.4M N of charted positions)

Note that the whole of Admiralty Bay is a 'Managed area' under the regime of the Antarctic Treaty.

Well-sheltered spot between Dufayel Island and the point at the head of the inlet, surrounded by spectacular glaciers. Anchorage found in 15-20 metres, good holding, a cable or two NW of the anchor shown on the chart. Clean water is available from glacier run-offs on the south side of the inlet. Fur seals on beach.

The spit is heavily colonized by penguins and fur seals. Both populations object vociferously to intruders. Around the Chilean memorial in the middle of the isthmus neither group is actively aggressive, but it seems prudent not to disturb the seals by pushing one's way the 100m or so to the presumed site of the famous 'boat-hut' on the north side of the spit.

Approach: The above waypoint is accurate for the actual site. An approach waypoint of 62° 05.2' S, 54° 52' W permits one to enter the bay from due N. Anchoring is not recommended (and may be impossible) but there is plenty of space to circle quietly in the bay in 15-20m, roughly level with the gap between Penguin Hill and Gnomon Island (79m – erroneously shown as a mere rock ('+') on the DMA chart) while a tender and/or shore-party explore. The E side of the bay near the point appears to be deeper than the western (Cape Belsham) side. Note that the historic site may not be immediately identified from seaward. It is more closely wedged between high rock and cliff than one would expect from some of Frank Hurley's famous photographs, in which the terrain looks more open.



Site of old boatyard, Point Wild



Pete Hill



Noel Marshall

About Us

The RCC Pilotage Foundation is a non profit making voluntary organisation.

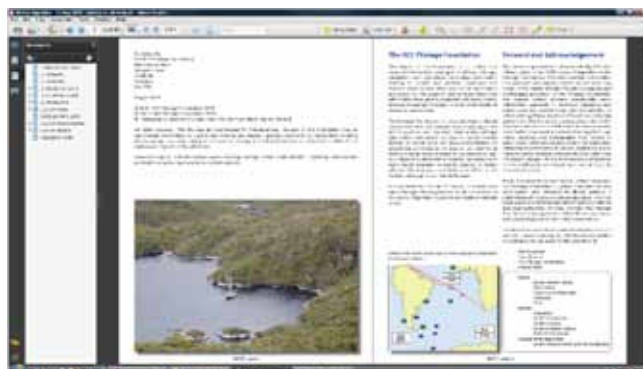
The object of the Foundation shall be to collect and research information relating to small boat pilotage (including information relating to remoter areas where other sources of information are scarce or non-existent) and to disseminate this information through the production of books, charts, lectures, meetings, internet or such other media or means as may be appropriate" information is part of a series made available to yachtsmen on

The products of the Pilotage Foundation, including books, web pilots, book support files and Passage Planning Guides may be seen on www.rccpf.org.uk. The Foundation welcomes contributions from cruising yachtsmen. Contact detail may be found on the website.

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Changing the way the document is displayed

You can use the following page layouts when viewing this document using *View > Page Display* :

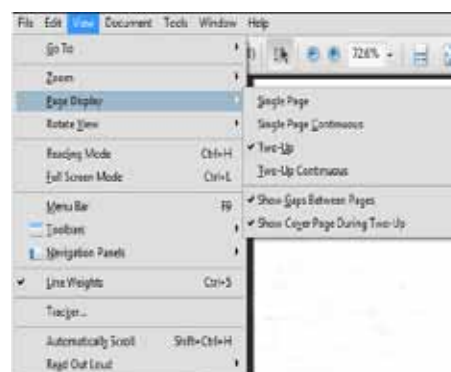
Single Page : Displays one page at a time, with no portion on other pages visible

Single Page Continuous : Displays pages in a continuous vertical column that is one page wide

Two-up : Displays each two-page spread with no portion of other pages visible

Two-up Continuous : Displays facing pages side by side in a continuous vertical column

To display the first page of a multi-page document alone on the right side, firstly specify the Two-up or Two-up Continuous option.
Then choose *View > Page Display > Show Cover Page During Two-up*



HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT (2)

Go to the next Page

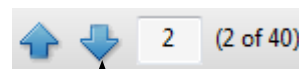
Moving to the next page can be achieved by any of the following :

Press the Page Down key

Click on the next page icon

Enter the required page number in the input box

Click on the Document bar along the right handside of the screen.



