Dear all,

Enjoyed our landing at Port Lockroy. Good to step foot again on UK soil & get a bit of British Antarctic history and to see the Gentoo Penguins up close. The film about the **Penguin Post Office** was also good background to the human and penguin life there - it is yet another BBC2 natural history film they have shown us. Is it on BBC i-player?

The concept of a BBQ outside might be OK - but in reality the ship was moving and the wind chill too much - so we got our food and went inside to eat it.

After that we sailed further south to the Lemaire Channel - a spectacular narrow channel that runs for 7 miles between Booth Island and the Antarctic Peninsula. The sun shone and we got great photos. At the bottom of the channel (about 20:45) we did a U turn around some big icebergs and headed north again back up the Lemaire channel.

This is the furthest south we are going at a round 65 south. Even so the weather in mid summer is still very cold with permafrost and lots of snow and ice. It is a long way further south to the Pole!

Tonight we are going back to a Bay just north of where we started this morning. The plan is for a 5am wakeup call and 05:30 zodiac trip to the beach. We have been promised that we will walk on the Antarctic Continent before we start our journey back to Ushuaia.

The end is neigh …..

**Day 16 of 20 :-(**

Woke at 5am to a cold crisp but calm day. We had anchored in the bay beside Portal Point. We spent an hour ashore and took photos to celebrate our standing on the real continent rather than one of the off shore islands where we have been before. The snow was crunchy under the feet and the icebergs were rubbing sholders in the bay.

Looks like this will be our last shore landing and last zodiac trip of the holiday. I suspect that tonight we will start the journey back to Ushuaia. Unless they have something planned for 5am Sunday! eg. Deception Island has never been mentioned.

**Portal Point & Gerlache Strait**

*"Glittering white, shining blue, raven black, in the light of the sun the land looks like a fairy-tale. Pinnacle after pinnacle, peak after peak, crevassed, wild as any land on our globe, it lies, unseen and untrodden."& nbsp; - Roald Amundsen*

0500 Wake-up call

0530 We hope to land at **Portal Point**

Portal Point is a continental landing and lies at the entrance to Charlotte Bay on the Reclus Peninsula, on the west coast of Graham Land. The British named it after they built a refuge hut at this site in 1956, enabling them to use a nearby snow slope as a gateway up onto the Peninsula plateau. The hut was occupied between 1956 and 1958. Research conducted from this field hut focused on surveying the region and geology. The building was dismantled in 1997 and taken to the Falkland Islands. Portal Point is also quite scenic due to the surrounding mountains, crevassed glaciers and glacial tongues that extend down to sea level.

**1st Disembarkation: *Amundsen & Scott***

**2nd Disembarkation(one hour later approx.): *Shackleton & Wild***

0800 **Breakfast** is served in th e Dining Room (Deck 3)

TBA We hope to ship cruise and explore in **Charlotte Bay**

Join us on the outer decks to view the remarkable views as we explore Charlotte bay. Discovered by De Gerlache and named in honour of the fiancée of Georges Lecointe, executive officer, hydrographer, and second in command of the expedition.

1230 - 1330 **Lunch** is served in the Dining Room (Deck 3)

TBA We hope to ship cruise the **Gerlache Strait**

The Gerlache Strait separates the Palmer Archipelago from the Antarctic Peninsula. The Belgian Antarctic Expedition, under Lt. Adrien de Gerlache, first explored the strait in January and February 1898, naming it for the expedition ship *Belgica* . The name was later changed to honor the commander himself.

TBA Join the Expedition Team for a **Recap & Briefing** in the Main Lounge

1930 - 2100 Dinner is served in the Dining Room (Deck 3)

After Dinner - Join **Ben & the Expedition Team** in the Club for an **Antarctic Quiz!**

We seem to have a little confusion, but in contradiction to the printed program but in line with what Woody told us last night, we are to go out on another zodiac cruise here in Charlotte Bay. Great excitement as we once again, and for the last time, don all our layers. Having perfected it at last it feels good. 4 layers on the legs and five on the top half for me. Two pairs of gloves and a hat and jacket hood for the faster bits. two pairs of socks and our knee length boots which we will hand back after this. They are totally waterproof and tough with grip on the snowy slopes as well. The upper parts of them are more flexible than the more rigid foot and ankle parts. I have never had cold feet all trip. Then face cover borrowed from son-in-law Paul from his skiing gear and my lovely fluffy scarf wrapped round and round. Sun block and sun glasses complete the look.

So I had better get it on. It takes a quarter of an hour.

xxx