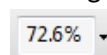
Next Page

Zooming into a page

If you wish to see a page in greater detail, you can use the percentage drop-down icon in the main toolbar.

This provides a number of default zoom-level options.

Once zoomed in, to move the document, hold the left-hand mouse button. Your cursor will change to a clenched fist. This will allow you to drag the document to the right position.



Opening and Closing “Reading Mode”

The reading mode hides everything in the page display except the document itself and the menu bar.

Choose *View > Reading Mode*

Choose Reading Mode again restores the previous view, with the same navigation displays and toolbar displays.

Automatic scrolling through the document

To automatically scroll through a document, choose *View > Automatic Scroll*

Press the Esc key to stop the scrolling

View the document in “Full screen mode”

In Full Screen Mode, the document pages fill the entire screen

View > Full Screen Mode

To go to the next page, press Enter, Page Down, or Right Arrow key, or click the next page icon

Setting PDF Document Display Preferences

You can set your preferences for reading PDF documents by going to :

Edit > Preferences

In particular set :

Edit > preferences > Full Screen and check the “*Show Navigation Bar*” option

Edit > preferences > Page Display and set your preferred Default Layout and Zoom options

Changing the Toolbar icon options

To add or remove icons from the toolbar, choose *Tools > Customise Toolbars*

Interactive Table of Contents

This document has been prepared with an interactive Table of Contents. Simply click on the section of the document that you wish to view.

Hyperlinks

Where the document contains a reference to an external website, the link will be active and by clicking on it, will open your web browser on that page (assuming you have access to the internet).

Interactive plans

Some plans in the document are interactive in that by positioning your mouse over the plan, it will be displayed in a bigger format to allow easier viewing. Interactive plans can be recognised by the following icon seen in the corner.

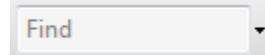


icon designed by [Fat Cow Web Hosting](#)

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT (3)

Searching the document for specific words

The document has a full text search capability allowing you to find any specific word in the document. Simply enter the required word into the “Find” box in the toolbar and press enter.



If the word occurs more than once, the next word icon is displayed. Just click to go to the next occurrence of the word.



Adding comments & sticky notes to your PDF document

This document has been prepared so that you can add your own comments and notes to the document.

First open up the Comment & markup Toolbar : **Tools > Comment & Markup**. Note the option to “**Show Comment & Markup Toolbar**” at the bottom of the options

OR click on: **View > Toolbars > Comment & Markup** to show the toolbar

Use the various tools to annotate your document. These include sticky notes, lines, arrows, etc.



Before closing the document, you will be presented with the option to Save your changes to the document. Answer “yes” to retain your comments.



To view all comments added in the document, click on the Comments icon (on lower lefthand side of screen).



Sending a copy of your comments to RCCPF

To send a copy of all your comments to RCCPF then open up the Comments Panel using the comments icon.

Then click on the options icon.



Then select the “Export Selected Comments...” option. This will prompt you to save a file (with a .fdf file extension).

You then need to [e-mail this file to RCCPF](#) indicating to which RCCPF ebook they refer.

Google maps Links

On the header of each section, there is an active link to the appropriate map, courtesy of Google Maps. Just click on the pin to access the appropriate map. On accessing the map, select the location, then select the “zoom to” option.



Printing the document

This document can be prepared to allow you to print all, or a subset, of the pages.

File > Print...

FEEDBACK TO THE RCC PILOTAGE FOUNDATION

Send your feedback, comments or suggestions by using the main feedback form on the RCCPF website:

Or [email your feedback to us](#):

Or mail to the registered address at :

RCCPF
Armaside
Lorton
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If you wish to send a copy of the various comments you may have annotated on your copy of this book, then this can be achieved relatively easily. See the “**Sending a copy of your comments to RCCPF**” instructions on the opposite page.

Mid-season Updates

If updates are received, then press the button below to retrieve them: